



Weill Cornell
Medicine

DeWitt Wallace Institute of Psychiatry: History, Policy, and the Arts Annual Report 2024-2025



APPROACHING THE END.
THE DOCTORS HAVE AGREED, NOW LET THE JURY AGREE.

DeWitt Wallace Institute of Psychiatry: History, Policy, and the Arts

Our Mission

- To support, carry out, and advise scholarship in a broad range of issues relevant to the present day theory and practice of psychiatry.
- To use in-depth studies of the past to enhance understanding of the many complex matters that surround contemporary thinking and practice regarding mental health and illness.
- To foster an open atmosphere drawing on a range of interdisciplinary perspectives addressing important questions in the field.
- To bridge studies of the past with the science of the future while connecting the domains of science and the humanities.

Our Programs

- The world's longest-running research seminar devoted to the history of the field.
- Working groups on historical, artistic, and narrative practices surrounding the overlapping fields of psychiatry, psychology, and psychoanalysis.
- Forums and associated white papers addressing contemporary issues in mental health policy.

The Oskar Diethelm Library

- Over 35,000 volumes in Latin, English, German, French, Italian, and more, dating from the 15th century to the present.
- Periodical holdings including long back runs of rare psychiatric journals.
- Manuscript collections and unpublished papers from numerous organizations and critically important individuals.
- Hospital and asylum reports of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

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Director's Report



Recently, I was chatting with a law student and the new Netflix series, *Death by Lightning*, came up. For those who haven't seen it, the four-part show tells the story of James Garfield's ascent to the presidency and his assassination by a man named Charles Guiteau. The murder is played exquisitely by Matthew Macfadyen (Tom from *Succession*), so that we are never quite sure if he is mad or bad, or perhaps both.

Unfortunately, the show entirely skips the trial, which was the most important part of this story, that is for American jurisprudence and medicine. Out of serendipity, a few months before the series premiered, the Oskar Diethelm's crack team of Nicole Topich and Nick Brenner curated an online digital exhibition based

on our astonishing collection of documents and objects from Guiteau's trial. In that courtroom, the battle between experts — those who said the assassin was "insane" and morally unable to discern the evil of his act, and those who said the converse — put psychiatry itself on trial. In this year's Annual Report, we have reproduced some of the digital exhibit, but I recommend following this link: <https://oskardiethelm.omeka.net/exhibits/show/guiteau/introduction>. Check out the hand-written notes, the bills, and the whipped-up popular press. A neuropsychiatrist testified that the man's mind was broken by his heredity and his free will compromised, while the famed editor of the *American Journal of Insanity*, a God-fearing man, said that the human moral faculty was divinely-endowed and therefore could not be compromised by illness. For him, Guiteau was fully culpable and something close to evil.

Skipping that debate, the Netflix series whisked us to Guiteau's hanging, thereby wasting Macfadyen's nuanced performance, which had viewers wondering how much of his behavior was psychotic and how much was the result of trauma, grandiosity, and rage. The law student I was discussing this with reported that it would hardly matter. Her professors let it be known that the insanity defense in America today was a good way to lose a case. It was almost impossible to meet the criteria. What this New Yorker had not been told was that four states have eliminated the defense entirely, a move that was unsuccessfully challenged in 2020 at the Supreme Court. And so when we wonder how Rikers Prison and the Cook County jail become the largest facilities at present in the United States for mental health "treatment," this is one rarely discussed answer.

From its distance in time, the Guiteau case still illuminates our present. It is another example of how history shakes us out of our "just another day" torpor and forces us to view with fresh eyes our fallible present. Today, judges and lawyers, who are hardly trained in the nuances of mental illness, assign legal responsibility to the overtly psychotic, thereby foreclosing more humane traditions and re-criminalizing mental illness. Guiteau's case marks the long path that has led to our dark reality.

This is the ninth digital exhibit that curator and research librarian Nicole Topich has culled from the riches of the Diethelm library. The others, which I encourage you to take in (<https://oskardiebethelm.omeka.net/exhibits>), are on matters like social stigma, attitudes about drug abuse, and quack drugs. As for the Guiteau exhibit, we were extremely proud that, in competition against Goliaths like the Smithsonian, it received an honorable mention for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference 2025 C. Herbert Finch Online Publication Award. It was a recognition that while our resources are modest, the riches of our collection and the prodigious talent at work, are not. Digital and visual communication hold immense power to reach everyone from high school students to academics and policy makers. We hope to expand our footprint in this virtual world with exhibits like these.

Dr. Shari Wolk has again done a sophisticated job curating the Richardson Research Seminars. Swimming between different disciplines can be an intimidating task. Thanks to Shari's erudition, she navigates this effortlessly. This year we hosted a great range of scholars with expertise in important topics like the history of eugenics in Germany and the mid-twentieth century project to establish a community mental health clinic in Harlem. Shari also brings her formidable editing and graphic design talents to the making of this Annual Report.

Alongside the Richardson seminars, our named lectures were special events. The Esman lecture was delivered by Jeremy Eichler, whose work on music and the Holocaust has won much praise. The Carlson Lecture brought Mark Solms from Cape Town to discuss his two decade project, a new translation of Freud's entire corpus. It was fitting that this landmark event brought him to our Institute, where so much of the work reevaluating the Freudian legacy has occurred. Finally, I am delighted to announce that in memory of our beloved colleague Anne Golomb Hoffman, who suddenly and tragically passed away last year, her family – husband, Dr. Leon Hoffman, and their daughters, Liora and Miriam – have endowed a new lecture in her honor. The inaugural Anne Golomb Hoffman lecture will be delivered in 2026.

So much more is included in these pages, such as the lectures on Mental Health Policy, curated by Dr. Stewart Adelson, my interviews on the arts with Damion Searls and Richard Slotkin, the Working Groups run by Katherine Dalsimer, Orna Ophir, Ben Kafka, and Nate Kravis, Siri Hustvedt's writing seminar, and the Rush fellowship for residents, co-directed by Nirav Soni and Alexandra Bacopoulos-Viau.

To keep up to date with the Institute's activities, please visit our website, where you will find resources including the schedule for upcoming lectures, digital exhibits and the library's finding aids, and a video archive of recorded lectures and interviews: <https://psychiatry.weill.cornell.edu/institutes-innovations/dewitt-wallace-institute-psychiatry>.

As you can tell, our community has never been stronger. That having been said, it has been a rough year for academic medicine. Nonetheless, we are forging forward thanks to your support. Please help us expand our outreach with a donation, no matter how large or small. We will use it to pursue questions and hopefully provide some answers for the quandaries of being embodied and possessing those strange things called minds.

George J. Makari, M.D.

Oskar Diethelm Library

Special Collection Librarian's Report



This year was an eventful one. The Oskar Diethelm Library, the world's leading repository for the history of the mind and brain, introduced popular new tours of archival collections, an award-winning digital exhibit, and a new digital image collection. In these ways, the library's essential resources became more accessible to considerably more people. The ODL is uniquely well-positioned to support the needs of scholars, at all levels of academic research, and to serve the public's interest in the archival records of the study and treatment of mental illness.

Nicole Topich, M.L.I.S.

Grant for Digital Image Database

The library is pleased to announce it is the recipient of a 2025-2026 Digitization Project Grant from the Metropolitan New York Library Council. This grant will fund the digitization of the papers of Thomas Salmon, who was a leading figure in the field of psychiatry and mental hygiene, established the Ellis Island psychiatric service for immigrants under the United States Marine Hospital Service, and organized neuropsychiatric units for the Army and the Navy during the First World War. Once digitized, the papers will be accessible online through the library's new image database in the Digital Culture of Metropolitan New York; this database has thus far been largely made available thanks to Charlie Shaw, who completed an internship with the library this year.

Award-Winning Digital Exhibit & New Tours

A new tour focused on the witchcraft collections brought dozens of visitors into the library for New York Archives Week. Another tour was based on the new digital exhibit, "Psychiatry, Insanity, and Religion in the Trial of Charles Guiteau," which received an honorable mention for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference 2025 C. Herbert Finch Online Publication Award. This exhibit was made possible through the wonderful curation and assistance of Nick Brenner, during an internship with the library.

Catalog & Collections

The Jonathan Cole and George Freeman Solomon collections were newly processed, and the metadata was enhanced for the Benjamin Rush notebooks, the unpublished essays of Donald Winnicott, and the New York Psychiatric Society Records. Over 500 books were cataloged during the year.

Rare Book Donations & Acquisitions

The library is grateful to Dr. Robert Michels, Janice Quinter, and Eileen Wachter for their book donations. The library purchased an 1859 edition of *The Witches of New York* and *Exposé des expériences qui ont été faites pour l'examen du magnétisme animal*, which is a complement to the famous 1784 *Rapport* commissioned by Louis XVI to investigate Anton Mesmer and his therapeutic science of animal magnetism, and also acquired the manuscript of John Stanford's 1819 lecture, "An introductory discourse, delivered to the lunatics in the asylum, city of New York."

TRANSACTIONS OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY (DAVID REED) Volume 55, Part 4, 1965

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume VII

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume VI

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume V

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume IV

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume III

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume II

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume I

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume I

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume II

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume III

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume IV

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume V

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume VI

Report of the New York State Planning Committee on Mental Disorders Volume VII

Psychiatry, Insanity, and Religion in the Trial of Charles Guiteau

<https://oskardiehelm.omeka.net/exhibits/show/guiteau/introduction>



Portrait of Charles Julius Guiteau, taken by C.M. Bell while Guiteau was in jail on July 4, 1881, just after the assassination of Garfield.

