



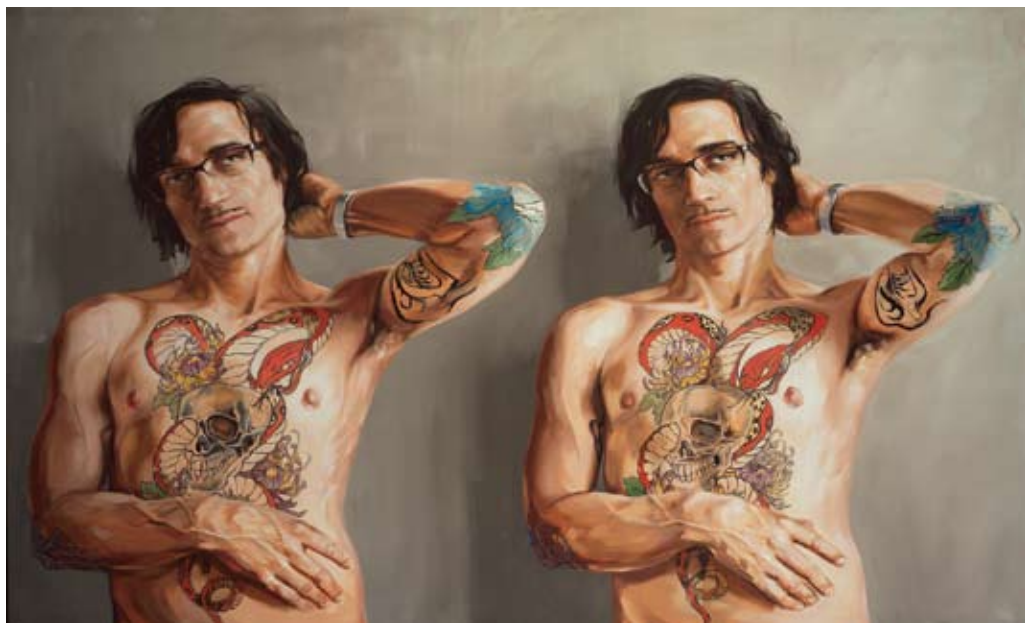
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Mating in Captivity



Kristi Ropeleski, Blood Harmony 4.1 (Photo: Paul Litherland)

Owen Renik, Training and Supervising Analyst at the San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis, moderated the September 13 roundtable, *Mating in Captivity*, the first in a series of six roundtables dealing with the biology and psychology of sexuality. He began by observing that sex, unlike some of the other specialized disciplines addressed at the Philoctetes Center, is not an esoteric topic. “Most of the audience has experience with sexuality within a relationship.”

Renik then turned to panelist **Esther Perel**, a family therapist whose book, *Mating in Captivity: Reconciling the Erotic and the Domestic*, was both the namesake and the inspiration for the roundtable. The title of her book refers to a poem by D.H. Lawrence, in which the poet refers to wild things in captivity in order to critique modern domesticity. “Is there an inevitable contradiction,” Renik asked, “between living sexual life to the fullest and having a long-term monogamous relationship?”

Perel was intrigued by the fact that pandas and bonobos had to be shown porn so they would mate when in captivity. This curious practice inspired the central question of her book: Why is it that great sex so often fails

for people who continue to really love each other over a long period of time? The answer, she concluded, was the paradoxical intersection between our need for stability and our need for risk as an erotic stimulant.

Pamela Paul, author of *The Starter Marriage and the Future of Matrimony*, noted that in the early 20th century people married early and lived into their 40s, meaning that marriage lasted 10-15 years. Today, on the other hand, if a couple marries at 26 and lives to 85, then they mate for 60 years. Paul emphasized that this is a tremendous undertaking in purely logistical terms, to say nothing of the expectation of ongoing sexual activity.

Center Co-Director **Francis Levy**, author of the recently published novel, *Erotomania: A Romance*, pointed out that because marriage is a dyad, and because there is an important kind of mirroring that occurs in a dyadic relationship, each partner has to identify strongly with the other, which can be difficult to sustain over time. Perel responded by explaining that her primary interest is in eroticism, rather than the marriage dynamic as a whole. Sex, she emphasized, is an antidote to death, one that contains the possibility of transcendence.

Note from Francis Levy: The Imagination of Sexuality

As our recent roundtables on the biology of romance and the chemistry of intimacy pointed out, sexual drive is what man has in common with primates and other animals, along with those forms of emotions that derive from the subcortical or limbic brain. However, the imagination of sexuality, the imprint that sexual drives leave on the neurogenic pathways of the brain (and which live on long after the biological desire for sex is diminished) is what fundamentally separates man from animal.

The imagination of sexuality necessarily implies an esthetics of sexuality. In the 1960s, two central tomes, Norman O. Brown’s *Love’s Body* and Herbert Marcuse’s *One Dimensional Man*, proposed two equal and opposing esthetics of sexuality. Brown used the term “polymorphous perversity” to describe a dying ego and superego presided over by regression states, in which the line between infant and adult was forever blurred. Marcuse on the other hand offered the Hegelian antithesis in the notion of “repressive desublimation,” according to which the selfsame freedoms that Brown championed were looked at as cutting short the process by which sexual energy is channeled into effective means of social change, revolution and, ultimately, the most revolutionary refinement of consciousness itself—art. The two kinds of liberation, individual and societal, represented a divergence in the avant garde movement that had run throughout both politics and art in the latter part of the 19th and early twentieth centuries.

Taking the Marcusean view, physical sexuality is actually a rather limited project that bears some degree of resemblance to the process of gestation that it both produces and mimics. Sex is only the pupa that can eventually bring about its metaphorical butterfly, either as an infant or work of art. In modern post-industrial society, people increasingly seek ways to prolong both their lives and their sexuality. The prolongation of sexual activity has a symbolic value in that it is ►►

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Note from Director Francis Levy

► indicative of the extent to which the human being is able to defy mortality. However, though physical sexuality is circumscribed by the limitations of the body and the evolutionary functions for which nature created sex drive, its neuronal substrates are capable of living on long after the physical need has been relinquished. It might be argued that the sexual imagination can outlive the body, to the extent that the repository of sexuality, the brain, goes on to manufacture imaginative products that outlive the body itself. Thus, we can look at art, music, theater, and literature as byproducts of an individual's sexual drive that endure long after the person is no longer active as a sexual being, and even long after his or her lifetime. But it is in the lifetime of the individual that the imagination of sexuality takes on a significant role, to the extent that it shapes and informs the structure of the brain and creates the format for subjectivity itself, i.e. a sense of time, of a beginning, middle and end, along with conceptualizations by which the impressions of others are libidinally imprinted on our consciousnesses.

We can look at art, music, theater, and literature as byproducts of an individual's sexual drive that endure long after the person is no longer active as a sexual being.

