

GALIT ATLAS-KOCH (with Steven Kuchuck)

To Have & To Hold: Cross Cultural & Clinical Perspectives on the Desire to Own

This presentation is an investigation into the psychodynamic and cross-culturally determined underpinnings of the desire to own and be owned as they manifest in our clinical work. We will be looking at these issues through the lens of a female Israeli analyst and her Israeli patients living far from their original homes and also an American born, Jewish male analyst with strong ties to, criticisms of and longings for his ancestral homeland. We will examine the relationship between culture and ownership as it manifests with Israelis and American born patients as well, and broadening our scope to look beyond nationality, reflect on additional ways in which owning, very often related to gender and sexuality, serves as a means for processing personal and cultural trauma. The experience of co-writing a paper about owning has of course stirred our own intrapsychic and cultural self and object representations and transferences. Each of us has had to contend with the question of how two people can create a "third" and still feel ownership both of our original ideas and the joint product. Can two parents equally own one baby? Can two nations equally own one land? We hope that an examination of the aforementioned clinical, internal and interpersonal struggles will help us to better understand our patients' experiences in and out of treatment and our own intersubjectively determined transferencecountertransference responses around the desire to own and be owned.

Galit Atlas-Koch is a psychoanalyst and licensed creative arts therapist in private practice in Manhattan. She is a Board member of The Institute for Expressive Analysis, author of several psychoanalytic articles, contributor to the Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion, and former psychology columnist for SBC publishing house, Israel.