The Oskar Diethelm Library has received an honorable mention for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC) 2025 C. Herbert Finch Online Publication Award for the digital exhibit "Psychiatry, Insanity, and Religion in the Trial of Charles Guiteau." This exhibit was curated by Nick Brenner, an Oskar Diethelm Library intern, and Nicole Topich, M.L.I.S. The award committee noted that "the digital exhibit did an excellent job of utilizing archival materials to showcase historical research and highlight an underrepresented and interesting area of American medical history." Selections from this digital exhibit are printed below.

Introduction

The trial of Charles Julius Guiteau constitutes a landmark moment in the history of the relationship between psychiatry and law in 19th-century America. Drawing on the Oskar Diethelm Library's unique collection of materials relating to the trial, this exhibition explores how the events of July 2, 1881 resulted in a dispute between old and new schools of psychiatry, invoking debates about nonconforming religious practices and the subversive role of scientific methodologies. Some highlights of the collection include trial notes made by prosecuting attorney John K. Porter; pamphlets and popular media discussing the trial; materials written by psychiatrists about the trial, both during and after; as well as unique correspondence between W. W. Godding, Superintendent of St. Catherine's Government Hospital for the Insane, and President Chester A. Arthur.

Charles Julius Guiteau

Charles Julius Guiteau was born on September 8, 1841 in Freeport, Illinois. The son of Luther Guiteau and Jane August, he was raised in a deeply religious environment. His father was a devoted follower of John Humphrey Noyes, founder of the utopian Oneida Community, and subjected the young Guiteau to intense verbal and physical abuse. Upon turning 19, Guiteau failed the college entrance exam and soon became a devout follower of Noyes. Joining the Oneida Community in June 1860, he quickly found out that life in the Community did not suit him.

Oneida, known for its socialist and utopian currents, constituted the "first positive eugenics experiment" in American history (Prince 2017). Noyes controlled the Community through regulating intimate relationships; Guiteau found his advances towards women in the Community spurned, and he suffered immensely during the Community's self-criticism activities, during which a panel of Community members would speak frankly about the virtues and vices of fellow Community members.

Guiteau left Oneida in 1865, moving to Hoboken, New Jersey in an attempt to start a theological newspaper promoting Noyes' religious beliefs. This endeavor failed due to low readership. Returning to Oneida, Guiteau found employment in their silk works and trap factory. He did not find peace and left Oneida again in 1866 for New York. There, he attempted to sue Noyes and the Oneida Community for compensation for his treatment over his years of residence there. This suit failed, and his father wrote letters to newspapers arguing that his son was not of sound mind in attempting such a suit. Guiteau then moved to Chicago in 1868, where he took up a position as a clerk in a local law firm, passing the Illinois bar a few months later. During this time, he met librarian Annie Bunn, whom he married in 1869. Their marriage was marked by intense physical abuse on the part of Guiteau, who on one occasion locked his wife in a closet.

In 1872, Guiteau moved to New York to practice law. When his wife divorced him in 1874, Guiteau turned to itinerant preaching, giving talks around the Northeast and published a book called *The Truth*, which plagiarized from the works of Noyes.

In 1880, Guiteau became wrapped up in Republican Party politics, siding with the Stalwarts in opposition to the Half-Breeds. Guiteau believed he was owed a position in a Republican administration, preferably as consul in either Paris or Vienna. When James A. Garfield won the presidency, Guiteau was convinced that the time had come to get what he deserved. By 1881, Guiteau was in Washington pressuring government officials to give him a position. Guiteau was not alone in these efforts. After every major election in the 19th-century, office-seekers would continuously hound federal offices in Washington, D.C. and often line up outside the White House, hoping to gain appointments in the federal government.

Having been frustrated in his efforts to gain a prestigious consulship, Guiteau wandered the streets of Washington. One day, he believed that he had received a vision in which God told him to murder the president. Garfield had recently had the good fortune of watching Senator Roscoe Conkling's Stalwart faction implode in New York when the Senator hastily resigned over the Cabinet appointment of Senator James G. Blaine, who represented the Half-Breeds. Guiteau saw this as evidence that Garfield had betrayed the Stalwarts and turned his back on the people who helped him get the Presidency. Purchasing a revolver, Guiteau set out to fulfill God's command.

On July 2, 1881, Guiteau waited for the President in the Baltimore and Potomac Railway Station as the President was preparing for a vacation in Long Branch, New Jersey. As Garfield, accompanied by Senator Blaine, passed through the Ladies' Waiting Area on his way to the platform, Guiteau shot him in the back two times. Garfield did not succumb to his wounds immediately and did not pass away until September 19, 1881, due to an infection caused by his doctors' improper sterilization of their hands and medical tools. Immediately apprehended, Guiteau confessed to the crime, saying that "I did it, and will go to jail for it. I am a Stalwart, and Arthur [Chester A. Arthur] will be President" (Wels 2023).

The Insanity Defense and the Trial of Guiteau

Guiteau's trial was critical in the development of the relationship between psychiatry and law. The trial began on November 17, 1881 and lasted until Guiteau was found guilty on January 25, 1882. During the trial, both the prosecution and defense collected a panoply of the leading figures in American psychiatry to support their causes.

The trial hinged on a key question: was Guiteau insane? If Guiteau was insane, then whether the state should execute him for assassinating the president would come into question since in theory, the state should not execute a person incapable of understanding their actions. If Guiteau was not insane, then he faced execution as a criminal who had committed a violent attack on the most powerful individual in the American system.

No one doubted that Guiteau had pulled the trigger or that he acted alone in doing so. Any whiff of a greater conspiracy to murder president Garfield had been done away with by the peculiarity of Guiteau's own actions - his insistence that God had ordered him to commit the crime (on behalf of that greatest of law firms, "Jesus Christ & Co.", according to Guiteau), his persistent self-confidence in his acquittal and future success as a theologian, and his rambling diatribes in court proceedings on the Bible and the incapacity of his own defense team.



Illustration from the *Puck* magazine discussing the contemporary non-specialist perspective on the implications of the insanity defense (1881-82). Gift of Bert Hansen.

In order to determine insanity, the Court could choose from several methods. The M'Naghten Rule, devised in England in 1843, was the primary method used in American courts. This rule presumed all defendants sane; in order to be proven insane, a defendant needed to either lack awareness of the nature of the act they were committing at the time when they were committing it, or to be aware of the act they were committing, yet not know that it was wrong (Wex Definitions 2020).

The alternative method involved invoking the doctrine of "irresistible impulse." This doctrine, first endorsed by courts in New Hampshire in the early 1870s, argued that the law should seek to identify whether or not a crime directly proceeded from a mental illness, taking mental illness as a fact that can be determined via evidence, rather than through the application of a test or standard. Should the defendant's actions be shown to follow from their ailments, then they could not be found guilty of a crime (Wex Definitions 2023). This doctrine was not without controversy and was explicitly rejected by the Court in Guiteau's case.

- 1 Was he insane? If not he is guilty.
- 2 If insane - was he such to such a degree as not to know the nature of the act & that it was illegal & morally wrong.
- 3 Uncontrollable impulse

Note fragment on insanity, possibly written by prosecuting attorney John K. Porter during the trial proceedings.



1924 illustration by Albert Reid depicting the spirits of presidential assassins, John Wilkes Booth and Charles Julius Guiteau.

read the following before the assassination,
worse than Judas: and it will make him feel.

Guiteau.

1
You treachrous villin, you deserve to die,
You cannot reign, with God on high;
You have acknowledged, it was your intent,
To kill Garfield, our righteous President.

2

Hence no righteous man, can take your part,
Because you are a murderer, Guiteau at heart;
And as sure as six and one, makes seven,
"No murderer can enter, the kingdom of heaven."

3
The righteous do not believe, in mob law,
But many hate you, you never yet saw,
And they would hate worse, to see you live & thrive;
Yea! many, would rather see you skinned alive.

4

No more at large Guiteau, you should trample,
You ought to be made, a public example;
And if the present law, will not do,
One ought to made, to finish you; (Gitto.)

5

Thirtyfive attempts, in thirty three years,
To assassinate rulers, history avers;
Hence hereafter, for such an attempt,
Death should be at least the punishment.

10

The James Ballard R. D. Oak, Iowa submitted Sept. 2nd 1881.

Poem about Charles Julius Guiteau. This poem, written by Rev. James Ballard of Red Oak, IA, was sent to prosecuting attorney John K. Porter. (September 2, 1882).

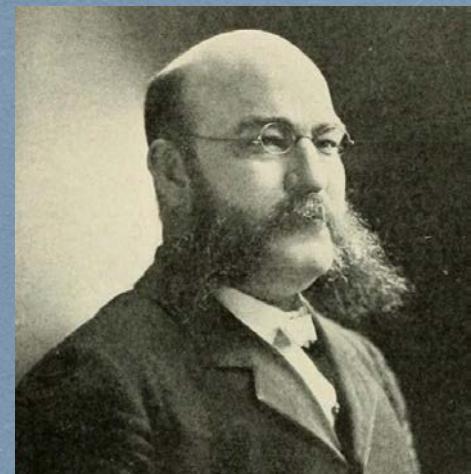
The prosecution brought a variety of psychiatrists to bear on the case, including John Gray, one of the foremost psychiatric authorities in the country. Gray was the superintendent of the Utica State Hospital, editor of the *American Journal of Insanity* (predecessor to the *American Journal of Psychiatry*), and possibly a personal acquaintance of Judge John K. Porter, the prosecuting attorney. Gray believed that Guiteau could not be insane and was instead a product of bad upbringing, personal depravity, and a deterioration of the moral fabric of American society. Gray's ideas were deeply informed by the religious orthodoxy of his time - a member of the Reformed Church, he believed that if Guiteau were found insane, it would be a concession to "European materialism" and a dangerous invocation of the concept of "moral insanity."



