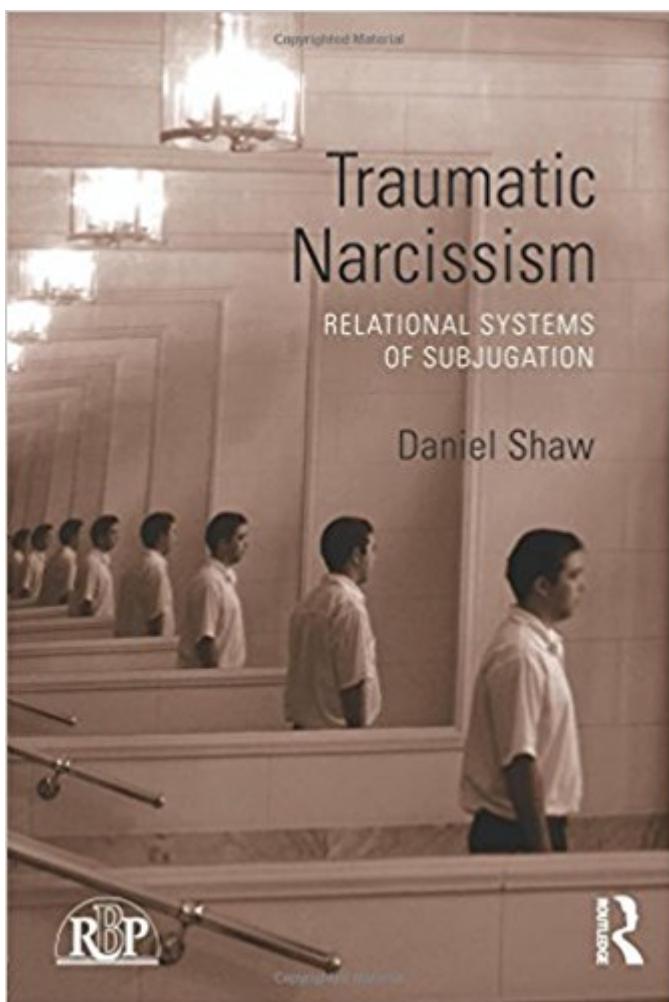


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# Traumatic Narcissism: Relational Systems Of Subjugation (Relational Perspectives Book Series)



## **Synopsis**

In this volume, *Traumatic Narcissism: Relational Systems of Subjugation*, Daniel Shaw presents a way of understanding the traumatic impact of narcissism as it is engendered developmentally, and as it is enacted relationally. Focusing on the dynamics of narcissism in interpersonal relations, Shaw describes the relational system of what he terms the 'traumatizing narcissist' as a system of subjugation — the objectification of one person in a relationship as the means of enforcing the dominance of the subjectivity of the other. Daniel Shaw illustrates the workings of this relational system of subjugation in a variety of contexts: theorizing traumatic narcissism as an intergenerationally transmitted relational/developmental trauma; and exploring the clinician's experience working with the adult children of traumatizing narcissists. He explores the relationship of cult leaders and their followers, and examines how traumatic narcissism has lingered vestigially in some aspects of the psychoanalytic profession. Bringing together theories of trauma and attachment, intersubjectivity and complementarity, and the rich clinical sensibility of the Relational Psychoanalysis tradition, Shaw demonstrates how narcissism can best be understood not merely as character, but as the result of the specific trauma of subjugation, in which one person is required to become the object for a significant other who demands hegemonic subjectivity. Traumatic Narcissism presents therapeutic clinical opportunities not only for psychoanalysts of different schools, but for all mental health professionals working with a wide variety of modalities. Although primarily intended for the professional psychoanalyst and psychotherapist, this is also a book that therapy patients and lay readers will find highly readable and illuminating.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

