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Concerning the Nature of Psychoanalysis

The Persistence of a Paradoxical Discourse

Gregorio Kohon

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In his new book, *Concerning the Nature of Psychoanalysis: The Persistence of a Paradoxical Discourse*, Gregorio Kohon describes the complexity of the psychoanalytic encounter, questioning the misguided attempts to simplify and/or reduce it to either art or science. Kohon disputes the contemporary use of parameters offered by evidence-based medicine as a research model to study psychoanalysis. Instead, the author proposes to reconsider the relevance of the psychoanalytic single case study, its importance and pre-eminence.

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Concerning the Nature of Psychoanalysis

The Persistence of a Paradoxical Discourse

Gregorio Kohon

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"Do psychoanalysts have a story to tell?", asks Gregorio Kohon. Yes, he says, but not one that everybody wants to hear. Kohon presents psychoanalysis as a unique relationship between individuals that in principle can never be understood completely. He criticises attempts to tame psychoanalysis, making it more manageable by distorting its essential singularity. The book's wide-ranging discussion of these themes is enjoyably clear and direct. Kohon relates psychoanalysis to scientific, social and political ideologies, insisting on its true character in a way that is valuable in itself, and especially needed today."

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"Gregorio Kohon's book is a passionate, evocative and persuasive defence of the particular nature of the psychoanalytic endeavour. Kohon argues that, belonging neither to science nor to art, and yet to both, psychoanalysis is a unique and intimate encounter between two people that confronts the complexities of the human mind and in which fundamental primary phantasies can emerge in symptoms, dreams and the ever-evolving changes in the relationship itself. With this in mind, Kohon argues for the pre-eminence of the clinical case report as the most truly meaningful way in which the psychoanalytic method can be understood and its value assessed."

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"This powerful new book by Gregorio Kohon addresses the disquieting question of how we may best study and give credence to that singular endeavour, psychoanalysis. Kohon argues that psychoanalytic clinical practice and 'evidence based' research differ fundamentally in aim and approach. At the heart of his book lies the immense and irreducible complexity ('the unbridled imagination') of psychoanalysis, exemplified by two psychoanalytic case studies that give a real sense of the paradoxical and conjectural nature of the analytic couple at work. For Kohon, psychoanalysis itself is also the analyst's prime research tool."

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