

CPSY 590 03; Summer, 2009

Course Title: Trauma Psychology in Clinical Practice

Instructor: Suzanne Best, Ph.D.

503-306-2965

Sbest@lclark.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will examine and discuss the two most vexing questions in the field of Trauma Psychology: *What is Trauma?* and *What is PTSD?* First, we will focus on defining and characterizing trauma as we consider issues of cultural competence in working with various victim populations. We will then review the current understanding of PTSD including risk and resilience factors, development and course, symptom presentations, and biological underpinnings. Together we will work to translate the science of Trauma Psychology into the psychoeducational component essential to treating the variety of trauma sufferers we encounter in clinical practice.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Herman, Judith (1997). Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror (Full book).

Rothschild, Babette (2000). The body remembers: The physiology of trauma and trauma treatment (Chapters 1-3).

REQUIRED MANUSCRIPTS

Courtois, Christine A. & Gold, Steven N. (2009). The need for inclusion of psychological trauma in the professional curriculum: A call to action. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, Vol. 1(1), 3-23.

GRADING

Class Participation: 50%

Final Paper: 50%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Preparatory reading assignment (prior to first class)

Courtois, Christine A. & Gold, Steven N. (2009). The need for inclusion of psychological trauma in the professional curriculum: A call to action. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, Vol. 1(1), 3-23.

7/18/09: What is Trauma?

Overview and discussion of the breadth of traumatic events and victim populations encountered in clinical practice.

Assignment

Read:

Herman, Judith (1997). Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror (Full book).

Rothschild, Babette (2000). The body remembers: The physiology of trauma and trauma treatment (Chapters 1-3).

8/1/09: What is PTSD?

Overview and discussion of development, course, and biological basis of PTSD.

Assignment

Write a 5-8 pg. paper on a specific trauma population of your choice. This paper must address the following areas:

- 1- The particular characteristics and clinical issues likely to be seen in this population
- 2- A summary or direct example of how you would explain PTSD (including its biological underpinnings) to a client who has experienced this particular type of trauma
- 3- The ways in which a therapist might be personally affected, both positively and negatively, by working with this particular population