



## **Psychopathology I: Hysteria and Obsessive- Compulsive Disorders 2020**

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### **Overview**

Psychopathology I, with its focus on Freud's early work on the neuroses, has been a historically important course. Modern students of psychoanalysis, however, often struggle to find the clinical relevance of this early work, which revolves around psychopathology and treatment.

One reason for this is that our view of "psychopathology" has changed dramatically. Freud's modern sensibility has been enlarged by a postmodern one. Freud's drive and defence models have given way to theories of object relations and intersubjectivity. Notions of psychopathology also have been transformed. In fact, as disturbances related to sexuality, aggression and repression have given way to emphases on subjectivity and meaning, the whole concept of "psychopathology" seems at times less relevant.

Another reason for this has to do with contemporary attitudes towards Freud himself. As we'll describe further in a week 1 handout, much of his thought, many of his bedrock assumptions, are politically odious to us today.

At the same time, Freud's early thinking matters, and over the next eight weeks we'd like to make this case. Psychoanalysis began with Freud's investigations into the structure of Hysteria and Obsessive–Compulsive Neurosis, and with this the understanding that psychopathological conditions could be usefully understood in terms of trauma and memory, and through the dynamic tension between the conscious and unconscious. Later Freud developed an appreciation of internal conflicts over unconscious aspects of aggression and sexuality. Our present day theories represent generations of theoretical evolution from these seminal ideas. As Yarom (1997) writes: "The field of psychoanalysis originated a century ago from Freud's analysis of his hysterical patients".

Wherever we locate ourselves on the theoretical spectrum from neo-Freudian to post-Bionians, it is helpful to appreciate both the continuities *and* the transformations that have occurred over the past 120 years. This is true on a purely theoretical basis, and it is true when it comes to our clinical work. Moreover, it is true because theories cannot

be well understood apart from the minds of the persons who have created them, and Freud is an important presence in every one of those theorists' minds.

## **Aims**

Specifically, we hope to:

- Examine classical readings on the neuroses with an eye to evolving central themes in Freud - the unconscious, drives, sexuality, and the place of reality, the father and the Oedipus.
- Take a look at how these themes have shaped, and emerged in, some admittedly selective tenets of today's psychoanalysis. We hope that this overview will prove useful context and foundation for your journey through analytic training.

In terms of classical themes, and their seminal influence on contemporary thinking, we'll explore:

- Trauma
- The mechanism of forgetting or not knowing as it has evolved from Freud's conceptions of repression.
- The evolution of gender from a primarily biological experience to a socially constructed one.
- The evolution of the triangular structure of the Oedipus, and the reality principle, to conceptualizations of thirdness and mentalization.

## **Readings**

Last year this course was redesigned. In place of a central focus on Freud, it became a comparative theory course that aimed to explore how contemporary thought has evolved from Freudian thinking. Generally there were two assigned readings per class. Again, the idea was to try to create points of comparison between Freudian/classical thinking and more contemporary thinking. We really didn't get complaints about the reading, perhaps because we were pretty laid back about them; our idea was that students would read what they were interested in, and that we would supplement the readings with handouts and class presentations. In this way, students were not at a huge disadvantage if they didn't get to the readings.

This year, we are going to adhere to the "one reading per class" request. In an effort to still compare and contrast classical and contemporary theory, we've created a four tiered reading list. Please don't be daunted by the readings. Again, read what you want and can, and we'll try to fill in during class.

Required reading:

One per week.

Suggested reading:

These are worth delving into if you have time, but seriously, they are not required! Because these, in conjunction with the required readings, will illustrate the classical/contemporary dynamic, we will cover the main ideas of the suggested readings with handouts and class presentations.

Previous readings:

These are meant as a reminder that you've encountered the reading before. Listing them reflects the hoped for continuity of the overall training program.

Maybe some day...:

Perhaps at some point in the future, when you are teaching, writing, or just plain curious, you may want to dig up this syllabus. Our aim with these "maybe some day..." readings is to provide an overview of the longer arc of psychoanalytic thought, and how it has evolved from some of Freud's early work.

## **Clinical Focus**

Each week we also hope to have an informal clinical presentation, with the emphasis on informal. We will have either a case or vignette to present, but if you would keep your mind open for interactions in your own work that illustrate the week's reading, we welcome you to present in our place.

