

## February 2021 Newsletter

### Announcement about Nancy Der



It is with great sadness that we announce the loss of our beloved administrator and friend, Nancy Der. She passed away on January 15, 2021 from lung cancer and its complications.

Nancy came to ICP+P in 2014 and has been the backbone of our organization ever since. Her unflappable and warm demeanor, keen attention to detail, responsiveness and her ability to manage anything that came her way was a unique and precious gift to us all. She will forever be embedded in our memories. Contributions in her memory can be made to the American Cancer Society by clicking [here](#).

Adrienne, Ruth and John

### In Loving Memory of Nancy Der by Eleanor Howe, PhD

Nancy Der began her employment as our new Administrator in late July of 2014, which makes it six years that we have known her. She is beloved, and now mourned by all who encountered her, whether in ways big or small, face to face or online. From the very first, she impressed us with her competence, her confidence, her openness and her proficiency. She established immediately that because she worked for us, she would be looking out for us. I had occasion to do the same from time to time as her first supervisor, and this led to a deepening of trust, and a meaningful friendship.

Nancy leaves behind her beloved husband, Bing, and their children Preston, Adam and Justin. In fact, when we hired Nancy, little did we know the whole Der family was joining ours. Nancy would arrive at a conference venue at 6 am, and Bing was there too, ferrying the heavy plastic bins full of handouts and flyers. The Der children tidied and alphabetized our ICP+P name tags after conferences for pennies. They happily ferried excess papers to the recycling bin at the back of the building, riding the office task chair and practicing their hoop shots as materials flew into the dumpster, while earning their community service hours. When we sought a caterer who would reliably have the coffee ready on time, Bing volunteered.

Nancy loved to help us make and save money; she introduced many efficiencies in her time toward that end. She saw opportunities for negotiation on our behalf and advised us well in finances and other aspects of the organization. She managed large bank accounts but wasn't above using hotel coupons she'd collected when booking hotel rooms for our speakers. When Director, I especially loved engaging in strategy with Nancy. We would throw around, "Where are we now?" "Where are we going?" "How might we get there?" and then burrow into "What data would help us select the next step and later evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts?" With her hand on the tiller of numeric and observational data, Nancy was well positioned for strategy. She spearheaded projects toward greater efficiency. She oversaw the development of a new website that incorporated a new data

management system; she created a detailed Procedures and Operations manual; she got the correct officers as signatories on our bank accounts, and much more. Very quickly, Nancy became the centerboard of our ship, the hub of our wheel, and the organization as a whole was stabilized by her unflappability and competence.

Our culture synergized with her true nature. Nancy treated everyone with respect, warmth, kindness and she had a pitch-perfect intuition for people. Accepting of the foibles of others while asking for their earnest endeavor, she was always striving for quality and showing eagerness to learn something new. In her down to earth way, she remembered to inquire about health, family members or trips taken, always ending her communication with good hopes for the other. Even on those occasions when she was going to render a “no,” she led with fairness. She learned our individual capacities and accepted each of our personal limitations, finding workarounds for tasks that needed doing in spite of our sometime ineptitude. So many members have spoken of the patience she showed when they needed help mastering their technology or registration, or just about anything. Nancy was temperate and never shaming, not even teasing: truly a model for us all. Everyone developed a bond with Nancy. We became family, Nancy and ICP+P: We loved her and she knew it; She loved us and we knew it.

## Fragmentation of the Self, from a Child Therapist’s Perspective by Tom Holman, PhD



Tom Holman, PhD

I want to share the perspective of a child therapist, and encourage more discussion in ICP+P of child therapy and child development. I often see people for whom fragmentation of the self, and of the inner life, are a default state, felt to be “normal”. For many of these children it is hard to say that the fragmentation had one specific cause. Some of them endured long, traumatic stays in the NICU, followed by surgeries or other medical treatments. Some were born with neurodiverse conditions. Some have other kinds of early trauma, which may or may not reflect the quality of parenting. Growth towards a cohesive self is extremely difficult to achieve, even with the best parenting and

environment.