John P. Gray, Superintendent of the Utica State Hospital and star witness for the prosecution (1880).



Edward C. Spitzka, psychiatrist and star witness for the defense (1889).



James G. Kiernan, psychiatrist and expert witness for the defense (1903).

The defense brought a variety of psychiatrists to its side, including W.W. Godding, James G. Kiernan, and Edward C. Spitzka. Godding, the Superintendent of the Government Hospital for the Insane, believed that Guiteau was insane and was convinced that his execution would be detrimental to the integrity of American justice system. Kiernan and Spitzka were part of a younger generation of European-educated psychiatrists who were beginning to challenge established orthodoxies in psychiatric practice, especially those espoused by influential figures like Gray. For these physicians, who were beginning to rely on the emerging concept of degeneracy, heredity constituted an essential factor in the cause of most mental illnesses. These concepts would become essential in the widespread adoption of eugenic theories about human reproduction and race over the succeeding decades.

In some sense, this trial constituted a confrontation between existing and emerging psychiatric schools of thought. The defense's reliance on a hereditary notion of insanity was in line with emerging trends in European, and especially German psychiatric thought. American psychiatry would embrace these ideas over the coming years, even as the majority of psychiatric opinion in 1882 saw Guiteau as culpable for his actions.

The Court ultimately ruled that Guiteau was sane and culpable for his actions, using the M'Naghten Rule to determine that Guiteau could tell right from wrong when he pulled the trigger. He was sentenced to be executed, the prescribed punishment for his crime.

Hereditry, Eugenic Thought, and Guiteau

The trial of Guiteau marked a significant moment in the history of psychiatry as new ideas about heredity and degeneration were first applied in a high-profile, culturally significant legal proceeding. Both of these concepts played significant roles in the justification of eugenic practices and the construction of scientific racism, which were manifest in US health policy (e.g., the forced sterilization for criminals and patients in psychiatric hospitals) during the late 19th and early 20th-centuries. These concepts were leveraged to popularize a eugenicist discourse of racial and ethnic inferiority, which was legislated into the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act, excluding Chinese and Asian immigration, and the establishment of immigration quotas on Central and Southern Europe.

Discourses on the relevance of heredity in psychiatry had existed since the 18th century (Kendler 2020). Psychiatrists differed in concluding that "insanity," a loose category for a variety of mental illnesses, itself was inheritable or whether a predisposition to "insanity" was transmissible across generations. Furthermore, there was disagreement as to whether or not heredity was a driving cause of mental health diagnosis or simply one component of the cause of a patient's ailment. In the early 19th-century, heredity gained additional currency with the development and expansion of the asylum system. In asylums, psychiatrists started to collect statistics in order to determine the cause of a patient's illness. Heredity provided psychiatrists with a silver bullet of sorts - an environmental explanation of mental illness which could be utilized in lieu of further investigation into a patient's life circumstances. In Bedlam Hospital, London's famous asylum and an important site in the development of the asylum system, "heredity" became the most common diagnosis for causation among female patients, and the second most common among male patients for the period between 1846 and 1855 (Chaney, Marks, and Wynter 2024).

Heredity also became a critical tool in a growing effort among psychiatrists to pathologize criminality. These ideas largely flowed from the work of Cesare Lombroso, who wrote the influential *The Criminal Man*. In Lombroso's view, criminals represented a lower or previous stage of human evolution and could be identified by physical as well as mental abnormalities (Mazzarello 2011). It is no surprise that these debates took place contemporaneously with the rise and professionalization of policing forces across the Western world (Uchida 1989; Woollons 1991).

In 1883, a year after the conclusion of the Guiteau trial, Sir Francis Galton would coin the phrase "eugenics," setting the stage for a brutal expansion of psychiatric discourse into the realm of disability, human reproduction, and genetic inheritance. In the following decades, ideas about heredity and mental illness would be turned against society's most vulnerable and play critical roles in formulating anti-semitic, anti-Roma, and homophobic discourse across Europe, as these groups became stigmatized as inherently deviant and socially threatening. This trajectory would, in the following century, culminate in National Socialism in Germany and in fascist movements more generally across Europe, with terrible consequences.

While these historical developments show that by the time of the Guiteau trial, heredity had become a determinative and predictive category in the diagnosis of both mental health and criminality, its use in the trial was perceived as profoundly subversive because it had the potential to exempt Guiteau from capital punishment. The psychiatrists called by the prosecution maintained a distinction between Guiteau's manifest erratic and immoral acts and a medical diagnosis of insanity. The psychiatrists called by the defense presented a diagnosis of insanity based on a genetic conception of mental illness as inherited and determinative. This logic of heredity, which may have protected Guiteau's life, would be the same logic used to sterilize and institutionalize thousands over the coming decades. While psychiatrists on both sides may have seen themselves as acting in a detached and objective manner, the Guiteau trial shows how trends in psychiatry can be upended based on the cultural and political context of a historical moment.

Legacy of the Trial

W. W. Godding, Superintendent of the Government Hospital for the Insane in Washington, D.C., alongside George Beard and A. A. Chevaillier of Boston, Secretary of the National Society for the Protection of the Insane, and Rev. W. W. Hicks, prison chaplain and spiritual advisor for Guiteau, pressed President Arthur to establish a Commission of Lunacy on June 22, 1882, only 8 days before Guiteau's execution (New York Times, June 22, 1882). This Commission would have, as its name suggests, ascertained whether or not Guiteau was insane; if insane, Guiteau would have escaped the gallows. The Commission would have been staffed with psychiatrists and medical specialists and remained outside the domain of public opinion. Godding's rationale in suggesting a Commission (whose very existence would seem to delegitimize both the verdict of a criminal court and the mass of public opinion) was simply that the government needed to protect itself by ascertaining Guiteau's insanity scientifically. If it turned out, as Godding believed, that Guiteau was insane beyond a reasonable doubt, and the state executed him, then future generations would look back on Arthur's government (and American psychiatry, as well) with regret and disdain. According to the letter, "it is a commission to save the Government rather than Guiteau" (Godding 1882). The Commission would not interfere with the sentence of execution should Guiteau be determined sane. Unsurprisingly, Arthur rejected Godding's suggestion and Guiteau was executed the next week.

The figurehead of modern psychiatry during the trial, Edward C. Spitzka, would continue to be influential, even though he never held a leadership position, such as being an asylum superintendent. Spitzka would play another important role in the history of American psychiatry when he oversaw the first execution by electric chair in New York in 1890. Spitzka incorrectly pronounced the victim, William Kemmler, an ax-murderer from Buffalo, dead after the first wave of electric shocks (Los Angeles Herald 1890). He would continue to support the use of the electric chair for the rest of his career.

The figurehead of establishment psychiatry, John P. Gray, on the other hand, did not fare as well. Soon after the conclusion of the trial, in March 1882, Gray was shot in the face in his Utica office by Henry Remshaw, who was an employee of local Turkish baths. Remshaw claimed, like Guiteau, that he had been receiving messages from God for the past 18 months commanding him to kill Dr. Gray (New York Times, March 17 1882). After the attack, Remshaw had given himself up and was declared insane (New York Times, May 9, 1882). As the bullet had not hit Gray's brain or caused significant bone damage, he recovered from his wounds. However, the stress caused by the injury would contribute to his eventual death in 1886, and compelled him to step back from the administration of the Utica Asylum (Shrady 1886).

According to Charles Rosenberg, author of *The Trial of the Assassin Guiteau: Psychiatry and Law in the Gilded Age*, which is the most significant publication to-date on the trial proceedings, Guiteau's trial marked the first moment in which significant (but not comprehensive) portions of the psychiatric community chose to publicly take a stand in opposition to popular opinion, opting to prioritize the principles, judgments, and determinations of their own science rather than those of non-specialists. For Rosenberg, this marked a growing "maturity" in American psychiatry, whose relationship with the law would stabilize over the coming decades as psychiatric testimony became more relevant in cases of insanity (Rosenberg 1968).

Selected Resources at the Oskar Diethelm

Archives:

Guiteau Collection
Bernard Diamond Collection
Alfred Freedman M.D. Papers
Isaac Ray M.D. Papers
Jacques Quen M.D. Papers
Norman Dain Ph.D. Papers

Books:

Alexander, H. H. and Edward D. Easton. (1882). *Report of the Proceedings in the Case of the United States vs. Charles J. Guiteau: Tried in the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, Holding a Criminal Term, and Beginning November 14, 1881*. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office.

Guiteau, John W. (1882). *Letters and Facts not Heretofore Published Touching the Mental Condition of Charles J. Guiteau Since 1865*. New York: J. K. Lees.

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All sources included in this exhibit are housed in the Oskar Diethelm Library's extensive collections of books and archival materials. Some highlights of the library's collection include trial notes, pamphlets and popular media discussing the trial, materials written by psychiatrists about the trial, and correspondence between W. W. Godding and President Chester A. Arthur.

Richardson Seminar on the History of Psychiatry

Seminar Coordinator's Report



Without aiming to program the Richardson Seminar around a particular theme, one (at least) tends to emerge. This year, as the institutions of higher education were shaken, these lectures returned us to earlier power struggles in the history of psychiatry, which have both structured and destabilized the dynamics of intellectual expertise and institutional authority.