We look forward to thinking with all of you the next eight weeks.

## **Week 1 (September 24, 2020)**

### **Hysteria: Freud's appreciation of the role of trauma**

In this first session we will review **Freud's** early work on Hysteria. The focus is what Freud problematically called his "seduction theory" ("problematic" because the word "seduction" does not capture the horrific realities of sexual abuse). We will use a different term that is also used; "trauma theory". Freud's approach represented a crucial break from Charcot and Janet. Whereas for Charcot a "degenerate nervous system" was seen as a precondition to hysteria, Freud began to view hysterical illness as more purely psychical. This led to the development of ideas such as defence, repression, the unconscious, a dynamic mind, the value of working through (over forgetting), and analysis (over suggestion).

For this first week's examination of trauma theory we chose **Freud's Emmy von N.** case over those of Anna O. and Dora because this case reflects a very early version of Freud's evolving thought. One can feel his growing awareness that a "talking cure" could allow a "wearing away process" (abreaction) that was more powerful and lasting than forgetting and suggestion. One of the beauties of this paper can be found in Freud's description of his reluctant, halting efforts to relent, to relinquish control and

power, in a way that allowed him to actually listen, something we analysts still struggle with today.

This paper also dovetails with the Bromberg paper in session 2. It's long, perhaps at least try to get a feel for Freud's sensibility.

In terms of suggested reading, these themes are nicely spelled out by **Roth's** *Falling Into History: Freud's Case of Frau Emmy von N. (...from Dimen and Harris' Storms in her Head: Freud and the Construction of Hysteria)*. Roth describes Freud struggling to actually listen, albeit somewhat begrudgingly, and he illustrates the way that, by giving up some of his absolute authority as doctor, Freud broke with Charcot's view that hypnosis could be used to *remove* or change the past that lived in patients minds. With this he moved towards the idea of a "talking cure", one that fostered a "wearing away process" (abreaction) that was more effective than hypnosis and suggestion.

In terms of the previous readings, these ideas were further refined by the time of **Freud's** (1896) the Aetiology of Hysteria, a paper that came three years after the Emmy von N. case. Here Freud laid out his clear thesis that hysteria was caused by repressed sexual trauma. "(A)t the bottom of every case of hysteria there are one or more occurrences of premature sexual experience....". Here his understanding of trauma is stunningly accurate. He writes that these experiences, in order to be traumatogenic, must suit two conditions. "They must possess" the relevant suitability to serve as a determinant and (they must recognizably possess) the necessary traumatic force".

These papers, between 1893 and 1896, all illustrate foundational psychoanalytic ideas; defense, repression, and the importance of the unconscious. In these seminal works we can see Freud's emerging view of a dynamic mind. While the characters that occupy this dynamic interplay change over the years, this paradigm proves lasting and foundational.

In terms of the "maybe some day...reading, **Brenner's** (1915) paper on repression, continues reading you did in last year's Freud seminar (his 1915 paper "On repression"). The Brenner paper offers a sweeping overview of Freud's development of this concept, and it offers a larger window into his evolving thinking.

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Required reading:

**Freud, S.** (1893). Frau Emmy von N, Case Histories from Studies on Hysteria. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume II (1893-1895): *Studies on Hysteria*. 48-105. [PEP Web Link](#)

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Suggested reading:

**Roth, M.** (2014) pp 169-184. Falling Into History: Freud's Case of Frau Emmy von N. In Dimen, M and Harris, A. (Eds.), *Storms in her Head: Freud and the*

*Construction of Hysteria* (pp. 343-358). New York, Other Press. [Available in the library: Check the reading folder or request from [library@bps.org](mailto:library@bps.org).]

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Previous readings:

**Freud, S.** (1896). *The Aetiology of Hysteria*. SE 3. p.191-221. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Freud, S.**, Volume II (1893-1895): *Studies on Hysteria*. p. 48-105 [PEP Web Link](#)

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Maybe some day reading:

**Brenner, C.** (1957). The Nature and Development of the Concept of Repression in Freud's Writings. *Psychoanal. St. Child.* 12:19-46 [PEP Web Link](#)

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Learning objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to define Freud's concepts of internal conflict and defense and identify one implication for symptom formation.

