

San Diego Psychoanalytic Center Newsletter  
October 2014 • Vol 3

[View it in your browser.](#)



## Announcements

### SDPC Members Meeting

An SDPC members meeting was held on 10/10/14. Members described their clinical practices and other professional activities. It was noted that some insurance plans no longer require utilization review of mental health treatment, and at least one plan covers 4 times weekly psychoanalysis.

Members will soon receive notice from the Board of Directors about an SDPC fundraising campaign.



---

---

## SDPC Member Spotlight

### **Heline Mirzakhania, Ph.D.**

Student, SDPC Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Program



**Hometown:** Tehran, Iran

#### **What was your pathway toward entering the mental health field?**

I have always been intrigued with the human brain and human behavior. I pursued a doctorate degree in clinical psychology with the aim to become a researcher and explore the mechanisms underlying human behavior. In preparation for my graduate degree I completed several fellowships through which I was introduced to individuals suffering from severe mental illness. While initially my interests were restricted to conducting research understanding the etiology of mental illness, I became more and more interested in its treatment. I came to realize that I can make an important contribution to each individual's well being as a clinician, which in turn is highly gratifying at a personal level.

**And what drew you to psychoanalysis/psychoanalytic psychotherapy?**

I was first introduced to psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychotherapy during my internship year at Yale University. Until then, I knew of psychoanalysis and associated the field only with Freud's theories that I believed, in my limited knowledge, could benefit a very small number of individuals. My experiences as an intern exposed me to psychoanalytic thinking and the applicability of psychoanalytic psychotherapy to different patient populations. Even that small glimpse during my intern year allowed me to recognize that compared to other approaches, psychoanalytic psychotherapy is a better match when it comes to addressing the complexity of human thought, behavior and relationships.

**Tell us about your educational experience thus far at SDPC.**

Every single event, seminar or course at SDPC has added to my clinical knowledge and skill set. I am grateful to the instructors who not only are incredibly knowledgeable but also highly motivated in sharing their knowledge and experience with us. Being able to apply the theoretical knowledge from our readings to our cases has helped me improve my understanding of my patients and aided in treatment planning. I also highly enjoy discussing cases and learning the many different ways one can conceptualize the same case.

**How has your training in psychoanalysis or psychoanalytic psychotherapy affected a) your practice, and b) your professional development? Other areas of life?**

This training has deepened my understanding on how people relate to others and helped me gain a new perspective on what motivates our behavior. I incorporate these insights into my clinical work with my patients. On a professional development level, this training has introduced me to a large number of peers and added to my support system. Even on a personal level, this training and the associated psychotherapy has increased my understanding of myself and how I see others.

**How else have you applied your analytic knowledge?**

As a psychologist at UC San Diego I incorporate my acquired knowledge in my clinical work whenever appropriate.

**What is something very few people know about you?**

I occasionally paint and love to go to art galleries.

**Tell us about your practice and who you are most interested in working**

**with.**

In my private practice I work with adolescents and young adults who struggle with severe anxiety and depression. I also see individuals who are at cross-roads in their lives and need to gain a better understanding of themselves in order to live more satisfying lives. As a psychologist at UC San Diego I see patients in the very early phases of psychosis with the aim to help them improve their everyday functioning.

**Where is your practice, and how can potential patients contact you?**

My private practice is located at 2645 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103. It is in the Banker's Hill area of San Diego.

[Drmirzakhania@gmail.com](mailto:Drmirzakhania@gmail.com) or phone: (858) 242 9330

For information about the UC San Diego Early Psychosis Treatment Center, please email: [care@ucsd.edu](mailto:care@ucsd.edu)

## Member Publications

**"Silence As the Voice of Trauma"**

**by Maria Ritter, Ph.D.**

The American Journal of Psychoanalysis, 2014, 74, (176–194)

Abstract: "Silence is a key to the unspoken world of the patient. Rather than interpreting silence as a defensive maneuver, the analyst may understand this disruption as a royal road to the patient's traumatic experiences."

