

THE UNPREDICATABLE IMPROVISATIONAL MOMENT AND TOUCH: WHAT INFLUENCES THE THERAPIST? *by Linda Kay Waters, 2010*

Results from six semi-structured interviews with experienced female therapists found that even therapists who said they did not touch, did touch. Findings indicated that therapists' decision-making process was primarily shaped by a dynamic interplay of multilayer factors that formed their overall attitude toward touch. This interplay enhanced or constricted levels and areas of flexibility in therapists at any given time. Decisions about touching were also influenced by the emotional tenor of a session, the therapist's relationship with the particular client, and whether a distinction was made between the formal session and the leaving process. This research demonstrated the need for and the effectiveness of open, nonjudgmental dialogue about touch.