President's Message

It is with great enthusiasm that we welcome you to Section II's brand new newsletter! We are hoping that this forum will allow existing and potential new members to keep abreast of current ideas in the field of psychodynamically oriented child and adolescent treatment. Along with a website which will be launched short, we are hoping that this newsletter becomes a conduit for exchanges between the different generations, specialties and interests existing within our section.

Section II is looking to grow and expand its activities in order to bring a higher level of visibility and participation within division 39. We are exploring new ways to reach out to the community of colleagues working with children, adolescents, families, and with the systems which support them.

This newsletter will include book reviews, a section
Section II has a new website!

www.sectionii.wildapricot.org

Wanted to get involved with Section II?

Contact us at:

section2div39@gmail.com

Section II honored Diane Ehrensaft for invaluable contribution to the field of child psychotherapy and her years of dedication and service.

for topical discussions on technique of child psychotherapy and innovative integrative perspectives, announcements for conferences and job opportunities, and a section for early career professionals. In addition, we extend an open invitation to members to contribute articles and editorials for our membership.

Our new Board Member Susan Goodman heads our new Newsletter Committee, and welcomes any ideas about making this newsletter an exciting resource for our members. The more voices, the better! If you are not a member yet, please contact the membership co-chairs, Virginia Shiller (virginia.shiller@yale.edu) or Diane Ehrensaft (dehrensaft@earthlink.net.)

Norka T. Malberg, PsyD
President, Section II

Philadelphia Center for Psychoanalytic Education and the Philadelphia Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology
Collaborate on Program "Three Perspectives on a Psychotherapy Case"

Psychoanalytic organizations in Philadelphia (Philadelphia Center for Psychoanalytic Education and the Philadelphia Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology)
JoAnn Ponder (Psychology) collaborated this past February on a program entitled *Three Perspectives on a Psychotherapy Case*. The psychotherapy case was of an adolescent girl, presented by Norka Malberg, Psy.D. The three discussants were Marjorie Bosk, Ph.D., Gabriella Serruya-Green, Psy.D., and John Frank, M.D.; Laurel Silber, Psy.D, moderated the panel. The program was very special for a number of reasons. Dr. Malberg had done thoughtful work in a challenging clinical situation of a girl who had sustained loss and on-going trauma. She presented her process, thereby allowing the discussants and the participants to readily come to appreciate the complexity. Some of the discussants’ remarks lead into a discussion of the interweaving of attachment theory in psychoanalysis, the way the child therapist works with the mother and her subjectivity, and developmental aspects, with special emphasis on the work of mourning at adolescence. There were over one hundred people in attendance; many were graduate students who were very interested in the depth of thinking about the inner life of the patient. This type of format proved a very rich discussion. The case came alive for us with Dr. Malberg's presentation and each discussant expanded our thinking about the clinical encounter.

Book Review:

**Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from One Another**

*By Sherry Turkle*

I had the pleasure of hearing Sherry Turkle speak at a conference in 2011. She had just written *Alone Together*, a book about how technology has changed the nature of our identities and relationships.

Turkle is a clinical psychologist and founder of MIT’s Initiative on Technology and Self, a group that seeks to be a center for...
"The computer offers a promise of perfection. It's like catnip," she asserted during her talk. Turkle went on to discuss the fact that now, people can plan what they want to say, and essentially create alternative cyber identities. In fact, computers can be much more satisfying than real life relationships, she said.

When Turkle asked teens why they preferred text messaging over face-to-face communication, they replied that in direct communication "you can't control what you are going to say, and you don't know how long it's going to take or where it could go." Turkle and writes that face-to-face conversation teaches "skills of negotiation, reading each other's emotions, having to face the complexity of confrontation and dealing with complicated emotion."

Turkle balances her concerns with consideration about all the good that technology offers for relationships. For example, Facebook allows one to keep up with one's friends, and to make new friends. It allows friction-free friendships, international friendships, and opportunities to play with identity. But it can also provide the illusion of companionship without real companionship.

