

Psychiatry Grand Rounds

WCM Department of Psychiatry

Psychology CE Announcement

Carlson Award

The Talking Cure between Science and Magic, from Freud to AI

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Harvard University

Wednesday, May 15th 2024

11:00am – 12:30pm

<https://weillcornell.zoom.us/j/92812036154>

Meeting ID: 928 1203 6154

Password: 12345

1.5 CE credit available to WCM Department of Psychiatry full time and voluntary faculty Psychologists and Social Workers who sign in with their full name, attend the majority of the lecture and complete a survey which will be emailed following the completion of the lecture. Note the survey must be completed within 30 days of the lecture. Please contact wcmpsychiatryce@med.cornell.edu for additional CE information

SPEAKER: Dr. Lunbeck has no relevant financial relationship(s) with ineligible companies to disclose and DOES NOT INTEND to discuss off-label or investigational use of products or services.

Elizabeth Lunbeck, a historian of psychiatry and psychoanalysis, is the author of several prize-winning books (including *The Americanization of Narcissism*, Harvard University Press) and co-editor of four books in the history of science. She is currently teaching a popular lecture course on Psychotherapy and the Modern Self to Harvard undergraduates, and working on a book on *The Talking Cure, from Freud to the Chatbot*.

Abstract:

Is the relationship between therapist and patient irreducibly human and central to its healing effects, or can an illusory, AI-generated other substitute? Researchers in the 1990s, quick to grasp the possibilities offered by cyberspace, cast it as analogous to the space of therapy: a place of imagination and creativity supportive of reality and fantasy, action and thoughts, isolation and connectedness in which magic and science could co-exist. Can we see in the enthusiasm for AI-generated therapy the reappearance of psychotherapy's disavowed mysticism—this time located in cyberspace and relabeled as scientific? Is it worth considering that magic, illusion, and "miracles" may not be bugs but rather features of the psychotherapeutic enterprise?

Learning Objectives:

1. Demonstrate the generative role of "cyberspace" in psychotherapy.
2. Identify ways in which researchers have made therapeutic action legible to science.
3. Assess the persistence of "the magic of words" (Freud) in the history and present of psychotherapeutic practice.

References:

1. Eltahawy, L., Essig, T., Myszkowski, N., & Trub, L. (2024). Can robots do therapy?: Examining the efficacy of a CBT bot in comparison with other behavioral intervention technologies in alleviating mental health symptoms. *Computers in Human Behavior. Artificial Humans*, 2(1), 100035.
2. Fiske, A., Henningsen, P., & Buyx, A. (2019). Your robot therapist will see you now: Ethical Implications of Embodied Artificial intelligence in Psychiatry, Psychology, and Psychotherapy. *JMIR. Journal of Medical Internet Research/Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 21(5), e13216.
3. Fonagy, P. (2010). The changing shape of clinical practice: Driven by science or by pragmatics? *Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*, 24(1), 22–43.
4. Giuliano, R. F. M. (2020). Echoes of myth and magic in the language of Artificial Intelligence. *AI & Society*, 35(4), 1009–1024.
5. Weizenbaum, J. (1966). ELIZA—a computer program for the study of natural language communication between man and machine. *Communications of the ACM*, 9(1), 36–45.

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