If the imagination of sexuality creates an esthetics of sexuality, then esthetics must create a culture. The sixties were indeed a watershed, one of those defining times that create adjustments in human sensibility and possibly even in our human gene pool. Epigenetics, the study of the effect of environment on genes, demonstrates some of the dramatic ways in which imagination can alter the genome in a single generation. But within the context of evolution, ideating sex is merely a step in the development in a chain of events whose future can only be revealed by the passage of time. Self-reflexive thought and the awareness of the self as both subject and object are relatively new developments, even within the evolutionary cycle that has witnessed the birth of modern man from the hominid stage of evolution, in which prehensile creatures began to roam the earth. The separation of the self from body as a witnessing agent has produced a neo-dualism within the context of scientific advances, which have more and more tied the relation of emotion to subcortical areas of the brain, thereby uniting animal and man in the area of emotion and sexuality. Consciousness, as the neuroscientist Joseph LeDoux states, is "only the tip of the iceberg." But it carries enough power to sink the ship and to play an enormous role as a filter for more primitive drives. Consciousness must bear an inordinate part of the weight in terms of "reforming" the brain in both meanings of the word, providing the pathways by which sexuality moves from instinct to idea. Assuming that there is artificial intelligence, consciousness can exist without sex. But it is hard to imagine sex in its human manifestation without consciousness, which gives us the ideas by which people are able to negotiate the transposition and trading among instinct, personality and, eventually, character. *F.L.*

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Sex & Love: The Biology of Romance

“**W**hat is love?” Pop musicians have been asking this question for decades. The answer is not likely to be found along the radio dial, but in the laboratory, where scientists delve into the biological and chemical underpinnings of romance, and in the treatment room, where clinicians attempt to unravel the personal histories behind broken hearts. The September 20 roundtable, *Sex and Love: The Biology of Romance*, brought together experts in biology, neurobiology, clinical psychology, and anthropology to find concrete answers where Ella Fitzgerald and Mary J. Blige have chased an elusive muse.

Michael Numan, Professor of Psychology at Boston College, initiated the discussion by asking why males and females are interested in the opposite sex. Studies show that testosterone levels are important for male sexual behavior, and that as these levels drop in older men, they become less sexually motivated. However, Professor Numan noted, these men can still fall in love. While species such as mice seek out predominantly olfactory cues in finding a mate, men and women seek out a range of different cues, often visual, prioritized to encourage mating.

Moderator **Donald Pfaff**, Professor and Head of the Laboratory of Neurobiology and Behavior at The Rockefeller University, explained that just as testosterone guides male sexual behavior, estrogen and progesterone are predominant in female sexual behavior. Professor Numan pointed out that the hormones activated in females by feelings of love towards a partner differ in their configuration from those activated by feelings of love towards a child. A post-partum female mammal, Numan explained, will take care of its own or any other infant, whereas other females will reject infants that don't belong to them. This phenomenon is due to the presence in recent mothers of elevated levels of prolactin, which stimulates lactation and has been shown to cause changes in the brain.

While Fisher uses advanced technology to search for answers, she cautioned, “You don’t need to put someone in a machine to find out if they love you. Just take them to dinner.”

Hiroaki Matsunami, Assistant Professor of Molecular Genetics, Microbiology and Neurobiology at Duke University Medical Center, addressed the phenomenon of olfaction in coupling and mating. To illustrate how individuals are sensitive to different smells, he passed around a test-tube containing a chemical that smells very unpleasant to some people, and odorless to others. Because there are about 400 genes dedicated to olfactory responses, there are millions of differences in the gene sequence from one person to another, accounting for the vast differences in the way different people respond to smell in their sexual behavior.

Helen Fisher, Research Professor and member of the Center for Human Evolutionary Studies in the Department of Anthropology at Rutgers University, joked that there's a reason that people say “love at first sight” and not “love at first smell.” Matsunami conceded that visual stimuli are the basis of initial attraction among humans, but pointed out that smell becomes relevant later in partnering.

Professor Fisher explained that only 3% of mammals form long-term pair bonds, and pinpointed the three contributing factors in mating among humans: sex drive, romance, and attachment. The



Helen Fisher

way that these three factors interact with each other inform the many different ways of coupling, explaining, for example, why “you can sleep with someone and be sure you're not in love.” In her studies Fisher found that the brain system involved with intense romantic love is much stronger than the one involved with sex drive. Sex drive evolved to enable people to seek out a lot of partners, she concluded, while romance evolved in order to choose one partner and reproduce. Attachment, she joked, evolved so that you could tolerate your partner over many years.

In her experiments, Fisher measures the brain activity of three different groups of people—those who have just fallen in love, those who have just been dumped, and those who are still in love after more than fifteen years of marriage. In contrast, **Siri Gullestad**, Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Oslo, draws conclusions about questions of love from the experiences of her patients, for example a man who loves his wife but can't have sex with her anymore. In analyzing long-term love relationships, Professor Gullestad commented, it's important to identify the primary impulse—is it romance, hormonal responses, or the longing to be held (an echo of the affective response from the mother)? In her work, she has found that what makes love last is the ability to integrate fantasies. Couples in which each partner feels safe enough to expose his or her desires are couples that communicate the most in general.

Michael Baum, Professor of Biology at Boston University, suggested that the ability to form successful loving relationships, while certainly influenced by childhood bonding experiences, could in some cases be an acquired skill. He emphasized that certain experiences can actually change genetic makeup, and that new pathways can be formed in the brain, potentially reversing the damaging effects of early trauma.

Audience members eager to solve the mysteries of love quizzed the panelists about why relationships fall apart, and why it can feel so disastrous. Center Co-Director Edward Nersessian observed that people have a difficult time recovering from romantic disappointment because they are unable to let go of their anger, while Professor Fisher noted that subjects suffering from romantic rejection exhibit the same kinds of brain activity as drug addicts. A question about the potential to develop drugs to make people more monogamous raised some concern about the dangers of delving too far into the biological origins of love. While Fisher uses advanced technology to search for answers, she cautioned, “You don't need to put someone in a machine to find out if they love you. Just take them to dinner.” *A.L.*

Love Code: The Chemistry of Intimacy



An audience member poses questions of the heart

With the possible exception of, “It’s not you, it’s me,” no other phrase represents a more crushing blow to the impassioned lover than, “I love you, but I’m not *in* love with you.” Ouch! How do we explain the different gradations of love, and how do we understand the chemical responses that constitute the myriad pathways of intimacy, with all of its fulfillments and disenchantments? The panelists who gathered for the September 27 roundtable, *Love Code: The Chemistry of Intimacy*, attempted to crack a cipher that has mystified the smitten and the spurned for millennia.

People who have a lot of anxiety as children tend to be more desperate in their feelings toward their lovers, making them more prone to a reckless choice of mate.

