

# I N T R O D U C T I O N

Psychological defenses are double-edged. They are beautifully designed to keep out danger, information that is too painful, and impingements upon the self. They are even part of the body's immune system, protecting vital organs from the impact of psychological stress. They are remarkably enduring, and agile. On the other hand, defenses can become habitual positions – outdated yet deeply embedded closed-systems, which can exclude positive affect, safe engagement with others and accurate perceptions of reality.

The psychotherapist's role in relating to defenses is therefore delicate. They form a crucial structure within the psyche that may be dangerous to disturb, and yet simultaneously can limit and harm the individual, restricting their relationships and capacity to experience good feelings. We will consider the necessary resistance to the dissolution of these structures, but also the need for this to happen so that good can be allowed inside, and so that the client/patient can experience a level of connection with the therapist and others which is crucial for therapeutic change.

In this series of presentations and panel discussions, psychotherapists from several theoretical schools come together to unravel some of the issues.

## **Clinical Supervision Group with Susie Orbach**

As a development of this project, Susie Orbach will be leading a small supervision group (maximum 12 participants) focused on the integration of theory and practice when working with defenses. The group is open to those who are currently in clinical practice as psychotherapists, and who have attended a minimum of five lectures in this series. The theoretical orientation will be psychoanalytic-relational.

**Day: Monday**

**Dates: 26 January, 2 and 9 February, 1 and 15 March 2004**

**Time: 3.0 - 4.30pm**

**Venue: NW3**

**Fee: £120**

# T H E S P E A K E R S

**Tessa  
Adams**

**Tessa Adams** Phd is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Visiting Fellow of Goldsmiths College, University of London, and Director of Studies of the Society of Psychology and Healing. She is an art theorist and practicing psychoanalytic psychotherapist, holding professional membership with both the Site of Contemporary Psychoanalysis and the Guild of Psychotherapists. She has published widely on psychoanalysis and contemporary art practice. Her most recent book *The Feminine Case: Jung, Aesthetics and Creative Process* offers a collection of papers which debate the role of the feminine from a Jungian perspective.

**Roz  
Carroll**

**Roz Carroll** is a body psychotherapist and member of the Society for Neuro-psychoanalysis. She teaches at the Chiron Centre for Body Psychotherapy and is running a seminar series for Confer on 'Emotion and Embodiment'. Her recent work and writing is focused on the implications of neuroscience for contemporary psychotherapy. [www.thinkbody.co.uk](http://www.thinkbody.co.uk)

**Julia  
Fabricius**

**Julia Fabricius** is a psychoanalyst of adults and children, and a training and supervising analyst of the British Psychoanalytical Society. She works in private practice and from 1996 to 2002 was also Director of the Anna Freud Centre, London. She previously trained as a nurse and worked in nursing for a number of years. She has worked as a psychoanalytic consultant with nurses and has published papers about the psychodynamic aspects of nursing as well as on clinical psychoanalysis.

**Dianne  
Lefevre**

**Dr Dianne Lefevre** worked previously as a physician, a Consultant Psychiatrist and is now as Consultant Psychiatrist in Psychotherapy. She runs a psychotherapy unit at Basildon Hospital where they specialise in the treatment of severe mental illness. In collaboration with Anglia Polytechnic University, she runs an MSc in the Psychodynamics of the Psychoses. She believes that the integration of psychotherapy, including family work, pharmacotherapy, social therapy, educational and nutritional therapies is desirable in the treatment of severe mental illness.

**Susie  
Orbach**

**Susie Orbach's** work as a psychotherapist and writer is centred on the therapy relationship, the construction of femininity and rethinking the relationship between body and mind. She has published extensively on these themes. She was co-founder of the Women's Therapy Centre (London) and the Women's Therapy Centre Institute (New York) and is currently Visiting Professor in the Gender Studies Institute at the London School of Economics. Her recent books are *The Impossibility of Sex, Towards Emotional Literacy* (Virago) and *On Eating* (Penguin).

**Andrew  
Samuels**

**Andrew Samuels** is Professor of Analytical Psychology at the University of Essex, Visiting Professor of Psychoanalytic Studies at Goldsmith's College, University of London, and a Training Analyst of the Society of Analytical Psychology. He works internationally as a political consultant and is interested in exploring the interface of psychotherapy and politics. He was a co-founder of Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility. His many books have been translated into 19 languages and include *The Political Psyche* and *Politics on the Couch: Citizenship and the Internal Life*.

## Anne-Marie Sandler

**Anne-Marie Sandler** was born in Geneva, studied with Jean Piaget and was for a time his assistant. She then came to England and trained in child analysis with Anna Freud, going on to complete the adult training with the British Psychoanalytical Society, where she is a training and supervising analyst. She has been President of the British Psychoanalytical Society, the European Psychoanalytical Federation, and Vice-President of the International Psychoanalytical Association. She was formerly Director of the Anna Freud Centre. Many of her published papers were written in collaboration with her late husband Joseph Sandler. They also collaborated on a book, *Internal Objects Revisited* (1984).

