
PERFORMANCE OF A NEWSLETTER
The Online Newsletter of The East Side Institute

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Highlights of news, to enjoy and peruse

TRAINING

*** Applications Reviewed for Developing Teachers Fellowship Program ***

The acceptance process is nearly complete for the Institute's Developing Teachers Fellowship Program, which launches this fall. Applicants are an impressive grouping of public and charter schoolteachers, distinguished by their seriousness, creativity and innovative spirit. The program will train teachers in the Institute's performance-based approach to teaching and learning.

*** Postgraduate Therapist Training Program Holds Graduation ***

Michele Senbertrand and Matthew Lundquist will graduate from the Institute's two-year, Therapist Training Program on June 30.

Michele is a registered nurse and geriatric care manager and clinical supervisor for Senior Bridge, an elder care company based in New York. Michele has a B.S. in Nursing from SUNY Health Service Center at Brooklyn.

Matt is a social worker and a state-certified general and special education teacher. In 2004, he completed graduate studies in education and social work at Bank Street College and Columbia University School of Social Work. He is now a school social worker at the Bronx Charter School for the Arts.

Both Michele and Matt will join the staff of the Social Therapy Group. Michele will see clients in Manhattan, and Matt will see clients in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

*** The International Class Convenes in NYC ***

Members of the 2005/2006 International Class came to NYC for a two-week residency from June 19 to June 30. Since their last residency in February, IC members participated (along with other Institute students) in a series of online classes including, "What Can We Learn From Group Psychotherapy?"

"Performing Philosophy," and "Developing Community Development." Back in New York this past week, a reception with Institute supporters capped a busy schedule of seminars, improv classes, school visits, and therapy group observation.

As the current International Class completes their yearlong program, the 2006-2007 class is in formation, with eleven students accepted as of June. They hail from Argentina, Bangladesh, British Columbia, Kenya, Quebec, Serbia and, in the US, from Georgia and New York City. One is a poet; the others work in health care, theatre for development, social work, education, counseling and social justice.

*** Institute Hosts Introductory Training in Philadelphia ***

On May 20, the Institute's director of training, Bette Braun and Brooklyn Social Therapy Group director, Christine La Cerva traveled to Philadelphia to join co-directors of the Greater Philadelphia Centers for Social Therapy, Jennifer Bullock and Marjory Levitt to lead a training entitled, "Grow our Clients, Grow Ourselves." Thirteen clinicians and students of social therapy attended.

Democracy Begins in Conversation

As the 10th anniversary celebration of South Africa's new Constitution nears, Betsi Pendry (an Institute Associate and member of the International Class working in Johannesburg, South Africa) has launched a new, model program, "Democracy Begins in Conversation," with a group of 120 young people, who come from both the wealthy suburbs as well as Johannesburg's poorest communities.

Their "classroom" for learning about the Constitution and participatory democracy is Constitution Hill, formerly a prison and now home of the Constitutional Court. At one of their first meetings at Constitution Hill, Deputy Chief Justice Moseneke, talked to the young people about his history as a youth activist and described the political process that led to the creation of the new constitution.

Performance is at the heart of this program. Young people perform the Bill of Rights and reenact landmark cases of the Court. Betsi has been working closely with the Department of Education to expand the model program into the schools -- training other teachers in the approach and developing curriculum materials. The goal is to train hundreds of teachers on how to use performance to teach the Constitution. A number of well-known South African musicians (Jennifer Ferguson, Anders Nyberg and Concord Nkabinde) and playwright Nkosan Mnisis have offered to stage benefit performances as part of the 10th anniversary celebrations.

DEVELOPMENT

Giving Circle Campaign Launches

A team of volunteers led by Institute development director Mary Fridley and including Ann Alexis, Sheila Lewis, Debra London, Joan Mahon-Powell, Susan Massad, Tim Neiman, Tom Vasiliades and Jan Wootten have manned the phones over the last six weeks as part of the Institute's annual fundraising campaign to bring new donors into the Giving Circle and to renew the contributions of current Giving Circle members. (Members of the Giving Circle make annual gifts between \$50 and \$1,000.)