## **Week 2 (October 1, 2020)**

### **Hysteria: Repression, dissociation and classical and contemporary approaches to not knowing**

At its core, psychoanalysis remains an endeavor organized around knowing what is not yet known, or knowing what was once known and is now no longer known; what Bollas calls the "unthought known". The nature of how this knowing takes place, and the nature of what is known and not known, has, however, changed a great deal over the course of psychoanalysis.

**Bromberg's** paper, which is organized around a study of Freud's Emmy von N case, begins our exploration of the way that early thinking about knowing and not knowing, has both catalyzed and given way to more modern approaches. As Bromberg writes, "an important shift is taking place that is leading away from the unconscious, preconscious, conscious continuum per se, toward a view of the mind as a configuration of discontinuous, shifting states of consciousness with varying degrees of access to perception and cognition". While Bromberg's work lies squarely within the American relational school, this quote reflects wide swaths of modern psychoanalytic approaches to the psychoanalytic endeavor of knowing.

During this course we'll do our best to resist reductive, binary comparisons. Freud's understanding of knowing and not knowing was often quite nuanced. Lucy R. tells Freud; "I didn't know. Or rather, I didn't want to know! Wanted to drive it out of my head and think of it again...." Here Freud describes a state of mind in which one both knows and doesn't know a thing at the same time. Lucy R.'s words reflect the experience we

now describe as “dissociation”, and of course that word, “dissociation” was very much central to the early work on hysteria.

In terms of the suggested reading, **Winnicott’s** “The theory of the parent-infant relationship” is only read in a Year V elective, “Soma as Canvas”. Yet this paper contains his famous “there is no such thing as a baby . . . “. Winnicott’s idea forms the basis of much of the today’s approach to knowing found in such theorists as Ogden, Bion, Ferro, Hoffman, Bollas and others, and so it reflects the very important move away from the classical notion of an unconscious that holds fully formed thoughts and affects, to the contemporary notion that knowing is not an archaeological process, but one of mutual construction.

The **Davies** paper is from Muriel Dimen & Adrienne Harris (eds.), *Storms in Her Head: Freud and the Construction of Hysteria*. Other Press. pp. 245-264 (2001). It’s a book we have borrowed from a bit, as it contains some interesting modern reflections on Freud’s early work. Dr. Davies quotes the poet T.S. Eliot in the preface to her chapter:

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploration  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

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Required reading:

**Bromberg, P.M.** (1996). Hysteria, Dissociation, and Cure: Emmy von N Revisited. *Psychoanal. Dial.*, 6(1):55-71 [PEP Web Link](#) (You read other Bromberg, but not this paper, which is directly relevant to Freud’s writing on hysteria).

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Suggested reading:

**Davies, JM.** Back to the future in psychoanalysis: Trauma, dissociation, and the nature of unconscious processes. In Muriel Dimen & Adrienne Harris (eds.), *Storms in Her Head: Freud and the Construction of Hysteria*. Other Press. pp. 243-264 (2001). [Available in the library: Check the reading folder or request from [library@bpsi.org](mailto:library@bpsi.org).]

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Maybe some day reading:

**Winnicott, D.** (1960). The theory of the parent-infant relationship. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*. 41: 585-595. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Bollas, C.** (1987). *The Shadow of the Object*. Columbia University Press: New York. [Request from [library@bpsi.org](mailto:library@bpsi.org) for a 2-week loan. First come, First served - Return shipping required. [Available via Kindle and Amazon here.](#)]

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Learning objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to describe two ways patients might protect themselves from knowing something they can't bear to know.

### Session 3 (October 8, 2020)

#### From trauma theory to a theory based on instincts and wishes

By the time of Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality in 1905, **Freud** had largely given up the trauma theory of the neuroses ("largely" because, despite popular criticism from [Masson](#) and others, Freud really never fully abandoned *any* of his ideas). Now, instead of believing that repressed memories of externally impinging sexual traumas formed the core of the neuroses, he believed that it was our conflictual relationship to forces *within* us - instincts, drives and wishes - that form the basis for our suffering.

**Freud's** Hysterical Phantasies and their Relation to Bisexuality is a pretty simple and straightforward read. It is a direct and clear expression of his post trauma theory understanding of hysteria.

