

ASPP Call for 2012-2013 Proposals Psychoanalysis in a Digital Age

In the coming year, ASPP presentations will focus on the implications of the widespread use of various digital technologies (such as internet, social media, gaming, email, messaging, virtual reality, and texting) for our work as psychoanalytic psychotherapists. As Turkle (2004) comments, human technologies are not only tools for work and play but also “evocative objects that cause us to see ourselves and our world differently.” They thus affect our experiences and those of our patients in ways worth our thoughtful consideration. These technologies also provide new opportunities and challenges in our treatment of patients. In particular, we hope to explore ways in which these technologies enter into our work with patients: how do they affect our patients’ experiences of self, others, and relationships? What does this mean for our work as psychoanalytic psychotherapists? Finally, what are ways in which we can ethically use these technologies in our work in a way that is consistent with our beliefs about the psychoanalytic process?

Proposals for presentations on topics relating to the general theme are welcomed. For inspiration, here are some ideas for topics to be explored for individual or panel presentation:

- The use of digital technologies (such as Skype or email) in an analytically oriented treatment, with attention to how this affected the transference/countertransference, or other aspects of the treatment
- Presentations of cases in which digital technologies played a prominent role in the patient’s life such as case examples of patients using virtual worlds, internet, or gaming in enriching or pathological ways over the course of the treatment
- Ideas about how these technologies impact our work with our patients, particularly adolescents and young adults
- Implications of the technologies for child and adolescent development
- How these technologies are used in adolescent identity play and the adolescent separation-individuation process
- Social networking, virtual reality, and the experience of self and relationship
- Connection and relationship in an era of hyperconnectivity
- Cybersex and cybersex “addiction” from a psychoanalytic perspective
- The intersection of virtual reality and psychic reality
- Virtual space as transitional space and mental space
- Engagement with social media and virtual reality as an affect regulation strategy
- Challenges and opportunities created by the fact that information about clinicians is readily available via internet search

Proposals for papers and panels should be submitted to Amy Preiss, Ph.D., by March 31, 2012, at phone number 512-407-8147, fax 866-740-4544, or email dramypreiss@dramypreiss.com