

THE CULTURAL VIOLENCE OF OTHERING – REVIVING FANON AND SEARLES FOR THE CONTEMPORARY CLIMATE

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This workshop revives two texts, one by Fanon the other by Searles, applying them to our current climates of clinical work. Each focuses on the cultural violence of narcissistic forms of externalization and racialized “Othering.” Re-reading these marginalized works, the presenters ask us as clinicians to reflect on practices of recognition and oppression as they are enacted in forms of “othering” particular humans and the non-human environment. Fanon’s examination of violence represents a critical way to understand the effects of racialization and “othering,” and how they shape and constrict possibilities for recognition, expanding on Benjamin’s ideas of doer/done-to. Searles describes the ambivalent dependence of the human on the non-human as being not only based in the gendering of the non-human as feminine, thus in need of control and domination, but also shaped by our unconscious hate and envy of our progeny and the resultant desires to foreclose their future through environmental destruction. Although this aspect of Searles’ work has been marginalized, it is not only contemporary but urgent for the future of psychoanalysis. The analyses presented will connect Fanon’s keen awareness of the dynamics of colonization with Searle’s seminal works on violence against the non-human to create ways of addressing our contemporary culture and climate within theory and practice.

Learning Objectives

Gentile:

- 1) Participants will critique the roles of the nonhuman environment in human development and subjectivity;
- 2) Participants will analyse their own biases about the nonhuman and how these shape their clinical approaches.
- 3) Participants will be better able to address anxieties about the environment as they appear within the clinical space

Knoblauch:

- 1). Participants attending this workshop will be able to use social and political practices outlined by Fanon to describe the limitations of a model of subjectivity constructed only in terms of individual traits constructed from cognitive and behavioral data.
- 2). Participants attending this workshop will be able to compare a drive model based on biological regulation with a sociopolitical model offered by Fanon which emphasizes how practices and beliefs concerning race, sex and class can shape interactive experience and related emotional meanings
- 3). Participants will be able to contrast a conflict model focused on descriptions of impulse control or interpersonal discord with a model introduced by Fanon emphasizing how socio-economic-political contextual influences shape the initiation and response of one subject to another. .