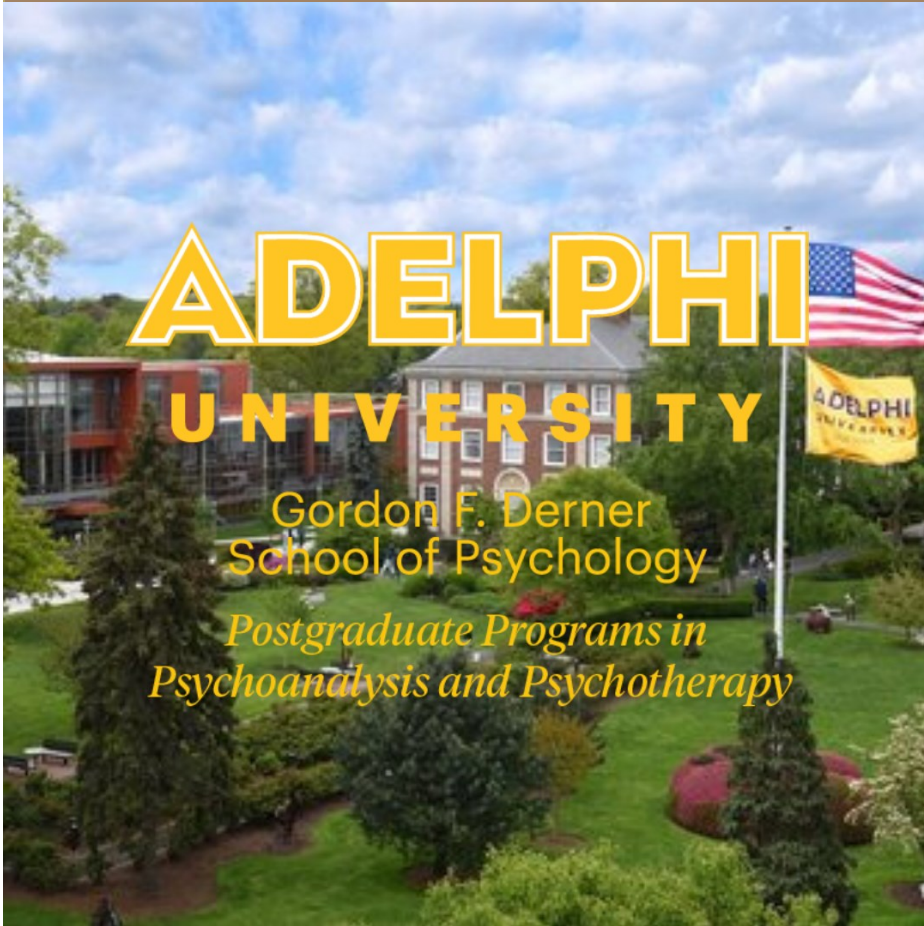


ADVANCEMENTS IN PSYCHOANALYSIS

Don Milman Memorial Conference



The Fragility of Joy in a Troubled World

Saturday, October 4, 2025

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM



Donald S. Milman, PhD
(1924-2005)

