

The New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis

OBJECT RELATION

NJI S305

Via Zoom

Spring 2025

Instructor: Ana Falcon, MA, LPC

Course Description: This course will start by tracing the shift from the Freudian understanding of human experience as driven by sexual and aggressive drives to its understanding as driven by the need to connect and relate to others. We will focus on the contributions of the first theoreticians emerging from the British School of psychoanalytic thought starting with Klein and following with Fairbairn, Winnicott and Bion. We'll also discuss and introduce more recent approaches to object relations and their influence in contemporary thinkers such as Christopher Bollas and Thomas Ogden. A contemporary read through the lens of object relations of race and violence will be discussed at the end of the cycle.

Course Structure: One hundred and five (105) minutes virtual classes (Zoom) will be held every other week for a total of 8 classes. Candidates should keep their cameras on at all times. Candidates are asked to log in to class from a private space that will guarantee the confidentiality of the information discussed in class. All case material should be properly disguised to protect the identity of the patient.

Candidates will read for each class the material assigned and will write a paragraph or two in response to a reading of their choice. Instructor will collect these writings and will return them the following class with comments.

Classes will revolve around the explanation and discussion of the main concepts in the assigned readings. In every class an assigned candidate will present a clinical vignette to illustrate the material.

Candidates will write a 2-4 pages clinical paper utilizing some of the concepts developed in class. Paper to be submitted on the last day of class.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Candidates will be able to list three theoretical differences between Drive Theory and Object Relations Theory.
- Candidates will be able to list three of the major concepts of Object Relations Theory and will be able to list three ways they may be applied in clinical practice.
- Candidates will be able to list and describe two theoretical contributions to Object Relations Theory by Klein, Fairbairn, Winnicott, Bion, Ogden, and Bollas

Required Text:

Greenberg, J., & Mitchell, S. (1983). *Object relations in psychoanalytic theory*. Harvard University Press. {hereinafter Greenberg, J., & Mitchell, S. (1983)}

Candidates are asked to review the tenets of Drive theory before the beginning of the course.

Required readings:

- * Greenberg, J. & Mitchell, S. (1983). Introduction (pp. 1-5).
- * Greenberg, J. & Mitchell, S. (1983). Chapter 1 (pp. 9-20).
- * Greenberg, J. & Mitchell, S. (1983). Chapter 2 (pp. 21-49)

Class 1. Melanie Klein, the first Object Relation theorist and pioneer in the psychoanalytic study of children's emotional life. Klein's theoretical contributions: paranoid-schizoid position and depressive position, partial objects and whole objects; persecutory anxiety defense mechanisms introjection, projection, projective identification, splitting; envy, gratitude, love, hate and reparation.

Readings:

- * Klein, M (1946). Notes on some schizoid mechanisms. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 27, 99-110.
- * Greenberg, J. & Mitchell, S. (1983). Chapter 5 (pp. 119-150).
- * Winnicott, D.W (1965). A personal view of the Kleinian contributions. (1962). (pp. 171-178) *The maturational processes and the facilitating environment. Studies in the theory of emotional development.* (pp. 171-178). International University Press.
- * Ogden, T. H. (1983). The concept of internal object relations. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 64, 227-241.

Class 2. W. R. D. Fairbairn. Departure from drive theory: Libido as object-seeking and its consequences in understanding motivation, development and psychopathology.

Readings:

- * Greenberg, J. & Mitchell, S. (1983). Chapter 6 (pp. 151-187).
- * Celani, D. P. (2020). Applying Fairbairn's object relations theory to the psychological development of Anders Breivik. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 107, 337-365.

Class 3. W. R. D Fairbairn. Expanding our understanding of Fairbairn's contributions and its impact in psychoanalytic thinking.

Reading:

* Scharff, D.E. & Birtles, E.F. (1997). From instinct to self: The evolution and implications of W.R.D. Fairbairn's theory of object relations. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 78, 1085-1103.