The Giving Circle outreach is part of a broader, expansionary fundraising effort that will culminate with the October 2007 Performing the World 4 conference and will include grassroots fundraising parties and get-togethers to introduce new friends to the Institute. In addition, plans are in the works to appeal to targeted corporations and foundations to help underwrite Institute programs (like PTW and the International Class) that support "revolutionary performers" involved in innovative grassroots social and cultural change efforts.

*** West Coast Center for Social Therapy Hosts Institute Fundraiser ***

The West Coast Center for Social Therapy in San Francisco hosted a lively cocktail reception and fundraiser on April 9 for the Institute's programs. The event was attended by 45 friends, teachers, psychologists, nonprofit managers, attorneys and artists and included dialogue and a short awards presentation to Lois Holzman, the Institute's director and Eileen Moncoeur, who is a program director with The American Himalayan Foundation, where she oversees more than 100 humanitarian projects in Southeast Asia.

Holzman and Moncoeur were honored for their contributions to human development, learning and community building.

*** Psych Out Awards Benefit Raises \$130,000 ***

The Institute's fifth Annual gala Psych Out Awards benefit at the Tribeca Rooftop on February 6 raised \$130,000 for Institute programs, a 24% increase over 2005. Two hundred fifty people attended the cocktails, dinner and awards ceremony. A total of 400 supporters made contributions to the benefit - including placing ads in the gala journal and/or making direct gifts to the Institute.

This year's recipients of the Psych Out Award, designed by sculptor and architect Suchitra Van, were social therapy client Grace Ashby, psychiatric nurse and social therapist Janet Bezmen, social worker and "Let's Talk About It" co-leader Fabiola Desmont, oncologist Jimmie Holland (in absentia) and Brooklyn Social Therapy Group director Christine La Cerva.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

*** Jean Piaget Society, Baltimore ***

Christine La Cerva and Carrie Lobman made a presentation at the annual meeting of the Jean Piaget Society in Baltimore, an annual developmental psychology conference. The theme of this year's conference was art and human development. Their symposium, "The Performing Art of Human Development in Educational, Therapeutic and Theatrical Settings," addressed their own practices as well as those of Institute director Lois Holzman and Youth OnStage! director Dan Freidman.

*** Association for the Study of Play, Ontario ***

Institute faculty member, Carrie Lobman presented, "Play and the Improvisational Creation of Zones of Proximal Development" at the Association for the Study of Play Conference held in Ontario, Canada, May 17- 20. The conference attracted a cross-disciplinary group of researchers (educators, psychologist, anthropologists, clinical social workers and historians) who study play in adults, children and animals. In her session she compared the "rules-for-results" play of older children and adults with

the "rule-and-result" play of young children.

*** Association of Oncology Social Work, Minneapolis ***

Institute Associate Baylah Wolfe conducted a poster session at the 2006 AOSW Conference, "Oncology Social Workers Steering the Path: Quality of Life in the Cancer Experience." Her poster presentation, which featured a giant, blow-up photo from New York Magazine's Best Doctors issue (and featuring Institute Associate, Dr. Susan Massad), depicted Massad leading a zany improv game with residents. This unusual scenario of a doctor-at-play attracted a variety of visitors to Baylah's booth. After all, medical social workers are all too aware of the difficulty that doctors have in their relationships with patients, patients' families, and with their nurse and social worker colleagues. Baylah discussed how social workers can improve the quality of their practice by teaching clients to ask philosophical questions.

*** American Educational Research Association (AERA), San Francisco

Institute director Lois Holzman, faculty member Carrie Lobman, and three Institute-trained educators-Matt Lundquist, Jim Martinez and Barbara O'Neill-presented at the annual conference of the AERA in April.