It is easy to ally with Bromberg's critique of Freud's rejection of Breuer's concept of autohypnosis as leading us away from an appreciation of the importance of dissociation, but from another angle one could argue that today's focus on psychoanalysis as a treatment for the ordinary human misery is a consequence of this shift. **Bergmann** captures this in his paper with the words; "The unconscious will be of interest not only to the neurotically ill, but to all those who wish to know themselves".

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#### Required reading

**Freud, S.** (1908). Hysterical Phantasies and their Relation to Bisexuality. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Volume IX. [PEP Web Link](#)

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#### Suggested reading:

**Bergmann, M.** (2001). The leap from the studies on hysteria to the interpretation of dreams. In Dimen, M and Harris, A. (Eds.), *Storms in her Head: Freud and the Construction of Hysteria* (pp. 343-358). New York, Other Press. [Available in the library: Check the reading folder or request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org).]

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#### Previous reading:

**Freud, S.** (1905). *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. SE 7, p. 130-243. (Focus for that reading was on the summary, 231-243.) [PEP Web Link](#)

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Learning objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to describe one way in which conflicted instincts and wishes contribute to patients' suffering.

#### **Session 4 (October 15, 2020)**

##### **Hysteria: From the Oedipal to the preoedipal**

We've selected the **Zetzel** paper because it serves a dual purpose.

It is an easy and legitimate target in terms of its treatment of gender. Perhaps it is a bit of a straw man in this regard. In session V we will contrast modern psychoanalytic approaches to gender with what can be found in Freud's early work.

This week, however, we will use the Zetzel as a springboard for thinking about a crucial development in thinking about psychopathology: the idea that there is an important distinction between oedipal and preoedipal issues. This thinking served as a crucial underpinning of the work of Winnicott, Klein, and other object relations theorists, which in turn served as a foundation for subsequent work in field theory and intersubjectivity.

**McDougall** is a fascinating thinker and her book *Theaters of the Mind* is creative and thoughtful. She quotes Raymond Devos, a French comedian, on the first page in her Prologue: "One always hopes to become someone only to find out in the end that one is several". Her work on perversions is worth reading. You don't read her elsewhere in the curriculum.

In his book *Hysteria*, **Christopher Bollas**, describes many cases of hysteria as well as theoretical understanding of them.

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Required reading:

**Zetzel, E.R.** (1968). The So Called Good Hysteric. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 49:256-260 [PEP Web Link](#)

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Suggested Reading:

**McDougall, J.** (1989). Chapter 3: On psychic deprivation. In *Theatres of the Body*. New York: WW Norton (pp. 50-67). [Available in the library: Check the reading folder or request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org).]

**Bollas, C. (2000)** *Hysteria*. Routledge: London. [Request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org) for a 2-week loan. First come, First served - Return shipping required. [Available via Kindle and Amazon here.](#)]

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Learning objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to assess the distinction between oedipal and preoedipal psychopathology.

## Session 5 (October 29, 2020)

### Gender

Gender, obviously, is not a psychopathology. However, when one reads classical psychoanalytic texts on the neuroses, it's clear that this proposition was not clear to Freud and his contemporaries. Last week's Zetzel paper, with, among other things, it's reference to "(b)ad little girls and curl's", embodies what has been objectionable in psychoanalysis' treatment of women and gender.

The **Horney** paper is an early (1928) feminist critique of a male dominated theory. It is prescient and brave, and it broaches the importance of subjective as opposed to objective knowledge. Horney is simply worth reading, and, surprisingly, you don't read her elsewhere in the curriculum.

Springsteen once said of "Born to Run; "It still holds up pretty good". In terms of the suggested reading, the same can be said of **Corbett's** paper. Written in 2008, it is smart, and interesting, worth the time, and it still holds up pretty good.

For the suggested reading, gender studies are a fascinating and exploding field of inquiry. And in terms of modern feminist critiques of classical psychoanalytic views on gender and hysteria, there were lots of good choices.

The **Devereaux** paper represents an interesting and thoughtful feminist critique of the feminist embrace of the concept of hysteria.

**Goldner's** paper is an iconic study not only of gender, but also of the post-modern, constructivist influence that has transformed psychoanalysis. Here is a teaser: "(A)s a "postmodern tide of uncertainty ....undermines the intellectual status and truth claims of virtually all academic disciplines, there has been an extraordinary resurgence of scholarly interest in psychoanalysis as the discipline most practiced in the art of uncertainty".

