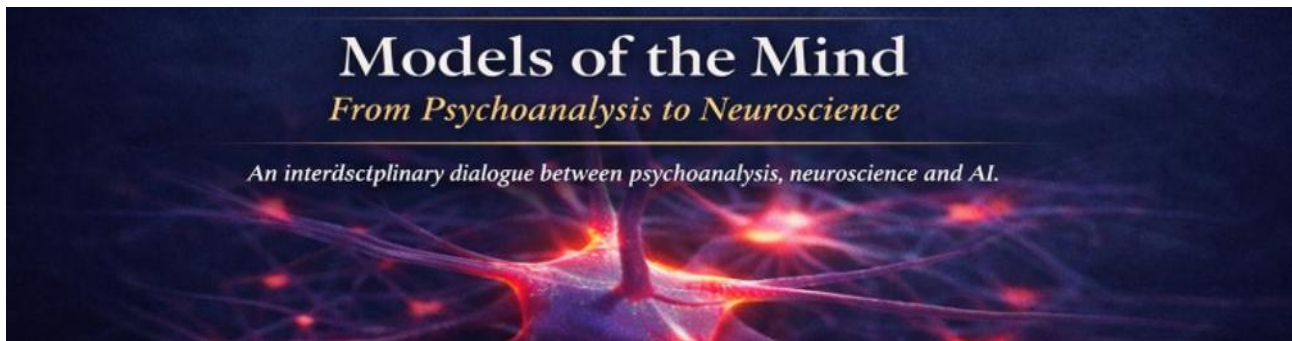




**Todd Essig**, Ph.D. is Faculty and Training and Supervising Psychoanalyst at the William Alanson White Institute, Faculty at the NYU Postdoctoral Program in Psychoanalysis, and inaugural member of the Psychotherapy Action Network (PsiAN) Advisory Board. Well-known for being a pioneer in the creative uses of mental health technologies he publishes, lectures, and consults internationally at the intersections of psychoanalysis and technology. He founded and currently chairs the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsA) Presidential Commission on Artificial Intelligence (CAI), serves on the International Psychoanalytical Association's (IPA) AI subcommittee, and is an Executive Producer on the Uncharted Territory documentary. Previously, he co-authored the IPA Task Force report on telesessions and psychoanalytic education and during the pandemic he co-chaired APsA's Covid-19 Advisory Team. For 10 years, until the pandemic hit, he wrote "Managing Mental Wealth" for Forbes. Dr. Essig maintains a private practice in New York where he treats individuals and couples.



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***Title: The Dream of Uncaring Care: Loving Encounters and Mental Models in the AI Age***

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**Abstract:** AI is weird, novel, and alien. Intimacy with an AI challenges theory to account for the experience of feeling cared for, understood, and appreciated by an entity one also knows is incapable of caring, understanding, and appreciation. This talk presents the framework of techno-subjunctivity, an emerging psychological adaptation to intimacy with these alien intelligences, in which both registers of the experience co-exist: immersion in the intersubjective affordances presented by chatbots, and a reflective awareness that one is inside a machine-generated simulation, the two fluctuating with varying degrees of fluidity and rigidity. How to model the relationship between the two registers is an open question: sequential, simultaneous, occlusion, oscillation, something else? Patients already arrive having been consoled, advised, and validated by machines. Clinicians are already working with the fluctuations between the two registers because how they combine determines whether AI interactions are helpful, harmful, or even potentially tragic. Models need to account for these newly emerging psychological adaptations to the accelerating AI age.