Therapists often ask people to reflect on themselves or others, or, less abstractly, about a concrete event from the past. This seems so “normal” for us that we may be surprised at a patient’s lifelong difficulty with this. The patient might act as though to say, “Why are you always talking about things that aren’t happening now?” For many people, this is not a defense; it is how they are.

A child in play therapy gets interested in a play idea, and carries it out. We like to see a play idea that forms an age-appropriate coherent story. When one idea ends, we like to see an orderly, or at least comprehensible transition to the next idea. After about age five or six, we like to see that the child can narrate in words the story that they enact with toys or materials. However, some children in the playroom seem to lurch from one fragmentary play idea to another, to another, leaving the room littered with fragments of experience. Their verbal material may bear scant relationship to their nonverbal play. We might like to ask such a child, “How did you get from this idea to this other idea?” Although the two ideas may have been separated by less than a minute in time, the child may look as though we’re asking a dumb question. They may live their lives in a manner that says, “That was then and this is now. **Period.**” Drawing on our knowledge of the child, we may be able to relate some, or all of these fragments and form a coherent narrative of the child’s experience. Our coherent narrative of the child’s recent play, integrated with knowledge of their history and family context, may be invaluable for understanding and intervening. However, insisting on our interpretation to the child, may be destructive to the therapy.

Working towards greater cohesion with such a child starts with three primary efforts. First is the relationship in which we help the child feel comfortable and understood. This

requires us to learn how to tolerate and to empathize with the child's fragmented experience. Second, we create an environment in which the child comfortably experiences increased cohesiveness. Third, scaffolding offers the child incremental steps towards greater cohesiveness without asking too much at any one time.

From the point of view of neurodiversity, we may need to ask the older child whether they want to work towards cohesiveness. While discussion of neurodiversity is outside the current article, I would be happy to discuss this and any other aspects of this article with anyone who's interested ([tom@tomholman.com](mailto:tom@tomholman.com)).

## New Member Highlight by Terry Chang, LICSW

### New Member Introduction with Sean Penny

#### What's your headline for life recently?

Did you see *Little Nemo*? Dori's character...*just keep swimming, just keep swimming.*

#### I get that. So, you work in a community mental health setting.

#### What's that been like?

The work...the breadth of humanity that I encounter on any given day...it's interesting and challenging (in a good way), but can also be daunting. There's an equity piece to working there. I hope to always be connected to community mental health in some way.

#### You're currently starting a private practice. How's that going?

I tried just before Covid - that hit a wall - so I'm trying again now that I have my LPC. I'm trying to get paneled. There's been a slow but steady stream trickling in. I appreciate how people are really shopping around for the right fit these days.

#### Any population you want to focus on?

I do hope to work with queer and trans folk and helping others to build identity.

#### What drew you to ICP+P?

"What's this *contemporary* all about?" (*laughs*) I've been aware of the conferences in recent years that address sexuality and gender. There's a different vibe here... less pathologizing, which is how I prefer to work. I completed the fellowship and applied to the CAPP program but...Covid.

#### What's pandemic life been like for you?

It's a challenge. I live with my boyfriend and we keep hearing about free time. And we're like, "*How? What free time?*" I do feel fortunate. I'm doing pretty ok. I know a lot people are not.

#### What do you do when you find that time?

I really, really love to cook. Lately I've dabbled into baking...it's a different animal. I recently discovered a simple bread recipe. It turned out very well and I plan to make it all the time now! And cats! Siamese and the other a mixed. They're very vocal and all my clients know them.

#### What will you reclaim when Covid is over (whatever that means)?

Dancing. Dancing at a club with other queer people. To be surrounded by people in that space. Joy.



