

THE SILENT (BODIES) IN PSYCHOANALYSIS

SPRING ISSUE 2023
VOL. 4 NO. 1

COVER PHOTO BY
JUDITH ALLEN , AB, MRP

CRITICA

CRITICAL THINKING AND CREATIVITY IN CONTEMPORARY PSYCHOANALYSIS

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PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

By Kali Hess, MFT

Dear Community,

The Federal government has declared that the COVID pandemic is over. I've been thinking about what we've all been through and how our world changed. The devastating loss of over a million Americans and untold millions around the world has not been memorialized in a significant way that might help us heal as a community. There has been little leadership in helping us mourn what we have lost.

I notice in my patients the effects of these losses, and how the struggle to come back is difficult. Perhaps our desire to go back to life as it was before the pandemic is not in line with what is realistic, both in terms of what we want, and what is possible. For those whose lives have resumed their former shape and rhythm, it may be that the surface effects of the years of COVID have been left behind but the deeper wounds remain.

About two years into the pandemic I gave up my office. When I recently talked to my patients about the possibility of meeting in person, almost all of them were reluctant. Some because they are still afraid of COVID. Most felt satisfied with our remote meetings and did not feel the time lost in the commute was worth what they might gain by being physically together. I have to say that I feel the same way, while at the same time missing the in-person contact. I love staying home and being able to wander around the house and play with my dog between sessions, but I do feel a loss of

connection, not just with individual patients, but with the world. Driving to my office, bumping into people in my building, running out to get a coffee and exchanging a few words with the barista, these small acts brought me into the larger world, and helped me feel connected. Some of you have been in your offices throughout the pandemic, and began in person sessions some time ago. Perhaps in that case the shifts don't feel as acute. For others, I know the pandemic gave the freedom to work from anywhere, and that has become a permanent choice. The glut of office space in San Francisco and elsewhere in the Bay Area seems to represent the larger community's reluctance to return to full-time in person work.

It seems important to reflect on the changes we have all experienced, and the cultural trauma that has touched us. I know most of us have been very lucky to have homes to shelter in and work we can do remotely, as so many have not.

Surely the residual damage to health care and service workers has not been addressed. PINC, as an educational institute, is facing similar changes. In our local cohorts, some candidates want to return to in person classes. Others do not. Faculty seems similarly divided. Our new outreach to faculty around the country means that those teachers will be remote. This is both a boon and a limitation. Many of us are wondering how PINC is going to be reshaped by the experiences we have all had over the last several years.

I am writing about this now because I feel the need to mark the moment and consider where we have been and where we are now. In our retreat this year, we had the opportunity to reflect on the effects of the pandemic on our personal and professional lives. One of the questions we considered is something that we might want to keep in mind for the foreseeable future. As stated in the retreat announcement (which was organized by the Members at Large of the Board of Directors, Julie Leavitt, Carole Christensen, and Sheila Longerbeam): How do we find our way back to each other in community, to reconnect and metabolize the effects of so much disruption and change? I think this question remains open for much contemplation in the future.



Kali Hess, MFT
President, PINC

Menlo Park, CA 94025
kalihess2122@gmail.com

EDITORIAL NOTES

THE PULSATING BODY IN
PSYCHOANALYSIS

By Carolina Bacchi, PsyD

Welcome to our Spring 2023 issue. In this issue, we all reflected on the Silent (body) in Psychoanalysis. The body that is invisible to others; the body that is invisible to ourselves; the body that carries what was unsaid/unknown; the body that is forgotten/oppressed/colonized socially; the body that is silenced or remains silent; the body from the past or the body we imagine in the future; the cultural body, the body invested with untold history; the body that carries marks from lived experiences; the body that is made to submit; the body that doesn't submit; the body that resists; the body of silent illnesses; the body and its untold secrets; the body that tells us stories.

De Toffoli (2011) beautifully describes how "I and you happen at the same time as emergence of the body, lived as an experience of oneself as the subject is mirrored in the other" (De Tofolli, 2019, p. 597) The author explains that every affect is a subjective state connected to the body (De Tofolli, 2019, p. 598). In this way, mind and body are intrinsically related as two manifestations of the same phenomena (inner and outer surface of experience). Beyond the psychic space, I find necessary to highlight the body as existing in the social sphere and as such collectively marked.

Our bodily experience is embodied in the inner space of our sensorial being while necessarily interconnected with the social through the gaze of the (m)other and its held connectedness with the symbolic order of our ancestors. As we reflect on the body in psychoanalysis, we necessarily encounter each other in the collective space where subjectivity exists, in an ongoing tension between the social and the psyche. Our body in its intersubjective corporeification suffers the pain of the world, expresses and internalizes the other/foreigner within itself. I invite the reader to play with those questions while interacting with the paintings, poems, pictures and essays that we collected.

On another hand, Critica is going through exciting times. Our team is growing as we embark on new projects – Critica online and Critica Conversations, both coming in the Fall. Our online publication follows the steps of Room, Caliban and Bergasse 19, hoping to, with them, disrupt and expand, reflecting the vibrant contemporary world of psychoanalytic thinking and practice. Stay tuned.

I would like to introduce you all to our new team. Elijah Allen is our new graphic designer. Elijah is very interested in inspiring people to open up to new perspectives while being curious about design. Beyond designing Critica's issues, he is also developing our new website to be launched in the Fall. We also have three new committee members. Emily Anstreich is a PsyD. student at the Wright Institute and currently writes a newsletter titled PsychoPolitics where she explores political issues from a psychological lens. Rachael (Rae) Perlman is also a doctoral candidate at the Wright Institute and a doctoral intern at the University of Nebraska. Luba Palter, MFT is the current editor of NCSPP's Impulse, and serves on NCSPP's board. She is interested in the intersection of psychoanalytic ideas, the arts and social justice. We are very excited to have them onboard as we embark on our new adventures.

Critica is the work of many hands, minds and hearts. It would never have been possible without our wonderful Committee members, our generous contributors and our readers. For that, I am always deeply grateful.



Carolina Bacchi, PsyD

Psychoanalyst Member at PINC
Co-chair of Critica

5445 College Ave suite 340C
Oakland CA 94618
drbacchi@gmail.com

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EDITORIAL NOTES

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE FRAGMENTED HUMAN BODY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

By Luca Di Donna, PhD

In the first paragraph of Carolina's editorial, she summarized the complex issue of the body in psychoanalysis. In my editorial, I will briefly touch on the body in our current society and expand on Freud's work on the body and his cancer.

In the last three years, our body has been under tremendous pressure due to Covid. Our bodies have been under attack by mass killers. Many bodies have been killed, mutilated, and dislocated. These killings are taking place in churches, schools, and on the streets without any specific reasons. Mass killings are becoming a part of our daily lives. Are we going to survive in a world in which the body is not respected and is perceived as a not-body- not as an entity?

We have seen clinically, bodies that have been traumatized, bodies unable to speak or feel. The body-mind construct is disconnected from the internal-external world. The homeless person has no home. He lives in a state of terror. I wonder, if in this insecure state, he fears somatically the loss of an intact body. In addition to that, society has lost track of them. Homelessness is not just

a mental problem, it is something more complex, a manifestation of our country's social and economic inequities, a location of deprivation in the face of obscene excesses by others.

We as a collective see part of this issue as a fragmentation in American culture due to political forces. These political forces have created a "collective madness," a virtual world, with fast fake news to confuse, control and isolate the people.

Michel Foucault stated that the role of society was to control and exclude marginalized people that created problems. The French society built mental hospitals and prisons to maintain social control. The aim was not treatment or rehabilitation but to keep those deemed unfit in controlled places. It seems that madness, losing a sense of reality, has been a main concern in Western civilization.

It was with fragmented, lost and dissociated bodies that mental illness started to be cataloged

"In Fragments for a History of the Human Body," edited by M, Feher. et all (1989) the authors

summarized various views of the body as seen in many cultures and in different periods. In the last chapter of the book "A Repertory of Body History" I found a reference to George Didi Huberman's (2004) book "Invention of Hysteria. Charcot and the Photographic iconography in Salpêtrière"

"that links the body with psychoanalysis. In the hospital Salpêtrière the hysterical woman was born. Hysteria at that time was considered a nervous disease that afflicted women. Huberman's work contradicted the prevailing view demonstrating that hysteria was a construction of the social, a montage of the role of women during that time.

Following Charcot Sigmund Freud became intrigued by the body of the hysterics. With Breuer he wrote "The Studies of Hysteria" Eugene Bleuler (1886) (1994), in the review of this book wrote, "The factual richness of the book opens a new insight into the psychic mechanism and makes it one of the most recent publications in the field of normal and pathological psychology" (p. 7). The psychic mechanism was repression and sexuality.

Freud rejected Breuer's ideas because he was not able to accept the concept of sexuality in hysteria. Also he rejected Charcot's ideas that hysteria was a disorder in the brain, a neurologic disease. In contrast Freud believed hysteria was a psychological phenomenon. The hysteric according to Freud was afflicted by conflicts of sexual nature that could not be expressed in words but in somatic forms. For Freud the body was a body-ego. The body was alive using an expression coined by the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty. We see language around this bodily aliveness in the Concordance to the Psychological Work of Sigmund Freud, the word bodies appeared 36 times, the bodily 105 and the body 602.

My brief and simplified history of hysteria is to introduce a new paper for Critica written by Riccardo Lombardi "On Freud and the Body." Lombardi, is an authoritative thinker in psychoanalysis on the body. I would like to thank Drs, Patricia Marra and Luisa Marino for their translation. (See note 1)

One interesting new source on the body and Freud is the book by Peter –Andre Alt,(2022) "Sigmund Freud, The Doctor of the Unconscious, a Biography. The book focuses on Freud's cultural background and his struggle with cancer. From Alt we learned that Freud had a frail body. He was tired most of the time, suffered from heart palpitations; and used cocaine to help with depression and shyness.

In 1923 Freud learned he had cancer in his jaw which lasted till his death in London. He had fifty operations that altered his face. Lana Lin in her book "Freud's Jaw and Other Lost Objects. Fractured Subjectivity in the Face of Cancer." (2017) traced Freud's operations through notes from his surgeons. Freud had many prostheses which he called "His Monster" because of the monster Freud was not able to speak clearly. He had many active voice registries according to people who knew him. It is interesting that Freud did not write much about his cancer.

I wondered after reading this book what it was for Freud to have a body that was fractured, monsters

that were implanted in his mouth, and the fact that he had to be exiled to London in this impaired state? How could events have influenced his theory?

Freud left Austria in 1938 to escape the Nazi Regime and died in London in 1939 from cancer, helped by his doctor Max Schur. The war started on September 1, 1939 –and ended on September 2, 1945. We witnessed the brutality of humankind. Six million Jews were killed in concentration camps. (See. Note, 2.)

A tragic historical note is that the sisters of Freud died in concentration camps in 1942. They were Rosa, Marie, Adolfine and Regine Pauline. In the book "Leaving Today: the Freuds, in Exile 1938", edited by Freud's Museum, (2018) there is a brief note: "and the rest is silence" Freud's sisters. p. (108)

The "rest is silence" is a very enigmatic statement. Is it a death notice? Is it something unbearable that cannot be discussed and must remain silent? Does this silent tomb extend to psychoanalysis where the topic of Freud's sisters and the camps has rarely been discussed in psychoanalysis?

I had the impression that Freud was guilty of leaving his sisters behind. It is possible to say that Freud used a defensive structure such as denial, or perhaps foreclosure to alleviate grief and loss. Psychoanalysis at that time was rather mechanical, precise, affectless, acting like a protection against a traumatic monster.

A current focus on the body in psychoanalysis is found in an article Paniagua- Hartmann in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis (2004) with a paper titled "What has happened to the body in Psychoanalysis". Since that writing a large body of literature has emerged especially at PINC. I hope to say more in the near future.