## Valerie Sinason

**Valerie Sinason** is a poet, writer, child psychotherapist, and adult psychoanalyst with the British Psychoanalytical Society. She is currently Director of the Clinic for Dissociative Studies where she specialises in work with abused/abusing and dissociating patients, including those with a learning disability. She has written over 10 books and 60 papers, and lecture nationally and internationally.

## Maggie Turp

**Maggie Turp** began her career in psychology and social work and studied psychoanalysis at the Tavistock Centre and the Institute of Psychotherapy and Social Studies. She is a practising psychotherapist and supervisor and teaches on the MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling with Children and Adolescents at Birkbeck College, London. Her publications include numerous journal papers and two books, the most recent of which is *Hidden Self-Harm: narratives from psychotherapy* (Jessica Kingsley). She welcomes correspondence on [maggieturp@aol.com](mailto:maggieturp@aol.com)

## Kate White

**Kate White** is a member of the Centre for Attachment-based Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (CAPP) where she is a training therapist, supervisor and teacher. Formerly a senior lecturer at South Bank University in the department of Nursing and Community Health Studies, she has used her extensive experience in adult education in her work for the UKCP as chair of the Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Section's Training Standards and Membership Committee. In addition, she has been involved in studying contemporary developments in attachment research and exploring ways to apply these to clinical practice within a relational approach. With this background she has been pioneering, with colleagues at CAPP, an imaginative and innovative approach to the curriculum in psychotherapy education. She is an Advisor to the International Association of Relational Psychoanalysts and Psychotherapists and active member of the London IARPP group.

## Robert Young

**Robert M. Young** was, until his retirement, Professor of Psychotherapy and Psychoanalytic Studies at the University of Sheffield and is Honoured Professor at the Bulgarian Institute of Human Relations. He is the editor of *Free Associations* and the author of many books and articles on human nature, psychoanalysis and philosophy. His writings are on-line at <http://www.human-nature.com>

CONFERR

Presents

# Problematising Defenses

Psychotherapeutic work with  
self-protective but self-defeating  
psychological structures



Monday evenings  
October – December 2003

London

# Booking Form

Please read the booking conditions (see information panel)

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

If Psychotherapist, which orientation/ training \_\_\_\_\_

## I would like to register for the following events:

All evenings

or

A selection of 5 (please tick)

Dr Maggie Turp October 6th

Andrew Samuels October 13th

Anne-Marie Sandler October 27th

Susie Orbach November 3rd

Julia Fabricius November 10th

Tessa Adams November 17th

Roz Carroll & Kate White November 24th

Diane Lefevre December 1st

Sinason & Young December 8th

Susie Orbach's supervision group

I enclose a cheque for £  made payable to Confer

Please deduct £  from card number

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Master Card  Visa  Switch

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Today's Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Cardholder's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:

**Confer, 36a Mildmay Road,  
London N1 4NG**

# Information

**Venue** 5th Floor Lecture Theatre,  
120 Belsize Lane, London NW3

**Dates** 6 October to 8 December 2003

**Times** 8.00pm – 9.30pm approximatley

**Registration** 7.30pm – 8.00pm

## Fees

### If you are paying for yourself

All events .....£180

Members of Confer .....£150

Selection of 5 .....£120

Members of Confer .....£100

### If funded by an organisation:

All 10 events .....£225

Selection of 5 .....£140

Susie Orbach's Supervision group .....£120

**A minimum of 5 events can be booked in advance.**

**Drop in Ticket** A single ticket can be bought on the night for £25 subject to availability

**Parking** Free use of car park at venue

**Tube** Swiss Cottage (Jubilee Line)

**To Book** Please complete and return the attached booking form with payment to

**Confer, 36a Mildmay Road,  
London N1 4NG**

Cheques are made payable to CONFER  
A receipt will be sent to you to confirm your place.

## Booking Conditions

The place you book is for your own use only.

It cannot be transferred to another person or event.

Should you wish to cancel regrettably we cannot give a refund in any circumstances.

Confer reserves the right to alter the programme if a speaker is unable to attend.

## Further Information

Telephone Confer on 020 7254 2323  
email [ryan@confer.demon.co.uk](mailto:ryan@confer.demon.co.uk)  
visit [www.confercpd.com](http://www.confercpd.com)

**Programme Director** Jane Ryan  
**Advisors to Confer** Brett Kahr & Elizabeth Scott

# T H E P R O G R A M M E

6 October:

## **Maggie Turp: Skin-boundaries, Skin defenses**

*"When a baby is born he is in the position of an astronaut who has been shot out into outer space without a space suit.... The predominant terror of the baby is of falling to pieces or liquefying"* Bick (1986)

The physical entity of skin forms a boundary between the individual and the outside world. While separating 'me' from 'not me', it also functions communicatively as the vehicle for the sensation of touch. The concept of a psychological equivalent - 'psychic skin' - offers a fruitful metaphor for considering the boundary between inner and outer worlds of experience and the defenses that come into play when that boundary is poorly established or under threat. The concept of psychic skin also offers a way of thinking about self-harming behaviour, much of which (self-cutting, self-hitting, self-scalding) is located at the site of the skin boundary.

