The lost language of being:
Exploring ontology’s endangered destiny in existential thought and practice

*The rootedness of the sciences in their essential ground has atrophied.*
-M. Heidegger, What is Metaphysics? (p. 96)

*Fundamental ontology, from which alone all other ontologies can take their rise, must be sought in the existential analytic of Dasein.*
-M. Heidegger, Being and Time (p. 34)

*Only in the light of an ontological understanding of human nature can the body of material provided by psychology...be organized into a consistent and comprehensive theory.*
-P. Tillich, The Courage to Be (p. 65)

Location: Duquesne University, Parking is available in the garage on Forbes Ave.
Lecture time: Friday March 21, 2014, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m., Workshop: Saturday March 22, 2014, 10:00 – 1:00 p.m., 3:00-6:00 p.m. and Sunday March 23, 2014, 10:00-1:00 p.m.

Continuing education credits: *Friday lecture only: 2.5 credits; whole workshop: 10 credits* Psychologists: Duquesne University is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Duquesne University maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Course Description
This workshop will explore the historical standing of fundamental ontology in existential psychology and psychotherapy. From the 1930’s through the 1960’s existential psychotherapy, especially in Europe, was intricately bound to ontology, however it was understood. As time has passed so, apparently, has the field’s central concern with ontology, particularly in America. Today, the terms ontology, being, and Dasein have been virtually expunged from the American literature in existential psychology and psychotherapy. When they do appear, they often do so in conflated or ambiguous ways, except among the most scholarly and less populist thinkers, writers, and practitioners in the field. The consequence of this forgetfulness of ontology, Being, and Dasein has resulted in an existential-ontological Tower of Babel, proffering a bewildering array of theoretical constructs and clinical possibilities without a clear sense of their hermeneutic, ontological status, their relation to one another, and their relation to the being of Dasein and Being as such. Unfortunately, this “ontological indifference” has fostered an often critical misunderstanding and devaluing of existential approaches to psychological theory and practice.

This situation begs the question, what has happened to ontology and, with it, Being and Dasein in America? What led to the circumstance that American existential psychology today seems to have forgotten or misunderstood ontology as “the science of being” grounded, since Heidegger, in “the
ontological difference – the differentiation between being and beings” (Heidegger, 1975/1988, p. 17). Although there is frequent, even admiring, lip service paid to ontology, for instance, in the claim by May and Yalom (1989), that “the term ontological is valuable in existential psychotherapy” (p. 364), what is offered as an example of its importance is a particular individual’s own ontic "sense of being," what May calls the “I am” experience, and not at all an ontological reality. The consequence of this or “de-ontologizing" of existential psychology and psychotherapy in America is that we now find ourselves speaking in different tongues much as described in the Biblical tale of the Tower of Babel.

In this workshop, after a brief introduction to some basic terms and distinctions in existential ontology, we shall explore the historical reasons the once impressive tower of existential psychology has disintegrated and fallen into the earth like Shelly's humiliated hero Ozymandias. Following the perspective of fundamental ontology as found in the works of Martin Heidegger and his philosophical student, the Swiss Daseinsanalyst, Medard Boss, we will then take up in greater depth such questions as follow. How can we understand ontology in the first place? How can we understand the ontological difference between being and beings and, with this, the difference between the ontic and ontologic? What are the implications of such understandings for what Heidegger called "positive sciences," in this case, specifically the science of psychology? If the sciences, including psychology, are necessarily conducted in the realm of the ontic, what relevance does an ontological approach have for the library and the clinic? What can be said to critics who claim that existential ontology is irrelevant to the ontic project of psychotherapy? In what specific concrete ways might fundamental ontology improve and enrich our understanding and conduct of psychotherapy? How might an ontological approach deepen and vivify our understanding of such so-called clinical phenomena as the therapeutic situation, unconscious experience, repetition, transference, resistance, and dreams? The purpose of raising these questions is to evoke fresh thought and discourse among participants. A combination of didactic presentation, discussion, case study, and demonstration will support this basic aim.