In Contrast to the early view of the body I would like to finish with an editorial from Caliban, a psychoanalytic publication from South America published in 2016.

Their editors wrote :

"We can think of different ways in which psychoanalysts relate to the body. The possibilities range from those who read hieroglyphs encrypted in their patients' bodies to those who decipher bodies resembling Bradbury's "The Illustrated Man," to those who, like forensic anthropologists, identify remains, exhume them, and restore lost identities. Talking about the body also involves exploring how it infiltrates many fields of knowledge. Language sheds light on this process. Nothing seems to escape its nominalizing ambition: medical corps, corpus delicti, the body of the nation, celestial bodies, hand to hand (cuerpo a cuerpo), the body of Christ, anatomical body, own body or foreign body; there are even two-body and three body problems in physics.¹ Whether we are speaking of typography or architecture, corporations or medicine, chemistry or religion, we need the notion of body.p.1"

The editorial of Caliban reflects a new perception of the body: full of potentiality, that is diversified and part of the social matrix.

I would like to thank the Critica Editorial Board, the new members of Critica, and PINC for their support. Also I would like to thank Dr. Sharon Neuwald for her superb editing and her perceptive insights on the Holocaust literature.



Luca Di Donna, PhD

399 Laurel Street.
San Francisco, Ca. 94118
Personal and Supervisor analyst at PINC
Ldidonna@comcast.net

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Note, 1.

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An excellent book on the History of Hysteria And The Women's Body.

Note, 2

The Concentration Camps: Inside the Nazi System of Incarceration and Genocide.

<https://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/camps/charts>



Alento

By Chris Laurito

**Chris Laurito, Psychologist &
Photographer**

Rua Borges Lagoa 1080 com 1103
Vila Clementino
CEP 04038-030
São Paulo - SP

Instagram: [chris.laurito](#)
christianelaurito@hotmail.com

RETURN OF THE REPRESSED

By Carolina Bacchi, PsyD

In conversation with Lisa Koshkarian
Bodily Autonomy, Reproductive Rights and
Unsilencing Islands of Marginalization
By Carolina Bacchi, PsyD

(published by Critica, Issue 3, Spring 2022)

Carolina Bacchi, PsyD

Psychoanalyst Member at PINC
Co-chair of Critica

5445 College Ave suite 340C
Oakland CA, 94618
drbacchi@gmail.com

In her paper, Koshkarian (2022) argues that bodily autonomy should be placed at the center of the psychoanalytic map as a fundamental human right, urging psychoanalysis to consolidate theories of child development in response to social pressures that makes one (us) believe that freedom, self possession and choice are not the rights of all. Her paper focuses on the many ways in which we silence human bodies as we remove their right of ownership, agency and power. She highlights how this silencing happens as oppressed bodies bear the impact of our social colonization of the mind – in her words “citizens with intersectional, marginalized identities experience exponential diminishment and expropriation of their freedom...” (Koshkarian, 2022, p. 20). She believes that as psychoanalysts we should foster bodily autonomy in our patients as a way into an empowered bodily relationship that will endorse boundaries, informed choices and safe personal space.

As I reflect on body and choice, I also consider the analytic work in the context of re-creating a body that may choose to bear a baby, and therefore, give birth to a mother. As Winnicott reminds us, there is no baby without a mother.

In considering the loss of reproductive rights for women, I am compelled to reflect on the control of women's bodies solidified intensely by a patriarchal belief system that delimits the possibilities of a bodily anchored experience of motherhood and threatens the development and evolution of an emotionally healthy mother-child bond. Reproductive rights are at the core of the possibility of a woman becoming a mother, fully owning her body and offering it as a hospitable nest for a baby to grow.

In this context, analysis as a place for a free body to be expanding on its own sensorial experience requires an analyst who is fully open and committed to the radical embodiment of a rupture with a mind that is colonized by systems of oppression. It requires an analyst who embraces choice at its core, including holding the theory as the beginning point and never the finish line.

Going back to Koshkarian, she also considers that ethos of power and domination got inflicted into our 'collective psyche-soma fabric', leading to our relationship with our bodies being coerced by the social framework. Lemma (2009) reflects that, beyond its physical reality, our bodies are marked by our relationship with others, which I

consider to be the first space of figuration and representation of the mind. The body then, is by definition, a social construct, a social space, a social experience, invested and defined by our collective/symbolic representations and expectations. Alterity is at the core of our becoming, and the most definite imprint of our bodies.

In that, I agree with Koshkarian that at the center of our job, we need to examine and move beyond continuing to silence bodies and minds, in order to move towards an embodied practice that considers the social, and the individual, hoping to free ourselves from unconscious systems of oppression. Freedom is then, like Young (2019) beautifully defines, "the space between the prey and its predator" (p. 4), a precarious space in which thinking may emerge. This is a necessary undertaking if we don't want to maintain a psychoanalytic practice that consolidates even further our patients' marginalized and compliant social and emotional position.

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Partidas e Chegadas

By Chris Laurito

Chris Laurito, Psychologist & Photographer

Rua Borges Lagoa 1080 com 1103
Vila Clementino
CEP 04038-030
São Paulo - SP

Instagram: [chris.laurito](#)
christianelaurito@hotmail.com

Mali Mann, MD, FIPA

Training and Supervising Psychoanalyst
San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis
Supervisor Child & Adolescent Psychoanalysis
Chair, Child Abuse Project/IPA
Clinical Professor
Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
Stanford University Medical Center
1202 Woodview Terrace
Los Altos, CA 94024

Kian with God

By Mali Mann

Kian Pirfalak, a 9 year old boy, was killed with a bullet to his lung. His father was also hit with several bullets, too. He was one of at least 47 children to have been killed in the Iranian government's brutal crackdown on nationwide anti-establishment protests that erupted in September of 2022.

Kian was from southwestern Iran. He hoped to become a robotics engineer.

Dear Kian,
I write to you from a faraway land
I write this poem as my tribute to you

I heard you wanted to be a robotics engineer
when you grew up

I will remember you
wherever you might be
high above in the sky
beyond the mountains,
beyond the rainbow and the clouds

At the funeral
your mother cried in outrage.
she recited her poem,
'you, dear people, the word hatred
is written on Khamenei's
menacing face and his ugly long beard.
the beard that comes down to his chest,
a chest filled with detestation
and his heart is made of stone'.
she screamed louder and louder.
it thundered through the air
'Whatever he says is not true, it is a lie!'

all the mourners circle her
with lit candles in their hands
praying for you, and
pray for your father
not to die

remember the day he made a video of you
as you let the boat you made float in the pond
You called the God of play, Dionysus
and the God of clouds
in the purple sky
and the God of mountains
who were kissed by the rivers.

That bloody day in November
you were inside your father's car
when a bullet punctured your lung
but, you could not come back to life.

Mother wrapped your blood-soaked body in the ice
prepared you for a journey to the underground.

gladiolas bowed in sorrow.
the wildflowers drank the sun
into their veins
weeping grasses huddled in silence.
next to an unmarked grave

Your room always remembers you and waits.
for you to come back to play with your toys.
or if you look down from
the arc of your rainbow
you can play in the heaven.

Kian,
Now, you must know.
Finally, women fight a hellish fight
on the streets of Tehran
they don't carry any weapon
they chant with their cursing lips
"death to the dictator!"

HOW MY BODY KEEPS THE SCORE: IMAGININGS DURING WARTIME CAPTURE AND IMPRISONMENT

By Sharon Neuwald, BSW DrPH

Sharon Neuwald, BSW DrPH

PO Box 18713 OKC OK 73154
Sharon.Neuwald@cox.net

How do I describe such conditions. It is a nightmarish reverie.

My mind and body are strangers, split to survive environmental horrors.

There is a paradox of the inner and outer realms where I present with an eerie stillness while internally reckoning with my tumultuous body.

Eyes twitch with a vigilant gaze both near and far. I stand straight and taut with my stomach in knots; my mind oscillates

between confusion and conformity. I hold on to known defenses to keep afar a fragmentation I may be unable to weave

back into cohesive patterns. I'm terrified I will emerge a stranger to myself.

How can I stand on my own two feet? They wither underneath the weight of my psychic despair. I imagine them

crumbling underneath me.

Anonymity is my shield; a magic cloak securely wrapped so as to not be seen. I am numb, robotically compliant, with no vitality. Do I even have a pulse?

Where will I find the wherewithal to exist day to day?

Can I count on "getting to the other side?" where despair relents to allow a smidgen of possibility and hope?

I laugh in disgust: Going on being, that amorphous psychic unity of mind and body now seems elusive; is it a

maturational fraud? Will I find that empathic other to offset this fracture, to take me in and believe? It is indeed a massive wounding by reality

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Untitled

By Kara Swedlow

Kara Swedlow, PhD, MFT, Psychoanalyst

5435 College Ave, Suite 202-6
Oakland, CA 94618

kara@karaswedlow.com

THE BODY IN FREUD'S WORK

By Riccardo Lombardi (Roma), Translated by
Luisa Marino and Patricia Marra

Riccardo Lombardi, MD

Psychiatrist and Psychoanalyst
Training and Supervising analyst, Italian
Psychoanalytic Society (SPI-IPA)
Vicolo delle grotte 52
00186 Roma, Italy
dr.riccardolombardi54@gmail.com

Luisa Marino, PhD

British Psychoanalytical Council
International Psychoanalytical Association
Italian Psychoanalytical Society
London UK
www.luisamarino.wordpress.com
Reading Italian Psychoanalysis

Patricia Marra, MFT

417 Spruce Street San Francisco, CA 94118
Member, Faculty SFCP
Patricia.Marra@Comcast.net.

While working with hysteric patients, Freud (1895) soon realized that the physical/bodily attack is always associated to some kind of hallucinatory trace. This way he discovered an association between the body and the mind. Freud identifies a split within consciousness so that "normal consciousness" is alternated with the bodily conscious phenomena and he called those hypnoid states. The so called "common representations" have the disadvantages of not being directly connected to the body where emotions originate from. The bodily sensation becomes the compass to guide psychological working through. And the pressure exercised by the bodily impulses requires a specific attention so that psychological representations do not withdraw too much away from the sensorial perception.

These initial discoveries by Freud seem to be particularly relevant nowadays in relation to how much the body has become crucial in contemporary psychoanalysis. Let's explore then briefly how focusing on the body has been a constant all through Freud's theorisation. In *Dreams* (1900), the "Wunsch" has a space and a meaning that is totally physical. Starting from this

physical core of the dream, dream work translates the primitive world of physical impulses: such work should be considered not only for its defensive value in regard of dream censorship, but mainly as a primary psychological way of organizing the not yet formed bodily dimension.

The bodily implications considered in *Tre Saggi sulla sessualità* (1905) are clear. The relevance of body conditioning on psychological life, for Freud, is expressed essentially via sexuality. In my opinion, nowadays, sexuality should be rather considered only as a “model” of a body-mind relation that has wider implications and has to do mainly with the evolution of body-affects-thoughts (Lombardi, 2009).

When Freud, in Schreber, says that the subject considers its own body as “love object” (1911a), he is closer to affirming that the libidinal investment of the body could be considered a “structural” aspect of the person: something very relevant in contemporary clinical work. Of particular relevance is Freud’s famous essay (1911b), in which, alongside his emphasis on the reality principle, comes his introduction of his theory of thinking as a containment of muscular discharge, and his theory of the birth of the mind as setting into motion the sense organs of the body: Bion (1962) will then start from these hypotheses, one who notoriously hinges his own thinking on very few central psychoanalytic hypotheses.

When Freud introduces the concept of the drives (1915) as an expression of the body’s “need for work,” it places the psyche in connection with the body; the reference to “work” connotes the relationship of necessity that links the body and the mind. If that “work” is not realized, a dangerous fracture is established, namely a body-mind dissociation (Lombardi, 2016).

