



**CONFERR**

A series of lectures

# The Psychodynamics of Self Destruction

psychotherapeutic work  
with people at risk  
of suicide, self-harm, and  
destructive relationships

Monday evenings  
from 10th Jan - March 21st 2005  
8.0pm - 9.30pm

Chairperson: Brett Kahr  
London

## Information

### Venue

120 Belsize Lane, London NW3  
(corner of Fitzjohns Avenue and Belsize Lane)

### Dates

10 January – 21 March 2005

### Times

8.0pm – 9.30pm

### Fees

Complete series: .....£150  
Selection of 5 lectures: .....£110 (or £22 each)  
Single ticket: .....£25

Please note that a minimum of 5 can be booked in advance but that you are welcome to come and pay on the night without pre-booking.

### For current Confer members:

Complete series: .....£120  
Selection of 5 lectures: .....£90 (or £18 each)  
Single ticket: .....£20

Regrettably we are not taking on new members at present.

### Further information

Tel: 01728 689090

Email: [ryan@confer.demon.co.uk](mailto:ryan@confer.demon.co.uk)

Confer, 36a Mildmay Road, London N1 4NG

### Booking Conditions

Refunds of 50% will be given if notice is sent in writing 14 days before the first seminar. We regret that your place is non-transferable and cannot be passed on to another person unless Confer is informed 7 days before the event.

## The Psychodynamics of Self Destruction



## Programme

10 January 2005

### Self-harm: an act of multiplicity and dissociation

#### Adah Sachs

In this paper I will be considering the part of dissociation in acts of self-destruction. I will be suggesting that in every act of self-harm there are at least two participants, who, during the moment that this act takes place experience themselves as quite separate: that the hand that does the hurting does not exactly belong to the person who gets hurt because their sense of self is fragmented – and that this fragmentation, or splitting, or dissociation between parts is the necessary condition for making self harm possible. We shall consider the object relational context for dissociation of this kind and consider what, apart from a difficult history, might lead someone into this pattern of behaviour.

17 January 2005

### Understanding the Pre-Suicidal State of Mind

#### Donald Campbell

Working with suicidal patients inevitably arouses anxieties in the therapist. This presentation aims to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the role and function of the suicidal fantasy that motivates a suicidal act, types of suicidal fantasies, and the role of the internalised father when patients enter a pre-suicidal state of mind.

24 January 2005

### Who's Killing Whom?

#### Dr Rob Hale

This talk will explore the details of suicidal acts, showing how they demonstrate multiple and contradictory unconscious purposes. A typology of suicidal acts will be presented and a schema of the process of the acts. This will lead to a discussion of the psychotherapist's management of threatened suicide, attempted suicide and the aftermath of completed suicide.

31 January 2005

### Suicidality: underlying attachment and object relational patterns

#### Dr Steve Briggs

As the old distinction between self-harm and suicidal behaviour is becoming more blurred, the term 'suicidality' is useful in orientating therapists towards the underlying object relational patterns of adolescents who may be at risk of, or predisposed towards harming or killing themselves. In the clinical setting, suicidality in adolescents generates diverse and distinctive counter-transference experiences. I shall explore the meaning of these in terms of attachment and object relational patterns, drawing on clinical experiences and research that I have undertaken from both psychoanalytic and attachment perspectives. I will present the findings of this research and discuss the implications for psychotherapeutic practice.

7 February 2005

## **Integrating psychoanalytic concepts into the brief treatment of self-mutilating patients**

**Jack Nathan**

This paper attempts to answer the following urgent question: is it possible to bring about psychic change in self-mutilating patients without lengthy, intensive treatment? I will try to show that psychoanalysis provides conceptual frameworks sufficiently robust to answer the question in the affirmative. I will present clinical material that demonstrates how vital it is to understand the primitive projections and the inevitable counter-transferences that emerge in the brief treatment process. It is through the practitioner's capacity to contain these powerful, anxiety-provoking dynamics that the daunting prospect of psychic work becomes possible for the terrified patient.

