Gender and Sexuality: Contemporary Psychoanalytic Perspectives

Instructors: Ayelet Barkai, M.D. & Laura Crain, M.D.

Course Description:
This course will explore, from a clinical and theoretical vantage point, the intersection and evolution of ideas about gender and sexuality development and expression within classical and contemporary psychoanalytic theory. The goal will be to trace the progression of psychoanalytic ideas on gender and sexuality and their development from classical to contemporary psychoanalysis. We will use clinical material as well as psychoanalytic, academic and literary texts to highlight and clarify contemporary clinical and theoretical psychoanalytic thinking on gender and sexuality.

Week 1: February 6, 2020 - Course Overview, and What Freud Said...

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session students will be able to summarize Freud’s understanding of the formation of sexual and gender identity.


Week 2: February 20, 2020 - Cold War Freud

**Guest Discussant:** Dagmar Herzog, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of History and the Daniel Rose Faculty Scholar at the Graduate Center, City University of New York; Author of *Cold War Freud.*

**Learning Objective:** At the conclusion of this session students will be able to describe how political and cultural factors contributed to the de- and resexualization (but in a conservative direction) of psychoanalysis in the first two decades of the Cold War in the US.


**Suggested Reading:** Stoller, R. (1976). Sexual excitement. *Arch. Gen. Psychiatry,* 33, 899-909. [Available in the library: check reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org]

Week 3: February 27, 2020 - (Trans) Gender Identity Development

**Learning Objective:** At the conclusion of this session students will be able to describe how the concept of mentalization can be applied to an understanding of gender identity development.


Week 4: March 5, 2020 - Queering psycho-sexual theory

**Guest Discussant:** Paul Lynch, M.D.

**Learning Objective:** At the conclusion of this session students will be able to describe gender identity development as seen through the lens of gender/queer theory and contemporary psychoanalytic perspectives.

Lemma, A. and Lynch, P.E. (2015). Introduction: Let’s talk about sex or...maybe not... In Sexualities: Contemporary psychoanalytic perspectives (pp. 1-16). London: Routledge. [Available in the library: check reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org]

Selected clinical material

Week 5: March 12, 2020 - Enigmatic Message

Guest Discussant: Diane O’Donoghue, Ph.D.

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session students will be able to explain the utilization of Laplanche’s conceptualization of the “enigmatic message” in contemporary psychoanalytic psychosexual theory.


Selected case material

Week 6: March 19, 2020 - “Perversions”

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session students will be able to identify the complex factors of a contemporary perspective on perversion, using both a psychoanalytic paper and clinical material.


Clinical presentation by Dr. Crain

**Week 7: March 26, 2020 - Psycho-sexuality and excess of representability**

**Learning Objective:** At the conclusion of this session students will be able to apply the concept of “representability” to contemporary psychoanalytic theories on sexuality development.


Selected case material

**Week 8: April 2, 2020 - Nonlinear Dynamic Systems Theory**

**Learning Objective:** At the conclusion of this session students will be able to describe the developmental concept of nonlinear systems theory and explain its impact on studying contemporary psychoanalytic theory on gender and sexuality development.


Schiller, B. M. (2012). Representing female desire within a labial framework of sexuality. *JAPA, 60* (6), 1161-1197. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Suggested Reading:** Kiersky, S. M. (2004). Perilous crossings: Tales of gender, identification, and exiled desires. *Journal of Lesbian Studies, 8*(1-2), 191-207. [Available in the library: check reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org]

Selected case material