7 CE contact hours

NYS: Psy, SW, MHC, MFT & Psychoanal

APA: Psy

Alumni House

Adelphi University

154 Cambridge Avenue

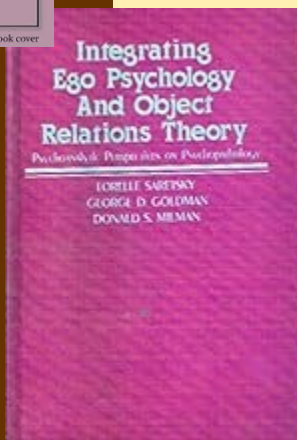
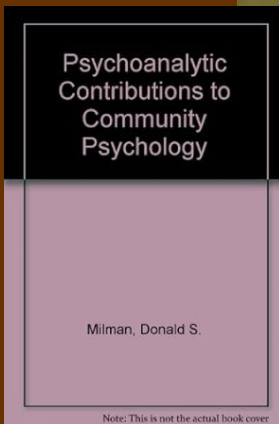
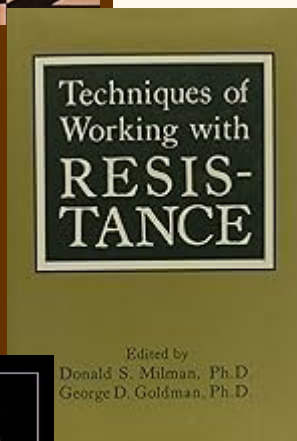
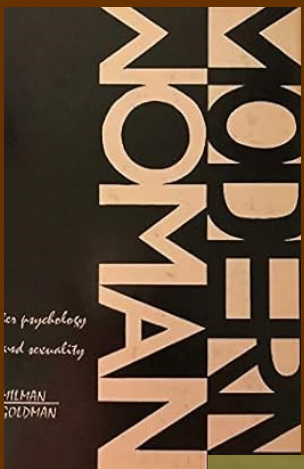
Garden City, NY 11530

Don Milman co-founded the Postdoctoral Programs in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy, (now the Postgraduate Programs) in 1963 to offer advanced psychoanalytic training to psychologists. Don served initially as Assistant Director of the program and then Director. Under his leadership, the Postdoctoral Psychotherapy Center was opened to offer psychotherapeutic services. This was the first non-medical based psychotherapy clinic to have a psychoanalytic focus. The center developed and retains an excellent reputation.

Don was an innovator in the field of psychoanalytic training, spending his professional life teaching, educating and supervising psychoanalysts. He was one of the founding members of the Division of Psychoanalysis of the American Psychological Association (Division 39), and his organizing efforts helped to establish psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic training as an area of study open to psychologists. Until that time psychoanalysis was provided only by medical professionals. Don's dedication and influence were evident in his work expanding programs, organizing conferences and editing books. Don co-edited the books *Modern women her psychology and sexuality* (1969); *Psychoanalytic contribution to community psychology* (1971); *Innovations in psychotherapy* (1972); *The neurosis of our time: acting out* (1973); *Therapists at work: A demonstration of theory and technique* (1979), and *Techniques of working with resistance* (1986).

Conference Schedule

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	Registration and Breakfast
9:00 AM – 9:15 AM	Welcome remarks Doug Milman, PhD
9:15 AM – 9:25 AM	Introduction Amira Simha-Alpern , PhD, ABPP
9:25 AM – 10:55 AM	<p>Panel 1: Joy in Dark Times Moderator: Beth Feldman, PhD</p> <p>9:25 – 9:45 <i>How can I feel joy when humanity is cooking our ecosystem?</i> Elizabeth Allured, PsyD</p> <p>9:45 – 10:05 <i>From joy to satisfaction: Joy and pleasure in the digital era</i> Ryan Meurlin, PsyD candidate</p> <p>10:05 – 10:25 <i>Despite the dark glass, joy emerges</i> Elizabeth B. Sullivan, LCSW-R</p> <p>10:25 – 10:55 Discussion</p>
10:55 AM – 11:05 AM	Break
11:05 AM – 12:35 PM	<p>Panel 2: Losing and Finding Joy Moderator: Elizabeth B. Sullivan, LCSW</p> <p>11:05 – 11:25 <i>Owed to Joy: A therapist experiences the obligation to bring joy into the treatment space</i> Carl Bagnini, LCSW, BCD</p> <p>11:25 – 11:45 <i>Privileging affective experience over language: The degenerative effects of Freud's most radical concepts</i> Andrew Galbraith, LCSW</p> <p>11:45 – 12:05 <i>Tears, joy's fragility: Expectations for the cycle of grief</i> Sonia Banks, PhD, LCP</p> <p>12:05 – 12:35 Discussion</p>
12:35 – 1:20 PM	Lunch



Note: This is not the actual book cover

Conference Schedule (Cont.)