There are sections of Alone Together that discuss changed notions of privacy and boundaries in relationship. This book is intriguing as we think about how technology affects our patients' relationships; what it does for them and if and how it might hinder deeper emotional connection.

Reading this book, we might ask: Are we more together because of our dependence on technological devices? What about down time, solitude, where nothing is happening, the kind of time that refreshes and restores?

Susan Goodman, L.C.S.W.
The ubiquity of electronic and digital media can't be denied. And the spillover of that reality into our work as psychotherapists with children and adolescents is similarly unavoidable. Many of us have addressed this recent and evolving state of affairs from varying perspectives (see especially Volumes 10 and 11 of the Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy, Taylor and Francis). In a previous paper (2011, JICAP), I referred to the eLife of our child and adolescent patients and the ways in which significant enlivening enactments were facilitated by the presence of electronics in therapy.

In that paper, I used the example of a youngerster with whom I had worked from 5th grade until his high school graduation. Jon brought his immersion in the digital, electronic, and internet gaming world into his therapy in a multitude of ways. It was my conviction that we could view this eLife immersion as an opportunity to explore the symbolic meanings of the games themselves, ranging from the wish for power and potency to the evolving capacities for social connection. Similarly, I argued for the intersubjective relevance of Jon’s use of electronics and texting in session, noting the moments of enactment between Jon and me and the opportunities to notice shifts in self states as well. Finally, that discussion suggested a relational incorporation of eLife phenomena into an understanding of the therapeutic relationship and Jon’s encounter with the death of a parent.

On reflection, after several years, I would maintain even more strongly that judicious embracing and exploring of eLife phenomena, such as Internet searching, cell phone text
messaging, Facebook browsing, and computer games, can yield valuable access to our patients' internal lives. My own experience in the recent past reinforces the sense that riding this digital wave can enrich the relationship between a therapist and his/her young patients.

I’d like to introduce two additional challenges to the child/adolescent therapeutic process that are illuminated by the inclusion of eLife phenomenon. First, kids now presume that knowledge is instantaneously available, always just a "google" away. Adults, too, presume instant info gathering and can even rescue their aging memories with quick reference to search engines or to any number of smartphone apps (e.g. IMDB for names of actors and movies.) I would suggest, however, that something more fundamental is at play with kids who have become masterfully adept at seeking and finding information on the web. With kids who stumble to find the right words or just the right way to express their thoughts and experiences, reaching for my laptop and going online can sometimes feel like a way to quickly demonstrate what is being felt. Tyler, a budding drummer in a death metal rock band, is describing a new song his band is debuting at their next performance: "Here, check your phone. I just texted you a link to our band’s website --- you should listen to the cut online and the lyrics are there, too." You can hear in this exchange both the opening up of an intersubjective space and the possibilities of instantly sharing information and in-the-moment reactions. Indeed, I was alarmed by some of the dark lyrics but also surprisingly moved by their interesting philosophical insights. But maybe what’s good about this quick access also represents what’s potentially risky --- stumbling and grappling, even at the risk of prolonging the search, is sometimes what the work is about.

The second challenge similarly highlights the positive and negative aspects of incorporating the eLife into treatment. Turning to sites online or reaching to friends on Facebook during sessions can be ways to evoke and expose the presence of
different and shifting self states. But does this very phenomenon forestall the therapeutic benefit of "staying" longer in one state or pondering and reflecting more slowly on the present emotional state? Simon, in near ritualistic fashion, begins sessions by inviting me to check his recent grades on his school's web site. Frequently, focusing on the classes in which he is improving gives way to some despair about the persistent struggle to improve in one class. "I just can't make any progress there .... It makes me feel like I'm just not any good sometimes." Quick as a flash, we're suddenly at a different web site --- sports or movie trailers, for example. While some might call this resistance, there's certainly room to consider other interpretations and relational understandings. With Simon, it's as if another part of himself is trying to protect him from the shame of confronting his despair.

These are some of the questions that therapists have to consider and ponder as the digital culture only increases its presence in modern culture and in the consultation room.