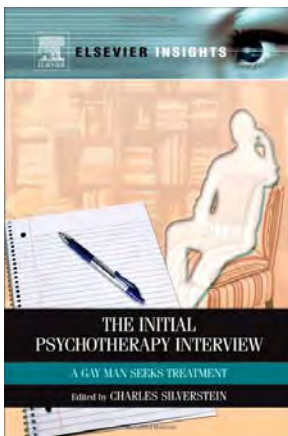


Member at Large — Kathleen Y. Ritter

As a supportive ally of the LGBT community, I am pleased to be a candidate for Member at Large representative to the Division 44 Executive Committee. If elected, I would be a strong advocate for continuing the many good works I have witnessed over the years as a member of the Division. I would support the existing committee structure and task forces and recommend modifications as needs change. I would advocate for the continuation of a strong presence in APA, the expansion of our influence in public policy related to sexual orientation and gender identity, and increased cooperation with other APA divisions and federal agencies. I would recognize and support the contributions of members at the national, state and local levels and promote additional financial sustenance for innovative research in LGBT psychology. The Division's recognition of the spiritual concerns of sexual minorities is refreshing to me since several of my previous and recent publications are related to faith and belief. In 2008 the Division honored me with the award for Distinguished Professional Contribution. I have been a Fellow of the Division since 2004 and was co-recipient of the Distinguished Book Award in 2003. I hope to be able to carry on the sound traditions of the Division, as well as to play a stronger role in the future direction LGBT psychology.



BOOK REVIEW



The Initial Psychotherapy Interview: A Gay Man Seeks Treatment

Charles Silverstein (Ed.). Burlington, MA: Elsevier, 2011, 321 p.

Contrary to what one might expect, *The Initial Psychotherapy Interview: A Gay Man Seeks Treatment*, is not a how-to-textbook on conducting an initial interview with a gay male patient. The book's objective is far broader and more ambitious. Charles Silverstein and his collaborators have succeeded in conducting a "psychological autopsy" of the interaction between a patient and his therapist, both of whom happen to be gay. The editor has assembled an impressive and varied group of clinicians to comment on the multiple facets that exist in the process of every clinical interview.

The book is organized around an hour-long interview with "Scott," a 30-year-old gay man who seeks treatment from Silverstein after the death of his much loved and admired gay older brother. While his brother's death serves as the catalyst for Scott seeking treatment, this profound loss is only one part of the story. The transcript of Silverstein's interview provides rich clinical data for a myriad of authors to reflect and comment on. We hear from a diverse group of practitioners, including those from the fields of psychoanalysis, cognitive-behavioral therapy, health psychology, family systems, and feminist theory. Reading this book was like attending a good clinical case conference in which clinicians forcefully argue their positions and in doing so highlight the fundamental differences (and similarities) that exist between their various theoretical approaches.

What I appreciate about this book is Silverstein's willingness to so openly acknowledge his own clinical errors. Many of us are likely to see ourselves in his retelling of the session, with the inevitable awkward silences, equivocations, and personal insecurities that we all experience as therapists. Silverstein resists the narcissistic temptation to be viewed as the all-knowing therapist and instead allows himself to be seen as he really is: vulnerable, unsure, brash, and even self-important.

Ironically, the success of this book rests on Silverstein's "lack of success" in his session with Scott. While there is plenty to criticize in this initial session, such criticisms come easily for a reviewer who has the luxury of time and distance to be able to reflect on all of the underlying psychodynamics at play.

In reading this book, I was reminded of my own experience as a graduate student conducting therapy for the first time. I often sat in supervision, feeling incompetent and in awe of my supervisors' clinical acumen. Dr. Silverstein is the supervisor I wish I had in graduate school: the one who teaches by example, acknowledges his own "mistakes" and in doing so gives us the permission to confront our own. "We have to do better," he writes in the book's introduction and challenges all training supervisors to let their supervisees "stand on our shoulders and to see further than we ever have ourselves."

My one real criticism of this book is a personal one. Designed primarily for the therapist-in-training, the publisher has chosen to market the volume as an eBook. While many graduate students these days are comfortable with such a format, I still appreciate the tactile experience of holding a book and having the option to flip freely between its pages. There were several times I would have preferred the opportunity to look back to a preceding chapter in order to compare how two different authors interpreted the same clinical moment. Overall, this was a minor inconvenience and one I was willing to endure in order to benefit from the clinical wisdom Silverstein and his colleagues impart.

Reviewed by Tyger Latham, www.DupontTherapy.com