In his essay on “The Unconscious” (1915), Freud introduces the necessity of a connection between the “thing-representation” and the “word-representation,” warning that when we think in abstract terms, our thinking becomes a “philosophizing” similar to the delusions of the schizophrenic. Here, Freud emphasizes the concreteness from which the mind originates and refers to the body as an indispensable element that limits thinking.

In his letter to Groddeck on June 5, 1917, Freud affirms that the unconscious is the missing link between the body and the psyche: if we lose the bond with the body, we also lose contact with the unconscious.

Later, in 1923, Freud places the roots of the id in bodily functioning, emphasizing how the ego is structured at the frontier of the id. At the same time, he emphasizes the contribution of the body to the functions of the ego, where the ego is “first of all a body ego” (1923).

In his reformulation of anxiety, Freud (1925) emphasizes that anxiety is an expression of internal needs, and, therefore, a communication bridge between the body and the mind. Freud (1925) in his reformulation of anxiety stressed that anxiety is the testimony of internal desires, and thus is a bridge for the communication of the body to the mind. In Freud (1930) he emphasizes that the function of the body is to define a sense of reality and a differentiation between the internal and external, indicating how the experience of the body is central to the forces of the undeferretiated. The presence of the body is seen by Freud as a source of differentiation. It is the real nature and it is concrete. It has not for the implication of an unconscious fantasy, as was defined later on by Klein. Freud speaks about the body always in a concrete manner when he identified the fragility of the body as one of three principal forces of our human suffering. The real body is a continuous area for the development of the reality principle.

Freud (1938) "The Outline of Psychoanalysis" stated the important aspect of the body, considering the somatic process as real. In this formulation, Freud opened a more radical focus on the body and on the relation of the body/mind placing it at the center of psychoanalytic conceptualization.

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This brief note shows Freud's work on the body. We need psychoanalysis not as a method or a system of fragmented theories that become a religious dogma, but we need a few hypotheses. We must understand how the man-animal transforms his body in a thinking process.

At the same time, we can say that Freud in reality is stuck in a method that stresses the continuity of the body and mind. The contemporary clinic is demonstrating quite the opposite. We are encountering a body that is absent, or completely disassociated from the mind, take as an example the problem of the anorexic and other pathologies of eating disorders. We can also add bodies that are constructed artificially, or the body that functions on abstract intellectualism, etc. In these cases, the disassociation must address the symptom in his specificity. Other authors, contemporaries of Freud like Victor Tausk and William Reich, intuited more than Freud the role of dissociation – body – mind. Unfortunately, the work of these authors remained isolated from the official psychoanalytic practice.



"Chaos"

By Dawn Shifreen-Pomerantz
Encaustic on Wood
30x40

**Dawn Shifreen-Pomerantz, MFT,
Psychoanalyst**

3184B Old Tunnel Road,
Lafayette, CA 94549

dawnshifreenpomerantz@gmail.com

I Dream of Annie

By Melissa C Anderson

I have only these tears though even more
than 20 years pass
my very first patient
but me now & she now
wait and wait for appointment at 8, nearly 9
for some reason through an amnesic fog I wander
into the waiting room
officious with a desk where receptionist should be sitting
yet no one there
and she, the patient, here all along
looks distraught
follows me into a room, my room
carpet sage green
lies down on a couch, as if fainting
wearing a hat

I'm so sorry we both say
time confused living in uncharted
hours, and this would have been so helpful she says
now that things are different
trailing behind her is a small boy,
or else birds, all wearing hats
tiny green felt with matching feathers
we turn, they are one and the same
the hat stands out
stands in for the rope
don't worry, she said on the phone
from the hospital
you didn't miss anything, I hid it from you

in real life I followed her for some time
successfully she got unmarried, finished the certificate
and maintained a professional position

we saw each other on the street once.

Melissa C Anderson, MFT, PhD
Neurobiology

925 The Alameda, Berkeley, CA 94707
melissacandersonmft@gmail.com



Mali Mann, MD, FIPA

Training and Supervising Psychoanalyst,
San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis,
Supervisor Child & Adolescent Psychoanalysis,
Chair, Child Abuse Project/IPA,
Clinical Professor,
Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences,
Stanford University Medical Center

1202 Woodview Terrace, Los Altos, Ca. 94024

Dreamscapes
By Mali Mann

This short piece is excerpted from a moral fairytale titled *On a cru. . . [We believed...]*. Using the freedom of tone that any satire allows, the text proceeds both through a vivid, cynical interrogation and an immense tenderness towards the tragic destiny of our species: one condemned, with its indestructible good will, to be incapable of dealing with its contradictions without wanting once and for all to resolve them.

Poetry <https://guerrierpoesie.blogspot.com/>
Perplexity <https://cheveupoesie.blogspot.com>

Elisabeth Guerrier, MA

French National Education (retired)
8 Grand Rue
Monbahu 47290
guerrierart@gmail.com

THE MASKED BODY

By Elisabeth Guerrier

It was already not always easy to live together before, when there was a multitude of deadly diseases that could decimate us, but the omnipresence of a single incomparable risk that called us to be vigilant everywhere -- while shopping, on returning home, leaving our house, staying at home, carrying our children in our arms, keeping them away from us, going about our daily chores, encountering the hundreds of reminders to order and caution that flashed on giant panels, all this sudden deployment of asepsis and prophylactic passion had seriously diminished our reserves of compassion. We looked at each other fiercely. Our eyes darted onto the state of health of each passer-by with scrutinizing distrust, and we issued discrete evaluative hypotheses on his general state. Everything was there, his blood pressure, his temperature, his breathing, the physical clues of the level of aggression that could be expected if we made the slightest misstep by pointing out to him the inadequacy of his prophylaxis, to protect him against himself. We had acquired an unstoppable diagnostic capacity in the detection of potential dangers observable in the carriage of the head, the pallor of the cheeks, the arch of the back.

Slowly, the twists and turns in this purified climate of imminent death seemed to create two groups: those who immodestly indulged in the delights of fear made official as a new rule of manners, an ultimate form of heroism, and sacrificed all discernment to it; and the others, who were content to lower their heads a little, hidden from retaliation against their disbelief by the annihilation-preventing accessories which made it impossible to guess whether the glimmer in their eyes was associated with a smirk or not. There were a few, more or less serious skirmishes when the constabulary expressed itself with excessive zeal with regard to the minor offenses committed. The devotion with which some applied the new rules, trying to show the world how just and good they were, so respectful of their neighbor that they thought it fair to denounce him for his good, also had the result of weakening the social fabric.

One noticed with dismay that the generation which should have rejected en masse all notions of a panacea, was the most docile, managing to exhibit the index of its alienation as an indisputable testimony of its political conscience and transforming the most visible accessory of submission to injunctions, into a fashion accessory.

The innumerable versions of fatality, all its varied and unpredictable causes generating the precariousness of our various fortunes; all those could now be reduced to a single name, a unique noun to appropriate for our greatest good, for our complete health, for our interactive security -- completely reassuring in the fear it generated because created somewhere far away by informed laboratory technicians, custodians of indisputable knowledge. We put it on like an

.....

overcoat they lent us against the storms, this word pandemic, both mysterious and terrifying. Those of us who supposed ourselves enlightened came to agreement very quickly, because life, a fortiori, everyday life and what we could hope to see there, was only a heap of prejudices; we no longer trusted anything but the uninterrupted messages which were hurled at us.

There was something very reassuring about this wave of panic, and we fairly quickly incorporated this new nomenclature of morbidity. Incorporated, yes, suddenly became free to unrestrainedly discover in ourselves a myriad of symptoms, each more alarming than its predecessors. We made it more corporeal than our body itself, which seemed to us to have become so unreliable and so obsolete that it appeared just as practical to submit it to the new nomenclature completely. We did not realize that it was only replacing the terminology that had preceded it which had evaporated in the face of the urgency of the major crisis, and we brandished this name in all circumstances by saying, this is what threatens me and what I am, this name is us, an obscure but magnetic formula that hypnotized with all the force of its classifying power.

So, once freed to no longer be accountable to anything except to the drugs prescribed to manage our so embarrassing feelings of gloom, we came to no longer know who we were talking about when we were talking about ourselves, and to be satisfied with this designation which delimited us, erasing by its weight of categorization and omniscient erudition all our anger and discontents, to replace them with a badge visible from afar by all.



Until We Mee...

By Kara Swedlow

**Kara Swedlow, PhD, MFT,
Psychoanalyst**

5435 College Ave, Suite 202-6
Oakland, CA 94618

kara@karaswedlow.com

Offering a dream week to week, my Montessori-school-in-the-woods, three-year-old self but wiser, on father's lap

reading flash cards, counting by subtraction. Analyst leans over, then into, some other iteration still distant

a warm hand on the perimeter. Years later, after the death of both parents, she akin to me,

rents a house in the old neighborhood. Standing outside to smoke, or take out garbage imagines

a cabin in Montana, my dead grandmother's house in Iowa, the comforting confines of the elevator in Washington Heights

anywhere but home is home. Holding head in hands, sobbing, groaning skeletal wreaking and wails through every layer of depth.

Each scripted line, improvised scene, belies bats-in-the-belfry animates animus, resounds with ringing in ears, eras, years and temporality closer to primitive

— we are intimate strangers.

Why forget my bracelet, locket, time before identity, all placed next to the chair, on the table where face-to-face, one cannot hide.

This happens on my watch, words portend: transformation. Why *this* instead of *that*?

Usurped by images of an earlier San Francisco, Playland by the Sea, the Haight, 1969

where very young, my youthful self-wishing-to-be-older, free and easy an imagined adult with flowers in her hair

now preternaturally-on-the-couch, incomplete

the way good-byes are never said.

Sonnet for Analysis Interminable

By Melissa C Anderson

Melissa C Anderson, MFT, PhD
Neurobiology

925 The Alameda, Berkeley, CA 94707
melissacandersonmft@gmail.com

PSYCHOSOMATICS: A VIEW FROM A LACANIAN PERSPECTIVE:

By Jeanne Wolff Bernstein, PhD

Jeanne Wolff Bernstein, PhD

Wildpretmarkt 1 /17
1010 Vienna, Austria
jeanne.wolffbernstein@gmail.com
Affiliation: Wiener Arbeitskreis für Psychoanalyse

From the very beginning of psychoanalysis, Freud was captivated by the diagnostic distinction between the Abwehr-Neuropsychosen, (1894) or psychoneuroses of defense, and the Aktualneurosen, the Actual neuroses. The psychoneuroses, like hysteria and obsession, are situated in the psychic field, in the “representational and defensive elaboration of infantile sexuality” (see Verhaege, 2005, 496). Symptoms associated with psychoneuroses carry meaning and are open to interpretation; they are derivatives of memories which are operating unconsciously and are of an infantile sexual nature. The central notion here is that conflicts concerning sexual desires and defenses are operating unconsciously against this inner conflict. In contrast, the actual neuroses which Freud had also defined as “anxiety neurosis, neurasthenia to which he later also added hypochondria” have a sexual origin, but in a completely different way. According to Paul Verhaege, “The typical characteristic of the actual neuroses is the absence of a symptomatic superstructure and its associated representational development with regards to sexuality. Symptoms are limited to somatic phenomena, possessing no additional meaning. The central clinical phenomenon is automatic anxiety.” (2005, 496) The concept of “Aktualneurose” was gradually forgotten, largely because Freud did not believe that the somatic phenomena he observed, were accessible to psychoanalytic treatment. In contrast to the hysterical symptom which speaks and “joins the conversation,” the psychosomatic phenomena cannot be addressed with words, they have no symbolic value and thus were thought to be untreatable by psychoanalytic interpretations. In his dictionary of psychoanalysis, Laplanche also notes this development from Freud’s early notion of Actual Neuroses to current conceptions about psychosomatic phenomena, he writes,

“...it may be remarked that according to Freud’s view of the matter of actual symptoms are chiefly somatic in character, so that the old idea of actual neurosis leads directly to the present-day conception of psychosomatic troubles.” (1973, 11)

With the discovery of narcissism and the dynamics of autoeroticism, the view gradually changed about the inaccessibility to patients suffering

from psychosomatic phenomena, phenomena which are lodged inside the body with no relation to the Other and no symbolic representation. Psychosomatic phenomena gradually came to be seen as healing attempts, often warding off a psychotic breakdown and demanding other analytic approaches than free association. I would like to talk today about Jacques Lacan's theory and understanding of psychosomatic phenomena which takes a somewhat different route than the psychosomatic French school of M'Uzan, Pierre Marty, and from Marilia Aisenstein. Lacan did not write very much about psychosomatics, but what he wrote in his second seminar *The Ego in Freud's Theory* and in *The technique of Psychoanalysis* (1954-1955) and in his eleventh seminar, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (1973) has been ground-breaking and has lead, I believe, to a different comprehension of these patients, suffering from incomprehensible attacks upon their bodies. In my presentation, I will rely on the work of Jean Guir, a disciple of Lacan who developed further Lacan's ideas about psychosomatic phenomena, including those he had voiced at a conference on "Le Symptôme" in Geneva, in 1973. In addition I will also cite the work of Silvia Lippi who discusses Guir's contribution to the dynamics of psychosomatic phenomena.