Lois joined a dozen other colleagues (Ana Marjanovic-Shane, Mary Bryson, Michael Cole, Kris Gutierrez, Vera John-Steiner, Elina Lampert-Shepel, Barbara Rogoff, Gordon Wells, Jennifer Vadeboncoeur, Jay Lemke, Donald Cunningham, Natalia Gajdamaschko, and Anna Stetsenko) as faculty for a mini-course entitled "Cultural Historical Activity Theory and Research on Educational Practices." This half-day session, attended by more than 50 faculty and graduate students, is becoming a popular featured event sponsored by AERA's Cultural-Historical Research Special Interest Group,

Among Carrie's conference presentations was the session "Improvising with(in) the System: An Interactive Dialogue Among Three Inner City Teachers." Carrie provided some theoretical/methodological background and interviewed Matt, Jim and Barbara on their work bringing a developmental and performance-based approach into public school settings.

TALKS / SEMINARS / WORKSHOPS

*** Danto and Braun: Reclaiming the Humanist Roots of Psychoanalysis ***

On June 3, the Institute hosted a presentation and conversation featuring Elizabeth Ann Danto and Bette Braun, the Institute's director of training. Among the invited attendees were practicing therapists, new social work graduates from Hunter College and Columbia University and psychology students from Bronx Community College.

Dr. Danto discussed her newest book, "Freud's Free Clinics, Psychoanalysis & Social Justice, 1918-1938" (Columbia University Press, 2005.) Her research into the early years of the psychoanalytic movement in Red Vienna has stirred the psychoanalytic community with its claim that Sigmund Freud's followers were radical humanists (progressives, communists and social democrats) who believed that by treating the poor, they could help change the world. Freud was a supporter of community therapy that offered patients low-cost or free treatment.

*** Are Boundaries Necessary? ***

On May 14, Fred Newman discussed boundaries (and necessity) with a grouping of nearly a hundred workshop attendees. At Newman's request, participants shared what boundaries meant to each of them -- in their actual lives. Newman discussed the insidious process through which boundaries (rules, conventions) go from being something we make up in our day-to-day lives to become something bigger than life: namely, laws / rules / truths that appear to have an existence independent of our having made them. "That's when boundaries become too big for us -- when they assume the voice of authority." He suggested that we routinely ask one another: "Is the way we're conducting ourselves working for us? Do we like this convention? Shall we keep it? Or should we make a new one?"

*** A Social Therapeutic Approach to ADHD and Asperger's ***

On May 13, family therapist and Brooklyn Social Therapy Group director Christine La Cerva presented a class on the social therapeutic approach to ADHD and Asperger's syndrome. Thirty-four parents, social workers, and teachers from NYC public schools took advantage of this opportunity to learn what social therapists have discovered about the importance of group

therapy for young people with these diagnoses. Introducing the multi-family group approach that she has pioneered over the last few years, Christine shared examples of how young people and families are learning (together with other families!) to create unexpected, new performances. Children's experience with improv in this context allows them to create new, more developmental, performances at school and at home.

Family Development Services are offered in Manhattan and at the Brooklyn Social Therapy Group, which has moved into beautiful new storefront offices at 104-106 South Oxford Street in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. For more information, see: www.socialtherapygroup.com, where you can also read an interview in which Christine discusses her work with children with Asperger's syndrome.

*** Fred Newman Asks: "Is Loving Still Sexy?" ***

On Sunday, April 23, Fred Newman gave his annual lecture at New York University's Skirball Auditorium to an audience of nearly 700 people. He was introduced by renowned family therapist Lynn Hoffman, who helped to locate Newman and Lois Holzman's work within the broader framework of postmodern psychology and family therapy. Hoffman described Newman's "artistry" as a therapist and conveyed her appreciation for the "depth charge" he has leveled vis a vis modernist philosophy and psychology. Hoffman surmised that family therapy is moving in the direction of social therapy and narrative approaches. Newman invited the audience to examine the philosophical assumptions we make about love and sex; and urged that we be more creative in examining these assumptions -- including the assumption that love and sex are (necessarily) connected. A recording of the full program is now available on CD (see: Publications, below.)

***Courses on Demand ***

Lois Holzman led two four-session study groups on "Marx and Marxist Methodology." The study group was instigated by an intellectually curious student (a Mormon) who asked Lois for a customized investigation of Marxism and Mormonism. The student then pulled together a small quorum of other interested students.

A study group led by Institute faculty member Chris Helm was initiated to read *Unscientific Psychology*, on the occasion of the paperback publication of this 1996 seminal book by Fred Newman and Lois Holzman.