Panelist **Elaine Hatfield**, Professor of Psychology at the University of Hawaii and past President of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, noted that in the early days of social psychology there was almost no work being done on passionate love. Advances in technology and theory, however, have spawned a cohort of evolutionary psychologists, biochemists, and neuroscientists to home in on that very phenomenon. Historically, the Greeks talked about love in passionate terms, but it wasn’t until 1500 that the idea of love as a basis for marriage came to the fore. **Stephen Porges**, Professor of Psychiatry and Co-Director of the Brain-Body Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago, pointed out that “predator love,” which was focused on securing safety in a hostile environment, predominated in earlier times.

In seeking a connection between idealized states of love and the purely biological function of sex, **Dolores Malaspina**, Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at New York University, proposed that the passions, including creative portrayals of love, actually serve the primal, biological part of the brain. Professor Porges concurred, noting, “We share old stuff with the primates, but the cortex has all this creativity that tries to relate and rationalize primal drives”

Addressing the ways in which the nervous system channels these primal urges, **Stephanie Brown**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Michigan, remarked that reciprocity, or mirroring, a vital component in intimacy, is actually good for one’s health. In other words, there is a survival benefit

for those who fall in love. Unconditional love allows people to suppress self-interest and, for example, provide care for a helpless infant. Brown concluded that we engage in long-term love in order to enhance physiological wellbeing, and thereby live longer to potentially procreate and care for our offspring.

If an individual is prone to anxiety and the fight-or-flight response, they will have a harder time forming this kind of bond. **Sue Carter**, Professor of Psychiatry and Co-Director (with Porges) of the Brain-Body Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago, studies how people are able to create permanent bonds. While there are benefits to intimacy in terms of physical chemistry, Carter explained, “You want to be careful who you release these chemicals with.” Forming a bond with the wrong person can be the basis of a pathological relationship. Professor Hatfield added that people who have a lot of anxiety as children tend to be more desperate in their feelings toward their lovers, making them more prone to a reckless choice of mate. On the other hand, if they find a suitable person, they tend to calm down.

While amorous prairie voles would seem to offer respite from the storm and stress of human romance, they in fact offer insights about how and why couples stay together, because like humans they form life-long pair bonds. In her experiments with these rodents, Professor Carter discovered that oxytocin plays an important role in sustained bonding. It is the most abundant chemical in the brain, and its primary function, along with its partner hormone vasopressin, is to allow humans to feel safe, to override the fight-or-flight response.

Although hormones like oxytocin can dampen anxiety responses, making it easier to bond with an appropriate partner, Center Co-Director Edward Nersessian posed a compelling downside to this adaptation. What happens when a woman can’t tap into the aggression needed to protect herself from an abusive husband, and ends up staying in the marriage? Carter conceded that this was a danger, explaining that animals in defeat show heightened levels of oxytocin, which puts them in a state where they can withstand a stressful experience. Unfortunately, it also mutes the aggressive response needed to extricate oneself from a threatening situation. While oxytocin assists in child care, it can be coopted to paralyze the fight-or-flight response. “We have to get past the idea that oxytocin is good. More is not better,” Carter warned, noting that it’s now possible to purchase oxycontin as a nose spray. “Emotional regulators create states that we don’t understand,” concluded Carter, highlighting the delicate chemical connections behind feelings as seemingly diverse as love and pain. *A.L.*



Elaine Hatfield

The Body and its Image

“As long as there have been human beings, or as long as we have records generated by humans, there have been images of the body that seem to represent the inner fantasies of a culture about the way bodies are supposed to look, not the way that bodies actually look.” This was the central conundrum of the October 4 roundtable, *The Body and its Image*, as encapsulated by moderator **Sander Gilman**, Distinguished Professor of the Liberal Arts and Sciences and Professor of Psychiatry at Emory University.

Professor Gilman went on to give a brief history of somatic studies, describing the work of Austrian doctor Paul Schilder, a friend and confidante of Freud, who in his seminal work, *The Image and Appearance of the Human Body*, postulated that the body was made up of three separate but inseparable constituents. The social body was the body in the context of social networks; the physiological body was the body of the endocrine system and neural networks; and the body of the psyche was the body shaped by the interiority of the individual. Schilder’s ideas were absorbed into the fields of psychoanalysis, sociology, somatic medicine, and somatic psychiatry, but society continues to wrestle with the separation, sometimes alienation, of these conceptions of the body. “When you look in the mirror at your body ... you see one of those three bodies,” Gilman observed. “Haunting us in the background perhaps are the other two bodies that we can’t imagine or don’t want to talk about.”

The primary focus in the work of **Sabine Wilhelm**, Associate Professor of Psychology at the Harvard Medical School and author of *Feeling Good About the Way You Look: A Program for Overcoming Body Image Problems*, is the body of the psyche distorted by Body Dysmorphic Disorder. The condition arises when an individual becomes preoccupied with a flaw in their appearance that others can’t see. More profound than simple self-consciousness or vanity, body dysmorphism can cause shame or depression, leading its victims, in some cases professional models considered beautiful by most objective standards, to engage in severe social avoidance. While the roots of the anxiety can be traced to childhood fears that lock a person into an outdated conception of their own bodies, Wilhelm conceded that socio-cultural factors, like the incessant imagery of idealized bodies in mass media, can exacerbate the condition.

Paul Campos, Professor of Law at the University of Colorado and author of *The Obesity Myth*, became fascinated by the contemporary obsession with body image while observing media coverage of the Clinton impeachment, when hundreds of stories referred to Monica Lewinsky as *zaftig*. “Why was Monica Lewinsky’s fatness, not to mention her Jewishness, being signaled,” Campos quipped. The saga prompted him to question what he called our “moral panic about fatness,” and he concluded that fatness is a social construct that is not necessarily based on scientific or medical evidence. He noted that our notion of a normative body is one that only describes about 30% of the population, leading us to incorrectly pathologize a huge percentage of the population.

Fortunately, art looks on bodies in a much more indulgent light. “In performance you don’t care about fat bodies, ugly bodies, strange bodies. Everything is welcome because it’s just another medium,” insisted **Marina Abramovic**, a performance artist whose work, *7 Easy Pieces*, was presented at the Guggenheim Museum in 2005. The difficulty in using the body as performance material, she said, is that the performer has to be both the subject and object of her work, creating a mental construct and then entering into it physically. In doing so,



An audience member contemplates body imagery

Abramovic endeavors to present the embodiment of two major fears—the fear of suffering and the fear of dying—offering the audience a mirror through which they can witness the possibility of perseverance.

Where Abramovic sees the potential to embody inner states through performance, **Marcel Kinsbourne**, a behavioral neurologist and Professor of Psychology at the New School, focused on the difficulty of translating abstract thought into movement and behavior. “Whereas we present ourselves to others in a stylized fashion, our brains are running wild the whole time, because the neurons never stop firing.” According to Kinsbourne, the turmoil of the interior leaks into our bodies in ways beyond our control, since we can only express in gesture, speech, or writing a small fraction of thought. As a result, we betray many cognitive abstractions through subtle, unconscious movements. These movements lack the intentionality achieved by the performance artist. From time to time, Kinsbourne concluded, we are forced to match the image of the body in our minds with what confronts us in the mirror, a trauma that leads some to anorexia or body dysmorphism.