- 1:20 – 2:50 PM** **Panel 3: Masquerading Joy:
The Fear of Joy from Cultural, Theoretical and
Clinical Perspectives**
Moderator: Ionas Sapountzis, PhD
- 1:20 – 1:40 PM** *Mania, cynicism and the mortification of the body*
Joseph Newirth, PhD, ABPP
- 1:40 – 2:00 PM** *Happiness versus joy: Commodification and excess*
Karen Lombardi, PhD
- 2:00 – 2:20 PM** *A meditation on a frisson of joy*
Michael O'Loughlin, PhD
- 2:20 – 2:50 PM** Discussion
- 2:50 – 3:00 PM** Break
- 3:00 – 4:30 PM** **Panel 4: Humor and the Capacity for Joy**
Moderator: Megan Nolan, LCSW
- 3:00 – 3:20 PM** *Joy: Universal antidote*
Sandra Buechler, PhD
- 3:20 – 3:40** *Humor as a transformational reflective “Third” for shame-
laden impediments to connection and joy*
Ryan L. Clements, PsyD
- 3:40 – 4:00 PM** *Cultivating the capacity for joy?*
Beth Feldman, PhD
- 4:00 – 4:30** Discussion
- 4:30 PM – 5:00 PM** Roundtable Discussion
Facilitation: Megan Nolan, LCSW

Panel 1:
Joy in Dark Times



Elizabeth Allured, PsyD



**Ryan Meurlin
PsyD candidate**



Elizabeth B. Sullivan, LCSW-R

How Can I Feel Joy When Humanity is Cooking Our Ecosystem?

Our planetary crisis is embedded in a dysfunctional relationship with our ecosystems. Facing this problem can seem overwhelming, but our theories of relational rupture and repair can guide us. Individual and societal efforts at repair of our human/ecosystem relationship can bring a needed balance, including joy in our individual or shared experience of the incredible earth that holds us all, physically and psychologically.

Bio:

Elizabeth Allured, PsyD is a licensed psychologist and psychoanalyst who has published articles on the environmental crisis and mental health, and presented her ideas about this, at international and national conferences, since 2007. She is a co-founder of the Climate Psychology Alliance of North America, an organization that addresses the psychological aspects of the climate crisis, and focuses on personal and community resilience, and climate justice. Dr. Allured has a private practice on Long Island, NY.

From Joy to Satisfaction: Joy and Pleasure in the Digital Era

Kohut (1977) identifies a distinction between joy and pleasure, suggesting that the former constitutes a rich experience of selfhood while the latter is more limited. The version of intersubjectivity that digital culture has to offer—particularly in the case of transient transferential relationships via online therapy platforms—may more closely align with a sense of protracted indulgence masquerading to its users as true self-enjoyment. This paper will attempt to conceptualize phenomena like instant gratification and “dopamine hits” as a defense against the potential disappointment that joy brings with it in a fragile world that appears increasingly volatile and indifferent towards its people.

Bio:

Ryan is a graduate student of Gordon F. Derner’s School Psychology PsyD program. He works with clients across the age spectrum at a private neuropsychology practice on Long Island and is also under supervision as an intern in a middle school and high school. His current research interests and ongoing dissertation center on exploring the implications of advancements in digital culture on the relationship of youth to themselves, others, and their rapidly changing world.

Despite the Dark Glass, Joy Emerges

This paper proposes that our most joyous moments occur in juxtaposition with our darkest experiences. The author argues that the very wounds that shape us also deepen our capacity for joy. She uses clinical and personal vignettes to demonstrate how joy’s profound meaning may lie precisely in its emergence through darkness and that our capacity for experiencing joy is not diminished by life’s shadows but rather enhanced by them.

Bio:

Elizabeth B. Sullivan, LCSW-R, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Psychoanalyst. She is currently a PhD Candidate at the Institute for Clinical Social Work. Her dissertation research involves a qualitative psychoanalytic case study which examines the lived experiences of practicing Catholic mothers whose children have experienced clergy-perpetrated sexual abuse. Elizabeth is the current president of the Adelphi Society for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy. She maintains a private practice in Garden City, NY.

