

THE BOSTON PSYCHOANALYTIC SOCIETY AND INSTITUTE
141 Herrick Road, Newton Centre, Massachusetts 02459

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Freud II

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This seminar is intended to introduce you to selected aspects of the evolution of Freud's ideas about unconscious processes, his shift from a topographic to a structural theory of the mind, and the centrality of object relations to these theoretical changes. These changes involved greater elaboration of his theory of mental functioning, psychosexual development, anxiety and defense, the 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. 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.

We have aimed to limit the assigned reading to be feasible for reading and discussing in some depth. Nevertheless, we will only be able to touch on selected aspects of the material. Each of the major papers covered could be a seminar on its own.

Please bring up for discussion what you found interesting, puzzling, useful, or evocative personally and clinically. Throughout the seminar we hope to connect the theories discussed with clinical material, particularly your own clinical experience.

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Seminar dates: Nov. 17; Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22 2016;
(Academic Lecture; Jan. 5 & APSaA Mtgs; Jan 19);
Jan. 12, 26; Feb. 4

Part 1: The unconscious - These first three sessions will focus on the unique insights developed by Freud about the unconscious sources of mental life – an idea that is perhaps the most central precept of psychoanalytic thought.

Week ONE - November 17

Main Topics: We will specifically explore how Freud used the data of dreams to hypothesize the existence of unconscious processes, including unconscious wishes and fantasies, and to study the special characteristics of unconscious processes as evident in “dream work.”

Learning Objective(s):

At the conclusion of this seminar candidates will be able to describe the role of infantile phantasy and wish-fulfillment in dreams.

Reading: (1900) *The Interpretation of Dreams, Please read all of Chapter VII (S.E. IV, Pages 509-621, with special attention to Section E, “The Primary and Secondary Process – Repression” and Section F “The Unconscious and Consciousness – Reality,” Pages 588-621)* [PEP Web Link](#)

Week TWO - December 1

Main Topics: In *The Unconscious* Freud carefully lays out his reasons for asserting that unconscious processes are *mental* despite being outside conscious awareness, and that they make powerful contributions to conscious perceptions, thought and feelings.

Learning Objective(s):

- 1) At the conclusion of this seminar candidates will be able to detail the arguments for positing unconscious processes and will be able to define the different categories of unconscious mental processes (e.g., descriptive vs. dynamic).
- 2) At the conclusion of this seminar candidates will be able to specify the distinct properties of conscious and unconscious processes.

Readings: (1915) *The Unconscious, sections I-IV (S.E. XIV, Pages 159-185)* [PEP Web Link](#)
[Optional] (1912) *A Note on the Unconscious in Psycho-Analysis (S.E. XII, Pages 255-266)* [PEP Web Link](#)

Week THREE - December 8

Main Topics: Freud illuminates the distinct properties of conscious and unconscious thought, further elaborates the primary principle governing admission of thoughts to consciousness, suggests the mechanisms for exclusion of unacceptable thoughts, and discusses the interactions between conscious and unconscious mental contents.

Learning Objective(s):

At the conclusion of this seminar candidates will be able to discuss the pleasure principle, the primary principle Freud thought to be responsible for exclusion of unconscious mental contents from consciousness, and the mechanisms of “repression.”

Reading: (1915) *The Unconscious, sections V-VII (S.E. XIV, Pages 186-204)* [PEP Web Link](#)

Part 2: Narcissistic vs. object libido and the beginnings of internal object relations – In “On Narcissism” Freud considers carefully the relation between self-love and love of the other. This work importantly anticipates his consideration of object relations, the influence of the actual object on psychic life and the enduring internalized role of the other.

Week FOUR - December 15

Main Topics: We will look at how Freud first considers the broader implications of narcissism for psychoanalysis, both in normal development and in psychopathology. Following from his observations of the megalomania and withdrawal of schizophrenics, he began to focus on the narcissistic transferences, hypothesizing about a primary infantile narcissism. Developing his theory, he writes of the relationships between two types of libido, that of object-libido and ego-libido, and he uses the study of love to continue looking at narcissism.

Learning Objective(s):

At the conclusion of this seminar candidates will be able to discuss the theory of narcissistic libido, and how this might contribute to normal and pathological functioning.

Reading: (1914) *On Narcissism: an introduction, sections I & II* (S.E. XIV, Pages 67-91) [PEP Web Link](#)

Week FIVE - December 22

Main Topics: Freud introduces the idea of the ego ideal, foreshadowing his later structural theory and the development of the super-ego.

Learning Objective(s):

At the conclusion of this seminar candidates will be able to describe the relationship between narcissism and the ego ideal and the regulation of self-esteem.

Readings:

(1914) *On Narcissism: an introduction, section III* (S.E. XIV, Pages 91-102) [PEP Web Link](#)

(1917) *Introductory Lectures, Lecture XXVI (The Libido Theory and Narcissism)* (S.E. XVI, Pages 412-430) [PEP Web Link](#)

[Optional] (1915) *Psycho-Analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia, section III* (Schreber) (S.E. XII, Pages 59-79) [PEP Web Link](#)

Part 3: Identification with the object - Freud 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.

Week SIX - January 12

Main Topics: ‘Mourning and melancholia’ shows 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. Freud’s account of ‘within-self’ relationships involving self-observation and self-criticism, based on internalization and identification, anticipates later changes in the theory of psychical systems. In *On Transience*, a literary paper, Freud points

to how a potential failure of mourning disrupts the ongoing cycle, the back and forth experience, of the life-long fort/da game. We will apply these ideas to clinical material brought by candidates.

Learning Objective(s):

At the conclusion of this seminar candidates 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.

Readings:

(1917) *Mourning and melancholia* (S.E. XIV, Pages 237-258) [PEP Web Link](#)

(1915) *On Transience* (S.E. XIV, Pages 303-307) [PEP Web Link](#)

[Optional] (1921) *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, sections V-XI* (S.E. XVIII, Pages 105-133) [PEP Web Link](#)

Part 4: Structural Theory

Week SEVEN - January 26

Main Topics: 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(s):

At the conclusion of this seminar candidates will be able to describe and compare the ‘topographical theory’ to the ‘structural theory’ and outline the reasons for Freud’s shift to a new model of the mind.

Reading:

(1915) *Thoughts for the Times on War and Death* (S.E. XIV, Pages 273-300) [PEP Web Link](#)

(1923) *The ego and the id – Chapter 1-3* (S.E. XIX, Pages 1-39) [PEP Web Link](#)

Week EIGHT - February 2

Main Topics: We will consider the origin of superego in the resolution of the Oedipus, its relations to both ego and id, and the nature of internal object relations.

Learning Objective(s):

At the conclusion of this seminar candidates will be able to delineate the distinct qualities and functions hypothesized for the id, ego and super-ego.

Reading:

(1923) *The ego and the id – Chapter 4, 5, and addenda* (S.E. XIX, Pages 40-66) [PEP Web Link](#)

[Optional] (1924) *The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex*. (S.E. XIX, Pages 171-180) [PEP Web Link](#)