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# Narration and Therapeutic Action: The Construction of Meaning in Psychoanalytic Social Work

*Jerrold R Brandell*

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**Narration and Therapeutic Action: The Construction of Meaning in Psychoanalytic Social Work**
Jerrold R Brandell
Narration and Therapeutic Action raises challenging questions about the limitations of science and of scientific inquiry for the practice of social work. In doing so, this innovative book calls upon clinical social workers, psychologists, and psychoanalysts to examine some of the most fundamental assumptions about the clinical process and what is “therapeutic” about it. Written by social work clinicians and theorists, the book explores the construction of meaning within the dual framework of psychoanalysis and clinical social work.Readers of Narration and Therapeutic Action will find the way in which clinical illustrations are used to articulate theoretical ideas especially useful. You will find chapters ranging from the highly abstract and theoretical to those that consider very specific dimensions of clinical process. As contributors examine various aspects of narrative theory and its relationship to psychoanalysis and clinical social work, they highlight such themes as:

- important theoretical contributions of psychoanalytic authors (including Roy Schafer, Donald Spence, and the French psychoanalyst Jacque Lacan) to the study of narratives
- how to use various frameworks, such as self psychology and multigenerational family systems theory, as a structure for analysis of clients’narratives
- narratives and their “fit” in psychoanalytic developmental theories
- the evolution of specific narratives in the context of ongoing psychoanalytically-oriented treatment
- the narration of traumatic experiences in dynamic psychotherapyClinical social workers, psychoanalysts, and psychologists will find Narration and Therapeutic Action filled with answers to important questions about the very nature of what is therapeutic in the psychoanalytic process and why; whether existing theory can be used with modification as a guide to the “unpacking” of the text; and if there are specific psychoanalytic theories of development better-suited to the meaning-making that occurs in the crucible of the psychoanalytic dialogue. Narration and Therapeutic Action is ideal as a guide and reference for practitioners and students of clinical social work, psychoanalysis, and clinical psychology as well as for instructors of clinical theory and practice. Readers will find abundant evidence of consensus and conflict, disparity and complementarity, and resonance and dissonance in the contributors’ diverse viewpoints. While this provides readers with support for their preexisting theoretical and clinical assumptions, it also offers a broadened perspective on other theories.

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