Reflecting the panic of body image, specialized body modifications are increasingly embraced, so much so that, as Professor Campos noted, “Breast enhancement is kind of like black-and-white TV.” In a roundtable that sounded alarms about a culture in which feeling anxious about one’s body has become the norm, Abramovic’s insistence on inner beauty was all the more refreshing. “The most fat body, the most ugly body, the most strange body can be incredibly beautiful if the real spirit is inside.” *A.L.*

From Looking to Voyeurism



Dany Nobus

“Visual impressions remain the most frequent pathway along which libidinal excitation is aroused; indeed, natural selection counts upon the accessibility of this pathway ... when it encourages the development of beauty in the sexual object.” Freud’s assertion, from *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, raises questions about how looking functions as a spur to reproduction. **Dany Nobus**, who moderated the October 11 roundtable, *From Looking to Voyeurism*, pivoted from Freud’s statement to the event’s underlying question: how do we define the moment when looking becomes voyeurism? Nobus, Chair of Psychology and Psychoanalysis and Head of the School of Social Sciences at Brunel University in London, quickly answered his own question. “Looking becomes voyeurism,” he said, “when the intensity of the looking becomes sexually arousing.”

Mary Anne Doane, Professor of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University, took exception with Freud’s premise, arguing that the concept of beauty as a consequence of natural selection is inaccurate. Evoking Roland Barthes, she said, “Beauty is always a copy of a copy of a copy.” Professor Nobus endeavored to clarify her remarks, stating, “You would agree that the visual is fundamental ... it makes us all voyeurs. But you disagree that beauty facilitates voyeurism.” Professor Doane replied that looking, as opposed to touching, necessarily implies distance, calling into question its primacy as libidinal stimulation.

Beauty is not necessarily what inspires excitement among the men who go to strip clubs. What excites them is not “sanitized” beauty, but hints of the obscene.

Bringing the discussion to a more experiential level, **Katherine Frank**, cultural anthropologist and author of *G-Strings and Sympathy: Strip Club Regulars and Male Desire*, recounted how she worked as a dancer in strip clubs in order to examine the motivations of the clientele. Bolstering Professor Doane’s earlier remarks, Frank noted that beauty is not necessarily what inspires excitement among the men who go to strip clubs. What excites them is not sanitized beauty, but hints of the obscene, sometimes embodied in breast implants and dyed hair, and other times in a girl-next-door freshness, where imperfections create an aura of vulnerability.

In contrast to the overt display of flesh in strip clubs, designed to induce sexual arousal, Professor Nobus proposed that a true voyeur adopts a position where he is unseen and watches what he’s not supposed to watch. **Sarah Stanbury**, Professor of English at the College of the Holy Cross and author of *The Visual Object of Desire in Late Medieval England*, commented, “Voyeurism has the connotation of illegality. Part of the strip club experience is that it’s on the margin between legal and illegal.” Frank, who doesn’t necessarily classify regulars at strip clubs as voyeurs, responded, “It’s not just voyeuristic. It’s about gender relations and labor relations.”

Professor Stanbury noted that in medieval texts, accounts of looking were often religious and beatific, incorporated into a structure of ritual. The mass, she observed, is orchestrated as a voyeuristic moment, with the Eucharist as revelation. The mutilated body of Christ on a cross, she added, was portrayed as strangely pleasurable in many descriptions. Voyeurism in these contexts, she concluded, was used to organize dynamics of power between the object and the viewer.

Nobus then turned to **Saul Robbins**, a photographer who focuses his lens on the intersection between public and private experience, asking, “Is photography a culturally sanctioned form of voyeurism?” Robbins offered a somewhat cryptic response. “As a photographer,” he said, “you construct an object, and photography constructs you.” Conceding that the nature of looking through a camera and capturing an object is very much like a voyeuristic gaze, Robbins downplayed the sexual implications, noting that while he derives pleasure from his relationship with observed objects, he reserves sexual stimulation for other areas of his life. “We’re all voyeurs,” he observed, “whether we get libidinal stimulation or just derive interest,” adding that looking at photographs of a war-torn country might in fact be a form of voyeurism.

Rather than necessarily engendering a position of power or control, the need for anonymity is often a consequence of the voyeur’s anxiety.

Professor Doane emphasized that the pathology of voyeurism in a strict sense lies in the fact that there is no reciprocity between the voyeur and the exhibitionist. But rather than embodying a position of power or control, the need for anonymity is often a consequence of the voyeur’s anxiety. For example, the Jimmy Stewart character in *Rear Window* is stymied by worry and passivity. Robbins pointed out that the character is a photographer who, while surrounded by his equipment, never takes a picture.

Center Co-Director Edward Nersessian asserted that a person who goes to a strip club once or twice a year isn’t a voyeur, and that enjoying a stranger’s naked body may be part of a healthy sexual relationship. “But,” he added, “if you have to go every week or month and then masturbate and don’t have sex with your wife, that becomes a pathology.”

Questions from the audience provoked myriad interpretations of voyeurism. Is there a voyeuristic element in observing fatal accidents? Were public executions popular in medieval times because they fulfilled a voyeuristic impulse? Is the uninhibited gaze of the infant the origin of voyeurism in a non-pathological sense? Why is sexualized looking so much more accepted in gay culture? Dr. Nersessian, reflecting on how the pleasure of looking crosses into the realm of the pathological, offered a parting thought. “I don’t think voyeurism and beauty have anything to do with each other.” *A.L.*

Paraphilias



Arnold Davidson

When does habit become addiction? When does looking become voyeurism? And when does sexual play become paraphilia? Adults often engage in sexual games that exhibit variety, playfulness, and flexibility, but a range of practices are labeled as perversions, and those who practice them are identified as deviant. How to place human behavior along a continuum ranging from normative to pathological was one of the central questions of the October 18 roundtable, *Paraphilias*.

Moderator **Otto Kernberg**, Director of the Personality Disorders Institute at New York Presbyterian Hospital, Westchester Division, launched the discussion by noting that cultural biases can influence ostensibly scientific classifications of human behavior. Paraphilia is a term created for the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (better known as DSM-IV) to replace the term perversion, because, as Kernberg put it, perversion “sounds like something bad, ugly, disgusting.” He went on to specify the clinical definition of perversion as any sexual activity with sadistic, masochistic, voyeuristic, exhibitionistic, or fetishistic behavior that becomes so rigid and repetitive that sexual excitement becomes narrowly linked to such activity, resulting in the loss of a broad spectrum of sexual behavior. But Kernberg emphasized that the divide between public and private sexuality, as defined throughout history by the oscillation between Puritanism and libertinism, rendered clinical definitions inadequate.