"The author proposes to recognize traumatic silences in the analytic process and the transference as a re-experiencing of past, unpredictable traumatic affective states and memories."

"Silences in this context are both a repeat of a disconnecting experience as well as a manifestation of a silencing identification with the original silencer. The clinical material illustrates effects of a German mother's World War II (WWII) personal traumata and collective shame-based silence on her daughter's self and good object development."

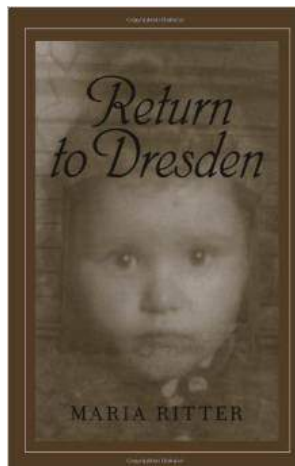
"In the daughter's analysis, the patient and the analyst, who herself experienced similar WWII traumata, face the pain of trauma recovery and un-silencing. The author suggests that the deadening effect of past traumata may

be reversed by an analytic process of re-memembering and re-speaking for both the patient and analyst. This allows for a more transparent, subjective experience in the transference and a verbal integration of ego functions."

Dr. Ritter is also the author of

[Return to Dresden](#)

[Maria Ritter, Ph.D.](#)




---

## ***The Psychiatric Witness in Court: What Mental Health Professionals Need to Know***

**by Calvin Colarusso, MD, Rowman & LittleField, New York, October, 2014.**

The book is a practical guide for mental health professionals who wish to serve as expert witnesses or are called upon to participate in the legal process or give depositions regarding their patients.

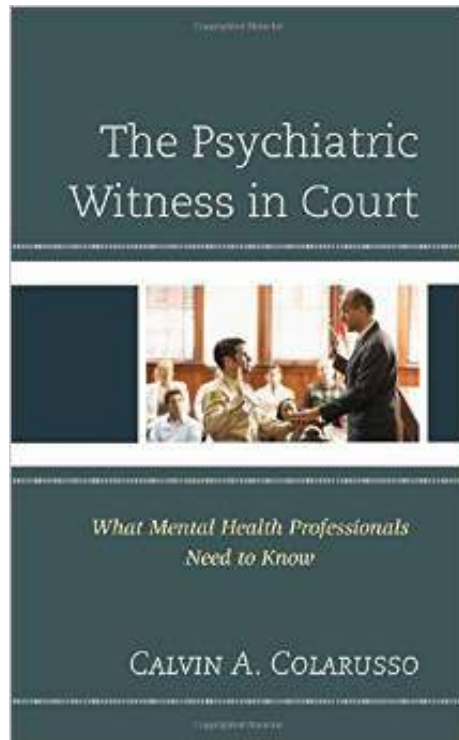
"Calvin A. Colarusso, who has written about the devastating impact of childhood sexual abuse, now turns his attention to the art and science of being a psychiatric witness in the legal system. With the help of lucid vignettes and a step-by-step manner, Colarusso dispels misconceptions regarding the courtroom and guides us through the labyrinthine process of cross examination in the court. He delineates the stands one needs to take in order to be comprehensible, even handed, and just under such circumstances. Since any and all of us can be called to testify on behalf of our patients, Colarusso's book is of immense help!" Salman Akhtar, M.D., Chairman, Department of Psychiatry, Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, Pa; Training and Supervising Analyst, Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia.

"Colarusso is a Renaissance Man--physician, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, author, teacher and citizen of the world. This book will become a classic in

forensic psychiatry. From the psychoanalytic couch to courtroom combat, he is a master." Reid Meloy, PhD, ABPP, University of California, San Diego, San Diego Center for Psychoanalysis

