

PCf 3083

Conceptual Foundations For Family Systems Theory Fall 2012

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Syllabus

Course Description:

This course explores historical and epistemological foundations for the practice of Marriage and Family Therapy, especially as this is integrated in a theological context. The course focuses on primary (as opposed to secondary) literature in the psychological traditions that support family therapy and family therapy as a clinical discipline and field of study. The course is a graduate seminar. It is heavily focused on reading and class discussion. Course content focuses is organized around evaluation and critique of three foundational epistemological streams influencing family therapy—personality theory, general systems and cybernetic theory, and postmodern philosophy. Evaluation and critique will be theoretical and theological with particular attention to how theories are socially located and attend to central issue of gender, race, class, and ethics.

Format:

This class is a graduate seminar. Participants are expected to be prepared for class by completing all reading. Discussion leadership may be rotated between participants throughout the semester.

Learning Objectives:

One day a mystic stopped Nasrudin on the street and pointed at the sky. He meant: "There is only one truth, which covers all." Nasrudin was accompanied at the time by some desiring to be his disciple. They said to themselves, "This weird apparition is mad. Perhaps Nasrudin will take some precaution against him."

Sure enough, the Mullah rummaged in his knapsack and brought out a coil of rope. The followers thought, 'Excellent, we will be able to seize and bind up the madman if he becomes violent' Nasrudin's action had, in fact, meant, "Ordinary

humanity tries to reach the sky by methods as unsuitable as this rope.” The madman laughed and walked away. “Well done,” said the followers, “you saved us from him.”

This story has given rise to the Persian proverb: “A question about the sky warrants the answer of a rope.”

Idries Shah

- By the end of the course the students will be able to:
 1. Articulate an historically-informed understanding of three epistemological streams of family therapy theory;
 2. Outline fundamental theological concerns and themes which interact with these epistemological streams;
 3. Demonstrate skill in critically discerning the epistemological foundations for principal therapeutic schools of thought in Family Systems Theory;
 4. Discuss the dynamic interaction between theoretical foundations in family therapy and key theological understandings of existence, creation, and the human person in a moral and relational ecological context;
 5. Demonstrate skill in critically analyzing epistemological issues in current Marriage and Family Therapy periodical literature.

Requirements

This course requires more reading than many other courses for similar credit. To make time for this heavy reading load there will be no other assignments apart from reading and a brief reflection paper each session to prepare students for class discussion and a final examination/essay. **This will, of course, require the discipline of managing your time to read regularly rather than finding large blocks of time to write papers.** The course will be graded with the following criteria:

1. Complete all reading 50%

This requirement will be assessed by the session evaluation form (see appendix 1) that is to be turned in each class period. This form will also be available on CAMS.

2. Class participation 25%

This requirement will be assessed by the session evaluation form (see appendix 1) that is to be turned in each class period. This form will also be available on CAMS.

3. Final Exam 25%

The final exam will be scheduled through the registrar's office. In the time allotted for the exam write an essay responding to the following:

Describe your theory and theology of change; that is, how and why do clients change in therapy? Consider issues like: What do I believe about how change takes place for individual, couples and/or families? How does therapy work? What place does religion or spirituality have in this? What does my theory of change say about the nature of the human person? What does it say about how God acts in nature and in people's lives? How do I account for biology, psychology, social/contextual factors, and the life of the spirit? Grading criteria will include how you integrated class material, original thought, and your clinical experience into the paper. Complete your essay by reflecting briefly on how writing this essay influenced how you think about the work of pastoral counseling and marriage and family therapy.

Texts

Duncan, B. L., S. D. Miller, B. E. Wampold, and M. A. Hubble. *The Heart and Soul of Change*. 2 ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2009.

Keeney, B. (1983). *Aesthetics of Change*. New York: Guilford Press.

Leupnitz, D. A. *The Family Interpreted*. New York: Basic Books, 1988.

Anderson, H. and Gehart, D. (2007). *Collaborative Therapy: Relationships and Conversations that Make a Difference*. NY: Routledge. ISBN: 0-415-95327-8

Supplemental Texts (Library Reserve)

Browning, Don S. (1987). *Religion and the Modern Psychologies*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Gurman, Alan and David Kniskern. *Handbook of Family Therapy*, Vol. I and Vol. II.

McGoldrick, Monica, ed. *Revisioning Family Therapy*.

Piercy, Fred and Douglas Sprenkle, et al. *Family Therapy Sourcebook*, 2nd ed.