We heard about the Sullivanian Institute's extreme abandonment of the Freudian psychoanalytic frame and the struggle to sustain Harlem's Lafargue Mental Health Clinic. We welcomed authors of important new books: Regina Kunzel, Ph.D. talked to us about *In the Shadow of Diagnosis: Psychiatric Power and Queer Life* and Dagmar Herzog, Ph.D. discussed *The Question of Unworthy Life: Eugenics and Germany's Twentieth Century*. These books each offered powerful — and powerfully disturbing — accounts of how clinical categories have been wielded to promote social exclusion and to further genocidal ambitions.

The 30th annual Carlson Memorial Grand Rounds lecture and Richardson Seminar were delivered by Mark Solms, Ph.D., the South African psychoanalyst and Professor of Neuropsychology at the University of Cape Town. These lectures took place soon after the publication of his *Revised Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. At Grand Rounds, his morning lecture posed the question, "Did Strachey Falsely Scientize Freud?," showing us how Freud's colloquial German word-choice was converted by his English translator, James Strachey, into a medicalized nomenclature with retrofit Greek roots. Professor Solms's afternoon presentation, "The Foundations of Psychoanalysis in Freud's Neuroscientific Works," elaborated often overlooked continuities between Freud's early neuroscientific understandings of the brain and his psychodynamic models of mind.

Shari Wolk, Ph.D., L.P.

Aaron H. Esman, M.D. Lecture

April 30, 2025



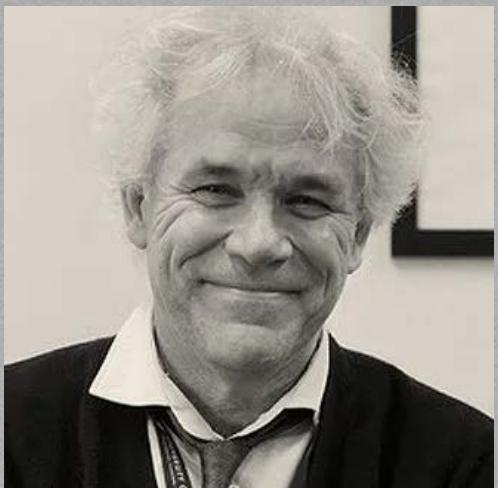
*To Listen and To Hear:
Music and the Memory of Trauma*

Jeremy Eichler, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Music, History, and English
Tufts University

Carlson Memorial Lecture

May 7, 2025



Psychiatry Grand Rounds
Did Strachey Falsely Scientize Freud?

Richardson Seminar

*The Foundations of Psychoanalysis
in Freud's Neuroscientific Works*

Mark Solms, Ph.D.

Professor of Neuropsychology
University of Cape Town

Fall 2024

September 4 Alexander Stille, M.S.
Columbia University
"The Black Sheep in a White Family:
A Case of Therapeutic Abuse"

October 16 Regina Kunzel, Ph.D.
Yale University
"In the Shadow of Diagnosis:
Psychiatric Power and Queer Life"

November 20 Julien Chehirian, Ph.D. candidate
Princeton University
"The Psychotherapeutic Museum: Political Violence,
Memory and Remediation at the 60th Venice Art
Biennale"

December 4 Kevin Duong, Ph.D.
University of Virginia
"Psychiatry for Internal Colonialism:
Harlem's Lafargue Clinic, 1946-1958"

December 18 Leonardo Niro, Ph.D.
University of Essex
"Is Love a Natural Force? Conservation of Energy and
the Origins of Psychoanalysis"

Spring 2025

January 15 Joel Braslow, M.D., Ph.D.
 Columbia University Medical Center
 "A Clinical History of Psychiatry and Serious Mental
 Illness"

February 19 Dagmar Herzog, Ph.D.
 CUNY Graduate Center
 "The Question of Unworthy Life: Eugenics and
 Germany's Twentieth Century"

March 5 Jennifer Langham, Ph.D.
 Psychoanalytic Center of California
 "London Kleinians in Los Angeles"

April 2 Nirav Soni, Ph.D.
 Weill Cornell Medical College
 "Systems and Fields: Intersubjectivity in New York,
 Buenos Aires and Montevideo"

April 16 Kelsey Henry, Ph.D.
 Princeton University
 "Deprivatizing Emotions, Racializing Public Feelings:
 Kenneth B. Clark and the Psychologization of Antiblack
 Environments, 1940s-1950s"

Seminar Coordinator's Report



In this year's Psychiatry and the Arts interviews, I hosted two brilliant writers. We explored the role of the imagination in the transmission of stories through translation and mythology. The dynamics of novelty and familiarity underscored these discussions of authorship, linguistic constraints, narrative structure, group formation, and cultural signification.

In the fall, Damion Searls — the polyglot translator of philosophy, poetry, and Nobel prize-winning literature — joined us to discuss his new book, *The Philosophy of Translation*, published by Yale University Press in 2024. Searls offered an evocative account of the thought-processes through which a translation comes to life for the translator. He presented examples of the often daunting semantic riddles that he needed to solve to reach across linguistic and cultural divides.

Richard Slotkin, Professor Emeritus of English and American Studies at Wesleyan University, is a distinguished historian of American nationalism. He spoke to us about his latest work, *A Great Disorder: National Myth and the Battle for America*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award in 2024. Our conversation examined the repetitious antagonisms, rooted in the making and maintenance of the idea of America, and the way mythic undercurrents continued to undergird our politics. The imagination of our nation, Professor Slotkin emphasized, has long been rooted in narratives of expansion and violence that is seen as regenerative.

George J. Makari, M.D.

Oct. 2 Damion Searls, Ph.D. on **"Translation and the Imagination"**

Feb. 5 Richard Slotkin, Ph.D. on **"Nationalism and the Imagination"**

Seminar Coordinator's Report



UNICEF estimates that "some 400 million children — about 1 of every 5 — are living or fleeing from conflict zones." Dr. Sami Owaida gave a presentation titled "Children of War: Youth Mental Health in Gaza." Dr. Owaida is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist from Gaza who served for twenty-five years as Psychiatrist and Director of the Gaza Community Mental Health Centre. Dr. Owaida discussed mental health policy pertaining to children affected by war, focusing on two questions: how can organized psychiatry best respond to the mental health needs of children in war? What mental health policies can mitigate the risk for trans-generational cycles of violence and conflict?

Professor Nicole Rust of the University of Pennsylvania spoke about her book *Elusive Cures: Why Neuroscience Hasn't Solved Brain Disorders — and How We Can Change That*, published by Princeton University Press. Prof. Rust is a neuroscientist who combines behavioral, neural, and computational approaches to understanding the brain's ability to remember what we've seen ("visual memory"), and more recently on how the brain drives the feelings we call "mood". In addition to this basic research, she also works to develop new therapies to treat memory and mood dysfunction. Her work on memory has been recognized by the Troland Research Award from the National Academy of Sciences for "revolutionizing how we think about neural representation in inferotemporal cortex, providing significant new understanding of the relationship between visual perception and visual memory." She is an elected member of the Memory Disorders Research Society and a recipient of a McKnight Scholar Award, as well as a CAREER Award from the National Science Foundation, an Alfred P. Sloan Fellowship, and the Charles Ludwig Distinguished Teaching Award.

Stewart Adelson, M.D.

Sept. 18 Sami Owaida, M.D., Gaza Community Mental Health Centre
"Children of War: Youth Mental Health in Gaza"

Mar. 19 Nicole Rust, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania
"On the Grand Plan for Brain and Mental Health"

Working Groups

Psychoanalysis and the Humanities



During the academic year 2024-2025, the Working Group on Psychoanalysis and the Humanities continued to engage in lively discussions of members' current work in progress. To begin the year, Nirav Soni gave a presentation about Friedrich Nietzsche's relationship to Richard Wagner, which was one of the most significant personal and intellectual relationships of Nietzsche's life. As background for considering this relationship and its vicissitudes, the group read sections from Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*.

Lisa Gornick, in her presentation, explored aspects of fiction that are relevant to thinking and writing about the therapeutic process. Drawing on writings of James Wood and Thomas Ogden to provide a framework, she led the group in close readings of short stories by Hemingway, Lauren Groff, and Jhumpa Lahiri.

Elisabeth Gitter continued this exploration of short stories and narrative technique with readings of two stories by D.H. Lawrence, "The Horse-Dealer's Daughter" and "The Thimble." She also assigned his short essay "Sex versus Loveliness" to remind us that Lawrence can also be quite funny.

My own presentation focused on a short story by Alice Munro, "Vandals," originally published in 1993. Since Munro's death last May, there have been revelations by her daughter that made Munro a controversial figure, in contrast to the high esteem—even reverence—with which she had previously been regarded. In our discussion we considered whether—or in what ways—what we know (or think we know) about Munro's life affects our reading of her work.

Katherine Dalsimer, Ph.D.

Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis, and Society

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the PPS working group continued to focus on discussing members' work-in-progress. All members are engaged in thought-provoking and critical research projects at various stages of development, which are planned for different types of publications.