Linda Williams, Professor of Film Studies and Rhetoric at the University of California at Berkeley, linked the evolution of public perceptions about sexual behavior with their depiction in film. For many years, she noted, a brief, non-sexual kiss was the most that was tolerated in American films. Williams cited the 1986 film *Blue Velvet*, in which a voyeur witnesses a primal, fetishistic sexual scene, as a turning point in the acceptance of paraphiliac sexuality in American cinema. A parallel development was the emergence of what Williams called “hard core art,” which goes beyond simulated sex to explore sexual play in a range of expressions. She cited John Cameron Mitchell’s recent film, *Short Bus*, as cinema that actually uses, and celebrates, polymorphous perversity.

Arnold Davidson, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Chicago and author of *The Emergence of Sexuality*, questioned the very feasibility of engaging in a scientific discussion about sexuality. Attempts to define paraphilia reflect a desire to demarcate sexual criteria outside the realm of politics and morality, influences that, according to Davidson, are almost impossible to disregard. He added that fluctuating morality posed further obstacles to concrete classifications, noting that masturbation was once thought to be pathological.

Richard Krueger, Medical Director of the Sexual Behavior Clinic at New York State Psychiatric Institute, speculated about what one could hope to gain by trying to define sexuality in scientific terms. Echoing Davidson’s ambivalence about the feasibility of scientific inquiry into the topic, he cited Darwin’s assertion that “We do not even in the least know the final causes of sexuality. The whole subject is hidden in darkness.” He went on to note that even the book *Sexual Deviance*, considered the most comprehensive volume on the subject, reports that most of the work in the area consists of unfounded statements, unsupported data, and unevaluated case reports. The lack of scientific discovery on the subject, Krueger argued, derives from societal misgivings, resulting in a dearth of funding for rigorous studies of deviant sexuality, which, if given support, could potentially lead to important discoveries about sexual criminality.

The need to define sexual behavior is rarely a professional imperative for **Susan Winemaker**, author of the memoir, *Concertina: The Life and Loves of a Dominatrix*. She explained that her role as a dominatrix is never to ask where a perversion comes from, but to explore with a client his or her central fantasy. “It’s beyond sexual satisfaction,” she elaborated, “it’s about sexual exploration. It’s about openness.” Asked if her clients worry about whether or not they suffer from pathology, she replied, “Yes, I suppose they do. However in this safe space, they don’t. It’s not really a question of what’s normal or not normal. It’s a question of curiosity.”

The panelists scrutinized some of the terminology used to describe paraphilia, in particular the characterization of sexual acts that become rigid or ritualistic as being pathological. Winemaker maintained that, even when a client repeatedly engages a preferred fantasy, there are variations within the repetition that allow for deeper exploration, and even creativity and invention. Professor Williams pointed out that what is termed normal sex can be very rigid, without being classified as deviant.



Susan Winemaker

In response to one of Winemaker’s anecdotal descriptions, Center Co-Director Edward Nersessian proposed that it might be instructive to ask why one of her clients enjoys a particular form of near-asphyxiation. The comment elicited objections from several panelists, who deemed such questions irrelevant and potentially indicative of systemic intolerance towards alternative ways of engaging sexuality. The exchange was reflective of a highly charged topic, in which personal choice is often placed in direct opposition to societal and scientific norms. Perhaps the most incisive question came when Professor Davidson asked what, beyond reproduction, is the appropriate function of sexuality? In most definitions of paraphilia, he noted, that question is not clearly answered. *A.L.*

Shakespeare: The Man Behind the Plays

Robert Brustein, founding director of the Yale Repertory Theater and the American Repertory Theater, moderated the October 3 Philoctetes roundtable, *Shakespeare: The Man Behind the Plays*. Brustein, whose play about Shakespeare, *The English Channel*, was recently performed at the Abingdon Theatre Company, began the discussion by mentioning that the Shakespeare scholar A.D. Nuttall, at the end of a 500-page book entitled *Shakespeare the Thinker*, said that it's impossible to really know what Shakespeare thought. "So you wonder why he went to all that trouble," Brustein quipped.



Robert Brustein

Ron Rosenbaum, author of *The Shakespeare Wars* and a writer for *Slate.com*, took up the question of whether scholars should attempt to sleuth out Shakespeare's biography. "We know nothing about Homer, but isn't it better in a way than trying to make up fables about him?" Rosenbaum said. Brustein suggested that Shakespeare's sonnets, featuring a speaker that professes love for both women and men, might provide some insight into their author's sexuality, but Rosenbaum contested the relevance of that sort of investigation. "Does that not take us away from the pleasures of diving into the fourteen line universes that each poem presents?" he argued.

Eugene Mahon, a Training and Supervising analyst at the Columbia Psychoanalytic Center for Training and Research, shifted the discussion to a different biographical question in relation to the plays. Shakespeare's son Hamnet died in 1596, while his twin Judith survived. *Hamlet* was written three years later. Mahon speculated that various twinings in that play and others may relate to Shakespeare's experience and emotions about his family. **Alvin Epstein**, an actor on New York stages for 53 years, then raised the inevitable question: was the man we know of as Shakespeare the same man who wrote all the plays? Brustein immediately responded, "There's no question he wrote the plays. The best proof is that Ben Jonson said he did. Ben Jonson was the most envious playwright who ever lived, and if [Shakespeare] didn't write the plays, he would have said so."

The conversation turned to the kind of playwright Shakespeare was. According to **J.P. Wearing**, Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Arizona and author of *The Shakespeare Diaries: A Fictional Autobiography*, he was "a very practical chap who happened to have great skill in iambic pentameter." Only four of his plots were original, Wearing pointed out. **Daniela Varon**, a member of the Theater Department at Smith College who has directed Shakespeare productions

throughout the country, chimed in: "Shakespeare wasn't just good at iambic pentameter. He blew up iambic pentameter.... He has an understanding of organic rhythms of the human body and human psyche that are far above his time."

Varon noted the way that Shakespeare's thinking about God and the afterlife appears to have evolved in the course of his work. In the earlier plays, heaven and hell are portrayed as real places, but in the later plays Shakespeare calls such religious beliefs into question, and seems to locate the possibility of redemption in relationships. Varon also discussed Shakespeare as a figure who challenged the dominant ideology of his time. "In Shakespeare's day what was supposed to determine your health was the astrological position of the stars or the fluids in the body. You were your behavior and your behavior was determined by the stars and what was going on in your body." The most famous Elizabethan playwright approached the creation of his characters with a much more complicated sense of the influences that shaped them.

"Shakespeare wasn't just good at iambic pentameter. He blew up iambic pentameter. He has an understanding of organic rhythms of the human body and human psyche that are far above his time."

