COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course examines the causes, characteristics, and therapeutic implications of pathological dissociation; considers enactments in the clinical setting as deriving from dissociation; and explores the mutative potential of enactment in both a therapeutic setting and a literary context. In relationship to dissociation, the class will also consider the concepts of self-states, particularly “me” and “not-me” self-states; “small t” trauma; traumatic temporality; and traumatic spatiality. Readings include essays on dissociation, trauma, and enactment by leading relational psychoanalysts, including Donnel Stern, Robert Stolorow, and most especially Philip M. Bromberg; as well as modern and contemporary short stories containing fictional examples of dissociation.

COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES:
This course is designed to help students

1. Recognize pathological dissociation in literature and in clinical practice, and distinguish adaptive from pathological dissociation.
2. Utilize enactments resulting from dissociation to advance clinical work.
3. Compare and contrast the characteristics of pathological dissociation as treated in psychoanalytic practice and in fictional works.
READING MATERIALS:

Donnel Stern, Selected Essays (available on Pep Web)

Robert D. Stolorow, World, Affectivity, Trauma (Selection)

Philip M. Bromberg, The Shadow of the Tsunami (Selections)


SYLLABUS:

Session 1: Introduction and Overview


Steinbeck, J. The Crysanthemums.

Gilman, C. The Yellow Wall-Paper
Session 2: Self-States and The Discontinuous Self


O’Connor, F. A Good Man is Hard to Find.

Forster, E. M. Ansell

Session 3: Traumatic Temporality and Traumatic Spatiality


Mansfield, K. Bliss.

Mansfield, K. Miss Brill
Session 4: The Threat of Retraumatization


Kincaid, J. *Girl*.

Erdrich, L. *The Red Convertible*.

Session 5: Dissociated Shame


Hemingway, E. *Hills like White Elephants*.

Lessing, D. *Wine*.

Session 6: Enactment


Cheever, J. *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*.

Joyce, J. *A Painful Case*. 
Session 7: Enactment


Mansfield, K. This Flower.

Boyle, T. C. The Love of My Life.

Session 8: Safe Surprises


Walker, A. Everyday Use.

Lawrence, D. H. The Horse Dealer’s Daughter

Carver, R. Cathedral.