And the **Benjamin** paper is both an excellent feminist critique and and also it, like the Goldner, embodies important ideas that follow from the rejection of a binary approach to gender: constructed meaning, intersubjectivity, the problem of complementary relations, and more.

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Required reading:

**Horney, K.** (1926). The flight from womanhood: the masculinity-complex in women, as viewed by men and by women. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 7, 324-339. [PEP Web Link](#)

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Suggested reading:

**Corbett, K.** (2008). Gender Now. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*. 18: 838 – 856. [PEP Web Link](#)

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Previous reading:

**Freud, S.** (1905). *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. SE 7. 218-221. (section on “The Differentiation between Men and Women”) [PEP Web Link](#)

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Maybe some day reading:

**Benjamin, J.** (2001). Freud, feminism and the vicissitudes of the transference. In Dimen, M and Harris, A. (Eds.), *Storms in her Head: Freud and the Construction of Hysteria* (pp. 31 - 65). New York, Other Press. [Available in the library: Check the reading folder or request from [library@bpsi.org](mailto:library@bpsi.org).]

**Goldner, V.** (1991). Towards a Critical Relational Theory of Gender. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*: 249 – 272. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Devereux, C.** (2014) *Hysteria, Feminism, and Gender Revisited: The Case of the Second Wave*. *ESC English Studies in Canada*. 40(1)19-45. [Available in the library: Check the reading folder or request from [library@bpsi.org](mailto:library@bpsi.org).]

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Learning objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to list two criticisms Horney and Benjamin had of Freud’s theory.

## Session 6 (November 5, 2020)

### Gender Now

Freud suggested that gender development begins between ages 3 and 6 years of age, the phallic stage. Biology/anatomy were determinants of gender in his mind. Prior to that period Freud believed that infants and very small children (up to age 5) were polymorphous perverse, able to derive pleasure from any part of the body. While now we recognize that many variables need to be considered when it comes to the formation of gender identity - the nature of the parent/child relationship, nature of partners’

relationship, mental health of each parent, siblings, trauma, deaths, social and cultural influences, socioeconomic status, education of parents and child, where they live and more - Freud did not consider gender to be socially constructed.

Ken Corbett examines social transformations of gender and the ways in which modern theories signify these transformations as they seek to undo the normative regulation of gender. Pronoun use, the Supreme Court ruling that same-sex marriages are legal, the more fluid gender roles in families, are a few indications of how norms are changing. Corbett says that embodiment and gendered identifications are open to a range of possibilities and differences.

Roughton's article is about the original analysis of a man in 1975 who was conflicted about his sexuality. In 1990, Roughton returned to his notes from 1975 and elaborated on what he would say or not say in 1990. The analyst himself, also, undergoes a significant transformation during that time.

In the chapter by an anonymous writer, a man discusses his 4-year therapy in which he discovered that he had always wanted to have a man's body but was born a female. He discusses the ways he tried to make his body look masculine before he transitioned as well as his gender dysphoria.

Dr. Phillips has written an interesting article about a case that involves his heteropatent patient learning that Dr. Phillips is homosexual.

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Required reading:

**Corbett, Ken.** (2020) Gender Now. In Hertzmann, L. & Newbigin, J. (eds) *Sexuality and Gender Now*. Routledge: New York, pp. 240-255. [Available in the library: Check the reading folder or request from [library@bpsj.org](mailto:library@bpsj.org).]

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Suggested Reading:

**Roughton, R.E.** (2002) The Two Analyses of a Gay Man: The Interplay of Social Change and Psychoanalytic Understanding. *Ann. Psychoanal.*, 30:83-99. [PEP Web Link](#)

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Maybe some day reading:

**Bollas, C.** (1995) *Cracking Up: The Work of Unconscious Experience*. Psychology Press. London. [Request from [library@bpsj.org](mailto:library@bpsj.org) for a 2-week loan. First come, First served - Return shipping required. [Available via Amazon here.](#)]

**Phillips, S.** (1960) A New Analytic Dyad: Homosexual Analyst. Heterosexual Patient. [PEP Web Link](#)

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Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this course, candidates will be able to describe how gender is socially constructed.