Let me begin with an early quote by Lacan:

"If psychosomatic reactions suggest something, it is that they are outside the register of neurotic constructs. It isn't an object relation. It is a relation to something which always lies on the edge of our conceptual elaborations, which we are always thinking about, which we sometimes speak of, and, which strictly speaking, we can't grasp, and which is nonetheless there, don't forget it- I talk about the symbolic, about the imaginary, but there is also the real. Psychosomatic reactions are at the level of the real." (1954-1955, 96)

What is the real, you may ask? Lacan defined three different structures, the imaginary, the symbolic and the real, not as mental forces but as registers of human experience that structure the intrapsychic life of the subject. The imaginary register encompasses everything that has to do with

illusions, images, resemblances, similarities and identifications while the symbolic order is the order of language, differentiation, order, rules, names, culture and law. Both registers, whether by images or words are systems of representations which circulate and attempt to articulate the register of the real which is the register of the unsymbolizable, the unrepresentable, the traumatic, the impossible, the order without fissure that always returns to the same place. The real resists language, it cannot be represented by an image, and yet it surrounds and punctures the symbolic and the imaginary at all times. It exerts an effect, a reality which cannot be gripped but which grasps the human subject at and in its core. All three registers are interlocked in a Borromean knot where one register could not exist without the neighboring others. If you cut the knot at any point, it falls apart:

Borromäische Ringe[note]Quelle: Seminar 23, Version Miller, S.



Lacan used this concept of the Borromean knot to illustrate that the registers are interdependent, the imaginary holding together the symbolic and the real, the symbolic holding together the imaginary and the real, and the real mediating between the symbolic and the imaginary with neither register dominating over the other. In a first phase, the body is organized as an imaginary body, structured through the mirror stage which occurs between the 6th and 18th month. The mirror stage is a stage where the infant identifies with the image projected upon the mirror which he mis-takes as his own self-image. The child greets his own image with jubilation- an early

jouissance, because the mirrored image holds out and promises a greater unity and mastery than the child experiences internally at that time. The child sees his own image as a whole, and the experience of the perceived entity of this whole image evokes a tension between the perceived image and the body which is still felt to be left in pieces (*corps morcelé*). The mirror does not simply refer to an actual mirror but also serves as a metaphor for the Other, who initially stands for the m(Other) through whose gaze and words the child comes into being and is delivered to himself. The specular image becomes an identity that is alienating because the child identifies with the view of the Other, the ideal image held out for him that he can only approximate but never meet. In this see-sawing process projective/introjective process, an internal division is established that leads the subject to search for a unity that never existed in the first place, but that has cast an enduring shadow upon his desire to be at one with the Other.

The Other also designates a symbolic place, as Lacan writes, "the law, the language and the unconscious which determine the subject in his relationship with desire" (Roudinesco, 1997, 769). The Other is "the one who sees me, the place of the signifier, unconsciously constituted as so, it is the place where the order of the singular difference is instituted." (Garate, Marinas, 1996, p.123) Thus the domain of the Other is the keeper, the storage house of signifiers which registers language in the body. The imaginary relationship is held in a symbolic framework represented by the symbolic figure of the Father. His position functions as a Third, and through it his installment of the Law that the child can separate from the mother. It is through the name and the "no" of the Father that the child is pulled out of the imaginary register and is given a distinct and separate place in the symbolic order. For the child to move from one position to the other, from being the object of the mother's jouissance to accepting the law of the father, the child must find a credible figure in the symbolic position for whom he can give up the phallic position in which he is placed to fulfill the lack of the mother. Besides finding a respectable figure in the position of the Third, the child must also be released from the mother's desire to

claim her child as her own exclusive property and rule over him. Alternatively the child must also recognize that the maternal figure is not exclusively invested in him but that her desire also goes beyond him and is directed to other objects outside the maternal dyadic orbit. "Something else is bugging her". Hence, if the child does not meet a credible figure in the position of the Third, or is not released from the mother's desire to fulfill her lack, the child risks to remain imprisoned in the universe of the maternal jouissance.

In order to understand more fully the psychosomatic phenomena, I still need to define more clearly Lacan's important concept of jouissance. As is the case with many other concepts in Lacan's theory, jouissance also went through some definitory changes, from being initially the simple jubilation of the infant recognizing his image in the mirror, to the more legalistic use of jouissance which refers to the right to enjoy a thing as opposed to possessing it. Jouissance is an enjoyment that is pursued for its own sake, it is limitless and has no use, yet the human being is hooked to this useless lust for its own sake. In contrast to desire which always implies the search and longing for a lost object, jouissance has no object but instead is fastened to the drive and is in constant pursuit of a pleasure that is not merely joyful but tense and painful at the same time. Jouissance is reminiscent of Freud's concept of the pleasure beyond pleasure from his text "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" (1920) which implies an excess of gratification, readily turning its search of pleasure into an abyss of tension and pain. Jouissance could also be translated as a "thrill" that is often pursued with a great risk either through the use of drugs, or risk-taking, self-harming behaviors, activities and sports and is in this aspect closely connected to Freud's death drive. Jouissance knows no boundaries and no objects, it is not graspable and part of this register of the real which is, as defined before, the order of the unsymbolizable and inassimilable experiences of human life. According to Lacan, "the real emerges at that which is outside language and is inassimilable to symbolization. It is that which resists symbolization absolutely" (S1, 66).

When the subject enters language, something is always left out and left un-translated, which is the order of the real dimension that corresponds to what cannot be said and symbolized. This unsaid may have its roots in the body, it is a part of the body that cannot be symbolized and it is here that the dynamics of the psychosomatic phenomena take root. In contrast to the neurotic subject, separated in and through language and separated from the maternal object, the subject suffering from a psychosomatic phenomenon, stays glued to body of the M/Other, there is no signifying structure, no paternal metaphor that can separate the subject from the object. Lacan identifies psychosomatic phenomena as "headless subjectivation, a subjectivation without a subject, a bone, structure, an outline which represents one side of the topology. The other side is that which is responsible for that fact that a subject, through his relation with the signifier, is a subject-with-holes (sujet troué). These holes came from somewhere" (1973, 184). How does it come to this headless subjectivation? What goes awry for the subject who is eventually subjected to these psychosomatic phenomena?

When the subject become signified through and by the symbolic order through the paternal metaphor, he is to separate from the jouissance of the mother and from the phallic position in which he was placed and is pushed to subject himself to the Law of the Other. In this process the child enters into an early either/or choice between his being or his being accepted and placed into the symbolic order. According to Stephanie Swales, "In the child's encounter with the Other of language, his choosing subjectivity means electing to lose his being. In permitting a signifier to represent him, the subject disappears beneath the bar, losing his being and becoming a subject divided by language" (2012, 39). This process of separation is called "alienation" and it indicates the limit, the bar against the mother's jouissance. It is only after the child's access to the mother is restricted that the child can realize the loss of the mother and can thus form a desire for her. When the subject becomes constituted through and by the Other, the subject fades underneath the signifier (the word spoken by the symbolic father) and allows itself to be represented by a signifier for another

signifier. The subject is represented by a signifier under which it is registered, but this representation is always in relation to other signifiers that are opposed and differentiated from one another. Lacan describes the process of subjectivation in the following way:

"What we find once again here is the constitution of the subject in the field of the Other ...If he is apprehended at his birth in the field of the Other, the characteristic of the subject of the unconscious is that of being, beneath the signifier that develops its networks, its chains and its history, at an indeterminate place." (1973, 208)

The graph of the discourse of the Master may illustrate this process of subjectivation more clearly:

$$\frac{S_1}{\S} \rightarrow \frac{S_2}{a}$$

The master signifier (S_1) is the signifier which comes from the symbolic Other and establishes the first identification with the father who connects the child—now represented by language with another signifier (S_2) which is then linked in turn with the chain of other signifiers. The introduction of the second signifier produces the process of aphanisis, the disappearance of the subject which in turn generates the division of the subject. This significant process of alienation is intricately linked to the process of separation; separare comes from the Latin and also means "to dress oneself", "to defend oneself", but most importantly, "to create/to engender". In other words, the subject can only establish his desire for and by the Other through his own disappearance, since his desire lies in between the first and second signifier. In accepting the name—of the —father, the desire —of

–the mother slides underneath the bar and pushes the now divided subject towards other signifiers through him it is placed into the signifying chain. By losing the desire of the mother, the subject frees himself for other substitutive objects and creates his desire retroactively for the lost object. The loss engenders, creates desire and a metaphoric or metonymic space within which the subject can establish his own desire, freed from the encapsulating jouissance of the mother.

In the case of the psychosomatic phenomenon, there is no aphanisis and no alienation. The process of separation is disrupted and the space between S1 and S2 is jammed. The signifiers are blocked or, as Jean Guir writes, “gele”, which means in French both “frozen” but also “glued to one another”. Guir states that “There is a kind of gelification of the signifier of the body of the subject, a short-circuit that will be responsible for the later bodily lesions. This amalgamation of signifiers in the body is defined by Lacan and later Guir, as a “**holophrase**.” Lacan describes the process as follows:

“I will go so far as to formulate that, when there is no interval between S1 and S2, when the first dyad of signifiers becomes solidified, **holophrased**, we have a model for a whole series of cases—even though, in each case the subject does not occupy the same place.This solidity, this mass seizure of the primitive signifying chain, is what forbids the dialectical opening that is manifested in the phenomenon of belief.” (1973, 237/238).

The massive occupation of the main signifiers, which are now organized without a gap, does not allow for a metaphoric, i.e. substitutive process, but instead produces a holophrase, the expression of a complex of ideas, tied together by a single word. In the psychosomatic phenomena, the injury emerges when the body is taken literally. The injured part of the body is not taken in a metaphoric way, but is taken in the register of the real, excluded from the symbolic register. The distinction between “being a body” and “having a body” is lacking. The metaphoric function remains frozen or glued in the part of the body that was taken as an object of demand by the

Other. The subject, afflicted by the psychosomatic phenomenon, responds to the demand of the Other with the body itself, with a piece of flesh where the lack of being is situated in the real body and is not metaphorically represented by language. The massive presence of the maternal Other and the lack of the paternal metaphor prevents the subject from becoming a separate subject, instead he is subjected to the Other through a sacrifice of a part of his own body. Thus his body remains in pieces (*corps morcele*) and he donates a part of his body as a way to ward off the mother's jouissance and this becomes then the injured, suffering organ. In the case of the psychosomatic phenomenon, language has lost its protective and damming function against the excesses of jouissance, the word becomes a body and a trace of that body causes the early trauma. The subject is not protected from the real, he is subjected to the real and cannot find a representation in the symbolic register, the substitution of S1 and S2 is barred. The subject defends himself against the real with his body since the real was unhinged, not traversed by the symbolic and no longer tied to the imaginary. The cut, usually instituted symbolically through the Name-of-the-Father, is now directly expressed in and by the body of the subject. Body and language have exchanged functions, now it is the body which assumes a symbolic function and language which assumes a bodily function since signifiers can violently and passionately seize upon the body and leave their injurious mark behind.