14 February 2005

## **The Many Faces of Self Harm**

**Dr Maggie Turp**

Is self-directed violence the only kind of self-harm? What do we think about behaviours such as smoking, chronic overworking and reckless driving? How do our assumptions affect our psychotherapeutic work? This talk will introduce a continuum model of self-harm, with the continuum ranging from good self-care at one end of the scale to severe self-harm at the other. We will consider the many different forms that self-harming behaviour can take and the mediating role of culturally accepted self-harming acts/activities in our own lives and in the lives of adolescents.

**21 February 2005**

**Half Term**

28 February 2005

## **Harmful Attachments**

**Valerie Sinason**

Whilst many psychoanalytic psychotherapists are often at their most comfortable dealing with the huge inner universe of internal reality, people at risk in their objective external environments pose particular technical, theoretical and ethical problems. This paper will consider the particular complexity of working with the attachment needs of people who have been severely traumatised – the victims of rape, enduring domestic abuse, prostitution rings, pornography, or ritual crime - when those needs for closeness to a known other compel them to remain involved with people who place them at risk. What are the pitfalls for therapist and client? And what can we learn about the human propensity for reproducing harmful object-relational configurations?

7 March 2005

## Self-Destructive Dynamics in the Couple Relationship

### Su Borsig

This talk will consider the implications of self destructive aspects of intimate relationships. Increasingly psychotherapists are working with issues of conflict and hostility, abusive relationships and various levels of domestic violence either with individual clients or with couples. We will explore ways of understanding some of the factors involved in self-destructive relational paradigms, with particular emphasis on attachment styles, conflict patterns and their implications. Theoretical perspectives will be drawn from adult attachment theory, object relations, systemic concepts and from research on conflict and violence

**Please note there is no presentation on 14 March 2005**


21 March 2005

## Case presentation and live supervision

### Brett Kahr

This evening will be an opportunity to listen to a theoretical discussion on challenging aspects of a colleague's current psychotherapeutic work with someone at risk. The discussion, based on a supervision model, will explore the difficulties faced by both therapist and client as they endeavour to engage in a therapeutic alliance

## The Psychodynamics of Self Destruction



## Speakers

### Su Borsig

Su Borsig is an integrative psychotherapist, trainer and supervisor working in private practice who has specialised in working with couples. Since 1995 she has worked as a trainer for One Plus One Marriage and the Partnership Research charity, training health professionals in primary care. She is particularly interested in the incorporation of research and evidence-based approaches into psychotherapeutic practice. She developed her own training in couples work in 1996 and has delivered training workshops and seminars at conferences and to different organisations both here and abroad. She is also a trainer at Relate. Her main interest is working with couple and family issues and promoting constructive exchange across therapy disciplines and related fields.

### Dr Stephen Briggs

Dr Stephen Briggs is a Senior Clinical Lecturer in Social Work and Vice Dean in the Adolescent Department of the Tavistock Clinic. He is the author of two books: *Growth and Risk in Infancy* (Jessica Kingsley 1997) and *Working with Adolescents: A Contemporary Psychodynamic Approach* (Palgrave 2002). Recent research papers include (with John Wright and Johanna Behringer) 'Attachment and the body in suicidal adolescents' (Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, forthcoming).

### Donald Campbell

Donald Campbell is a child, adolescent and adult training analyst, past President of the British Psychoanalytical Society and currently Secretary General of the International Psychoanalytical Association. He is a former Chair of the Portman Clinic in London and has published on such subjects as violence, suicide, child sexual abuse, fetishism and adolescence.

