

THE BOSTON PSYCHOANALYTIC SOCIETY AND INSTITUTE, INC.

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Seminar Year II Fall, 2014 Freud II

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This seminar is intended to introduce you to selected aspects of Freud's later work on the theory of mental functioning, psychosexual development, anxiety and defense, relation to reality, and the therapeutic action of psychoanalysis. From approximately 1914 to 1917 Freud had attempted to summarize and clarify his work up to then, both in the [Introductory lectures on psychoanalysis](#) and in a series of 'metapsychological' papers concerning fundamental issues in the psychoanalytic theory of drives, repression, consciousness and unconsciousness, and the several systems making up mental functioning. Although much seemed assured, it was plain to him that these efforts uncovered further problems. At the same time he sought to expand the reach of psychoanalytic understanding in new and puzzling arenas: (1) experiences of self-love and self-hatred, inner objects and identifications, and their implications for paranoia, severe depression, and normal development; (2) the clinical and theoretical importance of repetitive, self-destructive, self-punishing features of mental life. In the monographs and papers we will be reading, Freud finds himself obliged to modify his views of drives and self-regulation, as well as his conception of mental systems and the properties of being conscious and unconscious. Having done so he returns to the home territory of psychoanalysis—the psychopathology of hysterical and obsessional neurosis—and reformulates his views of anxiety, defense, and symptom formation. During these same years and into the 1930's, Freud returns again and again to the complexities of psychosexual development in boys and girls, to problems involving defense and the relation to reality, and finally to the elements of the therapeutic action of psychoanalysis.

In a given week there may be more reading than is practical for you. We are aiming for quality of attention, not quantity. We will only be able, in any event, to touch on selected aspects of the material. Please bring up for discussion what you found interesting, puzzling, useful, or evocative personally and clinically. For our last meeting we will ask the class to choose a second paper to read from Freud's work, in addition to 'Analysis terminable and interminable'.

Week 1: Freud, S. (1916). Some character types met with in psychoanalytic work. *SE* 14:311-333. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1917). Mourning and melancholia. *SE* 14:243-258. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 2: Freud, S. (1920). Beyond the pleasure principle. *SE* 18:7-64. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1924). The economic problem of masochism. *SE* 19:159-170. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 3: Freud, S. (1923). The ego and the id. *SE* 19:13-59. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 4: Freud, S. (1926). Inhibitions, symptoms, and anxiety. *SE* 20:87-174. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 5: Freud, S. (1933). The dissection of the psychical personality. In [New introductory lectures on psychoanalysis](#). *SE* 22:57-80. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1933). Anxiety and instinctual life. In [New introductory lectures on psychoanalysis](#). *SE* 22:81-111. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 6: Freud, S. (1923). The infantile genital organization: an interpolation into the theory of sexuality. *SE* 19:141-145. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1924). The dissolution of the Oedipus complex. *SE* 19:173-179. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1925). Some psychical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes. *SE* 19:248-258. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1931). Female sexuality. *SE* 21:225-243. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 7: Freud, S. (1924). Neurosis and psychosis. *SE* 19:149-156. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1924). The loss of reality in neurosis and psychosis. *SE* 19:183-187. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1927). Fetishism. *SE* 21:152-157. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1938). Splitting of the ego in the process of defense. *SE* 23:275-278. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 8: Freud, S. (1937). Analysis terminable and interminable. *SE* 23:211-253. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main Topics and Learning Objectives

Week 1

Main topic for discussion: ‘Mourning and melancholia’ and ‘Some character types met with in psychoanalysis’. These papers show Freud finding guilty conscience to be an independent actor in the genesis of severe or psychotic depression, in neurotic character, and in normal mental life. He develops further his account of ‘within-self’ relationships involving self-observation and self-criticism, based on internalization and identification, begun in the 1914 paper on narcissism. In doing so he also anticipates later changes in the theory of psychical systems.

Learning objective for this session: Participants will be able to describe how Freud develops the key difference between clinical depression and non-pathological grief—i.e., the loss of “self-regarding feelings” and the presence of “self-revilings”—into a distinct psychological structure built up from object loss and identification.

