In this advanced course, we will trace the development of the interpersonal tradition in psychoanalysis and its contributions to contemporary American relational approaches. It will begin chiefly with the work of Harry Stack Sullivan and associated analysts (e.g. Clara Thompson) and then consider the “second generation” of interpersonalists, chiefly the work of Edgar Levenson. The movement of and fundamental contributions of later interpersonalists to the development of what is now considered the American Relational community will be examined. We will study the work of Jay Greenberg and Stephen Mitchell as seminal interpersonal thinkers who helped shape relational thinking. Other founding relationalists who continue to shape this approach will be considered in some depth. This will include the work of Donnel Stern, Phillip Bromberg, Jody Davies, Jessica Benjamin, Lew Aron and Tony Bass.

The class will focus upon the concept of dissociation as a key interpersonal and relational principle, and contrast dissociative models with repressive models of the mind. The related issue of just what it is that we keep out of conscious thought and why will also be examined. In particular, we will consider the metapsychological and clinical implications of repression of endogenous phantasies vs. dissociation of unbearable experiences. Finally, we will study the nature of selfhood, and the ramifications of a singular self vs. multiple self-states, the role of self/other objects, and the nature of subjectivity and relations with others, and forms of relational analytic engagement as we consider these various authors.

We will have ample time to consider actual clinical treatment as a way to apply what at times may be dense theory, as well as developing students’ ability to use clinical experience to critically examine theory. Class time will be reserved for students to present and discuss cases. You should identify at least one case that has challenged you for discussion in depth.

Course Requirements

Much of the learning from this course will derive from the active participation of its members. Therefore, you will be required to have read carefully the assigned material prior to class sessions and be fully prepared to discuss it. This includes going beyond articulating what was read and extending to formulating questions about it. Active participation is defined as quality of participation during and outside class sessions rather than as quantity of class comments. Evidence of depth of understanding the material, the demonstration of the ability to apply it critically to one’s practice, and of contributing to critical inquiry of course participants are required.

Grading

The course will be graded solely on a Pass/Fail basis. Criteria for assignment of grades will be based upon fulfilling the course requirements listed above.

Contact Information

My email address is: alevy@icsw.edu. I am typically available in my office after 1 PM on Fridays (immediately prior to class) and I will also arrange telephone,
Skype or in-person meetings as needed.

**Ethics and Confidentiality**

Students are required to comport themselves in accordance with professional ethics and the policies of ICSW. This extends to respect for colleagues and clients, and the necessity of protecting the confidentiality of all clinical material.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with documented disabilities are strongly encouraged to inform the instructor and also work with him to ensure that learning needs are accommodated. There may be occasions when the instructor will encourage students to identify and document learning differences. Recognizing how learning affects one’s clinical capabilities and the necessity of taking responsibility for addressing learning issues is considered a professional obligation. The instructor shall endeavor to be sensitive to students’ needs within the scope of his role.

**Non-Discrimination**

It is a personal and professional obligation for all participants to affirm difference. All course members are obligated to respect and embrace the diversity of clients and colleagues, and to preserve a learning environment that affirms this ethic. Therefore, active and passive forms of discrimination against marginalized groups, including women, members of GLBTQ communities, racial, ethnic, and religious groups, persons with disabilities, among others will be treated as a serious breach of professional comportment and will not be tolerated.

**I. The Early Interpersonal Tradition**

A. Roots and early theorists (American Pragmatism, Social Science, Sullivan, Ferenczi, and Thompson)
B. Dissociation vs. Repression
C. Detailed Inquiry vs. Free Association
D. Additional Issues

Readings
Levenson, E.A. Harry Stack Sullivan: From interpersonal psychiatry to interpersonal psychoanalysis.
Levenson, E.A. The interpersonal (Sullivanian) model.

**II. Second Generation Interpersonalist Theories**

A. The centrality of the relational field
B. Endogenous phantasies vs. dissociation of actual experience
C. The widening scope of transference and countertransference

Readings
Psychoanalysis.”. Contemp. Psychoanal., 41:21-34.

III. The Identification of the Relational Turn

A. Two person psychology and analytic interaction


IV. Building the Relational Base

A. Multiplicity
B. The Centrality of Enactment


V. The Object in Relational Analysis


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