### Dr Rob Hale

Dr Rob Hale is a psychoanalyst and is currently Consultant Psychotherapist at the Portman Clinic, London. His interest in suicide started at St Mary's Hospital Paddington where he carried out a five year research project on those who had attempted suicide. During this time he saw over 1000 people for assessment and took a number into treatment. His interest in acting out took him to the Portman Clinic, where he has been since, with a short spell of six years at the Tavistock where he was the Postgraduate Dean. His current interest is the impact of the psychopathic mind on an institution.

### Brett Kahr

Brett Kahr is Senior Clinical Research Fellow in Psychotherapy and Mental Health at the Centre for Child Mental Health in London, and the Winnicott Clinic Senior Research Fellow in Psychotherapy at the Winnicott Clinic of Psychotherapy. He is also Visiting Clinician at the Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships, and Senior Lecturer in Psychotherapy in the School of Psychotherapy and Counselling at Regent's College, London. He is the author of several books including *D.W. Winnicott: A biographical Portrait*, which won the Gradiva Prize for Biography, as well as books on infant mental health, exhibitionism, and forensic psychotherapy. He is the Series Editor of the *Forensic Psychotherapy Monograph Series* for Karnac Books, and most recently, he has been appointed as the Resident Psychotherapist on BBC Radio 2, hosting the BBC campaign "Life 2 Live".

## Jack Nathan

Jack Nathan is Consultant Adult Psychotherapist in a self-harm out-patients clinic at the Maudsley Hospital, where he has worked since 1997. Formerly a social worker, he trained as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist at the London Centre for Psychotherapy. He is interested in applying psychoanalytic concepts such as transference and countertransference to short-term NHS treatment, and using psychodynamic ideas to help patients to think about their way of functioning or dysfunctioning. He is author of *In Depth Work with Patients who Self Harm: doing the impossible?* (in *Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*, June 2004, Vol 18, 2)

## Adah Sachs

Adah Sachs is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist. She has worked for many years at Huntercombe Manor, a specialist psychiatric hospital for young people, and has extensive experience of working with severe self harm. She is currently working in private practice and for the Clinic for Dissociative Studies, as well as teaching and lecturing on self harm and dissociation.

## Valerie Sinason

Valerie Sinason is a child and adult psychotherapist and an adult psychoanalyst. She is on the UKCP and BCP registers. She is Director of the Clinic for Dissociative Studies and a Consultant Research psychotherapist at St Georges Hospital Medical School Psychiatry of Disability Department. She is a poet and writer and has published 11 books and over 70 papers mainly on learning disability and abuse. Her latest book *Attachment, Trauma and Multiplicity* is published by Routledge and her last poetry collection *Nightshift* was published by Karnac.

## Dr. Maggie Turp

Dr. Maggie Turp is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist and supervisor in private practice. She teaches on the MSc in Psychodynamic Counselling with Children and Adolescents at Birkbeck College, London. Since 2002, she has run training workshops for counsellors and psychotherapists, which aim to help practitioners think about and work with the physical expression of psychological distress generally, and self-harming behaviour in particular. She is a member of the Editorial Boards of the journals *'Psychodynamic Practice'* and *'Infant Observation'*. Her publications include several journal papers and two books, *Psychosomatic Health: the body and the word* (Palgrave) and *Hidden Self-Harm: narratives from psychotherapy* (Jessica Kingsley). She welcomes correspondence at [maggieturp@aol.com](mailto:maggieturp@aol.com)



# Booking Form

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

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Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Orientation (if psychotherapist) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive Confer's bulletin by email

### I am booking for:

The complete series

Or

a selection of sessions (A minimum of five can be pre-booked.  
You can buy a single ticket on the night.)

10 January	Adah Sachs	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 January	Rob Hale	<input type="checkbox"/>
24 January	Donald Campbell	<input type="checkbox"/>
31 January	Steve Briggs	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 February	Jack Nathan	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 February	Maggie Turp	<input type="checkbox"/>
28 February	Valerie Sinason	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 March	Su Borsig	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 March	Brett Kahr	<input type="checkbox"/>

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