According to Jean Guir, the rupture and injury in the body functions like a stigmata, rendering visible the impossibility of losing the Other. Not being able to separate from the Other, the subject donates his sick organ to the Other, the ruined, injured part of his body. The injured subject, bequeathing the part of his body to the demand of the Other, unconsciously also enjoys this “donation” since it signals back to the subject an insolvable union with the Other. Guir remarks that many skin pathologies, like acne and psoriasis exhibit an auto-erotic aspect, a joyful suffering (*jouissance*) with that part of the body which causes so much pain and serves as a marker of the unfettered separation from the Other. As we can see, the signifiers are blocked, they do not form links to

other signifiers. The freezing and gelifying effect of the signifiers in the subject's body is responsible for the psychosomatic injury. Instead of assuming its metaphoric or metonymic functioning, the signifier acts like a seal, fixing and freezing the subject in his own injured part. Again, I think the punctured skin serves as a suitable example for the breakdown of the signifying function, as it lays open the permeability, rather than the protective and holding function of the skin. The subject suffering from acne or psoriasis draws and fixes attention upon his skin and in and through this shame that the open wounds exhibit, affirms his own subjectivity. According to Lacan, there is a straight connection between the psychosomatic phenomenon and the proper name: it is now the body in its symbolic function which delivers a name to the subject. The subject attempts to reconstitute itself through his illness, searching in it and through it the function of a prohibition, which is lacking because of the absence of the paternal law. Since the paternal metaphor is missing, the subject glues itself to a part of his body that assumes a regulatory function and institutes a kind of self-imposing law.

According to Jean Guir, the subject suffering from a psychosomatic phenomenon is in search of an identification, an identification other than the frozen link with the maternal Other. Guir suggests that the injured part of the body, the sacrificed, torn up part of the body also functions as an attempt to call for the father and to revive him through the tormenting lesion. The sought-for identification with the father, is of a violent and passionate nature, traversing the tearing of the body and the tearing of the father. Guir links this brutal identification to Freud's theory of the fantasm of "The Child is Being Beaten" (1919): one has to be beaten by the father in order to be loved by him. The subject is "the beaten one" and at the same time the one who beats, while the father is dead and alive at the same time. Love – the shots are a source of pleasure for the subject – so that it may be possible to pass through the transgressions and punishments as well through the destruction of the self and the other. Guir links this idea to the Ursadismus of Freud. With the psychosomatic phenomena, the register of the imaginary bursts, it cannot hold the body together nor contain it

and instead it provokes a tear. In the illness, the body is torn apart, affirms itself, it lives intensely while suffering feverishly at the same time. The body enjoys. "Il jouit" but always in a particular way and always in proximity to the Other even if it may exclude the enjoyment of the Other. The psychosomatic phenomenon is an act and not a symbolization of an unconscious conflict as is the case with the hysterical symptom because the psychosomatic phenomenon modifies the organization of the subject: the body makes itself a name and the subject maintains itself thanks to the tear and the injury in his body.

The question that emerges of course is how to listen to these patients and how to treat them when free association does not work and when the transference is primarily of a narcissistic, self-protective, autoerotic nature. The patient does not let you in, but sticks closely to a discourse of the injured organ. Lacan was of the persuasion that "the body lets itself go and writes something along an order of numbers." (conference in Geneva, 1975) and in order to illustrate that point, he described a female patient who suffered from a facial cancer and narrated her history through a series of dates and numbers. She discovered her illness the same day – 63 years later – as the day when she lost almost all her family, most of whom were gunned down by the Nazis. Her father, who had narrowly escaped death that day, but who died a few years later, was 43 years old at the time, like the friend of her daughter who was also 43 when Lacan's patient discovered her facial cancer diagnosis. In addition, the execution of her family also took place in 1943. Lacan continues to explain that the relationship between the patient and her daughter was very strong: for him, it was not difficult to see that the mother transferred to her daughter's 43 year old boyfriend the function of –the prohibited, in other words, the paternal function which she calls out for in order to continue to live and unfold her desire. This woman confided to Lacan: "I have rediscovered my interest in living only thanks "to my hurt" / "mon mal", before that I had no interest in living." So, it is conceivably the paternal function which allows for this numeration and which introduces the possibility of recounting a traumatic history across dates and numbers rather than words and sentences. Patients,

suffering from psychosomatic phenomena, tend to have a particular way of recounting their lives, often through the enumeration of fixed dates, periods and numbers which write themselves into their body.

In preliminary interviews with patients suffering from psychosomatic phenomena, the discourse keeps close to the facts – like in operational thinking; everything revolves around the moment of diagnosis, medical examinations, surgery, hospital stay, pain, procedures and medication. The body, its discontents, and the disease are constantly reviewed, measured and observed in minute detail. As the psychosomatic phenomenon is not a decipherable symptom in the way of a hysterical symptom, but rather a physical injury or a pathophysiological lesion, the engagement with that patient is also of course of a very different order. Even though many of these patients ask for a psychoanalytic treatment, it may take some time to differentiate whether the patient suffers from a hysterical symptom or from a psychosomatic phenomenon. By noticing their incapacity to reflect upon their symptoms or to put them into question, or to search for different meanings in them, which at first may appear as pure resistance, the analyst gradually comes to realize that he needs to pursue other avenues to speak with these patients afflicted by psychosomatic phenomena. While the more object-relational school relies more on their countertransference reactions in order to bring back into the discourse the patients' warded-off affects and terrors – see Marilia Aisenstein's shocked and angry reaction when she discovers that her patient Claudia had never revealed to her paroxysmal heart beats (conference on Psychosomatics, Lviv, Ukraine 2019)– the Lacanian treatment / analysis stays closer to finding a way to seize upon key signifiers in the patient's discourse which may eventually tie together a story that includes the warded off early, pre-narcissistic trauma that could only be "symbolized" / assembled in a coagulated holophrase.

At this point, I would like to reference also the work of Gabriel Burloux, a psychoanalyst and psychiatrist at the Neurological Hospital in Lyon. Even though Burloux is not attached to any

particular psychoanalytic school, he strikes me as working in a Lacanian manner, closely attuned to working clinically "at the rim of the real." His work with patients suffering from lumbalgics, is particularly noteworthy. He writes,

"The pain these lumbalgics suffer is due to a trauma. The abrupt appearance of the genuine internal foreign body that it becomes in a psychic economy forms a second trauma which prolongs the original one and joins with it. The result seems to be the after-shock of the traumatic period of infancy. Although the lumbalgics are different, their discourse is similar in the sense that four main points are expressed quite early on, sometimes even in the first conversation:

1. The painful, incurable present, which is a complaint.
2. The accident stated to be the cause, despite often being minor, and its circumstances;
3. The recent past, hyperactive, wonderful, but lost;
4. The ancient past of the disastrous beginnings, experienced in distress.

Even if the patients do not connect these four periods, an obscure intuition and a confused feeling of the continuity of their life allows recollection of them. They offer a traumatic model of their pain, in the image of the trauma they believe is responsible: the accident. It is from these points and the signs that emerge from them that what will later become the psychotherapy can be developed. Psychogenic lumbalgics represent a pure form of physical pain because it is free from any associated somatic lesion liable to have caused it.... In failing to find doctors who can understand their pain, the lumbalgic repeats the original situation, the lack of consolation and the same lack of response around them as they experienced in their early childhood. He also repeats the situation of passivity and impotence of the first periods of life when outside help was needed. The small affects they sometimes experience, have found no meaning and have not been symbolized but have left

"amnesiac traces" , susceptible to physical or behavioral and also painful discharges.... Treating these patients involves listening attentively to their endlessly repeated laments, which feed their nostalgia by going over and over their memories. But occasionally new memories are discovered that are valuable through the spark they evoke in the psyche, **tenuous evidence of possible processing. One needs a finely tuned ear!** The lumbalgic repeats everything: the circumstances of the accident, the various pains and his lamentations and regrets for his lost self-worth. (2004, 136-137)

Burloux, elsewhere, asserts how important it is to listen to the minor variations, the hesitations, slips of the tongue and particularly the associations. Burloux's aim is not to cure but to offer the patient a system within which he can live better with his pain. He asserts, "Our work is rarely or never interpretative, but we often construct, offer information and links and facilitate inter-systemic psychic exchanges. Therefore, no furor sanandi. (no furor/ haste to heal) We are aiming for integration of the pain into the patient's psyche." (2004, 225). Burloux's four points of how a painful lesion comes to be, echoes Jean Guir's theory of how a psychosomatic phenomenon unfolds which he traces along three moments:

1. a brutal separation (loss) from a cherished person. The subject submits to this extraction, to this rupture which he cannot assume as his own. (Abandonment/ Helplessness) No mourning can take place.
2. Certain signifiers remind the subject of the trauma of impossible loss.
3. The lesion/ injury/ pain appears. The particular lesion captures the trauma of the initial violent separation from the "cherished Other" and with the fact that this brutal loss cannot be mourned, the original trauma is being commemorated by a kind of painful transgression that pushes beyond the pleasure principle.

In the end, Guir argues that the psychosomatic phenomenon works like an open plea, a trauma

that tries (again and again) to appeal to the Other to be heard and to be seen. Given how difficult it is to treat these patients and to know the origins of their often inexplicable suffering, patients with psychosomatic phenomena are bound to repeat their "early bad and missed encounter" with the Other and to go through their excruciating disappointments again. But now and then with an attuned ear, "in the place", as Lacan writes, " where the unspeakable object is rejected in the real, a word makes itself heard..." (1966, 1977, 183).

