

## The AAPCSW (American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work) Northern California Chapter

**Co-Chairs: Velia Frost, LCSW & Rita Karuna Cahn, LCSW**

**Program** Romancing the Alliance:  
Understanding Sexual Attraction Between Client and Therapist

**Presenter** Linda Alperstein, LCSW

**Date** June 14, 2014

**Time** 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

In our private lives, we can respond to sexual feelings without having to analyze them. While we learn about legal and ethical consequences of sexual involvement with clients, we are rarely trained to examine the *meanings* of sexual feelings in the therapeutic alliance. Yet the failure to integrate an understanding of erotic feelings into the process of therapy can diminish or destroy the usefulness of our work. In this presentation we will consider motivations for eroticized transference countertransference, examining how needs for intimacy and distraction, or expressions of dependency, aggression and narcissism can become sexualized during psychotherapy. We will discuss the vulnerabilities involved and various therapeutic strategies that safeguard the work while respecting the needs and feelings of both client and clinician. Your own clinical examples are welcome for the discussion.

**Linda Perlin Alperstein, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.,** is an Associate Clinical Professor at UCSF in the Department of Psychiatry. She has taught human sexuality to medical and mental health professionals since 1976. She has had a private practice since 1972, working with a wide variety of couples and individuals. When California implemented a new law in 1978, requiring all mental and medical health professionals to have ten hours of training in human sexuality, she was hired by the NASW to teach human sexuality throughout the state.

### \*\*\*\*\* Location \*\*\*\*\*

120 Commonwealth Ave., (Between Euclid & Geary) S.F., CA. 94118  
Home office of Gabie Berliner, PhD, LCSW  
(call for directions) 415-751-3766

**Seating is limited: please RSVP by E-mail to: [ritakaruna@mac.com](mailto:ritakaruna@mac.com)**

#### **EDUCATIONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

1. To recognize overt and covert signs of sexual attraction between client and therapist and comprehend the psychological meanings of erotic feelings as they occur during the process of therapy.
3. To learn to respond to these signs in a respectful, ethical and professionally therapeutic manner.
4. To know when to seek consultation in order to address the ethical and clinical issues involved, and to be able to work with thoughtful objectivity for the benefit of the client at times when personal needs may conflict with professional considerations.