

Arnold Pfeffer Center for Neuropsychanalysis
at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute

Neuropsychanalysis Lecture Series

On Saturday, March 6, 2010 at 10 a.m.

Heather Berlin, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Assistant Professor
Department of Psychiatry
Mount Sinai School of Medicine

will speak on

The Neural Basis of the Dynamic Unconscious

A great deal of complex cognitive processing occurs at the unconscious level and affects how people behave, think and feel. But scientists are only beginning to understand how this occurs on the neural level. Understanding the neural basis of consciousness requires an account of the neural mechanisms that underlie both conscious and unconscious thought, and their dynamic interaction. For example, how do *conscious* impulses, thoughts, or desires become *unconscious* (e.g. repression) or, conversely, how do *unconscious* impulses, desires, or motives become *conscious* (e.g. Freudian slips)? Research taking advantage of advances in technologies, like functional magnetic resonance imaging, has led to a revival and re-conceptualization of some of the key concepts of psychoanalytic theory, and progress at understanding their neural basis. According to psychoanalytic theory, unconscious dynamic processes defensively remove anxiety-provoking thoughts and impulses from consciousness in response to one's conflicting attitudes. Within this framework, the processes that keep unwanted thoughts from entering consciousness include repression, suppression and dissociation. I will discuss studies from psychology and cognitive neuroscience in both healthy and patient populations that are beginning to elucidate the neural basis of these phenomena. This will ultimately lead to more effective treatment options for certain psychological disorders and help us better understand our own consciousness.

Discussant: Eric A. Fertuck, Ph.D.

Auditorium, New York Psychoanalytic Institute,
247 East 82nd Street, (between 2nd and 3rd Avenues) New York

ALL WELCOME!

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