The panelists also discussed differences in the way plays were produced and printed during Shakespeare's era. Mahon wondered why Shakespeare's work wasn't as carefully documented as that of Milton, who came to prominence shortly after the Bard's death. Wearing explained, "Plays belonged to the company, not the man." If they were published, the company feared that others might get hold of them and publish them as well. Varon commented, "Shakespeare was an actor in a time when there were no directors. My job didn't exist. The acting was in the language." When the panel opened up for discussion, an audience member noted, "It was said about him that he didn't go out and drink with the actors afterwards. He went home to write." Though the panelists didn't all agree on how to approach biographical information about Shakespeare, at one point or another they all marveled at the genius evident in his work. Rosenbaum recounted that the director Peter Brooks had once said to him, "Most of us walk around one percent alive. Here's this person walking around London who is a million percent alive." *P.R.*



Alvin Epstein

The Poetry of Eros

Observing a woman she loved, Sappho wrote, “If I see you but for a little, my voice comes no more and my tongue is broken. At once a delicate flame runs through my limbs; I see nothing with my eyes, and my ears thunder. The sweat pours down: shivers grip me all over. I am grown paler than grass, and seem to myself to be very near to death.” **Charles Martin**, an award-winning translator of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* and Poet in Residence at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, brought this and other ancient Greek and Roman poetry to the course, *The Poetry of Eros*, held at the Philoctetes Center on October 14. To write erotic poetry, Martin said, entails the ability “to narrate your own feelings, your own self, and to have some kind of space within you to tell your own story and perhaps to have other endings to that story.”

The characters in *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* express sexual appetite, but they don’t embody passion, the way that *Ovid* would later do with figures like Medea, Atlanta, and Byblis, presenting a questioning self in relation to love. In Ovid, according to Martin, we encounter “the kind of erotic dramatic monologue that Shakespeare learned so much from,” as well as finding that the female characters get “all of the better lines.” Both the greater sexual freedom of women in Roman times and the increased attention to written texts opened up a space for the erotic.

While Martin discussed the traditions out of which the poetry of Eros was born, **Sharon Olds**, former New York State Poet Laureate and author of several collections, including, most recently, *One Secret Thing*, read contemporary poems by Mark Doty, Chase Twitchell, and Dorianne Laux, as well as selections from John Donne’s “The Extasie.” The poets also read several of their own poems. Martin’s “Four Poems” is a meditation on the relationship between a couple with a long history together: “But where the two of us are now and whether / We are there together, / I could not have said: I was like someone gazing / Into the wrong end of a telescope, / And whether passionate and playful phrasing / Might be a portent, he could only hope.” After Martin’s reading, Olds called attention to the “anticipation and satisfaction” evoked by the beauty of the rhymes.

Olds’s free verse poem, “You Kindly,” describes a passionate scene of tender sex between the speaker and her lover, which takes an unexpected turn at the end: “I stroked back the hair in / pond and sex ▶▶

Yet Here We Are

When one says *taking* pleasure, what both mean
Is actually something in between
Taking and giving; and in the give and take
Of making love, what is it that we make,
If not the present tense of we have been?

For us, to whom much absence is routine
And laced with hours that are dure and mean,
Often there is no pleasure—just an ache
When one says, *Take*

Yet here we are: and as the dream machine
Records for later viewing this new scene,
We are the water and the thirst we slake
As all of our senses come awake,
And both are touched and tasted, heard and seen,
When one says, *Take*.

—Charles Martin

▶ rivulets / from your forehead, gently raked it back / along your scalp, / I did not think of my father’s hair / in death, those oiled paths, I lay / along your length and did not think how he / did not love me, how he trained me not to be loved.” In response to a question from the audience about how her father ended up in this sexy poem, Olds replied that she didn’t fully understand it herself, but that it had to do with a kind of gratefulness that despite childhood trauma, such intimacy as she described in the poem could be possible later in life.

When someone asked about the difficulty of expressing the erotic in poetry, Olds joked, “While you’re writing a poem, you know that no one will ever read it.” With a nod to a distinguished poet sitting in the audience, Olds said that although she writes the poem in a private space, eventually she begins to think about how others might respond, to “wonder what Marie Ponsot would think about this.” Both Martin and Olds spoke about the physical act of writing as sensual in nature. “There’s something very erotic about translation itself. You’re putting yourself into another body,” Martin said. *P.R.*

Our Life in Poetry: Gerard Manley Hopkins

A few months before his death in 1889, Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote in his sonnet, “Thou Art Indeed Just, Lord,” these agonized lines: “birds build—but not I build; no, but strain, / Time’s eunuch, and not breed one work that wakes. / Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain.” Marie Ponsot, the guest poet for the September 23 session of the ongoing *Our Life in Poetry* series, commented on the poem: “I read that and cry.... It seems like such a reasonable request.” Ponsot, winner of the Frost Medal for lifetime achievement, has most recently published *Springing: New and Selected Poems*. She and Michael Braziller, publisher of Persea Books, offered insight into Hopkins’s life and read some of his works, which, despite his sonnet’s lament, awaken the reader with their dazzling descriptions and moving expressions of spiritual contemplation.

As a boy, Hopkins was an enthusiastic list-maker and a keen observer of the natural world, which should come as no surprise to admirers of his most famous poem, “Pied Beauty,” where he speaks of “skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow” and “fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches’ wings.” He became a Jesuit priest at thirty-three, and was conflicted about writing poetry, as well as about his lustful thoughts (to prepare for confession, he kept a diary of things he did that he thought he shouldn’t have done). He published very little during his lifetime, but he continued to write in a way that, according to Ponsot, “conflated his feelings about poetic experience and religious feeling.”

In “The Windhover,” Hopkins exalts the bird both for its regal qualities of flight and its symbolic magnificence. The final stanza of the poem observes, “No wonder of it: sheer plod makes plough down sillion / Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear, / Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.” When an audience member asked about the meaning of the word sillion, Ponsot gave a definition—it’s the dirt track that a plough makes—and spoke about her own enthusiasm for the word. Growing up, she spent a lot of time on a farm, and when she first read the poem she was attracted to it because “it was one of those rare times that a poet talked about something I had actually seen.”

In fact, she said, Hopkins and his reference to sillion inspired one of her own poems, “Thank Gerard,” in which the intimacy between a poet and a beloved poet who came before assumes the form of prayer: “God to you / hold him close-folded / above his sillion / Loft him Halo him / Prize him high, pen in hand” *P.R.*

Left and Right: What Neuroscience is Revealing about Political Thought

John Neffinger is a partner at KNP Communications, which specializes in preparing speakers and speeches for public audiences. Essentially, Neffinger coaches candidates on how to make good impressions. “About 80% of what I do is telling adults to stand up straight and to smile,” he remarked during the September 15 roundtable, *Left and Right: What Neuroscience is Revealing about Political Thought*. The event was the first in a three-part Re:Mind series entitled *The Art and Science of Politics*, timed as a lead-up to the upcoming presidential election. Neffinger moderated the panel, which was rounded out by **David Amodio**, director of the NYU Social Neuroscience Laboratory; **Joy Hirsch**, director of the Program for Imaging and Cognitive Sciences at Columbia; and **Alexander Todorov**, Assistant Professor of Psychology and Public Affairs at Princeton.