## **Session 7 (November 12, 2020)**

### **The neuroses and the progression from the Oedipus and the reality principle to thirdness and mentalization**

Continuing our exploration of the movement from classical to more recent thinking, we'll spend our last two sessions on two cornerstones of contemporary psychoanalysis that can be seen to derive from Freud's work around the Oedipus: conceptualizations of thirdness, and the way development is catalyzed by the "good enough" frustration of drives, needs and wishes. These two ideas serve as cornerstones for some of the most seminal thinkers in contemporary psychoanalysis; Lacan, Green, Benjamin, Ogden, Coelho Jr. and many others. In terms of psychopathology, today's focus on subjectivity, mentalization, early developmental disorders and more all owe much to various conceptualizations of the "third".

Freud's work on the Oedipus, triangulation, the father and the reality principle is core to present day thinking about both thirdness, and the way that development proceeds from frustration. In the words of Blass, "the presence of the (Oedipal) third becomes the source of all ambivalence and conflict..."

In terms of the "required reading, **Coelho Jr.s** paper is an excellent and up to date overview of various approaches to thirdness, and you don't read it or him elsewhere in the curriculum. As you read, think about Freud's early work on the Oedipus as a background for this cornerstone of current thinking.

In terms of the suggested reading, **Freud's** "Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex" is classic and succinct. You will also read it in Freud II, along with the much longer "The Ego and the Id". It's easy to read twice, worth the time, but if you'd prefer to wait, here, in Freud's words, is the core idea from this paper.

"To an ever-increasing extent the Oedipus complex reveals its importance as the central phenomenon of the sexual period of early childhood. After that, its dissolution takes place; it succumbs to repression, as we say, and is followed by the latency period. It has not yet become clear, however, what it is that brings about its destruction. Analyses seem to show that it is the experience of painful disappointments. Even when no special events occur ...the absence of the satisfaction hoped for, the continued denial of the desired baby, must in the end lead the small lover to turn away from his hopeless longing."

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Required reading:

**Coelho, Nelson** (2015). 'Origins and destinies of the idea of thirdness in contemporary psychoanalysis. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 97(4), 1105-1127. [PEP Web Link](#)

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Suggested Reading:

**Freud, S.** (1924). The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIX (1923-1925): *The Ego and the Id and Other Works*, 171-180 [PEP Web Link](#)

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Maybe some day reading:

**Ogden, T.** (2004) The analytic third: implications for Psychoanalytic theory and technique. *Psych Q.* 73: 167-195. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Busch, F.** (2018). Three post Bionians. In *The Analyst's Reveries*. Oxon: Routledge, London. [Available in the library: Check the reading folder or request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org).]

**Freud, S.** (1923). The Ego and the Id. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIX (1923-1925): The Ego and the Id and Other Works*, 1-66. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Blum, H.P.** (2007). Little Hans: A Centennial Review and Reconsideration. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 55(3):749-765. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Chused, J.F.** (2007). Little Hans "Analyzed" in the Twenty-First Century. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 55(3):767-778 [PEP Web Link](#)

**Green A. (1975).** The analyst, symbolisation and absence in the analytic setting (On changes in analytic practice and analytic experience). *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 56:1–22. [PEP Web Link](#)

The entire volume 73, issue 1 of Psychoanalytic Quarterly deals with the subject of the third.

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Learning objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to explain the relationship between Freud's concept of the Oedipus and the current concept of "thirdness."

## Session 8 (November 19, 2020)

### The neuroses and the progression from the Oedipus and the reality principle to thirdness and mentalization

Our final class continues our exploration from the Freudian Oedipal theory involving mother, father, child to modern ideas about thirdness. A foundational underpinning of intersubjectivity is the idea that interactions between analyst and analysand cannot be seen as separate from each other. Rather interactions must always be seen as mutually influencing. An important element of this idea is the concept of mentalization: the capacity to think about one's own mind as well as the other's mind

Jessica Benjamin (*Beyond Doer and Being Done to*) explores the *moral* responsibility of creating thirdness in that the analyst accepts feelings of guilt, inadequacy, or shame that enactments and impasses arouse. The analyst can speak of her mistakes or misattunements, honestly, to an analysand that both gives the analysand freedom to do the same as well as illustrates how the analyst is understanding her own mind in conjunction with what is going on in the analysand's mind and between them. She likens it to two musicians riffing together where they have a fundamental understanding of music and their own instrument but try to follow each other in creating something new and never heard, a thirdness.

