



ETHICS SEMINAR

Instructor: Sally Ackerman, PhD

Purpose of the Seminar:

This seminar is designed to expose students to the radical paradox surrounding ethical conduct in psychoanalysis. On one hand, we have a clear code of ethics. On the other, nearly every rule in that code was broken repeatedly by the founders of psychoanalysis. Further, if we take seriously the idea of unconscious processes, such that we are always driven by motivations of which we are unaware, we have to reckon with a sense of humility about our conscious intention to do no harm. By looking at issues of confidentiality, gifts, responses to patients' requests for accommodations, self-disclosure and both sexual and non-sexual boundary violations, we will come to recognize that ethical conduct is best achieved by a constant dialogue with oneself about the impulses of which we may be unaware.

Relevance:

This seminar will open students' awareness of the everyday press of ethical conduct, where we can never be certain that we are treating our patients properly. This awareness will invite a new kind of internal dialogue in which students can constantly try to gain awareness of the motives that they might not recognize. This will enable students to practice with a more balanced sense of ethical conduct.

Week 1: November 29, 2018.

OUR PERSONAL HISTORY OF ETHICAL ISSUES AND A VIEW TOWARD THE PROBLEM OF ETHICS IN PSYCHOANALYSIS

Summary of Session Aims:

This meeting will allow students to explore the way in which ethical issues have been with us from the moment of psychoanalysis' birth and to recognize that an appreciation of the nature of the unconscious processes undermines the very idea of following a code of ethics

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of the session, students will be able to identify three factors in the history of psychoanalysis that have contributed to continuing ambiguities about the ethical practice of psychoanalysis.

Readings:

1. Gabbard, G. (2016). Chapter two: The early history of boundary violations in psychoanalysis. In *Boundaries and Boundary Violations in Psychoanalysis*, second edition (17-32). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association Publishing. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]
2. Pinsky, E. (2011). The Olympian delusion. *JAPA*, 59(2), 351-375. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 2: December 6, 2018.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ITS COMPLICATIONS

Summary of Session Aims:

This session will encourage students to come to grips with the fundamental and irreducible bond of confidentiality in the treatment, alongside a recognition of the conflicts that come with sharing our clinical work in written or spoken format.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the meeting, students will be able to identify two conflicting motivations in both the need to write about patients and the need to protect patient confidentiality.

Readings:

1. Mosher, P.W. & Berman, J. (2015). Introduction and we have met the enemy, and he (is) was us. In *Confidentiality and Its Discontents: Dilemmas of Privacy in Psychotherapy* (1-43). New York: Fordham University Press. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]
2. Ackerman, S. (2018). (How) can we write about our patients? *JAPA*, 66(1), 59-81. [Available in the library: [Download in the library](#), check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]
3. Chodorow, N., Goldblatt, M., Kantrowitz, J. (2017) Confidentiality in case presentations. BPSI. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]

Week 3: December, 13, 2018.

GIFTS AND UNKNOWABLE CHOICES

Summary of Session Aims:

In this meeting, students will explore the mixed meanings of both gifts from patients and the analyst's choices in response to patients' demands.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the session, students will be able to describe the ethical and clinical dilemmas inherent in accepting or refusing a patient's gift or responding to a patient's demand.

Readings:

1. Silber, A. (1969). A patient's gift: its meaning and function. *IJP*, 50, 335-341. [PEP Web Link](#)
2. Casement, P.J. (1982). Some pressures on the analyst for physical contact during the re-living of an early trauma. *Int. R. Psycho-Anal.*, 9, 279-286. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 4: December 20, 2018.

ILLNESS AND SELF-DISCLOSURE

Summary of Session Aims:

In this session, students will recognize the complexity of self-disclosure, be it of an analyst's illness or other more general content.

Learning Objectives:

At the meeting's end, students will be able to identify one pro and one con of disclosing the analyst's illness and be able to describe the potential for narcissistic gratification in self-disclosure.

Readings:

1. Brody, S.R. (2013). Entering night country: reflections on self-disclosure and vulnerability. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 23(1), 45-58. [PEP Web Link](#)
2. Busch, F. (1998). Self-disclosure ain't what it's cracked up to be, at least not yet. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry* 18(4), 518-529. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 5: January 3, 2019.