**Calvin Colarusso,**

**MD**




---

## **How Talking Cures: Revealing Freud's Contributions to All Psychotherapies** by Lee Jaffe, Ph.D.

From Dr. Jaffe:  
"Dear Colleagues,

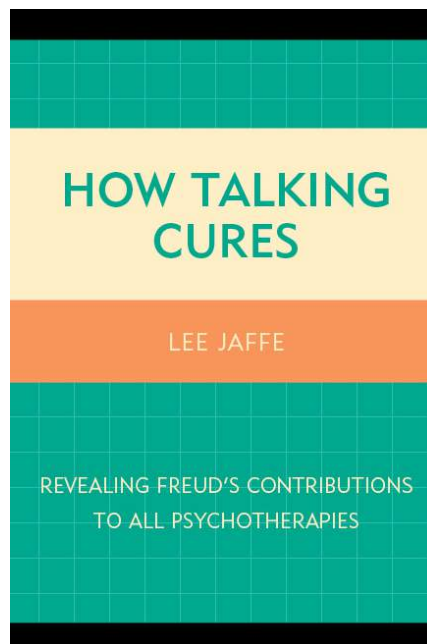
I want to announce the publication of my book *How Talking Cures: Revealing Freud's Contributions to All Psychotherapies*, which is now available on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com). I particularly want to thank everyone in our community who continue to teach me and stimulate my thinking, making the book possible. Here's a brief description of the book...

Sigmund Freud repeatedly revised his understanding of how our minds work, how to understand mental illness, and how to relieve emotional, psychological suffering. With each revision, however, he did not methodically integrate previous ideas with newer ones. In *How Talking Cures: Revealing Freud's Contributions to All Psychotherapies*, a careful review of his concepts at each stage of his thinking reveals six different ways that talking cures—six distinct

generic modes of therapeutic action by which all present-day psychotherapies work. Lee Jaffe demonstrates how these therapeutic actions can link treatment recommendations to individual diagnoses, and how they function during treatment itself. Different views of how psychoanalytic treatments work are analyzed according to their emphasis or de-emphasis of these six modes of therapeutic action. As a result, comparisons of all approaches to talking cures, and decisions about the choice of treatment for a given patient can be grounded in an understanding of the essential ways that each therapeutic procedure works, rather than an allegiance to what providers happened to be taught during their training.

again my thanks...Lee Jaffe"

### Lee Jaffe, Ph.D.



## SDPC Educational Events

### Bion's Discovery of Alpha Function: Changes in Psychoanalytic Theory and Technique

Guest Presenter: Lawrence Brown, Ph.D.

When: Friday, October 17, 2014 - 7:30-9:30 p.m. (7:00 – registration/wine and cheese)

Where: SDPC



Fee: Members free, non-members \$25, students \$15

CEUs: 2 hours credit

**Lawrence Brown** will discuss Bion's formulation of the concept of alpha function, which the author views as a function of the unconscious ego responsible for the transformation of raw emotional experience into symbolic thinking. Bion's traumatic experiences in World War I gave him painful insights into the factors that impede rational thought, and his psychoanalytic work with psychotic patients in the 1950s helped him to understand the nature of disordered thought. He expanded on Freud's theory of dreaming and posited the notion of unconscious waking thought that proposes we are constantly engaged in a process of dreaming while awake and asleep. The clinical implications of this model are discussed, and clinical material from the analysis of an adolescent female is offered to illustrate these issues.

**Lawrence Brown** is a graduate of the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute (BPSI) in both child and adult psychoanalysis and is a supervising child analyst there. He is on the faculty of BPSI as well as the Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis. He is also a Clinical Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. He has been on the North American Editorial Board of the International Journal of Psychoanalysis and is currently on the Editorial Board of Psychoanalytic Inquiry. He was also Co-chair of the Bion in Boston 2009 international conference. His book, *Intersubjective Processes and the Unconscious: An Integration of Freudian, Kleinian and Bionian Perspectives*, was published in the New Library of Psychoanalysis series by Routledge Press in early 2011 and another book, co-edited with Dr. Howard Levine, *Growth and Turbulence in the Container/Contained*, was recently published by Routledge. Dr. Brown has published papers on the Oedipus complex, trauma, countertransference dreams, and other topics.

