

Psychoanalytic Listening:

Deriving Meaning from Context



Dale Boesky MD
Keynote Speaker

Dr. Dale Boesky is past Editor-in-Chief of *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* and has served at various times on the editorial boards of the *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* and the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*. He is a training and supervising analyst at The Michigan Psychoanalytic Institute, and the author of the recently published book, *Psychoanalytic Disagreements in Context*. He has published over thirty papers in various psychoanalytic journals, and has been a frequent panelist and lecturer at psychoanalytic conferences both nationally and internationally. In 1995, the New York Psychoanalytic Institute awarded him the Heinz Hartman Award for his contributions to the field.

How Do We Really Listen to Our Patients?

The unreliability of our methods for evaluating our truth claims is directly linked to our confusion about how the analyst arrives at inferences about unconscious meaning. Since there is no meaning without context, it is disquieting that we have paid so little attention to our methods of contextualizing, as though these methods could be assumed. Careful attention to the methodology of contextualization is essential in order to understand how the analyst arrives at inferences about the unconscious feelings of the patient; to acknowledge how unrecognized differences in contextualizing by various analysts are masked by “theoretical” disputes; and to better appraise whether a clinical disagreement can or cannot be pursued on the basis of available clinical evidence. The best way to illustrate these issues is to use detailed clinical examples. Such examples will be the basis for our discussion.

Afternoon Case Presentation

Dolores Welber, PhD, LP, is in private practice in New York and in Vermont. She sits on the Board of Trustees for CMPS where she is Director of Educational Advisement and an instructor, supervisor, and training analyst. In 1971, with her husband Robert Welber, she founded the Studio Elementary School, a private non-profit school for children 2-13 years of age, in Greenwich Village, which has since relocated to New York’s Upper West Side. It was there in 1974 that Dr. Welber created the first modern psychoanalytic mothers’ group.

An Unexpected Turning Point in a Long Term Case. Dr. Welber addresses specific themes as they emerged in the treatment of one analysand over a long period of time. Questions to be answered in sequence are: What preceded and what followed the turning point? What may evolve over time? Within what context do we understand these developments?



Center for Modern Psychoanalytic Studies

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Modern Psychoanalysis, published by CMPS since 1976, presents modern psychoanalytic ideas and techniques to practitioners and to interested outsiders. The Journal is also the sponsor of *The Phyllis W. Meadow Award for Excellence in Psychoanalytic Writing* awarded annually for the article that best expresses the art and science of psychoanalysis. *Modern Psychoanalysis* is also available online through Psychoanalytic Electronic Publishing (PEP).

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Psychoanalytic Listening:

Deriving Meaning from Context

CMPS Annual Conference
Saturday, December 5, 2009

Psychoanalytic Listening: *Deriving Meaning from Context*

Dale Boesky, MD, Keynote Speaker

Dolores Welber, PhD, Afternoon Case Presentation

CMPS Annual Conference ■ Saturday, December 5, 2009

Lycée Français • 505 East 75th Street at York Avenue • New York City

Psychoanalytic Listening:

Deriving Meaning from Context

In his new book, *Psychoanalytic Disagreements in Context*, Dr. Dale Boesky focuses on how analysts listen to their patients. Psychoanalytic listening is not simply a passive, auditory experience. The analyst, often unconsciously, makes rapid choices, inevitably emphasizing certain associations and minimizing others, thereby developing inferences and assumptions from the patient's words to create meaning. This privileging or ignoring of associations reflects a frame of reference, a context, that the analyst uses to build bridges between what the patient says and theory. When the criteria by which we understand a case and make an intervention are made explicit, the analyst is better able to evaluate the raw data. Disagreements in psychoanalysis are often debated deductively, from the perspective of theory downward rather than inductively, from the concrete evidence of the patient's words upward. Identifying and articulating context can help analysts in the critical assessment of their work and the work of their colleagues.

Dr. Boesky begins the day by presenting ideas from his book about the importance of using explicit contextualizing criteria to improve our methods of comparative psychoanalysis and to enable us to listen more intelligently to our patients.

After lunch (*see Registration form for meal choices*), Dr. Dolores Welber presents a critical moment in an ongoing case and examines the contexts she used to understand the moment in the session and its aftermath. Dr. Boesky has found that the most illuminating debates about clinical material occur among analysts who adhere to the same theoretical assumptions, rather than among analysts from different schools of thought. We have therefore invited two modern analysts, Dr. June Bernstein and Ms Faye Newsome, to respond to Dr. Welber's case, focusing on the contexts they each used to understand the material.

