

What Brouillette, the author, suggests is that we, in fact, remove ourselves from our institutional homes and become politically engaged with the world, thus realizing the ethical power of psychoanalysis to the fullest, not constrained or split off into the theoretical, the clinical and the political, as in a dissociative or obsessive-compulsive manner.

While most of us may not be ready to take this step, for any number of reasons, I do believe that the institution of psychoanalysis is a repressive, disengaging and isolating force in many of our lives. It saps our liveliness and in many cases, if we do not take formal leave in the manner suggested by Brouillette, many of us disengage quietly.

To the sense of my original posting of questions for self-reflection, I would just add that I cannot see how we can split off our theoretical knowledge, our clinical work and our political engagement from each other. This does not, as some of my readers have suggested, mean that we go into sessions prepared to engage in political debate with our patients; but, it does mean that we see, preparatory and ongoing work of our own analyses, have their corollary out in the political sphere where whole populations are being repressed, marginalized, split-off, traumatized, etc. I don't care if I never see another article diagnosing Donald Trump's narcissism, but I do care to see the writing and work of people who are connecting the dots between individual pathology and collective suffering and between psychoanalysis and social and political action. Freud (and I am not idealizing him) did not shy away from this kind of social and political analysis and neither did any number of early analysts and that work continues in the writings and political engagement and teaching of any number of our contemporaries.

Kristeva, in *Strangers to Ourselves*, for instance, performs the simple theoretical/ethical move of saying, essentially, look, we now know that we are governed more by our unconscious minds than by our consciousness. We are, in fact, strangers to ourselves, and because we cannot tolerate this inner strangeness very well, we look around us and there, we find real strangers on which to project our alienation, our hatred, our most unhomey feelings of disgust, etc., etc. Here are the immigrants and refugees, the dark ones, the sexually strange ones. We then, as analysts, are presented with an ethical imperative in our lives as well as in our work and it is one that derives from our theory. Our theory is radical--it informs us that we do not really know ourselves, are not fully present to ourselves, and that in the minds of others, we may not be who we think we are, just as others, in our minds, are not who they think they are. This is tricky territory--the unconscious, transference, projections, etc. And it is this very radical unknowing that demands an ethical response on our part.

Freud wrote that the Christian ideal of loving one's neighbor as oneself was really an impossible one and went against the grain of our narcissism. But, he also wrote that the outcome of a successful analysis, while not guaranteeing any of the usual personal or social goals in life, was more modest, that one would be able to refrain from passing along to others the harm that had been done to oneself. This is a kind of negative of the golden rule, but opens the door to an altruism based on something other than repression, as I read it. It says, as in all of our professional ethical codes, that first we need to stop doing harm, and that is really very difficult.

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Elaine P. Zickler, PhD, LCSW  
26 E. Oak Ave.  
Moorestown NJ 08057  
[856-234-9117](tel:856-234-9117)  
Faculty, Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia