American Psychoanalytic Association Practice Bulletins

“the mere possibility of disclosure may impede development of the confidential relationship necessary for successful treatment” (Supreme Court, 1996). [Jaffe v. Redman] A thoughtful discussion on note taking is found at the following site: http://www.apsa-co.org/ctl/pubinfo/NewsRoom/practice_bulletins.html


Our political passivity as therapists has resulted in a loss of privacy that compromises our work. They suggest we make an argument for absolute confidentiality and try to get a privilege similar to lawyer-client, journalist-source, or priest-penitent.


Quoting the Talmud says gossip is like a three pronged tongue “…because it destroys three people: the person who says it, the person who listens to it and the person about whom it is said.” She says “The gossip can be viewed now as a kind of metaphoric teddy bear, a transitional phenomenon, which maintains the link with the absent patient from whom the analyst cannot separate.


Freud deviated from his own recommendations regarding anonymity 100% of the time, neutrality 37%, and confidentiality 53% of the time.


Have all gossiped about a patient at sometime? Gossip derives from “godsib”, or kinsman and speaks to the need of close associates to tell tales. Olinick suggests gossip develops out of envy, isolation, curiosity, and a subtle sado-masochistic relationship that is organized around the dominant one with a secret and the submissive one who wants to know. He describes gossip as the forepleasure derived from ‘auditory scopophilia’ and from the bribed superego.


“Even the smallest intrusion into private space by the unwanted gaze causes damage, because the injury caused by seeing cannot be measured.”

“Hezek Re’iyah,” Encyclopedia Talmudit