

# Mark Wheeler

Mark Wheeler (phototherapy@talktalk.net & mark.wheeler@nottshc.nhs.uk), lives in England where he is a Registered Art Psychotherapist working in a Child & Family Therapy NHS Clinic. In his clinical work, Mark engages families and individuals in conversations, both about and with, their family photographs, be they prints, mobile phone images, or a sketch to substitute for a photograph that does not already exist. A variety of emotional and neurodevelopmental issues are addressed by our service, including bereavement, eating disorders, early onset psychosis, attachment, depression, self-harm and autistic spectrum disorders as appropriate. Mark also teaches PhotoTherapy techniques to Bereavement Counsellors, Art Therapy students and Mental Health professionals.



Mark came to PhotoTherapy via his practice as a photographer, becoming interested in the psychological dimensions of making and viewing photographs in various contexts. As a student Mark became fascinated by the unique photographic syntax and the capacity of photographs to short-circuit many of our mental visual filters, culminating in our unique relationships with photographs among all visual images. After meeting Jo Spence in 1984, Mark went on to use therapeutic photography with adolescents at a therapeutic community and subsequently became the first British photography graduate to undertake postgraduate Art Therapy training. Mark's qualifying dissertation (1992) was *Phototherapy: The Use Of Photographs In Art Therapy*, for which he interviewed Judy Weiser and plundered her library.

Mark's practice embraces encounters with the individual's unconscious processes in psychodynamic or psychoanalytic models and whole families in systemic and narrative models. Mark's publications include a co-authored book chapter *Male Therapist Countertransference and the Importance of Family Context* (in Murphy, J (2001) *Lost For Words: Art Therapy With Young Survivors Of Sexual Abuse*). He has appeared on BBC radio and been interviewed and quoted by magazines including *Psychologies*. Mark continues to make and exhibit photographs.

In 2004 Mark was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society for his work examining the psychological aesthetics of making and viewing photographs and will be enlarging on these ideas at the PhotoTherapy Conference, Turku, Finland 2008 as well as sharing some of his experience working systemically with photographs.