

TX 5063

NECET proudly presents

Our 2022-2023 Conference Series,
our return to in-person meetings,
and more...

(see below)

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A word from Bob:


The NECET community is delighted to welcome you all back to *in-person meetings*! We have moved to a lovely space at Boston College, and we are excited about our partnering with different departments at Boston College and Seattle University. In the last few years, we have heard a number of people like David Goodman, Mookie Manalili, and Eric Severson speak. We look forward toward expanding horizons while sustaining our commitment to the existential, phenomenological, and hermeneutic ideas so essential to our core.

After the disorientation of the last few years, and the lack of physical community that went with that, we wish to have fun this year as well as think hard. We have decided that this year will be called “NECET goes to the movies.” Film is one of the greatest creators of images today, and it is one which brings together many different sorts of people. So much philosophy and psychology today use film as references. We wish to highlight a number of different existential and phenomenological themes through watching and discussing movies this year.

I am encouraging you to see these films before the NECET event, because we will not be seeing the films during the events and the assumption is that you have viewed them recently. Watch parties can be a great idea for this – films are meant to be seen in groups and discussed afterwards.

The four films and their presenters are:

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October 2, 2022. Presenter Bob Fox.
Paterson (2016), directed by Jim Jarmusch.

Almost nothing happens in the movie Paterson, but if you watch it and listen to it carefully, and stay with it, you are left with the sense that something very important – if unnamable – has happened to you. Like the city of Paterson, New Jersey itself and like the character Paterson (played by Adam Driver), it just goes round and round. Round and round we go, playing the circle game. But...slowly...without intent, some shape emerges, some images guide us, and quietly essential feelings develop. The ending will take your breath away, but only if you are open to it.

Paterson is a city, a bus driver in that city, and the name of an amazing five-volume piece of poetry by William Carlos Williams, who was also chief of pediatrics at Passaic Hospital for forty years. He was one of the mentors of the New York School of poetry (Ron Padgett from that school wrote the poems attributed to Driver's character for the film). There is a commitment to let things speak for themselves, and not to look for meanings inside of or outside of the simple things right in front of you. This is the phenomenological spirit, which was Williams' spirit, and the spirit of the movie Paterson. Listen to a character in the film repeat, mantra like, "No ideas but in the things.", and you will hear Husserl's manifesto: "Back to the things themselves."

Why pay attention to the everyday small things? Watch this film to find out the dangers of not paying attention to those things, and not cultivating the practices which make such profundities possible. Nothing can prepare you for the ending, so just sit with Adam Driver at the Paterson Falls and let it be.

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December 11, 2022. Presenter Ming Chang.
The Farewell (2019), directed by Lulu Wang.

Meeting the unexpected is one of the most vulnerable and unexceptional human experiences. And yet it could contain within it the possibility of becoming truly alive. *The Farewell* shows us this. The movie portrays a big large Chinese family navigating life's surprises. The film expresses many of the issues and concerns that show up for clients as Asian Americans in therapy. The storyline discloses three essential questions that often emerge in an existentially oriented psychotherapy: What is the point of living? What does one do at the edge of the familiar? How can I be truly free?

We will respond to these questions by following the story of this film; by following the journey of its members through applying both Heidegger's philosophy of authenticity and ancient Chinese views on nature and human relationships. In watching this film and discussing it together, we hope to reveal the dynamic interplay between implicit and explicit expressions of meaning, the differences between agreement and argument, and the complexities of differing senses of freedom and morality and loyalty and authenticity. We hope to show that the mystery of being oneself truly lies in the treacherous responsibility of being one-self in one's human interconnectedness.

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March 5, 2023. Presenter Glen Freiband.
Harold and Maude (1971), directed by Hal Ashby.

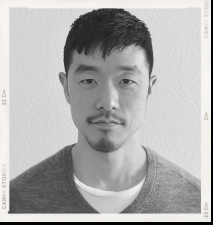
This film is a story that explores key human and existential concerns. It is situated right in the middle of the era of the presidency of Richard Nixon and the bloody Vietnam War – a time that the personal and the political were overtly existential, and often played out on television.

This film looks at the absurdity of life and the lure of death and ultimately, paints a path for a resolute stand for being-in-relation and the in/out, lost/found nature of becoming a whole human being. The film explores the tension between the need for aloneness and togetherness, and the complexities of authenticity.

Harold and his mother struggle with both a desire to be hidden and a desire to be known, and we can see ourselves in the paradox of our desires to be dead and alive. There is meeting violence with violence, side-by-side with the desire to reconnect and grow, to be known and valued. And we as therapists can learn from Maude to sit with the obsession with death and the desire to hide.

We will connect the excellent and awful therapies in the movie to our own practices, and to quote a Cat Steven's lyric from the movie, be reminded that not only can we "be what we want" but we must use wisdom and timing. We will use the stories in the movie to illustrate how we may – with care and precision – use the moments of heartbreak and loss to help our clients become their "own-most-selves."

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April 30, 2023, Presenter Jason Ri.
Departures (2008), directed by Takita Yojiro.

One of the only universal human certainties is facing death: the death of others, loved ones' and our own. How do we "do" this?

The Japanese Film *Departures* is both a comic and dramatic cinematic treatment of how we face life and death in a particular cultural context. By applying Heideggerian concepts like thrownness, authenticity and resoluteness, we hope to relate this story to human existence and to the practice of psychotherapy. The two primary themes will be the master-apprentice relationship, and the process of grieving.

The film explores death and grieving through the eyes of a professional "encoffiner". The strange objectivity and subjectivity of this role is not unlike our situation as psychotherapists. This film gives us the opportunity to look at this in an unfamiliar culture.

The master-apprentice relationship and its language are almost anachronistic in the United States, and we believe that may leave gaping holes in our relational, psychological and vocational developments. By comparison, in cultures where the words "master" and "apprentice" are ubiquitous, we may observe how these relationships provide the psychological infrastructure to be in-the-world, especially when the illusion of control and perfect safety are stripped away. This has implications for our individual lives and our clinical work. This film shows the utility of such a master-apprentice relationship in dealing with death and grief.

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Finally, in addition to our growing relationship with Boston College, Seattle University, and Psychology of the Other, we also have been busy modernizing NECET in technological ways. Many of you have noticed our newly renovated website with a password-protected section for members only which, as we update it, will continue to grow with intellectually stimulating and thought-provoking content. Membership continues to provide a community platform to seek out consultations, announce referrals and openings in practices. We also plan on providing asynchronous videos of our talks. It is in this spirit of providing more and better services that we also announce changes to our prices as follows:

- Attendance:
 - For non-member professionals: \$50.
 - For non-member unlicensed /retirees: \$25.
 - Free for students with ID: \$0.
 - Asynchronous attendance/recording: same as above.

- Membership (annual):
 - Professional members: \$150.
 - Students/retirees: \$75.
 - (Attendance is included with membership.)

- CEUs (for Massachusetts LMHCs and LICSWs):
 - \$20 for 3 units.
 - Asynchronous attendees must complete and submit post-test.

We hope you will join us in supporting NECET's future. And sincerest thanks for being with us thus far!

Yours,
Bob.