**Learning objectives**

Participants in this workshop course will be able:

1) to define, describe, and compare the daseinsanalytic understanding of ontology, fundamental ontology, particular being, beingness, being-as-such, and Dasein;
2) to describe, discuss, and demonstrate the difference between ontic and ontological as well as Marin Heidegger’s understanding of the ontological difference;
3) to describe and discuss the historical and current status of ontology in existential psychology and psychotherapy;
4) to discuss the relevance of fundamental ontology for theory and practice in Existential psychology and psychotherapy; and
5) To develop and discuss their own phenomenological hermeneutic perspective and understanding of at least two of the following classical analytic phenomena: transference, resistance, repetition, dreams & dreaming, the analytic/psychotherapeutic framework/situation.

**Basic References:**


Erik Craig, Ed.D.

Dr. Erik Craig is an independent scholar and licensed psychologist in private practice in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He studied for several years each with Clark Moustakas, one of the founders of humanistic psychology; Paul Stern, an existential psychoanalyst and close friend of Medard Boss; and Medard Boss himself, the founder of Daseinsanalysis, the first systematic approach to existential psychotherapy. He has been teaching and practicing humanistic and existential psychotherapy for over 40 years, holding full time faculty positions at Assumption College, University of New Mexico, and Pacifica Graduate Institute. More recently he has been studying Eastern approaches to depth psychotherapy, especially Tao Psychotherapy with its founder Rhee Dongshick, in Seoul, South Korea. His primary interest is in developing phenomenological hermeneutic grounds for understanding critical issues in psychological theory, research, and practice with the hope of achieving a comprehensive, existential approach to depth psychology. He has authored many articles in the field, a number of which have been translated into other languages, and is editor of two groundbreaking special issues of The Humanistic Psychologist entitled, Psychotherapy for Freedom: The Daseinsanalytic Way in Psychology and Psychoanalysis (1988) and Depth, Death and Dialogue: New Inquiries in Existential Depth Psychotherapy (2008). He has been organizationally active in a number of national and international professional associations and is secretary and APA’s Division 39 local chapter representative for the New Mexico Psychoanalytic Society (NMPS). He is currently president-elect of NMPS and a past president of the APA’s Society for Humanistic Psychology as well as of the International Association for the Study of Dreams.
Who may attend?
The Distinguished Speakers Workshop is open to the public and free for those not seeking CE credits. Participants can expect a combination of lecture, questions, and discussion, creating a cooperative and mutual learning experience.

No charge for Duquesne University students with I.D., faculty and adjunct faculty, as well as anyone not wanting continuing educations credits.

Inquiries
Any inquiries should be directed to Marilyn Henline at 412-396-6520 or henline@duq.edu.

Mission Statement of the Department of Psychology at Duquesne University
Internationally recognized for over three decades, the Psychology Department at Duquesne University engages in the systematic and rigorous articulation of psychology as a human science. The department understands psychology as a positive response to the challenges of the 21st century -- one which includes existentialism, phenomenology, hermeneutics, psychoanalysis and depth psychology, humanistic psychology, feminism, critical theory, post-structuralism, and a sensitivity to the diverse cultural contexts within which this response may find expression. Psychology as a human science pursues collaborative, qualitative research methods that pay special attention to what is particular to human beings and their worlds. Accordingly, the department educates psychologists who are sensitive to the multiple meanings of human life and who work toward the liberation and well-being of persons individually as well as in community.

Pre-registration form

Erik Craig, Ed.D.
The lost language of being: Exploring ontology's endangered destiny in existential thought and practice

Name: (print).................................................. Signed:.....................................................

Email Address:..........................................................................................................................

Phone:..................................................Professional affiliation:........................................

Fees
Friday night's lecture only: $20.00, Mini-course, including Friday: $120.00, $100.00 with pre-registration (by March 14, 2014)

Mail this form with check to Marilyn Henline, Duquesne University, Dept of Psychology, 544 College Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15282-1753. Make check payable to Duquesne University. Your check is your receipt. Refunds available minus $10 cancellation fee until March 14, 2014.

We look forward to welcoming you to our campus and our program.