**Educational Objectives: At the end of this presentation, participants should be able to:**

1. Describe the important clinical benefits of promoting alpha function in patients.
2. Employ clinical techniques designed to facilitate alpha functioning.
3. Recognize the absence of alpha functioning and differentiate it from phenomena involving primarily intra psychic conflict.
4. Show how an understanding of Bion's alpha function theory can help to make clinical distinctions between patients of different cultural/language backgrounds who are suffering the effects of trauma.

**RSVP:** [sdpc.michelle@gmail.com](mailto:sdpc.michelle@gmail.com)





## FIRST ANNUAL SDPC WRITING SYMPOSIUM

*CALL FOR PROPOSALS Deadline Extended*

**Writing about the Difficult Character in Psychoanalysis  
and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy**

**Plenary Speaker:** Reid Meloy, Ph.D.

**Date of Symposium:** May 16, 2015; 8.30-4

**Proposal Submission Deadline January 5, 2015**

**Cost of Symposium:** CEU credit

**Instructors:**

Harry Polkinhorn, Ph.D.

Caroline de Pottél, Ph.D.

**Possible areas for exploration:**

How can clinical writing be used to formulate countertransferences to difficult patients?

What are the pitfalls and advantages of reliance on vague diagnostic labels in writing about difficult cases?

What can metaphor and symbolic imagery contribute to articulating an understanding of mutative action with the difficult patient?

How does narrative structure influence diagnostic formulation in reports of difficult patients?

In what ways do the conventions of story-telling (character, plot, descriptions of scenes or persons, etc.) overlap with case-report writing practices, with reference to writing about difficult patients?



Théodore Géricault, Kleptomaniac, 1822  
from Portraits of the Insane

**Symposium Concept and Presentations:**

“Writing about the Difficult Character” is conceived as a series of open-ended, collegial discussions among those with an interest in deepening their understanding of demanding patients using writing in new ways. Since the symposium will not feature the presentation of polished written arguments but will facilitate a more informal approach, SDPC encourages full participation (presenters and audience). A range of writing styles will be invited, from standard clinical case reports to the personal essay, memoir, and so on. Sufficient time will be allocated for open discussion in addition to presentation.

**Link to SDPC Website for additional details about proposal submission and Symposium registration**

4455 Morena Boulevard, Suite 202, San Diego, California 92117

Telephone 858-454-3102 Facsimile 858-454-0075

Email: [sdpc.michelle@gmail.com](mailto:sdpc.michelle@gmail.com)

Website: [www.sdpc.org](http://www.sdpc.org)

## Community Events

## 2014 Western Regional Child Psychoanalytic Conference October 25th and 26th, 2014

San Diego Psychoanalytic Center  
4455 Morena Blvd, Suite 202,  
San Diego, CA 92117

Agenda:

### **Saturday, October 25, 2014**

8:30am - 9:30am

Registration and Continental Breakfast

9:30am - 12 noon

Presentation and discussion of the psychoanalysis  
of a selectively mute 6-year-old boy

12pm - 1pm

Lunch Provided

1pm - 3pm

Presentation and discussion of an  
adolescent psychoanalytic psychotherapy case

4pm - 6pm

Museums in Balboa Park (Optional)

6:30pm

Dinner in the Sala del Rey Room at El Prado in Balboa Park (Optional) (This  
dinner is an additional \$100.00 per attendee)

### **Sunday, October 26, 2014**

8:30am - 9:00am

Continental Breakfast

9am - 11:30AM

Presentation and discussion of the psychoanalysis of a nine year old girl  
who was enuretic and dealing with issues of separation-individuation

Registration will be \$100.00 for the conference, \$50.00 for  
graduate students, residents, analytic candidates, and  
students in psychoanalytic psychotherapy programs

Dinner in the Sala del Rey room at El Prado in Balboa Park is  
optional and an additional \$100.00 per attendee.

