COMMUNITY
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMUNITY FOR PSYCHOANALYTIC THERAPIES

Syllabus:

Troubling our thinking and feeling about embodiment and dis/abilities

Speaker: Patricia Donohue. PhD
Date: Monday, April 21, 2025
Time: 6:15 pm – 9 pm
Seminar
2.75 CE Credits
Fee: Free to Members; Pay-What-You Can Model to Non-Members per our Seminar Series Guidelines
For general programming questions email: inquiries@wpacommunity.org

Description Our work in this class is to trouble our thinking and feeling about embodiment, inter/dependence, dis/abilities and the limits of communication and care. It is an invitation to learn with and from people with disabilities and those who care for them; to explore our own affective reactions and responses to the people we encounter in the films/materials; and to draw on psychoanalytic concepts to explore these responses**.**

Learning Objectives:

1. **Participants will define the concepts of disability justice, intersectionality, interdependence and ablism.**
2. **Participants will explore the uses of psychoanalytic concepts such as dissociation, projection and splitting in understanding the fears and anxieties that underpin ablism**
3. **Participants will practice critical reflexivity: reflecting on experiences with disability (their own and others) and exploring the limits of communication and care in the therapeutic context.**

References/Readings/Media

There are three audio/visual resources for our class:

(1) Video: Sins Invalid, the 10 principles of disability Justice [13 minutes]
https://sinsinvalid.org/10-principles-of-disability-justice/

(2) Video: Alice Wong - "How Ableism Impacts People Who Need and Use AAC" [21 minutes]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erLtOogjpys

(3) Short film: Feeling Through [19 minutes]
Available to purchase for $3.00 on the film website:
https://www.feelingthrough.com
[also available for free via you tube]

Please watch all three videos before class.

As you watch/listen to the videos, I invite you to:

- be attentive to affect (how you are affected in your watching/listening)
- reflect on your awareness of the limitations of your own communication abilities
- in the film Feeling Through: notice the distinctive vulnerabilities of both Tereek and Arti (the two main characters) related to dimensions like race, age, ability and social class. What structures of support or lack of support (interdependence) are outside the framing of the film?

Readings:

Watermeyer, B. (2006). Disability and psychoanalysis. *Disability and social change: A South African agenda*, 31-43. [13 pages]

Dobrich, J. (2021). Prologue & ch. 5 “Answering the call to heal” in *Working with survivor siblings in psychoanalysis: Ability and disability in clinical process*. Routledge. [24 pages]

Supplemental materials:

Watermeyer, B., Hunt, X., Swartz, L., & Rohleder, P. (2019). Navigating the relational psychic economy of disability: The case of M. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*. [18 pages]

Samuels, E. (2017). Six ways of looking at crip time. *Disability studies quarterly*, *37*(3). [2 pages] https://dsq-sds.org/index.php/dsq/article/view/5824/4684

The supporting documentary for Feeling Through – Connecting the Dots [25 minutes]. Available through the website. https://www.feelingthrough.com

Patricia Donohue, Ph.D.: I think, teach, and learn at the intersections of feminist philosophy, gender studies, and psychology. I am preoccupied with themes of embodiment, social location, and enactments of power, and the ways these both enable and constrict and feeling. Within the last decade, I have been immersed in critical whiteness studies, reflecting on the emergence of gendered and racialized subjectivities within racist and sexist social/cultural worlds. I currently teach courses in culture and identity and ethics in the Counseling Psychology program at Chatham University, Pittsburgh

For additional information on the background and experience of the speaker, or to request the speaker's CV, please contact inquiries@wpacommunity.org or see our faculty section on our website at www.wpacommunity.org

Who Should Attend and Instructional Level of Activity: Psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, counselors with interest in advancing their understanding and application of contemporary psychoanalytic concepts. Instructional level is suited for practicing mental health clinicians. Intermediate level of instructional programming.

Continuing Education Credits: 2.75 *The Western Pennsylvania Community for Psychoanalytic Therapies is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The Western Pennsylvania Community for Psychoanalytic Therapies maintains responsibility for this program and its content.*

Attendance: To receive continuing education credit, you must sign in and be present for the entire seminar. You will be asked to complete an evaluation at the end of the session.

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Community for Psychoanalytic Therapies, 145 44th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15201, or go to our website at www.wpacommunity.org

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