At the first Fall semester meeting, I presented papers related to the final chapter of the book I am currently writing on the history of prevention in mental health (forthcoming with Reaktion Books, 2027). The book provides a history of preventive mental health care practices from ancient times to the present, with the last chapter focusing on the ethics of prevention. It connects Melanie Klein's work and the Object Relations tradition to what I see as a necessary "turn to the social" in preventive mental health care. We read and discussed Klein's 1958 work on the psychoanalytic play technique, her only publication in an American psychiatric journal, *The Journal of American Orthopsychiatry*. As it turns out, Ortho, or the American Orthopsychiatric Association, founded in 1923 and now called The Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice, has long been interested in how societal problems affect individual well-being. Building on the idea that the mental health of individuals depends on their social environment, we also read a chapter from Matthew Smith's 2023 book *The First Resort: The History of Social Psychiatry in the USA* and discussed the need to envision a different social covenant that could help mental health workers shift from an emphasis on offering "counsel" or even being in a "coalition of despair" toward a more proactive and pragmatic concept of "radical hope."



During our second meeting of the Fall semester, we discussed a chapter by Alexandra Bacopoulos-Viau, drawn from her work-in-progress, entitled *Scripting the Mind: Technologies of Writing, Gender, and Selfhood in Modern France*. This book, which emphasizes the role of automatic writing in shaping the modern self, combines a wealth of unedited texts from the traditions of Spiritism, psychopathology, and Surrealism. It aims to retell the "discovery of the unconscious" through the perspective of traditionally overlooked figures, such as séance mediums, experimental subjects, and avant-garde poets. We read and discussed the first chapter, "Enter the Mediums," which shows how mediumistic texts became an essential means of social, cultural, and political subversion.

The second presentation was delivered by Maria Farland, who is working on a monograph about literature and the antipsychiatry movement. Her focus is on how post-1945 authors both adapted and subverted the case history as a form of writing. We read and discussed Anne Sealey's "The Strange Case of the Freudian Case History: the Role of Long Case Histories in the Development of Psychoanalysis," J. Andrew Mendelsohn's "Empiricism in the Library: Medicine's Case Histories," and Robert Leventhal's "Historicizing the Psychological Case History," from his book *Making the Case: Narrative Psychological Case Histories and the Invention of Individuality in Germany, 1750-1800*.

We began the Spring semester with a discussion of a paper published by Leonardo Niro in *The History of the Human Sciences*, entitled "Freedom within Parameters": Liberalism, (In)determinism, and the Politics of Instinct in Sigmund Exner and Sigmund Freud." Leo plans to include this research as the final chapter of his forthcoming monograph, *Freud and the Legacy of Physiology*, and asked the PPS group to offer critical feedback on his argument. The article explores the connections between politics, science, and personal life in turn-of-the-century Vienna by comparing the psychological work of physiologist Sigmund Exner and his student, Sigmund Freud. Particular attention is given to how they understood instincts as the universal basis of subjectivity. Leo's analysis shows how these two authors' differing views on instincts reflect the political struggles at the time, as well as their efforts to navigate their own personal identities amidst the rise of anti-Semitism and nationalism that threatened their societal roles, forcing them to reconsider these identities.

During this meeting, we also discussed the book *Madness: A Philosophical Exploration* (2022) by J. Garson, assigned by Alex Miller, who is working on an essay examining Garson's framework, which views madness as either a strategy or a dysfunction. The essay expressed reservations about this author's ultimate reliance on evolutionary psychiatry. In response, Alex proposed an alternative view of what it means to consider madness as a strategy. To this aim, he introduced Michel Foucault's interpretation of Charcot's hysterics (in the former's seminar on *Psychiatric Power*) and the anthropologist Ivan Karp's deconstruction of "culture-bound syndromes" (1985), both of which demonstrate an interesting overlap and resonance with the approach to psychosis developed by the Center for the Psychoanalytic Treatment of Young Adult Psychotics in Quebec City, also known as in "The 388." Alex demonstrated how, at this center, the clinical implications of these two attitudes—strategy versus dysfunction—are made far more explicit than in Garson's work.

The last meeting of our Spring semester, which marked the end of the year for the working group, was dedicated to Nate Kravis' draft paper, entitled "Depressive Hedonia and the Debordian Moment." Nate demonstrated how revisiting Guy Debord's 1967 classic work, *The Society of the Spectacle*, can reveal key aspects of today's cultural climate. As he compellingly argued, some of Debord's main ideas can serve as a bridge between individual psychology and certain contemporary societal phenomena. We discussed his intriguing insights and their connections to envy, grief, and mourning.

In sum, the meetings of the Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis, and Society working group during this past academic year proved once again to be highly productive. They had a meaningful impact on both our individual projects and our collective growth as a community of researchers and scholars. We continue to challenge each other to deepen our thinking and improve our writing, while also supporting and appreciating the progress of each project we discuss. At a time when these kinds of intellectual exchanges face increasing political and institutional pressures, engaging in such patient work and respectful feedback is, in my view, even more valuable.

Orna Ophir, Ph.D., L.P.

History of the Mind Sciences



The History of the Mind Sciences Working Group devoted its November 2024 meeting to a continued exploration of the DeWitt Wallace Institute of Psychiatry's acquisition of the papers of Harry Stack Sullivan, led by Nirav Soni PhD. Our discussion centered on an unpublished paper of Sullivan's as well as his 1950 paper "The Illusion of Personal Individuality," published in the William Alanson White Foundation's journal *Psychiatry*. Therein Sullivan adumbrates his view

of anxiety as a form of narcissistic injury against which the self protects. Anxiety, Sullivan writes, is "the product of a great many people who have disapproved," beginning early in life. Defining the self entirely in terms of narcissistic balance, Sullivan emphasizes how the self is dedicated to "the exclusion from awareness of certain types of very humiliating recollections." Sullivan goes on to state that "It is one's prestige, one's status, the importance which people feel one is entitled to, the respect that one can expect from people – and even their envy, which becomes precious in that it gives a certain illusion that one has prestige – that dominate awareness."

Clinically, as Dr. George Makari observed, this perspective heralded an emerging focus on transference/countertransference phenomena, and what would later become an expansive theorization of narcissism and narcissistic personality disorder. As Dr. Robert Michels commented, New York analysts at the time concerned themselves mainly with discovering what was in the patient's mind, while Sullivan and his Washington, DC colleagues focused on what was happening in the room between patient and analyst.

In our March 2025 meeting, Dr. Lawrence Friedman led a discussion of his recent work on Freud's 1914 paper, "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through." Dr. Friedman drew our attention to Freud's statement that "We must still be grateful to the old hypnotic technique for having brought before us single psychical processes of analysis in an isolated or schematic form." Dr. Friedman enjoined us to unpack this statement of gratitude. What exactly is Freud thanking Charcot for? One answer entertained by the group in our discussion is that Charcot found a pathogen – traumatic memory – that Freud was able to transmute into a much broader category of memory as action in stating that patients repeat instead of remembering. "[A]cting out (repetition) replace[s] remembering," as Freud puts it.

There are many gems in Freud's paper that make it repay re-reading. Some of us were especially struck by his stating that "There is one special class of experiences of the utmost importance for which no memory can as a rule be recovered. These are experiences which occurred in very early childhood and were not understood at the time but which were *subsequently* understood and interpreted." A foreshadowing of the concept of *après-coup*?

Ben Kafka, Ph.D., L.P.
Nathan Kravis, M.D.

Seminar in Narrative Psychiatry

The 2024-2025 Seminar in Narrative Psychiatry took up the question of extreme emotional states, their description in literary works, and their relation to psychiatric diagnoses. When do emotions experienced by most human beings become pathological? What are the criteria for making such normal/sick distinctions? The literary texts under discussion included Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" with its "mad" narrator, the evocation of erotic fever in Emily Dickinson's "Wild Nights," a passage from Tolstoy's *War and Peace* about Natasha's infatuation, and Jacques's melancholy in Shakespeare's "As You like It." The texts generated fascinating discussions among us and written stories, personal and clinical.



Siri Hustvedt, Ph.D.

Benjamin Rush Fellowship



The Rush Fellowship has been full of activity and energy in the 2024-25 academic year. Dr. Alexandra Bacopoulos-Viau and I have had the pleasure of working with a talented, bright, and thoughtful class of residents.

This year we have four fellows in the program and are happy to be welcoming a fifth for the 2025-26 academic year. Norman Greenberg, M.D. has been steadily working on a fascinating study of Nachman of Breslov. He spent the year in an independent tutorial with Leonard Groopman, M.D. Nana Park, M.D., Jaimie Rogner, M.D., and Erin Collier, M.D. are continuing in the third year of the fellowship, after having spent the 2024-25 year studying foundational texts in the history of psychiatry. For 2025 we welcome Alison Mosier-Mills, M.D. (PGY-2) to the fellowship. Dr. Mosier-Mills comes with a background in the history of medicine and medical ethics and we are excited to welcome her for what promises to be an exciting course of study.

Nirav Soni, Ph.D.
Alexandra Bacopoulos-Viau, Ph.D.

Staff & Affiliated Research Faculty

George J. Makari, M.D.	Director
Nathan Kravis, M.D.	Associate Director
Orna Ophir, Ph.D., L.P.	Associate Director
Nicole Topich, M.L.I.S.	Special Collections Librarian
Shari Wolk, Ph.D., L.P.	Staff Associate
Stewart Adelson, M.D.	
Alexandra Bacopoulos-Viau, Ph.D.	
Michael Beldoch, Ph.D.	
Samantha Boardman, M.D.	
Katherine Dalsimer, Ph.D.	
Joseph J. Fins, M.D., D. Hum. Litt., M.A.C.P., F.R.C.P.	
Lawrence Friedman, M.D.	
Richard Friedman, M.D.	
William Frosch, M.D.	
Robert Goldstein, M.D.	
Leonard Groopman, M.D., Ph.D.	
Curtis Hart, M.Div.	
Dagmar Herzog, Ph.D.	(CUNY Grad Center)
Siri Hustvedt, Ph.D.	
Ben Kafka, Ph.D., L.P.	
Robert Michels, M.D.	
Doris B. Nagel, M.D.	
Louis Sass, Ph.D.	(Rutgers University)
Theodore Shapiro, M.D.	
Nirav Soni, Ph.D.	
Paul E. Stepansky, Ph.D.	
Rosemary Stevens, Ph.D., M.P.H.	
Megan Wolff, Ph.D., M.P.H.	