In a relationship of twoness, there appears to be only two choices: "it's either you or me" or to put it another way, submission or resistance to the other. Neither music, creativity, harmony or mutual understanding can be achieved at that point. Two-ness, a dyad without the organizing and catalyzing presence of a third, is relentlessly prone to collapse into states of doing and being done to, and with this the forced choice of submission or resistance. Repair is arrived at when the presence of a third can be reestablished. Becoming part of the problem is how we become part of the solution (Mitchell).

**Andre Green** may be one of the more underrepresented theorists in the BPSI curriculum. At present he is only read in one course, and that is an elective. He is, however, a deep and influential thinker. His paper, perhaps as well as any, illuminates the arc from Freud to much of what you will be reading over the next four years and beyond.

We considered using one of **Fonagy's** "Playing with reality papers here. You only read Fonagy in Psychopathology II, year 4, and in an elective; "Soma as Canvas". His papers on mentalization are important, and they combine an interesting empirical, developmental angle that is refreshing.

We also considered **Winnicott** whose ideas of potential or transitional space are very close to Benjamin's idea of thirdness.

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Required reading:

**Benjamin, J.** (2004). Beyond Doer and Done to. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 73(1):5-46 [PEP Web Link](#)

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Suggested Reading:

**Green, A.** (2004). Thirdness and Psychoanalytic Concepts. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 73(1):99-135 [PEP Web Link](#)

**Mitchell, S.** (1997). *Influence and Autonomy in Psychoanalysis*. Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press. [Request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org) for a 2-week loan. First come, First served - Return shipping required. [Available via Amazon here.](#)]

**Winnicott, D.W.** (1971). *Playing and Reality*. , 1-156. London: Tavistock Publications. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Freud, S.** (1920). *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. SE 18, 1-64. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Fonagy, P., & Target, M. (2007).** Playing with reality: IV. A theory of external reality rooted in intersubjectivity. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 88 (Pt 4), 917-937 [PEP Web Link](#)

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Previous reading:

**Freud, S.** (1908). *On the Sexual Theories of Children*. SE 9. p. 209-226. [PEP Web Link](#)

**Freud, S.** (1915). *Instincts and their Vicissitudes*. SE 14. p. 117-140 (special focus of our discussion will be pp. 117-127, 134-140) [PEP Web Link](#)

**Freud, S.** (1911). Formulations on the two principles of mental functioning. In *SE XII* (p.213-226) [PEP Web Link](#)

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Learning objective: At the conclusion of this class, candidates will be able to define the psychoanalytic terms “mentalization” and the “third”.

### Other suggested readings

Throughout this course we will reference changing conceptualizations of the unconscious. The concept of the unconscious is of course central to Freud, and tracing evolving ways of thinking about the unconscious is a pretty good way to trace changes in psychoanalytic thinking. Current theory has a radically different view of the nature of the unconscious than classical theory.

Consider, as one of many possible examples, **Bion's** notion that "conscious experience remains an 'undigested fact' until it is processed by dream-work and turned into a memory that may be Linked with other memories in an individual's self-narrative".

We'll keep this in mind during class lectures and discussions, but if you are interested in some additional reading here are a few suggestions:

**Brown, L.J.** (2012). Bion's Classical reading: Discovery of Alpha Function: Thinking under Fire on the Battlefield and in the Consulting Room. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 93(5):1191-1214 [PEP Web Link](#)

**Brown, L. B.** (2011). *Intersubjective Processes and the Unconscious: An Integration of Freudian, Kleinian and Bionian Perspectives*. London: Karnac. (Pages 2 – 9) [Available in the library: Check the reading folder or request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org).]

**Stern, D.** (2013) Field Theory in Psychoanalysis, Part I: Harry Stack Sullivan and Madeleine and Willy Baranger. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 23:487–501, 2013 [PEP Web Link](#)

**Busch, F.N.** (2017). A model for integrating actual neurotic or unrepresented states and symbolized aspects of intrapsychic conflict. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 86(1),75-108. [PEP Web Link](#)

Also recall a couple of papers you read in your Year I Basic Concepts course:

**Civitaresse and Ferro's** (2013) The meaning and use of metaphor in analytic field theory, and **Brown's** (2007). On dreaming one's patient: reflections on an aspect of countertransference dreams.