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Beautiful Mind

By Michele Randall

Michele Randall, Visual Artist

Website: michelerandallart.com

Instagram: [@michelerandallart](https://www.instagram.com/michelerandallart)

Nothing Speaks

By Stephen Mosblech

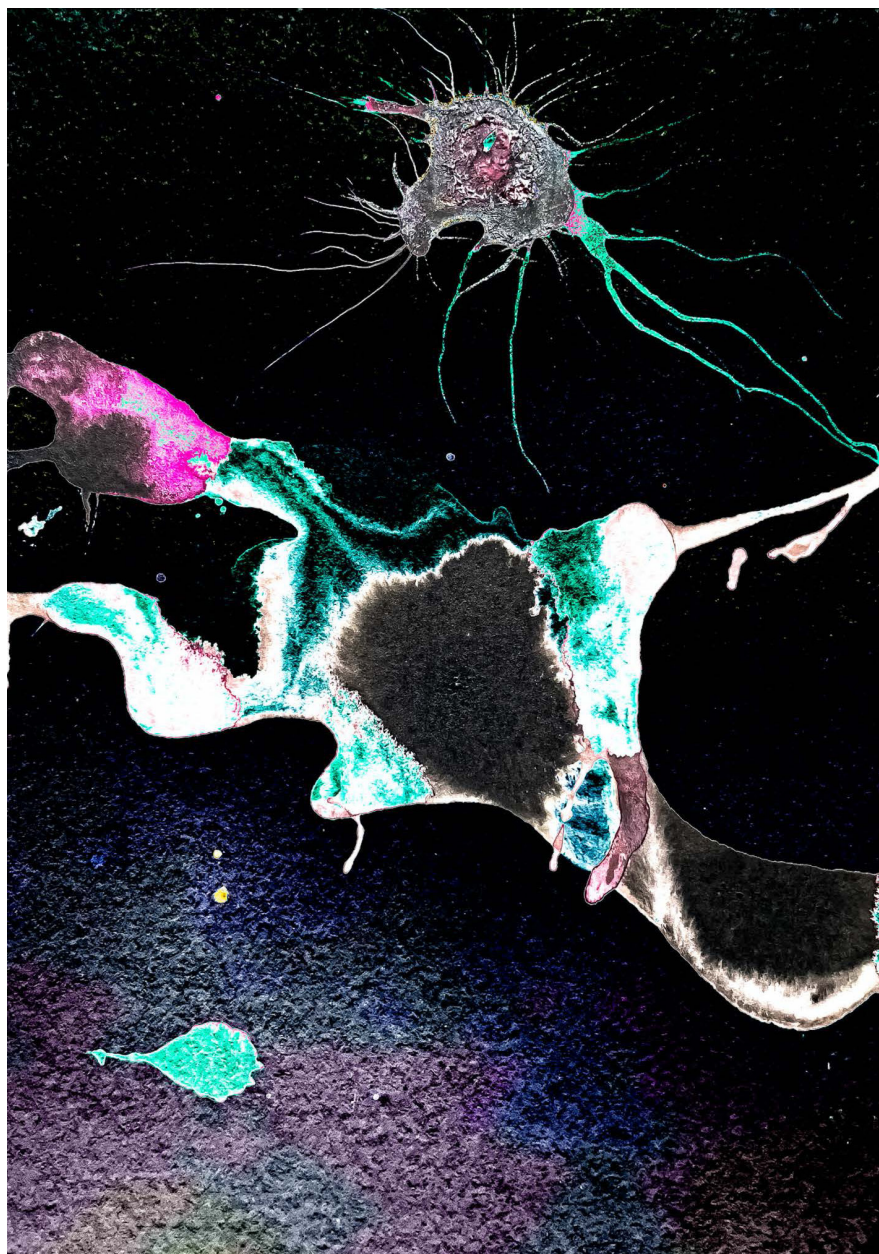
Nothing moves
Nothing thinks
Nothing speaks
The signifier
dangles only
from itself
ceaselessly oblique
In the pearloid-memory-wandering moment
omen through the disjunctures of a life
Forgetting joins the one-less-tentacled past
as tessellated effraction of an unobduring real