Pinderhughes, Elaine. *Understanding Race, Ethnicity, and Power*.

Watzlawick, Paul, Janet Beavin and Don Jackson. *Pragmatics of Human Communications. A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes*.

White, Michael and David Epston. *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends*.

Luepnitz, D. (1988). *The Family Interpreted*. New York: Basic Books.
Walsh, Froma, ed. (1993). *Normal Family Processes*, 2nd ed. New York: Guilford Press.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Section I: Foundations for Foundations

Sept. 6 **A Theological, Religious and Anthropological Frame**

Syllabus

Browning, Don S. (1987). *Religion and the Modern Psychologies*.
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, chs. 1-2.

Introduction to Epistemology: Paying attention to the relationship between epistemology, theory of therapy, and expectations of therapy

Sept. 11 **Family Therapy: Epistemological and Paradigmatic Shifts**

Becvar, D. and Becvar R.). *Family Therapy: A Systemic Integration*, 7th ed. New York: Allyn and Bacon *Family Therapy*.
Pp. 1-86

Doehring, C. (2006). *The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern Approach*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press. Pp. 1-9

A Beginning Evaluative Schema for Models of Therapy:

What is social reality according to this theory?

What is the ultimate context of social reality for this theory?

What/who is the human person for this theory?

How is image of family “grounded” in this theory?

How are human and family problems understood in this theory?

How is individual and family change understood?

Who/what is the therapist?

What operational understanding of “creation” is in action for this theory?

What theological issues (ontological, anthropological, etc.) are at stake?

Section II: Personality Theory

Sept. 13 **Foundations of Personality Theory and Humanism**

Hall, C. & Lindzey, G. (1985). *Introduction to theories of personality*.

New York: John Wiley & Sons. **Chapter 1 (3-23)**
Pervin, L. A. (1996). *The science of personality*. New York: John Wiley & Sons. (pp. 1-28; 231-256.)

Lecture and discussion

Sept. 20 **Psychoanalysis I**

Freud, Sigmund. *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*. Translated by James Strachey. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. 24 vols. Vol. XXIII, London: Hogarth Press, 1964. 1940. Pp. 144-194

Sept. 25 **Psychoanalysis II**

Fairbairn, W. R. *An Object Relations Theory of the Personality*. New York: Basic Books, 1952. Pp. 28-58;152-161.

Family Therapy Transition:

Scharff, J. S., and D. E. Scharff. *A Primer of Object Relations*. New York: Jason Aronson, 2005. 3-10; 19-63; 199-207.

Sept. 27 **Humanism**

Rogers, Carl. *Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1942. Pp. 3-18;131-196.

Perls, F. S. *Gestalt Therapy Now*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1970. Pp. 14-38.

AND 20 PAGES FROM EITHER (On reserve in library):

May, Rollo. *The Art of Counseling*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1939/1967.

OR

Maslow, A. H. *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper and Row, 1954.

Oct. 2 Family Therapy Transition: Humanism

Leupnitz, D. A. *The Family Interpreted*. New York: Basic Books, 1988.
Ch. 4 & 8

Read 75 pages from one or more of the following texts (library reserve):

- Whitaker, C. A., and W. M. Bumberry. *Dancing with the Family: A Symbolic-Experiential Approach*. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1988.
- Whitaker, C. A. *Midnight Musings of a Family Therapist*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1989.
- Satir, V., J. Stachowiak, and H. A. Taschman. *Helping Families to Change*. New York: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1975.
- Satir, V. *Conjoint Family Therapy: A Guide to Theory and Technique*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1967.
- Kempler, W. *Principles of Gestalt Family Therapy*. Costa Mesa, CA: The Kempler Institute, 1971.

Oct. 9 Behaviorism

- Watson, J. B. *Behaviorism*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1924.
Pp. 1-19.
- Skinner, B. F. *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971. 3-25; 184-215.

AND one chapter from:

- Wolpe, J. *Theme and Variations: A Behavioral Therapy Casebook*. New York: Pergamon Press, 1976

Oct 11 Family Therapy Transition: Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

- Datilio, F. M. . *Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy with Couples and Families*. New York: Guilford, 2010. Pp. 1-87.

Oct. 15-19 Research and Study

Section III: Systemic Conceptualizations

Oct. 23 Murray Bowen

- Bowen, Murray. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. New York: Jason Aronson, 1985. Pp. 103-115; 468-520; 529-547.