All have appointments at Weill Cornell. If a member's primary academic position is elsewhere, it is given in parentheses.

Research Faculty News



Stewart Adelson, M.D. is Clinical Associate Professor in adult, child and adolescent psychiatry at Weill Cornell, Adjunct Associate Clinical Professor at Columbia, and a Senior Visiting Fellow at Yale Law School. He directs the Issues in Mental Health Policy lectures at the DeWitt Wallace Institute of Psychiatry, serves as Deputy Editor of *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, and is on the Editorial Board of the American College of Psychiatrists' Practice in Psychiatry (PIPE) Exam. He is founding Director at Yale of the Youth Equity Science/YES Project, a novel program in which youth mental health experts and human rights scholars collaborate, employing public health science and human rights principles to amend sexual and gender minority youth mental health disparities in the U.S. and internationally. He served as the lead author of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry's first and only Practice Guidelines for sexual and gender minority youth. He also provides clinical supervision and has expertise in psychodynamic psychiatry of adults, children and adolescents, and practices psychiatry in Manhattan.



Alexandra Bacopoulos-Viau, Ph.D. is Clinical Assistant Professor of History in Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine's Department of Psychiatry. During the past year she worked on her first monograph project, entitled *Scripting the Mind: Technologies of Writing and Selfhood in France, 1857–1930*. The book traces the rise of various models of the mind that emerged in France prior to and concurrently with the Freudian revolution. Specifically, it highlights the role played by 'automatic writing' in the making of the modern self. In 2024-25 Bacopoulos-Viau presented her work-in-progress at the 'Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and Society' working group, wrote the preface to a French book on female mediumship, and gave a number of invited talks in the US and abroad. She also co-facilitated a new thesis writing program for graduate students at McGill University. In 2024 she was promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor in Weill Cornell's Department of Psychiatry. As of spring 2023, she is the academic advisor of the Benjamin Rush fellowship in the History of Psychiatry, which she co-directs with Dr. Nirav Soni.



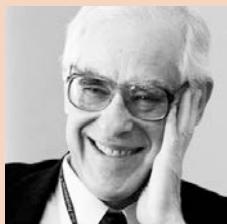
Samantha Boardman, M.D. is Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Clinical Instructor in Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College, Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, and Co-Chair of the Positive Psychiatry Section of the World Psychiatric Association. In the past year she taught the Essential Principles of Medicine course. Dr. Boardman's writing on positive psychiatry has been published in psychiatric journals and *The Wall Street Journal*. She also presented at the World Congress of Psychiatry on "Positive Psychiatry, Psychotherapy, and Psychology, and Healthy Aging." She presented lectures on "Everyday Resilience" and "Raising Resilient Children Through the Digital Age."



Katherine Dalsimer, Ph.D. is Clinical Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medical College. She is the coordinator of the Institute's Working Group on Psychoanalysis and the Humanities. She is also on the faculty of the Columbia University Center for Training and Research, where she is the director of the Affiliate Scholars Program, and where she co-teaches the course on advanced clinical writing.



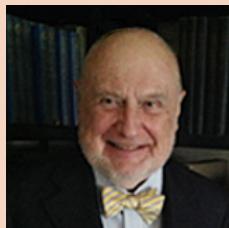
Joseph J. Fins, M.D., DHL, DMSc, M.A.C.P., F.R.C.P. is the E. William Davis, Jr., M.D. Professor of Medical Ethics, Professor of Medicine, Chief of the Division of Medical Ethics at Weill Cornell Medicine and director of medical ethics at New York Presbyterian Weill Cornell. Dr. Fins co-directs the Consortium for the Advanced Study of Brain Injury at Weill Cornell and Rockefeller University with Dr. Nicholas Schiff. At Yale Law School, Dr. Fins is the Solomon Center Distinguished Scholar in Medicine, Bioethics and the Law and a Visiting Professor of Law. The author of *Rights Come to Mind: Brain Injury, Ethics, and the Struggle for Consciousness* (Cambridge University Press), Dr. Fins has pioneered ethical and legal scholarship advancing the civil and disability rights of patients with brain injury. Last year, he was a co-author of a *New England Journal of Medicine* paper demonstrating a 25% prevalence of cognitive motor dissociation (covert consciousness) in patients with severe brain injury. Dr. Fins continues work on his NIH funded BRAIN Initiative grant as MPI. In this collaboration with Mass General Brigham-Harvard Medical School, he and his colleagues explore post-trial ethical obligations to subjects with in-dwelling investigational neural devices. Dr. Fins continues in his role chair of the Hastings Center for Bioethics Board of Trustees. In the past year Dr. Fins was honored to present the Thomas A. Pitts Memorial Lectureship in Medical Ethics at the Medical University of South Carolina, serve as Commencement Speaker at Dell Medical College at the University Texas at Austin, and receive an Honorary Doctor of Medical Science at the Medical College of Wisconsin where he was also the Commencement Speaker. Dr. Fins continues to work on a full-length biography of the physician-humanist, Dr. Lewis Thomas now with support of the Richard Lounsbery Foundation.



Lawrence Friedman, M.D. is on the Faculty of the Psychoanalytic Association of New York (PANY). He is on the Consulting Board for the Hans W. Loewald Center. He serves on the Editorial Board of *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, and he is an Editorial Consultant to *Psicoterapia e Scienze Umane*. He wrote the Preface to *The Emerging Tradition of Hans Loewald* (Routledge, 2025), edited by Rosemary Balsam, Elizabeth Brett and Lawrence Levenson. He will shortly republish some of his papers as *Psychodynamic Psychotherapy; Mind and Meaning* (I.P. Books). He is a member of the Center for Advanced Psychoanalytic Studies, and the Rapaport-Klein Study Group. At the Psychoanalytic Association of New York he is chairing a Study Group on the work of Hans Loewald, and a Study Group on Theories of Therapeutic Effect of Psychoanalysis. He is currently working on origins and methodology in Freud's *Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through*.



Richard A. Friedman, M.D. is Professor of Clinical Psychiatry and the Director of the Psychopharmacology Clinic at Weill Cornell Medical College. He is actively involved in teaching and training psychiatric residents and is director of the biological psychiatry curriculum in the department. Dr. Friedman has a keen interest in mental health policy and the social and cultural implications of current psychiatric practice. He has published on a wide range of topics in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, and *The Journal of the American Medical Association*. Dr. Friedman has expanded his public writing on topics including mental health, addiction, human behavior, and neuroscience. He is a contributor to the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Atlantic*. Outside of the office, he is an avid long-distance swimmer and classical pianist.



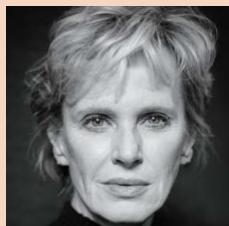
William Frosch, M.D. is Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry. Dr. Frosch continues to attend rounds, participate in the Richardson Seminar, and occasionally sit in on Rockefeller University's IRB. Reflecting on the last year, he noted that he has been writing memorials for old friends.



Curtis W. Hart, M.Div. continues in his varied roles at the medical center. These include teaching medical ethics to medical students at both the basic and advanced level in the Division of Medical Ethics and as a member of the Institutional Review Board Committee on Human Rights and Research. He serves on the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee of Hunter College and the Board for Professional Medical Conduct of the State of New York. The latter presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation for ten years of service as a member of the Board. He provides peer reviews for articles for both the *Journal of Religion and Health* and the *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling*. His presentations include "David Hollinger's Memoir 'When This Mask of Flesh is Broken': A Case History of the Anxiety of Influence" to the Columbia RADO Advanced Study Group in Psychoanalysis and Spirituality.



Dagmar Herzog, Ph.D. is Distinguished Professor of History at the Graduate Center, City University of New York. Her book, *The Question of Unworthy Life: Eugenics and Germany's Twentieth Century* (Princeton 2024), was selected as winner of the DAAD/German Studies Association Book Prize in History and Social Science for 2025 as well as the Disability History Association's 2025 Outstanding Book Award. The German translation, *Eugenische Phantasmen: Eine deutsche Geschichte* (Suhrkamp 2024) was chosen by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* as one of the top 8 nonfiction books for 2024. Her long-form essay, *The New Fascist Body* (Wirklichkeit Books, 2025) - based on lectures delivered in Rome and at the Remarque Institute - has just appeared in English and German and was reviewed in *Jacobin*. She is currently working on a project entitled *Fascism's Lingering*, based in a corpus of public opinion research conducted in post-Nazi Germany in the early 1950s.