"Daniel Shaw's Traumatic Narcissism is a must read as a cutting edge relational approach to helping patients free themselves from the destructive impact of the relationships they have with traumatic narcissists." - Lawrence Josephs, Adelphi University, American Psychological Association "This book belongs on my shelf between Leonard Shengold's Soul Murder (Shengold, 1989) and Bernard Brandchaft's pathological accommodation work (Brandchaft, Doctors, & Sorter, 2010). To these irreplaceable resources, Shaw adds not only his extensive studies of the precise mechanisms of soul destruction in cults and cult-like groups (such as allegedly therapeutic cults and the large group awareness trainingsâ€¢ , as well as his own description of cult-like families ruled by traumatizing narcissists." -Donna Orange, International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology "This is a serious, clearly written, clinically informed book written from an insider's perspective. Shaw inhabits the experiential worlds he depicts, and he knows his subject deeply. Weaving together disparate threads, Shaw works toward a position that places our willingness to acknowledge vulnerability and need, and our ability to withstand shame, as the cornerstones of transformational therapy work. Shaw's writing seeks and inspires partnership. His efforts to grapple with his subject invite our participation as readers. He demonstrates expertise, but his voice is not that of the expert. He writes in an egalitarian spirit... I highly recommend Shaw's instructive and evocative work and have, on more than a few occasions, recommended it to friends, students, and patients whose responses confirm my sense that this is a book with much to teach us. Shaw's book should and, I suspect, will inspire considerable interest in our field and will facilitate a useful critical analysis of our clinical approaches to working with the narcissistic dimension of experience." -Eric Mendelsohn, Division|Review "Readers will be compelled by Daniel Shaw's differentiated and lucid account of relational trauma and non-recognition in the shaping of what has been called narcissism. The book's intelligent and compassionate portrayal of clinical dilemmas involved in working with those who have suffered in abusive subjugating relationships is ideal for students and advanced practitioners. Traumatic Narcissism offers an original and captivating analysis of the relational configurations and painful emotions that lead to and so often prevent emergence from submission. While his thinking is informed by a broad theoretical knowledge, equally impressive is Shaw's exemplary dedication to exploring how we can use our own experience and personal honesty in order to transcend shame and confront the pitfalls of being an analyst while still maintaining our focus on recognizing the

patient." - Jessica Benjamin, author of *Shadow of the Other* "Daniel Shaw has written a fascinating book that places his personal psychological journey in the well-researched context of his larger compelling theory of traumatic narcissism. Inspired by his own experience in a cult with a guru whom he eventually came to see as a traumatizing narcissist, and enlivened with numerous clinical case examples, this absorbing and far-ranging book traces the history of traumatic narcissism from ancient times to the vagaries of the current political scene." - Sheldon Bach, PhD, Adjunct Clinical Professor of Psychology, NYU Post Doctorial Program in Psychoanalysis

Daniel Shaw, LCSW is a psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapist in private practice in New York City, and in Nyack, New York. He is a training analyst, teacher and supervisor of analytic candidates at the National Institute for the Psychotherapies in New York City. Website: [danielshawlcs.com](http://danielshawlcs.com)

A thorough and engrossing view of the literature on narcissism. A comprehensive and innovative psychological perspective on the psychological effects of a traumatic narcissist. This book is a real contribution to the existing literature. The examples illustrated are clear and well defined. It is a real asset to a clinical practice.

Excellent. A must read for any clinician who works with any population. This book ought to be required reading for graduate programs.

An amazingly understandable explanation of HOW the narcissist parent traumatizes the developing child, and the new relationship with the analyst) that is necessary in order to comprehend, unravel, and ultimately heal these complex early losses and assaults on intersubjectivity. One of the very best books I've read on the subject. I look forward to learning more from Daniel Shaw.

A bit technical for me. I am not a trained clinician. But it did help me see how the narcissistic people around me have impacted me. This book gave me a lot to think about.

I'm not a practicing therapist. I am the adult child of a subjugating narcissist who was also a practicing therapist. I've read many books on the narcissism subject in my struggle to grasp this relationship and its dynamics. And I've tried a few therapists. I found therapists frustrating in how benign they saw narcissists - as silly, vain and people who purchased plastic surgery. And therapists want to keep the focus on you at the very time you're navigating complicated group

dynamics. I found some support groups too "nervous nellie" in their demonization of "pathological" narcissists from whom they were recovering. Many of the other books I read added small insights to understanding the subject but would also lead one astray in recovery - one such book says almost all narcissists get worse with age. That isn't true. This book stays true, and shines a bright light without making false declarations in order to sound authoritative. It hits the sweet spot - in recovery, one has to understand the narcissist, but also has to understand, de-fog himself. This book is not too gentle not too harsh, without being watered down either. It bravely illuminates a facet of a relationship with the problematic narcissist: subjugation. What I especially liked was his reconsideration of the term "pathological" narcissist. It's the best contribution since Pressman and Pressman's *The Narcissistic Family* (1997.) Clinical and effective. (I also highly recommend George Simon's book "Character Disturbance." )-----I would advise readers skip over the very small section on the Tea Party.

Loved this book! A must-read for all clinical practitioners.

First rate. Must read for therapists.

Excellent, thought provoking and very insightful.

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