Nov. 8 Postmodernity and Therapy as a Philosophical Stand

Lakeland, P. (1997). *Postmodernity: Christian Identity in a Fragmented Age*. Minneapolis: Augsburg/Fortress Press. Pp. 1-38.

Anderson, Harlene, and Diane Gehard. *Collaborative Therapy: Relationships and Conversations That Make a Difference*. New York: Routledge, 2007 Anderson H. & Gehart, D. Ch. 1 & 2.

Nov. 13 Postmodern Approaches to Therapy

Anderson, Harlene, and Diane Gehard. *Collaborative Therapy: Relationships and Conversations That Make a Difference*. New York: Routledge, 2007. Ch. 3-4.

Section V: Integration—Neuroscience, Empirically Supported Therapy & Common Factors

Nov. 15 & 20 Neuroscience, the Brain, and Therapy

The Britannica Guide to The Brain: A guided tour of the brain -- mind, memory, and intelligence. London: Constable & Robinson Ltd., 2008, pp. 3-72.

Ratey, J. (2001). *A User's Guide to the Brain: Perception, Attention, and the Four Theaters of the Brain*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2001, pp. 3-13; 336-377.

Videotape

Nov. 22 Thanksgiving

Nov. 27 Empirical Foundations—What Works?

Duncan, B. L., S. D. Miller, B. E. Wampold, and M. A. Hubble. *The Heart and Soul of Change*. 2 ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2009. Ch. 1-4

Nov. 29 Empirical Foundations

Duncan, B. L., S. D. Miller, B. E. Wampold, and M. A. Hubble. *The Heart and Soul of Change*. 2 ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2009. Ch. 5-7.

Dec. 4 Empirical Foundations

Duncan, B. L., S. D. Miller, B. E. Wampold, and M. A. Hubble. *The Heart and Soul of Change*. 2 ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2009. Ch. 8, 12, 14.

Dec. 6 Models for Therapy in Religious Contexts

Hindson, E. & H. Eyrich (2004). *Totally Sufficient: The Bible and Christian Counseling*. (No city listed): Christian Focus, chs. 1 & 8

Townsend, *Introduction to Pastoral Counseling*, Ch. 4

Buckholtz, *Help from Above*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/02/AR2005120202287.html>

Appendix

Important Policies

Grading: Grade Scale and Philosophy

A	96.6-100
A-	93.6-96.5
B+	90.6-93.5
B	87.6-90.5
C	85.6-87.5
C+	83.6-85.5
C	81.6-83.5
C-	79.6-81.5
D	70.6-79.5
F	Below 70.6

Attendance

Learning is a complex activity that requires conceptual and experiential participation by those who wish to learn. Student attendance and participation is fundamental to the way the learning environment is structured for this course. Attendance and participation is required to earn a passing grade. While circumstances may require an adult learner to miss class occasionally, absence from more than 10% of the classroom experience will affect student learning and (consequently) the student's grade. Extreme circumstances, such as health problems, family concerns, etc. must be discussed with the professor *prior* to multiple missed classes. Students unable to attend at least 75% of classes are advised to drop the class prior to the registrar's WP deadline, or receive a failing grade.

Form for Writing Assignments

All papers submitted for grades must be written in APA approved style and be double-spaced.

Major research papers, book reviews, etc. should include a cover sheet with the assignment title, your name, and the class for which you are writing.

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Weekly assignments should include at the top of the first page your *name, title of the assignment, and the date the assignment is due*. These papers are to be folded in half (vertically) with your name and mailbox number on the outside. This allows returning them to you through campus mail.

All sources used in writing assignments must be cited appropriately and according to APA style. *Failure to cite sources is plagiarism. You must give credit for quotes and ideas used in your writing. Papers submitted for grades that demonstrate plagiarism will receive a failing grade, and students will be subject to the seminary policy regarding plagiarism.*

Inclusive Language is a Seminary Policy

Learning is fundamentally concerned with communication, self-expression, and personal and social transformation. Learning respects individuals, their feelings, their value and worth, and their particular potential for contribution to common knowledge and community virtue. Learning is fundamentally and intentionally inclusive.

Since all learning is inherently ethical and political, and theological discourse has been traditionally patriarchal and gender exclusive, the Seminary has established a policy, in the interest of constructing an inclusive and egalitarian community, that the language (symbols, metaphors) used in our class discussions and written work shall be gender inclusive and respectful of all persons and groups as valued human creatures of God.

Racism also permeates our society and is detrimental to any learning environment. We need to use language, symbols, and metaphors that honor our commitment to racial inclusiveness.