Siri Hustvedt, Ph.D. continued teaching a seminar in narrative psychiatry at Weill Cornell and writing a memoir, *Ghost Stories*, which she finished in March of 2025. In July, she gave a talk at an interdisciplinary symposium on pain at St. John's College, Oxford, organized by the psychologist Christopher Eccleston and the molecular biologist Banafshé Larijani. In September, she traveled to Arctic Norway where she had a small acting part in a film by Wim Wenders on the architect, Peter Zumthor. In October, she was in Oviedo, Spain, where she did two events on her work for the Asturias Foundation. In November, she discussed her work at a Zoom event with the Argentinian Psychoanalytic Association. In January, she spoke at a psychosomatic medicine conference at Columbia University Department of Psychiatry. In the spring, she spoke by Zoom at an International Association of Forensic Psychotherapy conference on the arts in offender rehabilitation, was interviewed by Laure Adler for *Machine à écrire*, and appeared at the PEN festival in NYC. In June, she gave the opening keynote lecture, "Fascist Masculine Bodies and the Terrors of Dependency" at an Embodied Visual Culture conference in Palermo, Italy, and she opened the Neuropsychoanalysis Conference, held at Mount Sinai in NYC with her paper "Trouble at the Border: "Mother, Fetus, Placenta and the Question of 'Mind.'"



Ben Kafka, Ph.D., L.P., has entered full-time private practice after nearly twenty years teaching the history and theory of communication at NYU. In 2024 he was also appointed associate professor of clinical psychoanalysis in the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia, in conjunction with his position at the DeWitt Wallace Institute. He continues to work on a book, inspired by Harold Searles's famous paper, about how people "drive each other crazy." The book is now under contract to Random House, with translations planned in several languages. A conversation about the project appeared in *The New Yorker*.



Nathan Kravis, M.D. is an Associate Director of the DeWitt Wallace Institute, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medical College, and a Training and Supervising Analyst at the Columbia University Psychoanalytic Center. He serves on the editorial board of *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*.



George J. Makari, M.D., Institute Director, was featured in the award-winning documentary by Yair Qedar, *Outsider Freud*, and along with that movie, opened a conference assessing Freud's legacy at the Stockholm Royal Institute of Arts. In addition to a podcast on the History Channel, he discussed Freud's legacy at the Austrian Cultural Forum and at the University of California, where he gave a plenary to a conference, "A Return to Freud? New Histories of Psychoanalysis." He lectured on xenophobia at the Holocaust, Genocide and Information Center of Manhattan College and did podcasts on animal behavior and xenophobia, as well as irrational forces in group psychology. His "Inside the Xenophobic Mind" was published in the Netherlands, where he was also interviewed by the popular press. Dr. Makari penned an extensive critique of extreme reductionism (as proposed by some so-called "incompatibilist" philosophers and neuroscientists) called "Was Samuel Johnson a Robot?" in *Raritan Quarterly*. In addition, his essay with Dr. Richard Friedman in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, on the need for commemoration after COVID, was taken up this year by Emory University's medical school, where a full day of mourning and celebration took place. Finally, new translations of his landmark books came out this year in Portuguese, Taiwanese, and Korean. He served as a judge for the Book Prize of the American Psychoanalytic Association. In addition to his private practice and responsibilities at the Institute, Dr. Makari continues to teach the history of psychiatry and a historically based, six-month long Psychoanalytic Models of the Mind class to the PGY-2 residents.



Robert Michels, M.D. is Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry. After having been on the full-time faculty at Cornell since joining to serve as the Barklie McKee Henry Professor and Chairman of Psychiatry from 1974 to 1991, then as the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean of Cornell's medical college from 1991-1996, and from 1996 to the present as University of Professor, in the end of 2024 Dr. Michels transitioned to Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry. His article titled "Defense: Psychological Construct or Clinical Process?" was published in the Fall 2024 issue of the journal *Psychiatry*.



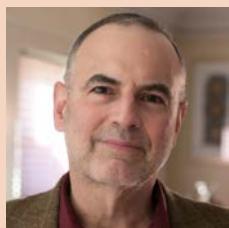
Orna Ophir, Ph.D., L.P. is a historian and a licensed psychoanalyst. Her book, *Schizophrenia: An Unfinished History* was published by Polity Press in the UK in May 2022 and in the US in July 2022, appeared in 2023 in a Spanish translation as *Esquizofrenia: Una historia inacabada* with Bauplan Press. It is currently being translated into Turkish. During the academic year of 2023-2024, she presented excerpts from the new book she is working on, entitled *The Social Turn: The History of Preventive Care in Mental Health*, at the Faculty Lecture Series at the Gallatin School for Individual Studies at NYU (April 5) as well at the Center of Modern Psychoanalytic Studies (May 2024). Ophir continues to teach an interdisciplinary undergraduate seminar on the history of madness at NYU, in addition to advising students on their individual senior projects touching on psychoanalysis, psychiatry, madness, and art. She serves on the IPA committee on the History of Psychoanalysis and contributed to the second issue of its History Bulletin, featuring The Oskar Diethelm Library. Ophir continues to serve as an Associate Director of The DeWitt Wallace Institute of Psychiatry and see patients in her private practice in SoHo.



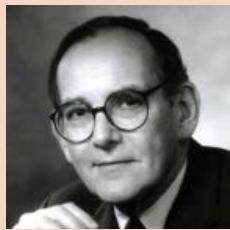
Louis Sass, Ph.D. is Distinguished Professor of Clinical Psychology in the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers University and a fellow of the New York Institute for the Humanities. He currently holds the International Francqui Professorial Chair, Belgium. Sass authored and co-authored various articles this year in journals including *Philosophical Psychology* and *Schizophrenia Research*.



Nirav Soni, Ph.D. is Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry at Cornell and on the teaching faculty at the Columbia Center for Psychoanalytic Training and Research. At Cornell he directs the Benjamin Rush Fellowship in the History of Psychiatry at the Institute and teaches and supervises in the psychology internship program. At Columbia, he teaches in the Theory track and is co-chair of the Sandor Rado lecture committee. He is on the editorial board of the *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* and the program committee of the American Psychoanalytic Association. He is in private practice in New York City and Princeton, NJ.



Paul Stepansky, Ph.D. is continuing to update his blog, "Medicine, Health, and History" (adoseofhistory.com), which includes numerous essays on a range of topics in the fields of mental health policy and medical history, including recent essays on the history of anti-vaccinationism in America, the history of malaria in the military, and a history of anti-mask protests during the 1918 Influenza pandemic. He is also at work on a memoir of his 30-year career in psychiatric and psychoanalytic publishing, twenty-three of which were spent as Managing Director of the Analytic Press, Inc.



Theodore Shapiro, M.D. retired from active assignments at Weill Cornell Medical College on June 30, 2022 as Emeritus Professor. He continues to participate in the Sackler Infant Psychiatry Program, which he founded as part of the Sackler Research Center for Developmental Neurobiology. He also is a steady participant at Grand Rounds and the Richardson Seminars. He continues a small practice with a few remaining patients following the Covid crisis. He presented at Grand Rounds addressing the value of Freud's polymorphous perverse sexuality in understanding recent upheavals concerning LGBTQ, trans-politics, and Roe vs. Wade. He continues his scholarly and mentoring roles at the Medical College while devoting his newly found retirement time to his family, which now includes a most winning two year old great-granddaughter.



Rosemary Stevens, Ph.D., M.P.H. completed editing the observations she made of work and workers in a large British hospital where she was a hospital administrative trainee, and has been writing about her subsequent experiences as House Governor (administrator) of a London hospital and subsequent immigration to the United States. Dr. Stevens is considering issues raised by her book, *A Time of Scandal: Charles R. Forbes, Warren G. Harding and the Making of the Veterans Bureau* (2016), whose conclusions center on myth-making in history; specifically, on the fictional characterization of Colonel Charles R. Forbes, the first director of the nation's huge, newly organized, politically conflicted U.S. Veterans Bureau. She is focusing on the broad topic of historical memory, as evidenced in nonfictional and fictional accounts of documented events, now a topic of great importance in the political life of this and other nations.



Megan J. Wolff, Ph.D., M.P.H. serves as the Executive Director of the Physician and Scientist Network Addressing Plastics and Health (P-SNAP). She conducts research, organizes webinars and advocacy campaigns, and gives frequent lectures on the impact of plastics overproduction on ecology, the climate, and human health. She teaches an online course on plastics and public health through the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University. She remains a member of the Institute of Psychiatry.



Shari Wolk, Ph.D., L.P. is the Richardson Seminar coordinator and staff associate of the DeWitt Wallace Institute. She is a licensed psychoanalyst in private practice. At NYU she teaches courses on psychoanalysis in the Dept. of Media, Culture, and Communication, and this year she served as an external reader for graduate theses in Film and Media Studies at Columbia University.



Selected Research Faculty Publications

***Boardman, S.** (2025). Feeling Overwhelmed? Don't Trust Your Instincts About What To Do Next. *Wall Street Journal*, May 24.

_____. (2025). How to Cut the Risk of Depression in Half. *Psychology Today*, March 11.

***Fins, J.** (2025). Lewis Thomas on Artificial Intelligence. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, March 25.

_____. (2024). The Lives of Lewis Thomas. *Issues in Science and Technology*, 41(1): 73-77.

_____. & Shulman, K. (2024). Neuroethics, Covert Consciousness, and Disability Rights: What Happens When Artificial Intelligence Meets Cognitive Motor Dissociation?. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 36(8): 1667-1674.

Friedman, L. (2025). Preface. In: Hock, U. And Scarfone, D. (Eds). *On Freud's "Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through."* New York: Routledge.

***Friedman, R.** (2025). The Problem With Optimism in a Crisis. *The Atlantic*, February 27.

_____. (2024). Imagine a Drug That Feels Like Tylenol and Works Like OxyContin. *The Atlantic*, November 29.

_____. (2024). Anxiety is Like Exercise. *The Atlantic*, July 29.

Hoffman, A. (2025). The Child in the Adult: Narrative and *Nachträglichkeit* in Henry James and Freud. *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 94(1): 93-122.