Terry Chang, LICSW

## On a Quest for Awareness, Growth and Clinical Improvement by Eleanor Howe

February is Black History Month, so designated to prompt citizens in the US to learn more about Black culture and historic events in our country. This being February, it is fitting to acknowledge that there is ample room for growth and learning in the psychoanalytic community, as with the whole country and world. With my own ears



**Eleanor Howe, PhD**

I have heard institute members comment that our community would benefit from knowing more about our whiteness. I have also heard that instances of aversive racism happen and inflict wounding.

I know that one breach is all it takes to hurt a person. Knowing makes me wince. And wonder, "Could that have been me? Do I do that?" I know the internal desire to squirm away from that discomfiting thought, to encourage my attention to wander. But I also know that if I want to learn something, I must try. In fact, I must keep trying. I must look forward, inward too, and seek a promising direction. I must persevere and invent new ways of trying.

This is why I sought to co-chair the weekend of events with Ruth Migler (see below). Please join us at these opportunities for personal and professional discovery and growth.

## SAVE THE DATES March 12th & 13th Conference Weekend

**Free to ICP+P Members**

### So How Unconscious is your Bias? Explorations Inside and Outside the Treatment Room

**Victoria Lee, PhD, Rosemary Segalla, PhD, and  
Ayana Watkins-Northern, PhD**



*Victoria Lee, PhD*



*Rosemary Segalla, PhD*



*Ayana Watkins-Northern, PhD*

**Saturday, March 13, 2021**

9:00 am-12:15 pm Eastern (US/Canada)

Virtual Online Event

**3 Diversity CEs will be offered.**

[Click here to learn more and register for March 13th Conference.](#)

**Pre-conference Workshop**

*A nominal fee will be charged*

### **Race, Melancholia, and the Fantasy of Whiteness**

**featuring Cherian Verghese, PhD**

**Friday, March 12, 2021**



Cherian Verghese, PhD

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Eastern (US/Canada)  
Virtual Online Event  
**1.5 Diversity CEs will be offered.**

[Click here to learn more and register for the March 12th Pre-conference.](#)

## May 15, 2021 Annual Conference

- **Saturday, May 15, 2021, Annual Conference:** "Historical Trauma and Trans-Generational Transmission" with Jill Salberg, PhD, ABPP, 9:00 am-5:00 pm.

***This will be a virtual conference. CEs will be offered.***

**MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!**



*Several other events are being planned.  
Check on our website for more information as it becomes available.*

## News + Notes



Nilou Mostofi, MA

We are pleased to announce that Nilou Mostofi will serve as the new ICP+P Administrator. She comes with a wealth of experience. Nilou has been an integral part of our last several events, and has been an enormous help to us over the past few months.



Martha Blechar Gibbons, PhD, APRN, BC has published an article entitled "First Do No Harm" in the Winter issue of *Voices, The Art and Science of Psychotherapy: Psychotherapy Amidst Pandemic*. Through the prism of couples therapy she presents the factors that led to her decision to see patients in person during the pandemic.



Martha Blechar Gibbons, PhD



## Training and Education



## Couples Therapy Training Starting in 2021

Many experienced therapists feel energized to engage in couples therapy. Yet as time passes, they often feel overwhelmed or “stuck.” Those trained and familiar with couples’ work know this phenomenon all too well. As the couple’s issues around communication, sex, trauma, affairs, rage and hopelessness unfold in the therapist’s office, the work can feel taxing and overwhelming, often deskilling the most seasoned therapist.

ICP+P’s Couples Therapy Training Program focuses on integrating psychodynamic theory and specific clinical skills, so that clinicians can feel effective in therapeutically addressing the challenges of this work. The program consists of weekly three-hour meetings, divided between didactic learning and group supervision on active couples cases.

The program focuses on:

1. Contemporary Psychodynamic Theories as they apply to Couples Therapy
2. Addressing specific challenges for couples, including sexual impasses, high conflict, distant and cut-off forms of relating
3. The challenges inherent in collaborative work between couples and individual therapists
4. The exploration of countertransference reactions as a tool to effective intervention
5. Incorporating the contributions of neuroscience and control-mastery to a psychodynamically oriented approach
6. Specific interventional techniques that facilitate growth and effective couples treatment

Many graduates of the program continue to collaborate and work together on clinical cases long after the program is completed. The program also offers graduates many ongoing professional and social events, and the opportunity to belong to a warm professional community.