Todorov reported that psychological studies of the last 30 to 40 years reveal that “much of our mental life is guided by rapid snap decisions.” Though we might not want to believe it, he explained, unconscious mental processes and seemingly superficial details can greatly influence our political judgments. One study presented participants (mostly college students) with pictures of winners and runners up of recent elections. Only subjects who didn’t recognize the pictures were tabulated in the results. They were asked to judge, in a very brief amount of time, how competent the candidates looked. Seventy-two percent of the time the candidate who was judged to appear more competent had actually won the election. Commenting on the study, Neffinger added that this finding was at least as predictive as the amount of campaign spending in determining the likelihood of a candidate’s winning an election.

Todorov described another study in which a composite, average face was created. This face was then subtracted from George Bush’s face to produce a new face composed of Bush’s distinctive qualities, and the same was done with John Kerry’s face. It was established that interview subjects didn’t recognize these doctored faces before they were asked which of them they would vote for in a time of war or peace. The results showed that 70% would choose the unrecognizable Bush face in a time of war, and 70% would choose the unrecognizable Kerry face in peacetime. According to Todorov, the faces displayed attributes that seemed to matter to potential voters depending on context. Bush’s face, for example, “looks more masculine, more leader-like, less forgiving, less intelligent,” thus appealing to a majority in the context of war.

From a neurological perspective, Hirsch explained, it’s recently been found that responses to facial images activate the basal lateral amygdala, which is associated with early emotional response. Thus, the emotional systems in the brain interact with the executive or cognitive system in guiding political thought, and the emotional response may tend to dominate in stressful situations. “Under conditions where people are frightened or in fearful environments, they will shift their thinking to short-term decisions rather than investment-type decisions,” Hirsch said.

Amodio discussed another study, performed by his colleague John Jost, that looked at the correlation between liberalism and conservatism and other types of attitudes. Political ideology turned out to be predictive of a range of basic psychological variables, which, he acknowledged, “end up making liberals sound better.” As a follow-up to these findings, Amodio conducted a study to test whether ideology is related to fundamental processes by which the mind deals with information. Students were asked to perform a task that required them to respond rapidly to changes in stimuli. Those who self-identified as liberal were

found to make more accurate predictions on trials where they needed to change their behavior, thus suggesting that ideology may be related to a fundamental neuro-cognitive information processing mechanism.

The roundtable concluded with the panelists urging greater general awareness of how people make political decisions. According to Neffinger, “Republicans get this stuff more.... They listen to Madison Avenue a lot more than Democrats have been listening to academia.” Todorov argued that policy makers don’t pay enough attention to psychology. “Every president has an advisory panel of economists, but there’s no advisory panel of psychologists.” Amodio, in response to an audience member who worried that Obama’s message of change might tap into people’s fearful response to the unknown, suggested that the candidate might spend more time reminding people of a past period of peace that we could return to under his administration. *P.R.*

Music and Film at Philoctetes



David King

Lewis Porter returned to the Philoctetes Center this fall to continue his music series, *Living in the Musical Moment*. On September 28, Porter welcomed drummer and composer **David King** for an event entitled *Percussion Madness*. King, a major figure in the Minneapolis/St. Paul music scene, is best known as a founding member of the acclaimed trio The Bad Plus. Porter and King teamed up to perform short improvisations, explaining the basis of their improvisational technique, and taking question from the audience. As with past music events, not only was the Center momentarily transformed into an intimate performance venue, but the insights of the musicians offered a unique perspective on the creative process.

Philoctetes continues to hold film screenings as a way to inform and reinforce the themes of its roundtables. Coinciding with the roundtable, *From Looking to Voyeurism*, the Center screened Michelangelo Antonioni’s classic, *Blow Up*, a film that received wide acclaim on its 1966 release despite notoriously being denied a Production Code seal due its explicit content. Pushing the boundaries of so-called good taste even further was Pier Paolo Pasolini’s *Salo* (1975), which transposes the 18th century depravities of the Maquis de Sade to 1944 Fascist Italy. The film was screened as a companion piece to the October 18 roundtable, *Paraphilias*. As with past programs surrounding *In a Year With 13 Moons* and *Secrets of a Soul*, the Center continues to hold roundtables that focus exclusively on the content of a particular film. On November 8, there will be a film screening and roundtable centered on Michael Hanke’s *Caché*, moderated by past Philoctetes panelist and Yale Film Studies Professor **Brigitte Peucker**. *A.L.*

Mating in Captivity *Continued from p. 1*

This desire for a meaningful physical dynamic, she continued, has led to a moment in history where for the first time sex in long-term relationships is more rooted in desire than in reproduction. “What fuels the desire and what fuels love,” she asked, “and how are they at odds?”

Levy speculated that one requirement for sustaining desire in a long-term relationship is imagination. Allowing for a chameleon-like quality of personality can be a saving grace in a marriage, enabling partners to enact their erotic sides. “People should be free to not be themselves in a relationship,” Levy proposed. Perel underscored this notion by specifying that while sex is primordial, eroticism is a creative act, and therefore quintessentially human.

In response to Perel’s premise that humans have an impossible laundry list of needs in their relationships—companionship, stability, friendship, sexual fulfillment—**Michael Kimmel**, Professor of Sociology at SUNY Stony Brook and editor of the scholarly journal *Men and Masculinities*, asked how we know for sure that for many people these needs aren’t in fact met. Paul noted that in her experience, the idea of having both a great sex partner and a reliable domestic partner is widely seen as naïve, and many couples eventually let go of the illusion of sexual harmony and are still able to be happy. Perel asserted that some people opt for non-monogamy as an attempt to cope with the disappointment of a naïve ideal, but that in most cases monogamy is seen as the sacred cow of married life and exclusivity is non-negotiable. But Paul argued that monogamy is more than a social construct. “I still think there’s something biological and practical that makes monogamy sensible ... there’s the question of parenthood. You can’t establish paternity without monogamy.”

Questioning the notion that the erotic is fed by mystery and imbalance, Professor Kimmel endorsed the feminist ideal of equality in relationships, enthusiastically pronouncing, “I believe equality is super hot.” He went on to report that men who share childcare and cooking tasks report higher levels of marital satisfaction, perform better at work, have children who are more successful in school, and are generally happier than men in less egalitarian marriages. Thus, equality in a marriage need not be the damper on eros that it is often assumed to be, since sharing the domestic workload tempers the resentment and anger that can undermine healthy sexuality.

Perel persisted with her thesis that the closeness of domesticity undermines desire, which “needs space and a bridge to cross.” When someone sees their partner as a separate person, engaged in something they are passionate about, they become momentarily unknown. “In that space,” insisted Perel, “is the erotic. Caretaking is not erotic.”