* Song, C.(Director). (2023). *Past Lives*. [Film] A24, CJ ENM, Killer Films, The Searchers N.V., 2AM

CLASS 4. D.W. Winnicott. Concept of Transitional Object and Transitional Phenomena. Good enough mother and optimal maternal failure.

Readings:

* Greenberg, J. & Mitchell, S. (1983). Chapter 7 (pp. 188-219)

* Winnicott, D.W. (1953). Transitional objects and transitional phenomena – A study of the first not me possession. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 34, 89-97.

* Ogden, T. (2021). What alive means on Winnicott's transitional object and transitional phenomena. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 102, 837-856.

Suggested reading:

* Phillips, A. (2021). Winnicott's magic: playing and reality and reality (pp. 9-38). *The cure for psychoanalysis*. Confer Books.

CLASS 5. D.W. Winnicott. Object Relatedness and Object Usage.

Readings:

* Winnicott, D.W. (1969). The use of an object. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 50, 711-716.

* Caldwell, L. (2018). A psychoanalysis of being: An approach to Donal Winnicott. *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, 34, 221-239

Suggested reading:

* Brooks, D. & Antin, P. (2022). Clinical impasse. The infant body and gathering of a soul. In Harrang, C. Tillotson, D. & Winters, N. (Ed). *Body as psychoanalytic object. Clinical Applications from Winnicott to Bion and beyond*. Pp 86-100. Routledge.

* Ogden, T. (2022). Deconstruction reconceived: on Winnicott's "The use of an object and relating through identifications" (pp. 72-97). *Coming to life in the consulting room*. Routledge.

*Ogden, T. (2023). Like the belly of a bird breathing: on Winnicott's "Mind and its relation to the psyche-soma". *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 104, 7-22.

CLASS 6. Wilfred Bion. Concepts of container and contained; Alpha Function and Beta elements. Theory of thinking.

Readings:

* Bion, W. (1962). The psycho-analytic study of thinking. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*. 43,306-310.

Abel-Hirsch, N. (2023). A breakthrough (pp.33-40). *Bion. An introduction*. Phoenix Publishing House.

Suggested Reading:

* Eekhoff, J.K. (2021). No words to say it: Trauma and its aftermath. *The American Journal of Psychoanalysis*. 81, 186-206

* Levine, H.B. (2022). Post-bionian field theory. An illustration. In Levine, H.B (Ed), *The post-bionian field theory of Antonino Ferro. Theoretical analysis and clinical implication*. (pp. 39-45). Routledge.

CLASS 7. Christopher Bollas and Thomas Ogden. Bollas' concept of idiom and Ogden's autistic-contiguous position.

Readings:

* Bollas, C. (1979). The transformational object. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*. 60, 97-107.

* Bollas, C. (1982). On the relation of the self as an object. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*. 6, 347-359.

* Ogden, T. (1989). On the Concept of an Autistic-Contiguous Position. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 70, 127-140.

Suggested Reading:

* Ogden, T. (2022). Toward a revised form of analytic thinking and practice. *Coming to life in the consulting room*. Routledge.

Class 8. A contemporary understanding of race violence through the lens of object relation theory.

* Bass, A. (2021). Murderous racism as normal psychosis: The case of Dylan Roof. *Journal of the American Psychological Association*. 69, 291-313.

*Hinshelwood, R.D. (2023). Populism: The politics of emotions. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*. 43, 110-118.

Suggested reading:

* Holmes, D.E. (2021). "I do not have a racist bone in my body": Psychoanalytic perspectives on what is lost and not mourned in our culture's persistent racism. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 69, 237-258.

*Stoute, B.J. (2021). Black rage: The psychic adaptation to the trauma of oppression. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*. 69, 259-290.

* Wilson, M. (2021). Psychoanalysis, race and racism: introduction to Japa 69/2. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 69, 233-235.

* Grand, S (2023). On hatred: Perpetrator fragments and totalitarian objects. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*. 33, 543-560.