Stephen Mosblech, MA, AMFT

Managing Editor, European Journal of
Psychoanalysis

1543 Shattuck Avenue, #201
Berkeley, CA. 94709

stephenmosblech@gmail.com



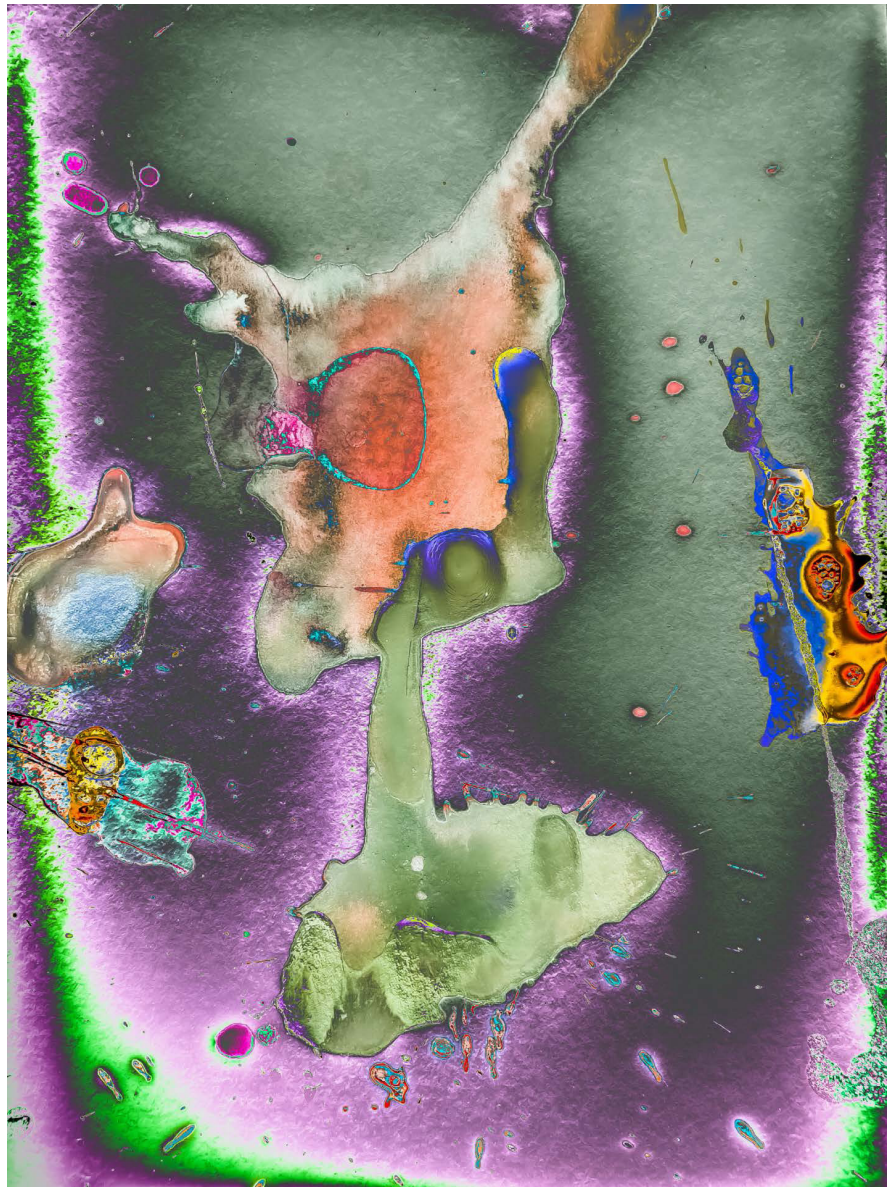
The Unspeakable - 01

By Stephen Mosblech

Stephen Mosblech, MA, AMFT

Managing Editor, European Journal of
Psychoanalysis

1543 Shattuck Avenue, #201
Berkeley, CA. 94709
stephenmosblech@gmail.com



The Unspeakable - 02

By Stephen Mosblech

Stephen Mosblech, MA, AMFT
Managing Editor, European Journal of
Psychoanalysis

1543 Shattuck Avenue, #201
Berkeley, CA. 94709
stephenmosblech@gmail.com

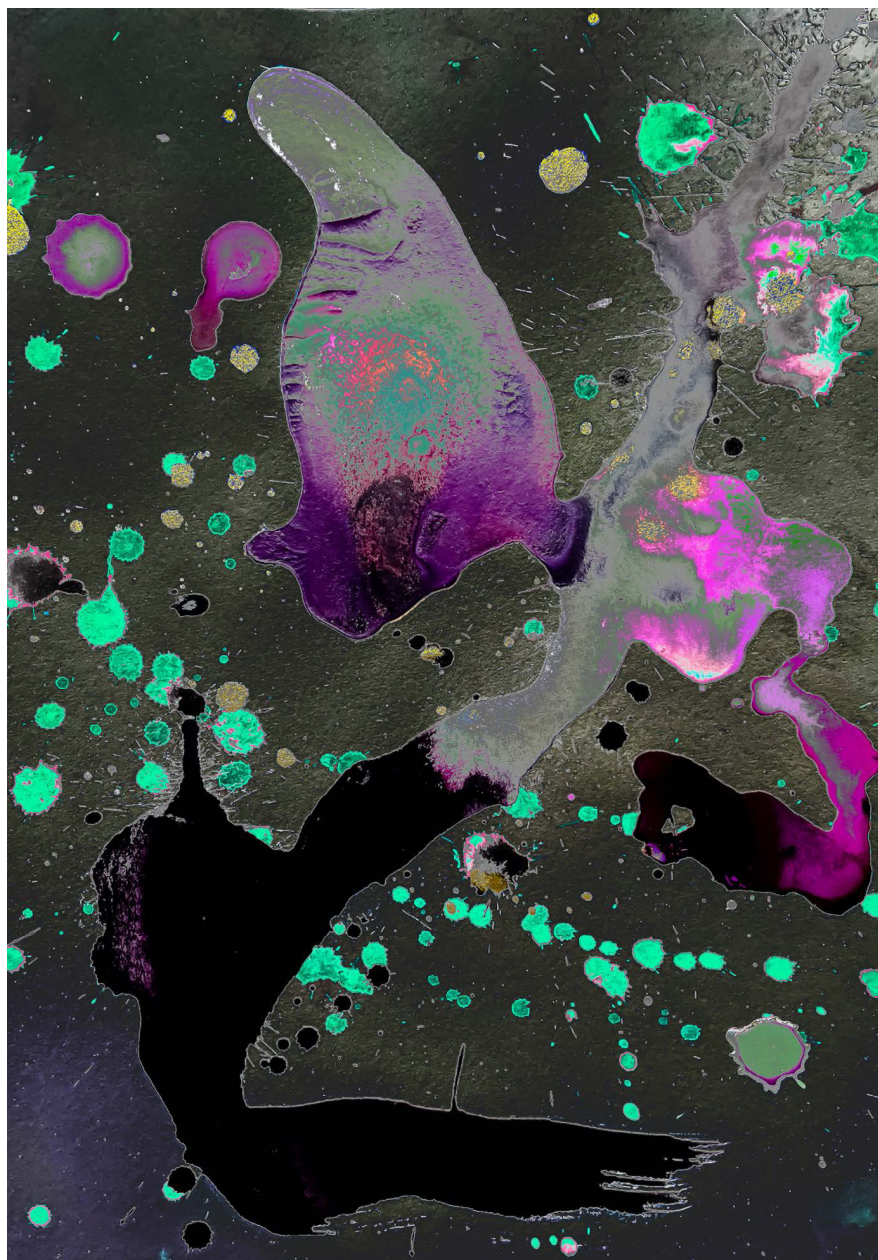


The Unspeakable - 03

By Stephen Mosblech

Stephen Mosblech, MA, AMFT
Managing Editor, European Journal of
Psychoanalysis

1543 Shattuck Avenue, #201
Berkeley, CA. 94709
stephenmosblech@gmail.com



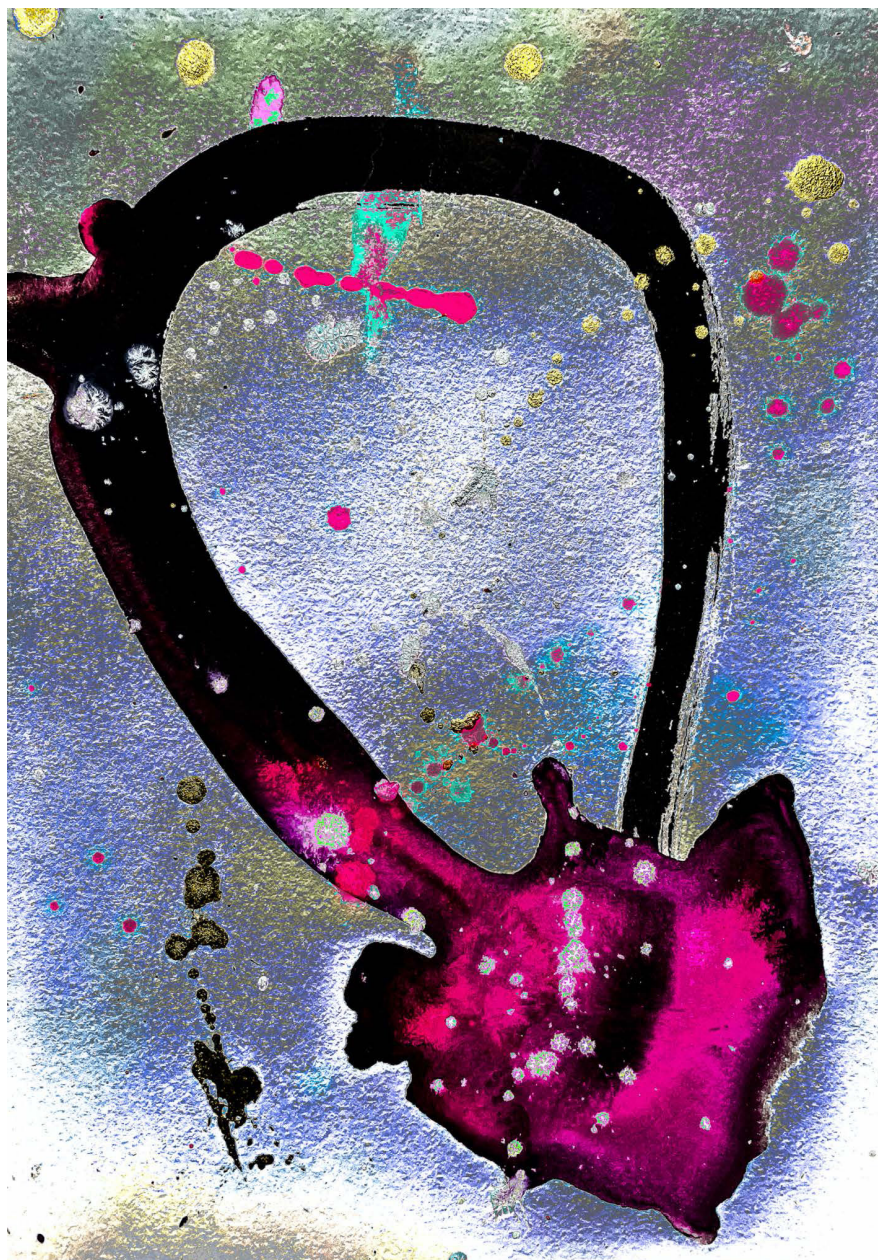
The Unspeakable - 04

By Stephen Mosblech

Stephen Mosblech, MA, AMFT

Managing Editor, European Journal of
Psychoanalysis

1543 Shattuck Avenue, #201
Berkeley, CA. 94709
stephenmosblech@gmail.com



The Unspeakable - 05

By Stephen Mosblech

Stephen Mosblech, MA, AMFT

Managing Editor, European Journal of
Psychoanalysis

1543 Shattuck Avenue, #201
Berkeley, CA. 94709
stephenmosblech@gmail.com

THE SILENT BODY OF PRIMATE SOCIAL INSTINCTS AND ITS METAPHORIZATION BY THE SPEAKING BODY

By Daniel S. Benveniste, PhD

Daniel S. Benveniste, PhD

Honorary Member - American
Psychoanalytic Association

4127 - 205th Ave SE
Sammamish, Washington, 98075
daniel.benveniste@gmail.com
<https://benvenistephd.com/>

In *Totem and Taboo* (1913), Freud integrated clinical observations, libido theory, and his speculations on the prehistoric origins of universal symbolism and the Oedipus complex. He employed the psycho-Lamarckian assumption that the individual inherits cultural memories of repeated events in prehistory. These include a matriarchy preceding a patriarchy, a primal father who kept all the females to himself, the castration or expulsion of young men who threatened the primal father, the killing of the primal father by the fraternal clan, the totemic feast in celebration of and in atonement for the murder of the primal father, and so on. But modern science tells us events of the distant past are not inherited as memories by descendants of the species. What Freud knew, but chose to overlook, is that the Oedipal dynamics that he speculated on in the actions of the primal father and the fraternal clan need not be repeated many times to be remembered as a memory of the species, as they are embedded in the primate social instincts of alpha male dynamics.

Mother-infant observation is a kind of human ethological (study of animal behavior) investigation. The infant's behavior is significantly influenced by primate social instincts or ritualizations. Such instincts continue throughout development, but language acquisition and culture tends to obscure them from direct observation. To attend to the ritualizations of the human animal, it is useful to observe our closest cousins--the chimpanzees, with whom we share 98.6 percent of our DNA. Erik Erikson suggested that the first human ritualization is greeting behavior (oral stage), and indeed much of the primatology literature is dedicated to this behavior. I have suggested that subsequent ritualizations are dominance and submission behavior (anal stage), copulation interference (Oedipal stage), and alpha male dynamics (genital stage; adolescence). Incidentally, copulation interference is when a chimpanzee mother copulates and her child instinctually climbs onto her back and tries to push off the male suitor. Similar behavior is seen in humans when young children intervene between parents who are hugging or kissing. Thus, the silent body of primate social instincts is always serving as a backdrop to the discourse of the metaphor-making speaking body.

While studying the literature on greeting behaviors among chimpanzees, I made a chimpanzee observation of my own. I discovered something that was not there! Chimpanzees do not signal good-bye. They grieve the deaths of loved ones but then just walk away. This is interesting because 100,000 years ago, when a woman and child died, they were intentionally buried. It was the first funeral—the first indication of a good-bye in the archeological record. There is no reason to think that chimpanzees have a concept of a soul that carries on beyond death. With humans, however, intentional burials often include food, tools, amulets, and fetal positioning, all for the purpose of life in the hereafter. By the Upper Paleolithic period (50,000 years ago), there was a mutation that granted us our superior symbolic function, resulting in an explosion of technological and spiritual advancements. The emerging concept of the soul became evident in funeral rituals, ritual cannibalism, amulets containing the souls of the ancestors, paintings carrying the souls of the represented, and female figurines representing the souls of motherhood. This led me to the conclusion that when our primate social instincts were processed through our symbolic function, they facilitated the emergence of technology, spiritual innovations, and a universe of metaphors on the threshold of psychological development and prehistoric cultural evolution.

.....

In brief, I concluded that orality and the Paleolithic period are about oneness. Paleolithic culture was embedded in the unity of nature, just as the infant's psyche is embedded in the unity of the early mother-infant relation. Anal-ity and the Neolithic period are all about two-ness. The toddler separates from the mother, and in the Neolithic period human culture separates from nature by building walls around permanent houses and villages. The phallic stage and the High Neolithic period are about ambition, power, and sexual enlightenment. And the genital stage and the Urban Revolution period mark a new way of seeing the world.

This is highly schematized, but my point is that both the silent body of our primate social instincts and the vicissitudes of our psychosexual development informed our approach to the challenges of our prehistoric cultural evolution and metaphorized our universe in the voice of a speaking body. For more details, see my recently published *Libido, Culture, and Consciousness: Revisiting Freud's Totem and Taboo* (2022). <https://www.amazon.com/Libido-Culture-Consciousness-Revisiting-Freuds-ebook/dp/B0B7XZDDWH>



Lascívia

By Chris Laurito

Chris Laurito, Psychologist & Photographer

Rua Borges Lagoa 1080 com 1103
Vila Clementino
CEP 04038-030
São Paulo - SP

Instagram: [chris.laurito](#)
christianelaurito@hotmail.com

ON CONVICTION

By Eric Eissman

In *Affect, Representation, and Language* (2022), psychoanalyst Howard Levine writes:

I was drawn to psychoanalysis, in part, because of a significant early emotional loss, one that left me feeling restless, incomplete and in search of something. My maternal grandmother, to whom my mother was extremely close, died in the seventh month of my second year....I have developed a strong conviction that this loss precipitated a significant depressive withdrawal on my mother's part that had profound effects on my emotional development...[A]lthough in terms of historical reality, the early loss was that of an object, in an important sense of psychic reality, what I felt to be missing...turned out to be some aspect of my self. (Levine, p. 7; emphases in original)

While Levine's focus in this book is on unrepresented states (e.g., the psychic space occulted by the lost object/lost self), my interest as a non-psychoanalyst is in the state of mind "conviction," – which will lead to a question about psychoanalysts.

Eric Essman, MA

1 Daniel Burnham Court #1112
San Francisco, CA 94109
epessman@gmail.com

Consider the contrast between conviction and the emotional states (akin to curiosity) restless[ness], [feeling of] incomplete[ness], or being in search of something. Incompleteness also suggests desire, associated by Lacan with lack. Can a conviction be communicated so that another person can share it? (Can one have a “persuasion” like one has a conviction?) Further, how does Levine’s conviction contrast with “certainty,” as discussed, for example, by Ludwig Wittgenstein in *On Certainty* (1972), the philosopher’s final published work, which speaks of certainty predicated of often implicit personal knowledge that other beliefs presuppose? For example, Levine’s conviction rests on the certain knowledge that he had a mother.

Typically, one says: “I have a conviction that A” or “I am convinced of A” (call these sentences “C”) where “A” stands for an assertion such as “The unconscious exists”. Having a conviction (like having a belief) is something that one either has or doesn’t: the existence of a conviction is logically independent of the truth or falsity of A. (One can be wrongly convinced, though the likelihood of having a conviction is plausibly dependent upon having evidence for its truth.) Therefore, the truth of C depends upon whether (or not) one has such a state of mind, not on A. On the other hand, if certainty is something that can’t be doubted, the truth value of such sentences as “I am certain of A” must depend upon the truth of A. Being certain, on this analysis, would appear to imply a stronger relation to truth than having a conviction. Another way of saying this is that convictions are psychological, certainties are epistemological. Not all convictions have the force of certainty, although a person cannot be uncertain as to whether she has a conviction. And (like learning), to develop a conviction is to say at some time one didn’t have a conviction but that a later time one had one, presumably based on experience and reflection. Perhaps Levine was not able to discover any other reason for his vocation than the temporary depression of his mother, and so he concluded that that must have been the reason (or the primary reason). Or, that what Levine identifies as his conviction is a plausible construction that sufficiently patches over the lack of an irrefutable explanation that he doesn’t need to explore further. Conviction would seem to be a

place of rest.

Turning to representation, Levine’s primary concern, what are the representations associated with a conviction, such as that the unconscious exists? (Not simply descriptively, as in characterizing synapses, but ontologically, as in Freud’s topographical representation.) One tacitly affirms the unconscious or explicitly asserts that one believes in it because of its explanatory power: positing an unconscious yields involuntary actions or productions (slips of the tongue, dreams) intelligible. So, the representational contents of convictions are the affirmation accompanied by satisfactory explanations – satisfactory in that they’re more than merely probable, even if possibly false. Yet in the text there remains a deep and mysterious narrative gulf between the feeling states restlessness, incompleteness, and the impetus to search and the development of Levine’s conviction (no matter how plausible) that the “significant early emotional loss” grounds his psychoanalytic investigation of unrepresented states. Suppose that he discovered the foundation of his conviction during his personal analysis. So why is it that relatively few analysts describe their recollection of segments of their own analyses, with the same level of detail as the cases they present in supervision or in journal articles? Are unrepresented states inevitable, the negative spaces in any account of oneself, coexisting with convictions?