**Panel 2:
Losing and Finding Joy**



Carl Bagnini, LCSW, BCD



Andrew Galbraith, LCSW



Sonia Banks, PhD, LCP

Owed to Joy: A Therapist Experiences the Obligation to Bring Joy into the Treatment Space

Owed to Joy: A therapist faces the suffering and sacrifice required in bringing Joy into the therapy space. Clinical material will illustrate the therapist's journey in the interpersonal-interpsychic domain of analytic process.

Bio:

Carl Bagnini, LCSW, BCD is an analytic therapist, supervisor and teacher, at two training institutes, having published and co-published over 30 papers and book chapters on clinical topics, featuring children, adolescents, couples and families. His book: *Keeping Couples in Treatment* was published by Aronson, in 2012. He is an international and national presenter at psychoanalytic conferences, and his practice is in Port Washington, NY.

Privileging of Affective Experience over Language: The Loss of Freud's Most Emancipatory Discoveries

This paper will examine Freud's conclusions regarding the ethical basis of human subjectivity. It will involve a Lacanian 'Return to Freud' addressing how contemporary psychoanalysis emphasizing the maternal dyad and affective experience is a substantial divestment from Freudian principles that illustrate the ethical basis of the psychoanalytic intervention. The emancipatory elements of Freud's theory involve the psychoanalyst's capacity to facilitate the conscious, explicit and radically subjective position of the patient so he or she may have greater clarity in resolving, with a degree of a mastery, conflicts as they manifest within the social milieu. This paper hopes to evoke a discussion involving the clinical relevance associated with maintaining the ethical basis of human subjectivity, the challenges to doing so in our discursive moment, and the imperative to maintain this discipline in the face of these challenges and competing theories. It will use a mix of examples inspired from contemporary clinical, aesthetic, and political experience to convey this Freudian imperative.

Bio:

Andrew was born and raised in Queens, NY. He is a practicing Lacanian in Northern New York treating patients solely from a Lacanian-Freudian Frame. He is also a PhD advanced Candidate at the Institute of Clinical Social Work: Psychodynamic Graduate Studies. He is currently developing his dissertation on the Lacanian Film Analysis of Psychotic Subjective Structure as examined in the films 'Taxi Driver' (1976) and Talk to Me (2022).

Tears, joy's Fragility: Expectations for the Cycle of Grief

This paper provides a summary of loss that is revealed through tears that reflect the joy of a beloved relationship. It offers a glimpse at a way love and joy recycle in our lives even in our deepest despair.

Bio:

Sonia Banks, PhD, LCP is a clinical psychologist with 30 years of clinical and organizational practice. Currently uses play for behavioral change with teams and organizations through her own company.

Panel 3:

**Masquerading Joy:
The Fear of Joy from
Cultural, Theoretical and
Clinical Perspectives**



Joseph Newirth, PhD, ABPP



Karen Lombardi, PhD



Michael O'Loughlin, PhD

Mania, Cynicism and the Mortification of the Body

The paper begins with a discussion of the current hit comic horror film, *The Substance*, in which Demi Moore plays an aging star who finds a way to clone herself, in order to continue to receive constant admiration. It is difficult to decide whether this film is a parody of our obsession with youth and beauty and our willingness to do anything to our bodies in order to maintain our position of being admired, or is it actually a true representation of our contemporary need to be constantly seen and admired, representing the pervasiveness of a pathological imaginary register. This film will provide the basis of differentiating mania from true joy in our contemporary world. The paper will elaborate these themes from Lacanian and Kleinian perspectives.

Bio:

Joseph Newirth, PhD, ABPP is currently a Professor Emeritus from the Derner Institute where he taught graduate students for over 40 years. He is also the former Director of the Postgraduate Programs and has published three award winning books and numerous articles relating psychoanalytic theory to Technique. His most recent book *The Unconscious: A Contemporary Introduction* reflected his life long interest in understanding unconscious processes.