***Herzog, D.** (2025). Trauma, Reparations and the Paradoxes of Post-Holocaust Antisemitism. In: Frosch, S. & Baum, D. (Eds.). *The Routledge International Handbook of Psychoanalysis and Jewish Studies*. New York: Routledge.

_____. (2024). *The Question of Unworthy Life: Eugenics and Germany's Twentieth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

***Hustvedt, S.** (2024). Donald Trump, ce 'grand méchant Papa qui va tout reparé. *Liberation*, November 12.

_____. (2024). Jetzt sind wir alle in Gefahr. *Die Zeit*, December 10.

_____. (2025). Une sourde angoisse d'être émasculé s'est emparée des États-Unis. *Liberation*, April 11.

***Makari, G.** (2024). Was Samuel Johnson a Robot?. *Raritan Quarterly*, 44(2): 79-89.

_____. (2024). Inside the Xenophobic Mind. *Groniek*, no. 237: 9-18.

Makari, G. & Friedman, R. (2024). Collective Trauma and Commemoration — A Moment of Silence, Please. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, August 4.

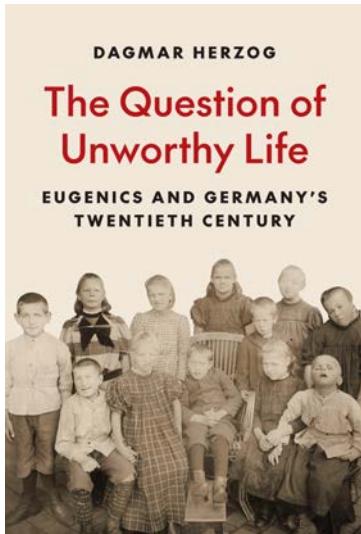
Michels, R. (2024). Defense: Psychological Construct or Clinical Process?. *Psychiatry*, 87(3): 216-217.

***Sass, L.** (2025). Lacan, Psychosis, and Phenomenological Psychopathology.

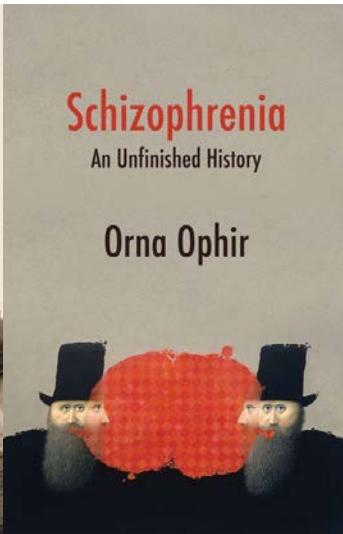
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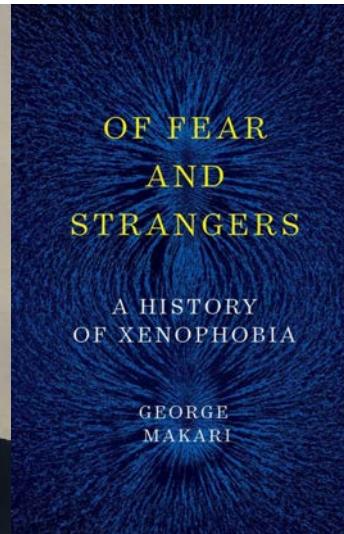
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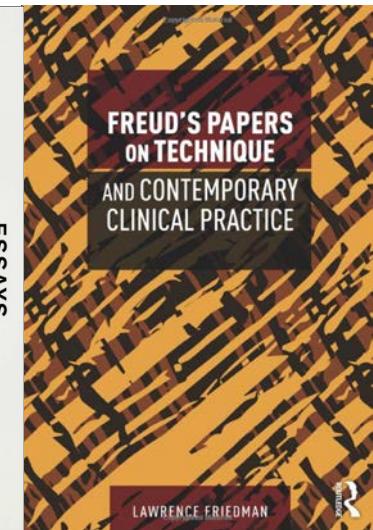
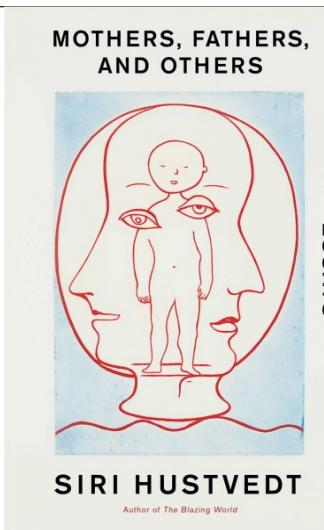
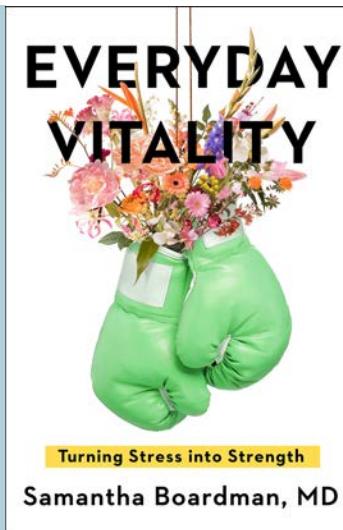
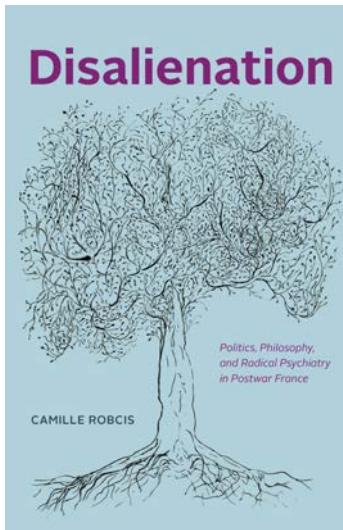
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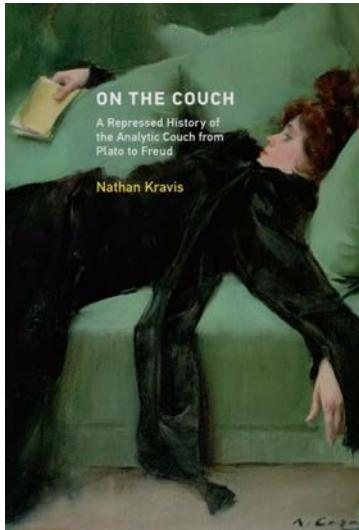
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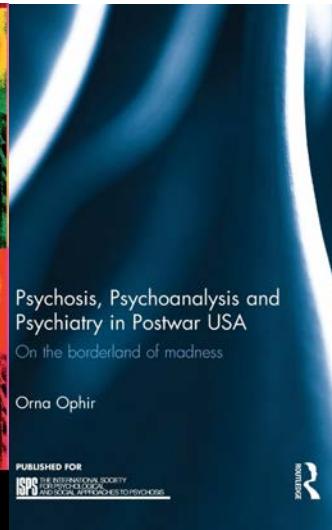
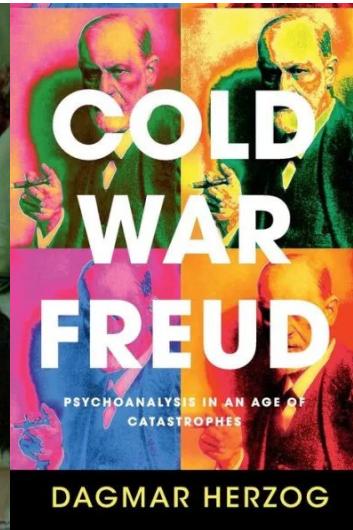
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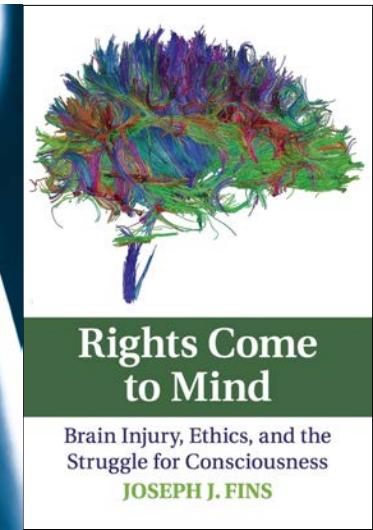
2017



2016



2015



A look back at books published by the institute's directors and research faculty members from 2015-2024. We celebrate their contributions to scholarship in the history of the mind sciences, the humanities, and clinical practice.

Welcome

Attend a Lecture

The Institute meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, from September to May, for our three seminar series: the Richardson History of Psychiatry Research Seminar, Psychiatry and the Arts, and Issues in Mental Health Policy. We welcome participation in-person and on zoom.

Please contact the Richardson Seminar coordinator (shw4012@med.cornell.edu), for the current program schedule and details about attending in-person.

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Planned gifts are a thoughtful way to achieve your philanthropic goals while maximizing your resources and establishing your legacy as a donor to the DeWitt Wallace Institute of Psychiatry.

For information on how you can include the Institute in your plans, please contact Development Coordinator, Emily Layton (eml4009@med.cornell.edu).

Visit the Library

The Oskar Diethelm Library is now accepting visitors on a limited basis. To make an appointment to conduct research, please contact Nicole Topich (nrt4001@med.cornell.edu). We are also available to assist with scholarly research related to our holdings and answer questions about the collections.

Contact Us

We welcome your feedback and questions.

Please contact our administrator (shw4012@med.cornell.edu).

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