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"Transformations"

By Dawn Shifreen-Pomerantz
Encaustic on wood with sticks and
cheese cloth. 24x30

**Dawn Shifreen-Pomerantz, MFT,
Psychoanalyst**

3184B Old Tunnel Road,
Lafayette, CA 94549

dawnshifreenpomerantz@gmail.com

Bright Spirit

By Cornelia St John

Cornelia St John

PINC member, Supervising analyst,
Emeritus

5318 Bryant Avenue
Oakland, CA 94618

510/205-3383
Corneliasj@mac.com

One hand gripping the handle of a miniature magnifying glass,
The other holding a plastic cylinder with a mesh lid
Perfectly designed for housing a captured spider
Francie tramps down the steps of the front porch
On her sturdy five-year old legs
Headed for her favorite place,
The small front yard garden.
Noticing the fig tree, with its huge
Shiny paw-shaped leaves, she comments on the finches
Singing and darting around it's curvy branches,
Seeking a ripe fig to poke their beaks into
Which will of course render the juicy fig
Unfit for human consumption.
Oh boy, she says, disappointedly
As she continues her morning rounds
Of the garden
Turning away from the waist high kale and chard,
She stoops down and brushes away the soil
Where she senses she might find a few small potatoes
Stowaways from some compost
that had been worked into the ground
Three tiny fingerlings she pushes into the back pocket
of her jeans
Smelling the white butterfly winged blossoms
Of the Japanese anemone
And then noticing the bees buzzing and poking around
The red tubes of the abutilon
She turns away, the busy little person yielding
the space to the busy honey bees.



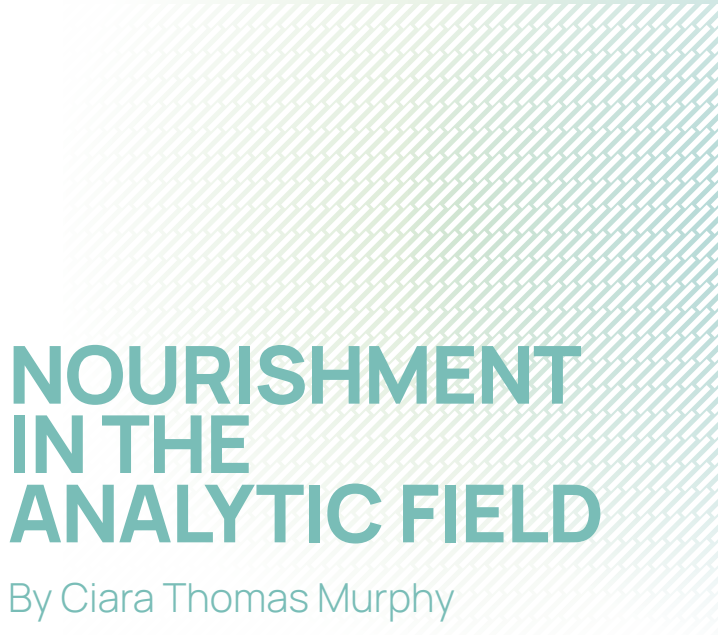
DreamSuccession

By Kara Swedlow

Kara Swedlow, PhD, MFT, Psychoanalyst

5435 College Ave, Suite 202-6
Oakland, CA 94618

kara@karaswedlow.com



NOURISHMENT IN THE ANALYTIC FIELD

By Ciara Thomas Murphy

The pandemic has opened up surprising refractions of embodied life: Working across extended geographies, meeting with each other in our respective homes, there is a blend of new distances and new intimacies. The frame stretches to form a surface for new configurations of creative analytic work, illuminating what is truly essential. Following Neville Symington (2012), psychoanalysis is most fundamentally an act of awareness and becoming, a reflective and relational process of creation that “transforms the inner emotional direction of life whose fruit is a new understanding of the world” (398). At the heart of this process is the capacity to be in relation with oneself and with the world: a simultaneous turning inward and outward. In the pandemic, just to have a body is startling. As we feel vulnerability keenly, psychoanalysis offers a practice of neither using the mind as escape from the body, nor the body as escape from the mind, but inhabiting both in concert with each other. In the context of education, bell hooks (1994) conceptualizes the notion of engaged pedagogy as a practice of freedom, which also poignantly illuminates the values at the heart of psychoanalysis. In liberatory learning, she notes, both teacher and student must be fully present as co-learners:

**Ciara Thomas Murphy, MA, PhD
Student**

School of Education
University of California
One Shields Avenue
Davis, CA 95616
cthomasmurphy@ucdavis.edu

"Engaged pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process. That empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risks" (21).

Taking up an engaged psychoanalytic practice requires a similar capacity to tolerate a new experience of vulnerability and discomfort—or even to appreciate the opportunity to learn more about what one has been doing all along. Whether in a traditional clinical setting or a community-engaged practice (and perhaps the distinction is not so neatly defined in the first place) we may be guided by hooks' vision of a vitality that engages all the senses toward the task of learning as a process of self-actualization—notably, a self that is always a participant in a community. There is healing potential in the imaginative act of theorizing from embodied experience, and a move toward freedom for both self and collective, each ever more present in well-nourished wholeness.

Metaphorically and phenomenologically, this vision involves an inversion of analytic spatiality. Francisco González (2020) proposes the figure of a Klein bottle (a mathematical object that can be imagined as a multidimensional Möbius strip) to illustrate the mutually constitutive relation between subjectivity and intersubjectivity. In this formulation, "psychic life is interstitial, located in the in-between: as a constant and reciprocal modification of internal and external groups, which reiterate and echo each other over time, creating a spiral movement; and as multiple nodes in a vast network of intersubjective chains, as individuals assemble in groups which in turn shape and recreate the individuals and their internal groups, creating a recursive, repeating pattern" (393). In other words, with a nod to Winnicott, the Klein bottle is a conceptual surface that exists and yet cannot exist, offering a container for analytic work while continuously inverting and refracting the relationship between inside and outside. The containing function may be understood as an emergent property of the dynamical relations that constitute the psyche as both self-within-world and world-within-self.

Within a relational field characterized by collective imagination, the psyche comes into being as a Klein bottle that is both container and contained, surfacing the intersubjective nature of both conscious and unconscious experience. In an exploration of the minor gesture in individual and collective psychic life, Erin Manning (2016) writes that this gesture "moves the nonconscious toward the conscious, makes felt the unsayable in the said, brings into resonance field effects otherwise backgrounded in experience" (7). Here analytic action is not located inside a fixed mind, nor even in a fixed relation between one mind and another, but in a dispersed relation of each mind with the whole field. Thus, I suggest, a feature of engaged analytic practice is a refraction of the symbolic function of nourishment. What is said and what is unsayable can both potentially create space for a transformative process that simultaneously feeds and is fed by the "complex compositional field of experience" (23). What is essential is a sense of relaxed freedom, and a vital interplay between the freedom to be silent and the freedom to speak. In this practice, we learn the difference between speaking about freedom and speaking freely.

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All In My Mind

By Michele Randall

Michele Randall, Visual Artist

michelerandallart.com
[@michelerandallart](https://www.instagram.com/michelerandallart)

ENID YOUNG MEMORIAL

By Ivria Spieler

It is inconceivable that Enid is not with us anymore. Enid was a close and dear friend of mine. Our friendship started when she organized a group of analysts to study together and evolved into a close, personal friendship.

Enid's sensitivity made her notice, recognize, and appreciate the beauty, goodness, and depth of the people she encountered. She had a captivating blend of innocence and sophistication, faith in people's basic goodness, coupled with a sober and sharp realism. Her craving for knowledge and understanding made her open to new ideas and was an important aspect of her creative mind. She was eager to experience life to the fullest, in its complexity, depth, and mystery.

Enid's death is a profound loss for me. I felt her deep, gentle, and constant presence in my life. Some moments stand out, like her joy when I shared with her my experiences with my kids and grandchildren or her sorrow when Barry, my husband, died.

I have experienced the gift of her love and will miss her very much.

Ivria Spieler
ivrias@yahoo.com



ReD sLiPpErS

By Terrance McLarnan

Your broom swishes
in rhythm with your heart

whisking away
the very last leaf,
exhausting
your red slippers.

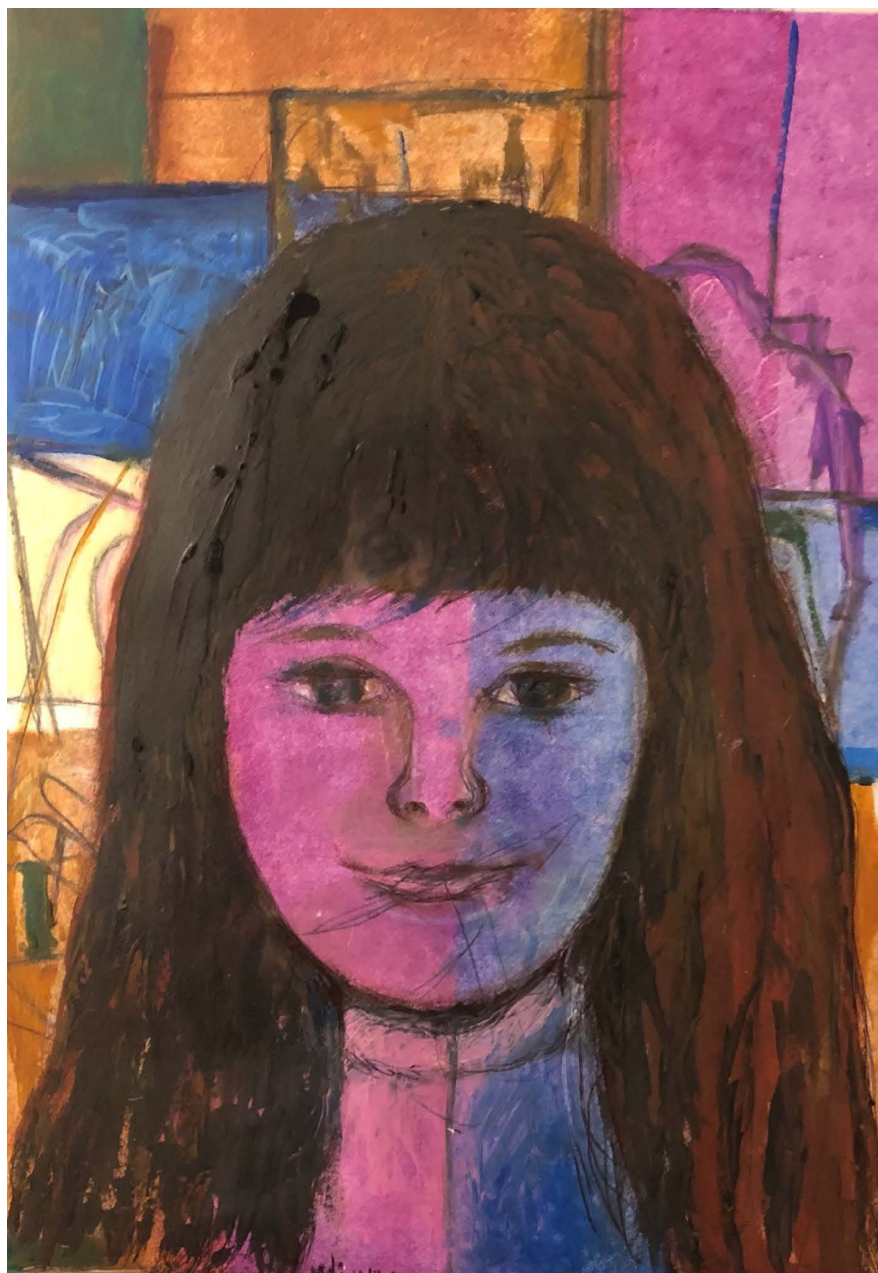
As holy as the pope
they lay
where you left them

waiting your return
their duty,

whatever the call.

Terrance McLarnan, MFT, PsyD

1625 The Alameda Suite 510
San Jose, CA 95126
tsmlarnan@gmail.com



**'portrail of an eight
year old girl'**

By Mali Mann

Oil Feb/19

Mali Mann, MD, FIPA

Training and Supervising Psychoanalyst,
San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis,
Supervisor Child & Adolescent
Psychoanalysis, Chair, Child Abuse Project/
IPA, Clinical Professor, Department of
Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences,
Stanford University Medical Center

1202 Woodview Terrace, Los Altos,
Ca. 94024

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