Robert S. Wallerstein Lecture in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy

Each year, the UCSF Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences invites a distinguished scholar to speak on campus as part of the Robert S. Wallerstein Visiting Lectureship in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy. This lecture series is held in honor of the late Robert S. Wallerstein, MD, and focuses on showcasing psychoanalytic knowledge and clinical expertise that influence psychiatry, psychotherapy, and psychoanalysis.

The 2021 Robert S. Wallerstein Lecture in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy

The University of California, San Francisco Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences hosted the 16th annual Robert S. Wallerstein Lecture in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy on Wednesday, March 24, 2021. The event's keynote lecture, "Internalizing Reality: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Trauma Treatment Across Generations," was delivered by 2021 honoree Alicia F. Lieberman, PhD.

Video of 2021 Wallerstein Lecture

About Dr. Lieberman
Alicia F. Lieberman, PhD [1]

A widely renowned expert on mental health and development in infancy and early childhood, Lieberman is the Irving B. Harris Endowed Chair in Infant Mental Health, professor, and vice chair for faculty development in the UCSF Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. She also directs the Child Trauma Research Program [2] at Zuckerberg San Francisco Hospital and Trauma Center, as well as the Early Trauma Treatment Network, a center of SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Network. She serves as the current board chair of the Irving Harris Foundation and is a former board president of the early childhood development nonprofit ZERO TO THREE.

Lieberman is the senior developer of child-parent psychotherapy, an evidence-based treatment for traumatized children from birth to five-years-old, and has made major contributions to the field’s understanding of attachment, toddler development, and cross-cultural perspectives on early development through her research, writing, training, and consultation. She is the author or senior author of several books for parents and clinicians, including The Emotional Life of the Toddler; Losing a Parent to Death in the Early Years: Treating Traumatic Bereavement in Infancy and Early Childhood; Don’t Hit My Mommy: A Manual for Child-Parent Psychotherapy With Young Witnesses of Domestic Violence, and Psychotherapy With Infants and Young Children: Repairing the Effect of Stress and Trauma on Early Attachment. Lieberman is the senior editor of DC: 0-3 Casebook: A Guide to the Use of Zero to Three’s Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood. She also served on the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, whose work resulted in the publication of the influential From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood

Born in Paraguay, Lieberman received her professional training in Israel and the United States and uses her experience as a trilingual, tricultural Jewish Latina to inform her work on behalf of children and families from diverse ethnic and cultural origins, with primary emphasis on the experiences of Latinos in the United States. Her major interests include infant mental health, disorders of attachment, early trauma treatment outcome research, and mental health service disparities for underserved and minority children and families. She also holds a special interest in cultural issues involving child development, child rearing, and child mental health, and has lectured extensively on these topics both nationally and internationally.

Lieberman has received numerous honors in recognition of her groundbreaking work, including most recently the 2016 Rene Spitz Award for Lifetime Achievement from the World Association of Infant Mental Health (WAIMH), a 2016 Public Health Hero Award from the San Francisco Department of Public Health, the 2017 Whole Child Award from the Simms-Mann Institute, the 2018 Blanche Ittleson Award from the Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice, the 2019 Paulina Kernberg Award from the Weill Cornell Institute, and the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award from ZERO TO THREE.
Due to limitations on public gatherings necessitated by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this year's lecture will be held virtually using Zoom. This event is free and open to the public, but advance registration is required.

We are pleased to be able to offer continuing education (CE) credit for this year's event through a partnership with A Home Within [3]. This event offers the opportunity for attendees to earn two (2) CE credits. Further details will be provided upon registration.

Previous lectureship honorees

- 2020 - Mardi Horowitz, PhD [4] (postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic; will be rescheduled for a future year)
- 2016 - Bessel A. van der Kolk, MD [12]
- 2015 - Beatrice Beebe, PhD [13]
- 2014 - Morris Eagle, PhD [14]
- 2013 - Regina Pally, MD [15]
- 2012 - Robert Michels, MD [16]
- 2011 - Arietta Slade, PhD [17]
- 2010 - Salman Akthar, MD [18]
- 2009 - Peter Fonagy, PhD, FBA [19]
- 2008 - Glen O. Gabbard, MD [20]
- 2007 - Nancy McWilliams, PhD, ABPP [21]
- 2006 - Otto F. Kernberg, MD [22]

About Robert S. Wallerstein, MD
Robert S. Wallerstein, MD

Robert S. Wallerstein, MD, (1921?2014) was a distinguished psychiatrist, psychotherapy researcher, and psychoanalytic leader who left a legacy of a widened scope of theory and technique in the psychological sectors of psychiatry. He was an administrator who advocated for cooperation between psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers in achieving academic excellence and sought to develop a new profession, the Doctor of Mental Health. He also developed a departmental structure that worked across professional lines, leading to new ideas on research centers, educational plans, and high quality service delivery.

Dr. Wallerstein trained at the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas, rising to become the foundation's director of research and conducting a pioneering study called the Psychotherapy Research Project. He moved to the Bay Area in 1966 as the chief of psychiatry at Mount Zion Hospital, then joined the faculty of the UCSF Department of Psychiatry as a professor. Dr. Wallerstein served as department chair and director of the Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute from 1975-1985, as well as a training and supervising analyst at the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute, and president of both the American and International Psychoanalytic Associations.


Dr. Wallerstein was a leader by consensus. With a remarkable ability of synthesis, he strived to bring together diverse schools of theory and treatment technique. He will be remembered as a dynamic and tireless leader who contributed extensively to every organization that he led.

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