Both morning and afternoon conference sessions conclude with an hour devoted to audience discussion. In this way we hope participants will have the opportunity to deepen their awareness of what constitutes intelligent listening.

Center for Modern Psychoanalytic Studies Annual Conference

Saturday, December 5, 2009 9:45 AM–5:00 PM

■ Lycée Français · 505 East 75th Street at York Avenue in New York City ■

Psychoanalytic Listening:

Deriving Meaning from Context

Conference Program

Saturday. December 5. 2009

Morning Session

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|---------------|--|
| 9:00 – 9:45 | Registration |
| 9:45 – 10:00 | Welcome and introduction of speaker, Lucy Holmes, PhD |
| 10:00 – 11:00 | Dale Boesky, MD:
“How Do We Really Listen to Our Patients?” |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Audience discussion |
| 12:00 – 2:00 | Buffet lunch in Lycée cafeteria (<i>see Registration form for information</i>) |

Afternoon Session:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 2:00 – 2:15 | Presentation of the Phyllis W. Meadow Awards by June Bernstein, PhD and Ronald Okuaki Lieber, MFA, Editors of <i>Modern Psychoanalysis</i> |
| 2:15 – 2:30 | Introduction of case presentation, Lucy Holmes, PhD |
| 2:30 – 3:00 | Case presentation , Dolores Welber, PhD
An Unexpected Turning Point in a Long Term Case. |
| 3:00 – 4:00 | Respondents:
June Bernstein, PhD • Faye Newsome, MA • Dale Boesky, MD |
| 4:00 – 5:00 | Audience discussion |

■ Clinical Research Seminar • Friday December 4 • CMPS Great Hall • 7:30-9:00 PM ■

In conjunction with the conference, the Center is hosting an evening devoted to psychoanalytic research. Dr. Steven Poser, CMPS Research Committee Coordinator, leads a discussion with two advanced CMPS students in the process of conducting research for their final papers. The discussions examines how students listen to develop hypotheses about their patients. Dr. Dale Boesky joins us to assist the students in defining the contexts they are using to understand their control cases. • No charge for conference registrants • \$10/non registrants • RSVP: 212.260.7050

Afternoon Case Presentation Respondents

Dr. June Bernstein and Ms Faye Newsome respond to Dr. Dolores Welber's case presentation focusing on the contexts each used to evaluate the material. Dr. Dale Boesky will participate in these interpretations.

June Bernstein, PhD, LP, is on the faculty of CMPS, the New York Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, and the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis. At CMPS and BGSP, she is a supervisor, training analyst, and control analyst. She is also co-editor of the journal *Modern Psychoanalysis* to which



she has contributed eighteen articles, her most recent being "Consciousness and Interpretation in Modern Psychoanalysis," "On Criticism and Being Criticized: Some Considerations," "There's No Such Thing As a Mother," and "A Resistance to Getting Better." Dr. Bernstein is in private practice in New York City and Boston, MA.

Faye Newsome, MA, LP, sits on the faculty of CMPS, the New York Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, and the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis. She also serves as the NYGSP Liaison between CMPS and BGSP, where she is a training and supervising analyst. In



addition, she runs the One-Year Program at both CMPS and BGSP and is Chairperson of the Board of Trustees at CMPS. Ms. Newsome is in private practice in New York and Brookline, MA.

Registration

Psychoanalytic Listening: *Deriving Meaning from Context*

Saturday, December 5, 2009

Lycée Français, 505 East 75 St. at York Ave, NYC

ADMISSION General: \$180 • Students *with ID*: \$100
Group (*min.10*): \$160. Includes: Conference, Buffet Lunch
and Clinical Research Seminar, Friday Evening, Dec. 4 at CMPS.
Tickets purchased after Nov. 27: \$200 • Students: \$120.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

TEL _____

E-MAIL _____

Affiliation (optional) _____

In training at (Students only)

_____ I plan to attend the Clinical Research Seminar, Friday,
December 4, at CMPS, 7:30-9:00 PM. (*free to conference registrants*)

BUFFET LUNCH: A healthy and delicious buffet is included
with conference registration fee. Please indicate choice:

_____ Chicken _____ Salmon _____ Vegetarian.

I AM ENCLOSING \$ _____ for _____ Admission(s)

Tickets will be mailed if time permits or may be picked up
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