The program is for licensed therapists from all disciplines, and runs from September-May. Classes are held each Wednesday from 11:30 am-2:30 pm. To request more information or set up an informational meeting, please contact Dr. Michael Wannan at 301-951-9488.

[Click here to learn more about the program...](#)



## CAPPs Pre-program Study Group 2021

We are happy to announce the **Contemporary Approaches to Psychodynamic Psychotherapy (CAPP)** program pre-program study group for clinicians who are interested in starting training in Fall 2021. This monthly study group will be led by faculty member Marie Hellinger, LICSW, and will meet monthly, on the fourth Sunday of the month. There will be monthly readings assigned, that will form the basis of thoughtful discussion. These readings will reflect perspectives that are integral to the CAPP program and will be derived from Self and Relational psychodynamic thinking. The group will provide an opportunity to learn about CAPP and psychodynamic theory, as well as connect with other potential classmates for the incoming class Fall 2021. There is no fee for the group. Space is limited. If interested, please contact Janna Sandmeyer at [JannaSandmeyer@me.com](mailto:JannaSandmeyer@me.com) or 202.306.6500.



## Bulletin Board

### Groups

*All groups are currently meeting via zoom until further notice.*

Men’s & Mixed Therapy Groups meeting via Zoom have openings for adults of all ages.

Relational approach; leader is Certified Group Psychotherapist with 30 years' experience collaborating with individual therapists and serving clients of various cultures. Both groups meet weekly and focus on improving relationships with self and others (partners, family, friends, colleagues) and issues in members' lives.

The foci of the men's group include emotional intimacy and recovery from childhood trauma; the mixed group is open to women, men and gender non-conforming persons and deals with a broad variety of issues. All cultures welcome. Men's Group meets Wednesdays at 12 pm; Mixed Group, Thursdays at 5 pm. Sliding fee scale. Leader licensed in MD, DC and VA.

For more information, contact (or have client contact) Jonathan Lebolt, PhD, CGP at [Therapy@Doctor-Jon.com](mailto:Therapy@Doctor-Jon.com) or (240) 507-7696.



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## Events

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**January 13, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm EST**

**Presented by Washington School of Psychiatry, Attachment and Human Development Center and featuring an ICP+P Member**

### **Why Clinicians Need to be Informed by Attachment Theory and Research**

Presenter: Mauricio Cortina, MD

On Saturday February 13th Mauricio Cortina will be conducting an online presentation from 9 am to 12:30 pm. The workshop will be divided in two parts. On the first part of his presentation Mauricio will explain why attachment theory is a new paradigm in the mental health field based on relational model based on:

- an evolutionary perspective
- a new model of developmental model based on extensive direct, systematic observation of parent-child relations and longitudinal research of the attachment relation through the life span
- a new model of motivation
- a new ways of understanding of defensive processes based on different affect regulation strategies

In the second part of the morning Mauricio will show how each one of these dimensions of attachment theory and research help develop trust in the therapeutic process and safety to explore issues patients bring to therapy.

***CEUs will be offered.***

Maurico is recognized as a distinguished contributor to the dissemination and development of attachment theory and last year received the prestigious annual John Bowlby-Mary Ainsworth award.

Mauricio will be conducting this workshop through the Attachment and Human Development Center of the Washington School of Psychiatry that he directs.

If interested contact Kim Jones at [kjones@wspdc.org](mailto:kjones@wspdc.org).



**We love hearing from you!**

Please send articles, announcements, artwork, etc. to  
Nilou Mostofi, ICP+P Acting Administrator, at [icppeast@km-direct.com](mailto:icppeast@km-direct.com)

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