Mediating the stark contrast between the views of her fellow panelists, Paul theorized that both were predicated on the unrealistic expectation that everything in a marriage happens at the same time, when in fact most relationships are cyclical and sequential. During childbearing years, for instance, there is often greater distance, which allows for a later return to sensuality. But Paul reinforced the idea that remoteness fuels the erotic, stating, “You don’t want what you already have.”

Perel emphasized the illusion of ownership inherent in this premise, quipping, “You never *have* your partner. You have them on loan with an option to renew.” She explained that in quest of the security of the nuclear family model, we collapse the space between partners. But that space holds the very energy that brings intimacy into being. To escape this tension, people intuitively seek out transgression. But Perel offered hope for those seeking deep sexual fulfillment within the home, paraphrasing the words of Marcel Proust: “The true voyage of discovery is not to go to new places, but to look with new eyes.” *A.L.*

Philoctetes Fellowship Program

Three candidates at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute training program were awarded Philoctetes Fellowships for the 2008-2009 academic year. In addition to their coursework at the Institute, Philoctetes Fellows will volunteer at the Center, regularly attend Philoctetes roundtables, and submit a publishable paper related to imagination and psychoanalytic or neuroanalytic theory.

Cristina Davis received her B.A. at Harvard College, where she studied Romance Languages and Literatures. She proceeded to the Ph.D. program in Clinical Psychology at Adelphi University’s Derner Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies. She is currently a fifth-year doctoral candidate completing her clinical internship at the Jewish Board of Family and Children’s Services. She works at their Youth Counseling League, where she is pursuing an adolescent specialization, and at their general outpatient clinic. As a Philoctetes Fellow, she is following her interest in music and psychology. Her doctoral research is on the effects of music on mood and perception.

Adam Libow is a second-year clinical fellow and chief resident in the division of child and adolescent psychiatry at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. He received his B.A. in neuroscience from Johns Hopkins University, and his M.D. from Weill Cornell Medical College. He went on to train in general adult psychiatry at the Payne Whitney Clinic of the New York Presbyterian Hospital Weill Cornell campus before beginning his fellowship at Mount Sinai. In July, he was a panelist at the Philoctetes roundtable, *Place, Imagination, and Identity*. In addition to clinical work, Adam has interests in the history of psychoanalysis and the challenges of interdisciplinary exchange. Through the Philoctetes Center Fellowship he will pursue a project on the historical relationship between psychoanalysis and American medicine in the 1930s.

Jamieson Webster completed her A.A. at Simon’s Rock College of Bard, and went on to receive her B.A. at Sarah Lawrence College. She then attended the New School University for the last year of its Psychoanalytic Studies Program, working with Alan Bass, Paola Mieli, and Julia Kristeva. She began her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at City University, where she worked with Dr. Norbert Freedman and the IPTAR research program on their study of a recorded psychoanalysis and symbolization in psychoanalytic process. In addition, she continued to focus on French psychoanalysis and the clinical thinking of Jacques Lacan. She has published several articles, including “Women on the Margins of the Freud Family” (2007) and “The Ethical and Logical Lacan” (2008) in *Contemporary Psychology*, and “On Love and Shame” (2008) in *Cardozo Law Review*. She teaches Freud as an adjunct faculty member at the New School University. As a Philoctetes Fellow, she is currently preparing the roundtable, *Anxiety and Ecstasy*.

Next Issue: The Art and Science of Politics

Following the roundtable, *Voters and Friends: Group Influence in Individual Political Belief*, the Center took advantage of a scheduling quirk to screen a live broadcast of the third presidential debate between John McCain and Barack Obama. The roundtable, the second in the Re:Mind series, *The Art and Science of Politics*, looked at the effects of crowd psychology and identity on individual political belief. The final roundtable in the series, *The Design of Influence: How Images and Words Sway Minds*, was held on October 22. Both of these events will be addressed in the next edition of *Dialog*, with the outcome of the election undoubtedly offering additional perspective.

Upcoming Events

True Crime: Inside the Mind of Mayhem

Roundtable

Saturday, November 1, 3:30pm

Participants: John Coston, Spencer Eth (moderator), Joe Loya, Shoba Sreenivasan, Qiu Xiaolong

Caché

Film Screening & Roundtable

Saturday, November 8, 1:30pm

Participants: Roy Grundman, Edward Nersessian, Brigitte Peucker (moderator), Brian Price, Garrett Stewart

Is Freud Dead?: The Relevance of Freud's Theory of Group Psychology in Today's World

Roundtable

Friday, November 14, 7:00pm

Participants: Mark Edmundson (moderator), Ken Eisold, Jim Hopkins, Bennett Markel, Jane McAdam Freud

Freud, Psychoanalysis, and the Philippon Bible

Roundtable

Saturday, November 15, 2:30pm

Participants: Mary Bergstein, Abigail Gillman, Diane O'Donoghue (moderator), Bennett Simon, Andrew Stein Raftery

I'll Go On: An Afternoon of Samuel Beckett

Film Screening & Roundtable

Saturday, November 22, 1:00pm

Participants: Edward Albee, Tom Bishop, Alvin Epstein, Lois Openheim (moderator), John Turturro

Listening with Greg Calbi

Course

Saturday, December 6, 3:30pm

Participants: Greg Calbi

Autobiography/Biography: Narrating the Self

Roundtable

Saturday, December 13, 2:30pm

Participants: Nicholson Baker, David Shields, Judith Thurman, Simon Winchester, Louise Yelin (moderator)

Jazz Improvisation: The Art of the Ballad

Performance & Discussion

Sunday, December 14, 2:30pm

Participants: Jane Ira Bloom, Drew Gress, Fred Hersch

Living in the Musical Moment: Banjo Innovations

Course

Saturday, December 20, 2:30pm

Participants: Bela Fleck & Lewis Porter



Helvetica

Film Screening & Roundtable

Saturday, January 10, 1:00pm

Participants: Steve Heller (other panelists TBA)

Literacy and Imagination

Roundtable

Sunday, January 11, 2:30pm

Participants: Jonathan Rosen, Michael Suarez (other panelists TBA)

Living in the Musical Moment: Classical Violin Meets Jazz

Course

Wednesday, January 14, 7:00pm

Participants: Lewis Porter & Andy Stein

The World of the Translator

Roundtable

Saturday, January 17, 2:30pm

Participants: Peter Cole, Jonathan Galassi, Suzanne Jill Levine (other panelists TBA)

Fanatical Belief Systems

Roundtable

Saturday, January 24, 2:30pm

Participants: Peter Caws, Marc Galanter, John Horgan, Neil Kressel, Jerrold Post

Spinoza

Roundtable

Saturday, January 31, 7:00pm

Participants: Akeel Bilgrami, Rebecca Goldstein, Jonathan Israel, Steven Nadler (other panelists TBA)

On Aggression

Roundtable

Saturday, February 7, 3:30pm

Participants: Craig Ferris, Jay Kaplan, Ted Shapiro, Richard Tremblay

All events are held at The Philoctetes Center, 247 E. 82nd Street, New York, NY. They are free and open to the public.