To register or for details on the program : Call or e-mail Michelle Spencer,  
Administrator, San Diego Psychoanalytic Center 858-454-3102

[sdpc.michelle@gmail.com](mailto:sdpc.michelle@gmail.com)

---

## **Pregnancy in the Clinical Consulting Room**

**Presented by:** Emilie Sfregola, Psy.D., Joanne Callan, Ph.D. Sylvie  
Shuttleworth, Ph.D., & Thomas McGee, Ph.D.

**Date:** 10/18/14

**Time:** 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Location:** San Diego Psychological Association

**CE:**3

The majority of the literature describes pregnancy as a normal developmental crisis that involves psychological and emotional changes for pregnant women. While many female therapists practice throughout their childbearing years, there is little research on the impact this profound experience has on their clinical work with patients. This aspect of the therapists personal and sexual life is inevitably disclosed to her patients and has a direct effect not only on the structure of treatment but on the clinical issues that are elicited and/or intensified in the therapeutic process. This presentation will address the therapists pregnancy in terms of clinical, practical, and ethical considerations through the discussion of case material from presenters clinical work with patients during pregnancy as well as from supervision of pregnant supervises.

<http://www.viethconsulting.com/Calendar/moreinfo.php?eventid=30773>

## **Plenary Presentation - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24**

### **Bion, Beckett and Poetry**

Annie Reiner, Ph.D., Psy.D., LCSW | [anniereine@aol.com](mailto:anniereine@aol.com)

Bion spoke often about art and poetry as a means to experience the infinite reality and ineffable truth he called 'O.' The first Plenary Presentation on Friday aims to evoke this experience, and other psychoanalytic ideas, through more emotional languages of poetry and drama. Dr. Annie Reiner, a poet and training analyst at The Psychoanalytic Center of California (PCC), will be joined by two award winning actors, Barbara Bain and Alan Mandell, in readings of poetry and drama.

The theme of this conference, "psychOanalysis," is Bion's enigmatic concept of O, representing absolute truth or an essential reality beyond the capacity for rational understanding, and this presentation is designed to give participants an emotional experience of many of the ideas about primitive mental states which will be addressed. The presentation will serve as stimulus for the smaller group discussions which follow. Bion's relationship to poetry was central to his life, for he felt that both poetry and the unconscious had the capacity to stimulate awe in its readers. We therefore begin with recitations of poetry, which can create forms which are expressions or transformations of O. This will be followed by a performance of an abridged short story by Samuel Beckett

entitled, "First Love." Beckett's work was chosen for its unique perspective on primitive mental states, which in part reflects his therapy at the age of 27 with a young Wilfred Bion.

Barbara Bain won three consecutive Emmy Awards for Best Dramatic Actress from 1966-69, for her work in the original television series, Mission Impossible. In addition to countless other television shows, Ms. Bain is a gifted theater actress and director, who was directed by Alan Mandell in Samuel Beckett's Happy Days at Los Angeles Actor's Theatre in 1986. In 1993 she also founded BookPALS, a national program for the advancement of literacy. She created the program in which actors in the Screen Actor's Guild volunteer to read books to children, and today, 20 years later, there are 2,200 volunteers reading to 60,000 pre-school to 5th grade children in classrooms, hospitals and shelters.

**Alan Mandell's** 75 year distinguished acting career includes a European tour of original productions of Waiting For Godot and Endgame, directed by Samuel Beckett, with whom he had a long friendship until Beckett's death in 1989. Mandell has also appeared in such films as the Coen brothers', A Serious Man, and John Cameron Mitchell's, Short Bus. Mr. Mandell was co-founder of the San Quentin Drama Workshop, which began in 1957 with a performance of Godot inside the prison. He has won Ovation Awards for his work in Pinter's No Man's Land (2010), and in Trying (2007), in which his performance was lauded by The Los Angeles Times theater critic as, "...a marvel, one of the five best performances you will see in this lifetime." His most recent Ovation Award was for his work in the production of Waiting For Godot (2012) at the Mark Taper Forum, L.A.).

Join us in Los Angeles, California, for a rich, creative and clinically useful conference!

**SPACE IS LIMITED!**

For more information and TO REGISTER, visit: <http://bionla2014.org/>

The 2014 International Bion Conference Los Angeles is sponsored by Newport Psychoanalytic Institute.