*** "Lev Vygotsky, No Ordinary Psychologist" ***

Institute faculty member Carrie Lobman presented a three-session workshop in March on the work of Lev Vygotsky. Participants (most of whom were educators) read Vygotsky's "Thought and Language" and "Mind in Society" and then to a look at a variety of secondary sources -- examining what other educators and psychologists have done with Vygotsky's work. Small groupings within the class made short performance presentations.

PUBLICATIONS

*** Associate Joan Ingalls Brings Improv to Sports ***

Joan Ingalls, a graduate of the Institute's Therapist Training Program, is bringing a social therapeutic orientation to her work as a sports performance counselor. A sought-after expert in the field, she was recently cited in several publications including: "W" (New York City gym culture), "The New York Times" (grieving in public) and "New York Newsday" (dealing with rejection and criticism, "American Idol"-style.) "The New York Times" article on the death of Coach Dungy's son included her comments on grieving in public, sometimes in the face of an unsympathetic audience.

*** Teachers College Press Signs for "Basic Improv for Teachers" ***

Institute faculty member Carrie Lobman and social therapist / learning specialist Matt Lundquist have signed a contract with Teachers College Press for their book, "Improv: A Performance Approach to Learning and Creativity In and Out of the Classroom" (In Press, 2007.)

*** Holzman Edits Special Issue of Theory and Psychology ***

Lois Holzman guest-edited the February 2006 special issue of "Theory & Psychology" (Vol. 16, no. 1.) on "What Kind of Theory Is Activity Theory?" The articles intersect current debates within activity theory circles and among postmodernists on the philosophy and politics of current and possible future psychologies. Contributors include: Harry Daniels, Carol MacDonald, John Shotter, Eduardo Vianna & Anna Stetsenko. To read Lois's article, "Activating Postmodernism," which appears in this volume, see:

http://www.eastsideinstitute.org/documents/ActivatingPostmodernism_000.pdf.

Or to order the journal from Sage Publications, see:

http://tap.sagepub.com/cgi/search?andorexactfulltext=and&resourcetype=1&disp_type=&sortspec=relevance&author1=Holzman&fulltext=&pubdate_year=&volume=&firstpage=

*** Lev Vygotsky in Corporate America ***

Lois Holzman's article, "Lev Vygotsky and the New Performative Psychology: Some Implications for Business and Organizations" appears in the newly published, "The Social Construction of Organization," edited by D.M. Hosking and S. McNamee. The book is a volume in the series "Advances in Organization Studies" published by Liber & Copenhagen Business School Press.

*** "Unscientific Psychology" Now in Paperback ***

Fred Newman and Lois Holzman's provocative text, "Unscientific Psychology: A Cultural-Performatory Approach to Understanding Human Life" (originally published by Praeger, 1996) is now available in paperback, <http://www.eastsideinstitute.org/books.html>.

Newman and Holzman claim that psychology is a hoax. They then proceed to deconstruct three of psychology's most powerful myths: the myth of the individual, the myth of mental illness and the myth of development – exposing how these myths were created, marketed and sold to the American public. At \$19.95, this book is not to be missed.

*** "Community Engaged Theatre" Features Esther Farmer ***

Institute Associate Esther Farmer's article, "Community Development as Improvisational Performance: A New Framework for Understanding and Reshaping Practice," appears in the online journal, www.communityengagedtheatre.ca (Vol. 36, No. 2, 2005), which presents core themes in community development practice and new strategies for creating change in communities.

*** New CD: "Is Loving Still Sexy?" ***

Recorded live on Sunday, April 23, 2006 at New York University's Skirball Center for the Performing Arts and introduced by renowned family therapist Lynn Hoffman, Fred Newman presents his annual public lecture. Each year, his talk engages important topics on the psychology and politics of American culture. In this 80-minute CD, Newman takes a philosophical look at love and sex: How's love doing in our culture? How do we understand the relationship between love and sex? Where are the philosophical mine fields? And can we find more intimate/creative ways of being sexy? Price: \$19.95.

To order, contact Melissa Meyer, mmeyer@eastsideinstitute.org.

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