13 October:

## **Andrew Samuels: Ego Defenses and Beyond**

Because there are other kinds of consciousness than ego consciousness, defenses do not only involve the ego. This has implications for clinical practice that we will explore. I will elaborate the theory that 'defenses of the self' refer to protection of the whole organism, managing the experience of *not-me* as toxic. Similarly, I am interested in how therapists can work with the clinical phenomena of 'soul defenses' that block the flowering of an awareness of depth and death, 'body defenses' that mute the intensity of orgasmic and other intense bodily processes, 'spirit defenses' that undermine the transformative potential of religious experience, and 'civic defenses' that mar the fulfillment of the patient's social responsibilities as a citizen.

27 October:

## **Anne-Marie Sandler: A special type of splitting: the rejection of the infantile self**

The ego knows nothing of its own defensive measures, but through the therapeutic endeavour these measures can be studied and their role in the maintenance of the equilibrium of the patient's mental state can be understood. Clinical vignettes will be used to describe this special type of splitting.

**3 November:**

**Susie Orbach: The Problem with the True and False Self Model**

Susie Orbach will propose that there is no such thing as a true self beneath a false self, as Winnicott proposed, which can be uncovered by therapy. Without jettisoning Winnicott's general argument about the development of the false self she suggests, rather, that we often encounter an undeveloped self in the consulting room, which was never received. She will argue that the work of psychotherapy is to find a way to both welcome this undeveloped self and to help the individual integrate what has been learnt in their false-self adaptation.

**10 November:**

**Julia Fabricius: The Dialectics of Repetition**

The repetition tendency is an observable phenomenon in the behavior and psychic life of humans. Freud hypothesised the existence of a 'compulsion to repeat', a concept he revisited and modified, eventually seeing it as a manifestation of an immutable and deadly instinctual force. This presentation will examine the phenomenon, considering its relation to psychic defense, its potentially more creative aspects and the tension between them. Clinical technique in relation to the repetition compulsion will be discussed.

**17 November:**

**Tessa Adams: Superiority and Repudiation**

The rejection of all others lies along this trajectory where the fragile scaffold of self-worth finds its ballast in repudiation. As a defence this double edged sword not only engenders malevolent scrutiny but shields the individual from the responsibilities of intimacy. For intimacy is dangerous. In the clinical setting the hard bargain of this narcissistic dilemma cannot be glossed over, since here is the patient, who, when offered the prospect of real engagement, responds with a surfeit of censorship. But, ironically, we also know from our own histories those times when we have had to 'go it alone' - harnessing the notion of our uniqueness in order to mitigate the fear of an ordinariness that might temper our treasured ambitions. I will explore both the travesty and value of this defensive structure where superiority sanctions negation. The presentation will examine the problematic for the psychotherapist within the context of contemporary concerns and will be illuminated by clinical vignettes.

24 November:

### **Roz Carroll with Kate White – in conversation**

**Roz Carroll** will argue that all defenses are an attempt to master or cut off intensity of feeling. Defenses are resources called upon and maintained out of survival needs, but also out of habit, fear, and dependency. Whilst some are creative, others inhibit the available energy for life, and the courage to engage with the unknown. Re-stimulating engagement, making intensity bearable, and enhancing relatedness and embodiment are central tasks of body psychotherapy. **Kate White** will consider how defenses, patterns of relationships embedded in a social and political context, can be understood from an attachment and relational perspective. In our struggle to negotiate our needs for intimacy and autonomy we find different strategies to regulate emotions aroused in our early attachment relationships. The cycles of rupture and repair in the therapeutic relationship offer new opportunities to find recognition, meaning and greater freedom in intimate attachments.

1 December:

### **Diane Lefevre: Psychosis as a defense against unbearable reality**

Dr Dianne Lefevre, analyst and psychiatrist, who specialises in an integrated therapeutic approach to working with psychotic and hospitalised patients, will propose that psychosis is an ally which protects the patient from unbearable awareness of toxic reality. She will explore how the psychosis becomes an attachment object to which the patient needs access, and how clinical work can move that person towards relationship with others. Other defenses against the unbearableness of being will be considered.

8 December:

### **Robert Young and Valerie Sinason – in conversation**

Professor **Robert Young** will propose that 'Pathological Organisation' is one of the most highly-organised and intractable unconscious defensive systems. It involves a highly-developed pathological narcissism where there is a 'gang in the mind' with whom the patient is in alliance against the therapist and against therapeutic change. The nature and development of this concept in the writings of Rey, Rosenfeld, Steiner and others will be discussed. The concept will be juxtaposed with that of 'borderline personality disorder'. **Valerie Sinason** will unravel the notion of the 'gang in the mind' from the perspective of past traumatic experience and our understanding of certain dissociative processes. She will propose techniques for clinical practice.