

Shame and the Experience of Class in the U.S.: A Symposium

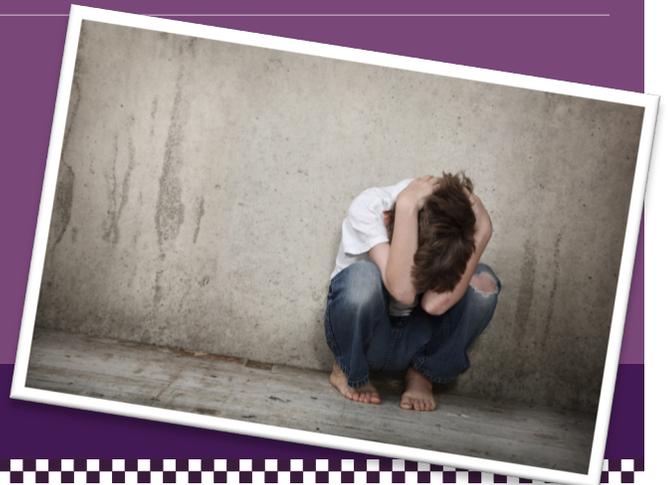
Date: Saturday October 29, 2016

Time: 9:30am-12:30

Location: Marran Theater, Doble Campus, 29 Everett St. (a few blocks from the Porter Square T), Cambridge, MA

Speakers: Mary Watkins, Noha Sadek, Christine Maksimowicz

Moderator: Lynne Layton



How can an exploration of the psychic effects of economic disparity deepen our psychoanalytic understanding of shame? We begin with three papers offering new ways of understanding different manifestations of shame and their effects as experienced across socioeconomic divisions.

Maksimowicz suggests that the relationship between structural inequality and the kind of shame often experienced within poor and working-class communities is best understood through a multidisciplinary perspective. Applying a psychosocial lens to the fiction of Toni Morrison, Maksimowicz will examine how everyday legacies of constricting economic realities and societal derision shape parent/child relationships within working-class homes. Her research attends closely to the insidious ways in which internalized shame is transmitted from mother to daughter.

Sadek will explore the phenomenon of "wealth shame" as it unfolds in a psychoanalytic setting. She will discuss the intrapsychic, transgenerational and cultural roots of "wealth shame" and its multiple functions. "Wealth shame" is explored as an ethical response to economic disparity, as a manifestation of a pervasive shame pattern, and in its relationship to moral superiority and envy.

On the eve of the presidential election, Watkins will examine shame to help us understand some of the psychic effects of neoliberalism. Comparing individual psychotherapy with psychosocial accompaniment, a form of practice arising in Latin America, Watkins will explore the countertransference dimensions that deter or aid the psychotherapist from being able to metabolize shame around economic privilege in the face of misery.

Christine Maksimowicz holds a PhD in English and is currently working on a monograph entitled, "*Who Do You Think You Are?*": *Recovering the Self in the Working-Class Escape Narrative*, a project that explores unrecognized classed injury in fiction and the roles imagination and self-narration may play in recuperative processes. Christine's examination of maternal recognition failure and shame in Elena Ferrante's fiction will be published by Palgrave later this year in *Reconfiguring the Margins: The Works of Elena Ferrante, History, Poetics and Theory*. Christine is a recent recipient of an American Psychoanalytic Association Fellowship and BPSI's Silberger Prize.

Noha Sadek, M.D., is a child psychiatrist and a candidate in psychoanalysis at the Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis. She is in private practice in Providence, RI, where she sees children and adults in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. She is an assistant clinical professor in psychiatry at Brown Medical School. Her work has focused on how the analyst and the patient experience class-related shame across the socio-economic divide and how cultural and intrapsychic explorations of this shame can enhance therapeutic work.

Mary Watkins, is co-founder of the Community Psychology, Liberation Psychology, and Ecopsychology specialization in the M.A./Ph.D. Depth Psychology Program at Pacifica Graduate Institute. She is co-author of *Up Against the Wall: Re-imagining the U.S.-Mexico Border* and *Toward Psychologies of Liberation*. She was a member of an oral history project (*In the Shadows of Paradise: Testimonies from the Undocumented Immigrant Community in Santa Barbara*). She is the author of *Waking Dream and Invisible Guests: The Development of Imaginal Dialogues*.

Co-Sponsors: MIP Academic Outreach Committee and The Psychosocial Work Group of the Psychology and the Other Institute