**The San Diego Psychoanalytic Center**  
is dedicated to promoting the relevance and vitality of  
psychotherapy and psychoanalysis

**Advanced Training**

Innovative, inspiring and individualized education

**Continuing Education**

Educational events for mental health professionals and the public about psychoanalytic thinking and clinical applications in diverse settings

**Mentoring**

Fellowship for mental health trainees early-career therapists

**Community Involvement**

Connections with mental health professionals, academic institutions, and professional societies

**Referral Service**

Referrals for psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychotherapy for adults, adolescents and children in the San Diego area (619-615-8428)

**Events and Celebrations**

Upcoming event: Spring celebration to honor new grads

**Collegial Connections**

Community of supportive, experienced, and dedicated psychoanalytic therapists

**Practice Promotion**

Support in building your therapy practice

## Services Offered By SDPC Members

Please send your Announcements to: [sdpc.michelle@gmail.com](mailto:sdpc.michelle@gmail.com)

## SDPC Member Classifieds

**Please send your ads to: [sdpc.michelle@gmail.com](mailto:sdpc.michelle@gmail.com)**

---

### **You are invited to an Open House! Save the date...**

**Friday, November 7, 4-7 p.m.**

5th & Olive Psychologists, including the practices of Daniel Blaess, Ph.D., Margaret Sawires, Psy.D. (PPP graduate), Robert Fullerton, Ph.D. (SDPC Fellow), Chris Schmelzle, M.A. (former SDPC Fellow), Bernadette DiToro, M.A. (former SDPC Fellow), and Takeshia Niday, M.D., invites you to come and see our practice, socialize, and learn more about what we do! Appetizers and wine will be served. We are located in Banker's Hill, at 2760 5th Avenue, Suite 205. Hope you can make it!

Daniel Blaess, Ph.D.  
Licensed Psychologist

5th & Olive Psychologists  
2760 5th Avenue, Suite 205  
San Diego, CA 92103

[619-804-1669](tel:619-804-1669)

fax: [619-298-2492](tel:619-298-2492)

[drblaess@post.harvard.edu](mailto:drblaess@post.harvard.edu)

[drblaess.com](http://drblaess.com)

Arash Khatami, M.D. is a recent graduate of the UCSD child/adolescent psychiatry fellowship and a student in the Fellowship Program. He would like to rent office space 1-2 days a week in an established suite of therapists or psychiatrists. He is looking to be anywhere from UTC/La Jolla to the Del Mar/Solana Beach area. If you or anyone whom you know has space to rent, please call him at [512-633-6257](tel:512-633-6257) or email [akhatami@ucsd.edu](mailto:akhatami@ucsd.edu).

---

REMINDER: Please send all future announcements/event advertisements to Ms. Michelle Spencer at: [sdpc.michelle@gmail.com](mailto:sdpc.michelle@gmail.com). They will be included in the next volume of the SDPC weekly newsletter.

---

## Donate to SDPC Through Amazon Smile

[AmazonSmile](#) is a simple and automatic way for you to support SDPC every time you shop, *at no cost to you*.

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of each purchase you make through AmazonSmile to SDPC.

Sign up now and specify San Diego Psychoanalytic Center as the organization of your choice.

[Submit Your Announcements](#)

[Visit Our Website](#)

Show Your Support &  
Donate



Forward to Friend



## San Diego Psychoanalytic Center

4455 Morena Boulevard • Suite 202 • San Diego, CA 92117

Ph: 858-454-3102 Fax: 858-454-0075

Established in 1973 as a non-profit 501c3, the San Diego Psychoanalytic Center provides advanced mental health training in psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychotherapy; mentoring; community education; and public service to San Diego County.

Accredited by the American Psychoanalytic Association. Member of the American Psychoanalytic Association, the International Psychoanalytic Association, and FIPAS, the organization of Southern California Psychoanalytic Institutes and Societies. © 2014 San Diego Psychoanalytic Center. All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)