NON-SEXUAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

Summary of Session Aims:

This meeting will expose students to a variety of enactments and indulgences by the analyst, inviting students to understand the implications of analyst slips.

Learning Objectives:

At the session's end, students will be able to describe two examples of the analyst being drawn to make a subtle or overt ethical mis-step.

Readings:

1. Gabbard, G. (2016). Chapter 5: non-sexual boundary violations. *Boundaries and Boundary Violations in Psychoanalysis, second edition* (71-88). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association Publishing. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bps.org.]
2. Slochower, J. (2003). The analyst's secret delinquencies. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 13(4), 451-469. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 6: January 10, 2019.

BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

Guest Presenter: Ellen Pinsky

Summary of Session Aims:

This session will articulate the confusion of ethical precepts that are written into the practice of psychoanalysis, and delve into the impact of sexual boundary violations.

Learning Objectives:

At the meeting's end, students will be able to describe two salient ways in which sexual boundary violations affect patients and their experience of psychoanalysis.

Readings:

1. Pinsky, E. (2014). The potion: reflections on Freud's "observations on transference-love". *JAPA* 62(3), 455-474. [PEP Web Link](#)
2. Dimen, M. (2011). Lapsus linguae, or a slip of the tongue? a sexual violation in an analytic treatment and its personal and theoretical aftermath. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 47(1), 35-79. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 7: January 17, 2019.

ETHICS OF THE ANALYTIC SITUATION

Guest Presenters: Jane Kite and Humphrey Morris

Summary of Session Aims:

At the meeting's end, students will be able to identify one ethical conflict present for the analyst as a person in the practice of psychoanalysis

Learning Objectives:

At meeting's end, students will be able to identify disavowal/acknowledgement oscillations in the everyday practice of psychoanalysis.

Readings:

1. Kite, J.V. (2016). The fundamental ethical ambiguity of the analyst as person. *JAPA* 64(6), 1153-1171. [Available in the library: [Download in the library](#), check the reading folder or request from library@bpsj.org.]
2. Morris, H. (2016). The analyst's offer. *JAPA*, 64(6), 1173-1187. [Available in the library: [Download in the library](#), check the reading folder or request from library@bpsj.org.]

Optional Additional Readings:

3. Wilson, M. (2016). The ethical foundation of analytic action. *JAPA* 64(6), 1189-1206. [Available in the library: [Download in the library](#), check the reading folder or request from library@bpsj.org.]

4. Kattlove, S. (2016). Acknowledging the “analyst as person”: a developmental achievement. *JAPA* 64(6), 1207-1216. [Available in the library: [Download in the library](#), check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]
5. Moss, D. (2016). Me here, you there—now what? commentary on Kite, Morris, Wilson, and Kattlove. *JAPA* 64(6), 1217-1224. [Available in the library: [Download in the library](#), check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]

Week 8: January, 24, 2019.

INSTITUTIONAL IMPACT OF BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS, BOUNDARIES IN CYBERSPACE, AND WRAPPING UP

Summary of Session Aims:

This meeting will focus on the impact of boundary violations on the broader community of analysts, along with the specific ethical risks posed by the use of technology in the practice of psychoanalytic treatment.

Learning Objectives:

1. At the end of the meeting, students will be able to describe two ethical risks posed by the use of technology in psychoanalytic treatment.
2. At the end of the meeting, the students also will be able to identify and explain the unique functions of each of the 3 components of BPSI’s Ethics resources (EEC, Ethics Committee, and Ombudsman Program)

Readings:

1. Sinsheimer, K. Silencing: when a community loses an analyst to ethical violations. In R.A. Deutsch (Ed.) *Traumatic Ruptures: Abandonment and Betrayal in the Analytic Relationship* (147-162). New York: Routledge. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]
2. Gabbard, G. (2016). Chapter 7: boundaries in cyberspace. *Boundaries and Boundary Violations in Psychoanalysis, second edition* (105-120). [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]
3. BPSI Candidate’s Manual. Chapter 11. Ethics Committees, Ombudsman, and Member Assistance. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org or find it on the [BPSI Member Website](#)]