Week 2

Main topic for discussion: ‘Beyond the pleasure principle’ and ‘The economic problem of masochism’. In this monograph and subsequent paper Freud struggles to account for human self-destructiveness and our repetitive pursuit of aims which involve pain, when he has held it to be axiomatic for many years that we are governed by the principle of aversion to pain.

Learning objective for this session: Participants will be able to describe the clinical observations which led to Freud’s re-evaluation of the theory of drives, as well as his speculative account of a psychobiological structure which receives and binds stimulation from within and without, the traumatic breaching of this structure, and the subsequent “compulsion to repeat”.

Week 3

Main topic for discussion: ‘The ego and the id’. The emphasis will be on Freud’s presentation of the clinical grounds for distinguishing the facts or qualities of consciousness and unconsciousness from the nature of mental systems or structures, and on the implications he draws from re-thinking those systems.

Learning objective for this session: Participants will be able to describe and evaluate the reasons for Freud's shift from the 'topographical theory' to the 'structural theory' of the mind.

Week 4

Main topic for discussion: 'Inhibitions, symptoms, and anxiety'. Having reformulated the theory of drives and psychical systems, and ensconced the Oedipal complex at the center of psychosexual development, Freud revisits basic psychopathology. Almost, it seems, without really wanting to do so, he is gradually led to change his view on the nature of anxiety and its relation to defense. And in passing he gathers his thoughts together in this monograph regarding the distinctive features of hysterical and obsessional neurosis.

Learning objectives for this session: Participants will be able to describe the 'danger situations', as Freud calls them, which play a central role in development and symptom formation. Participants will have an opportunity to clarify their understanding of the dynamics of hysterical and obsessional neurosis.

Week 5

Main topic for discussion: Two chapters from the New introductory lectures on psychoanalysis. The monographs we have read for the past several weeks were written as exploratory essays which begin with questions about one or another problem, then seek solutions with all the tentativeness, false starts and stops, and meandering which go with the essay form. These chapters written seven to thirteen years later, present Freud's thinking on the same topics with the benefit of further reflection. Now the form is expository and elegant, the ideas more integrated and developed.

Learning objectives for this session: Participants will be able to show how Freud correlates his division of the mind into three systems—'It', 'I', and 'Above-I'—with his revised view of anxiety, the danger situations of childhood, and symptom formation.

Week 6

Main topic for discussion: We will read a series of four relatively short papers from 1923 to 1938 on psychosexual development, in which Freud returns again and again to the problem of understanding differences between male and female development, and is eventually led to expand his conception of the extent and nature of the Oedipus situation in order to accommodate the complexity of female development.

Learning objectives for this session: Participants will be able to trace the evolution of Freud's views on the onset, dynamics, and outcome of Oedipal conflicts in boys and girls.

Week 7

Main topic for discussion: We will read a series of four short papers from 1924 to 1938 on defense and the relation to reality in which Freud employs his revised theory of psychic structure to distinguish psychosis and neurosis in terms of repudiation and acceptance of reality, and discusses partial and splitting defenses which both accept and reject reality.

Learning objectives for this session: Participants will be able to describe differences in symptom formation arising from different kinds of rejection of reality.

Week 8

Main topic for discussion: We will study Freud's extensive discussion of the theory and method of psychoanalytic treatment in 'Analysis terminable and interminable'. In addition we will read a paper chosen by the class, on anything which has caught their interest.

Learning objectives for this session: Participants will be able to describe Freud's view of how ego characteristics due to constitutional and gender differences, as well as ego modifications ensuing from defense activity during the course of development, affect the course and outcome of therapeutic analysis.

How is this program relevant for clinicians and how will it enhance their work with patients?

The theories of development, psychic structure, conflict, and symptom formation which are covered in this course will be helpful to clinicians in comprehending not only neurotic conditions, but also severe

personality disorders and psychoses. The course addresses Freud's original ideas regarding pathological self-punitive activities, the repetition in later life of painful scenarios from early development, and defensive activities which compromise persons' relation to reality. These remain daily problems of clinical work in all settings. Finally, clinicians will be able to use Freud's insights into the genesis and dynamics of hysterical and obsessional symptoms with all patients.