Happiness Versus Joy: Commodification and Excess in Late Stage Capitalism

Following an homage to Don Millman, this paper will contrast the opportunism and consumption orientation of happiness in late stage capitalism with moments of excess found in joy. Joy will be considered from the position of surplus enjoyment and from the jouissance of feminist theory. A clinical example will be provided.

Bio:

Dr. Karen Lombardi is a practicing psychoanalyst, faculty and supervisor of the Adelphi University Postgraduate Programs, and professor emeritus of the Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology at Adelphi University. Author, with Naomi Rucker, of two books: *Subject Relations: Unconscious Experience and Relational Psychoanalysis* and *The Color Human: A Psychohistory of Self and Other, Race and Class and the Complexion of Things* as well as numerous articles and chapters in psychoanalytic publications.

A Meditation on a Frisson of Joy

We cannot offer ourselves or our patients happiness, and the societal offerings of happiness are often commodified and quantified as Colin Wright and Nancy Fraser's critique of "care" illustrate. The work of psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic pedagogy (cf. Shoshana Felman, Jacqueline Rose) is about contact, about what Martin Buber would describe as the experience of meeting, of existential encounter. Such moments are fleeting but inescapable, truly a frisson of joy.

Bio:

Dr. Michael O'Loughlin is Professor in the College of Education and Health Sciences and in the Ph.D. program in Clinical Psychology at Adelphi University, New York. His most recent book is *Precarities of 21st century childhoods: Critical explorations of time(s), place(s), and identities* (2023). He is co-editor of the journal *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society*. He is also editor of the book series, *Psychoanalytic Interventions: Clinical, Social, and Cultural Contexts*. He founded the Adelphi Asylum Project and has a private practice for psychotherapy and psychoanalysis on Long Island, NY.

Panel 4:
**Humor and the Capacity
for Joy**



Sandra Buechler, PhD



Ryan L. Clements, PsyD



Beth Feldman, PhD

Joy: Universal Antidote

The author called joy the “universal antidote” because it can help us modulate our experiences of all the negative emotions. In its affirmation of life, joy may lift us from guilt, regret, and shame and move us to invest more fully in life. Using personal and clinical examples, I describe some moments of joy that have been most meaningful to me.

Bio:

Sandra Buechler, Ph.D. is a Training and Supervising Analyst at the William Alanson White Institute. She is the author of *Making a difference in patients' lives*, (Routledge, 2008), which won the Gradiva award, *Still practicing: The heartaches and joys of a clinical career*, (Routledge, 2012), *Psychoanalytic approaches to problems in living*, (Routledge, 2019), *Erich Fromm: A contemporary introduction* (Routledge, 2024), and other books and papers.

Humor as a Transformational Reflective “Third” for Shame-Laden Impediments to Connection and Joy

Humor and laughter can serve as a self-reflective catalyst for change when working with resistances. We will explore two cases, sexual in nature, that serve as examples of inhibition and disinhibition and how resistances, both rooted in part by shame, were disruptive of the joy of peace, safety, and contentment sought for themselves and in love.

Bio:

Dr. Ryan Clements is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Stony Brook, NY. He is on faculty at the Adelphi University Derner Postgraduate Programs and the Renaissance School of Medicine at SBU.

Cultivating the Capacity for Joy?

The paper examines the intrapsychic underpinnings of the capacity for joy, and the interpersonal and self-object experiences which facilitate and encourage the ability to experience joy. Through the lens of the authors work with her patient Maggie, she explores how using empathy, mirroring, and focusing on the development of her patient’s affinity for intense affect and nuanced experience of their core self can help them cultivate “the chip” and increase their capacity for joy in their life

Bio:

Beth Feldman, PhD is a clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst with a private practice in Plainview, New York. She treats adults and adolescents in individual, couples, and group therapy. Beth is the co-host of the podcast “Being a Parent is Hard!” and has recently published her first book, *Case studies in Relational Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis: If I Could Turn Back Time*. She is adjunct faculty at Postgraduate Programs in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, Derner School of Psychology, Adelphi University.

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