



boston psychoanalytic
society & institute

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FREUD I Seminar Year I, 2021-2022

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In this, the first of your seminars dedicated to the works of Sigmund Freud, we enjoy the opportunity to read the primary source material of psychoanalysis unmediated by subsequent interpretations and influence-- although translation is an issue. As such, each reader can share in the spirit of discovery, the rhetoric of persuasion, the struggles with dissent and rebellion, and come to their own first impressions.

Ever present is the figure of Freud. From the outset he places his self-explorations in the foreground. He addresses us directly, in intimate dialogue that inevitably mirrors the very processes of unconscious desire, influence, and relation to authority that he is attempting to describe. Einstein famously suggested that Freud best deserved a Nobel for literature. His suggestion was taken as a dismissal of the scientific status of psychoanalysis but perhaps it might be better understood as a recognition of Freud's power as an author to stir in his readers the subjects of his investigation. Perhaps this helps explain why psychoanalysts frequently describe the effect of returning to reading Freud as inspiring a renewed capacity to focus on evidence of unconscious processes.

Reading Freud is both an educational opportunity and an experience, at times an experience of transference to the founder of psychoanalysis. Many authors have observed episodes of idealization and denigration that mark their encounters and re-encounters with Freud over the course of their training and development as analysts. Our goal is to foster openness and playfulness with the material while noticing when we can the flow of our experience and perhaps the evidence of transference.

This seminar emphasizes readings from the first half of Freud's career. It is a time in closest proximity to his self-analysis, explosive creativity, and the excitement of resistance to his ideas yielding to recognition. Each week, after one of the instructors lays out some initial highlights and context for the reading, we will ask one of you to begin the discussion with some thoughts and questions. The goal, of course, is to achieve a dynamic discussion of the ideas in an environment that encourages everyone to participate. We will know we succeeded if participants feel free to try on ideas without fear of judgment or worries about being pigeonholed into one perspective about psychoanalysis or another. Such worries have been observed at times to inhibit engaging with ideas in different settings throughout the institute. This first year seminar occurs early in the process of forming an identity as a psychoanalyst. As in all periods of identity

formation experimentation is the rule. It is a time to let all the flowers bloom. It is a time to let the experience of the reading mingle with experiences in the consulting room and in your personal analyses. It is a time to let Freud's creative explorations observations and ideas inspire our own.

BPSI's library has a number of copies of each volume of Freud's Standard Edition. Each of the papers assigned will be available on PEP. If you don't own the Standard Edition, it would be great if you could check out the volumes we will be reading each week from the library so that we can easily read together from the same text.

We look forward to meeting all of you and reading Freud together.

The Early Phase (1895-1905)

Seminar 1 – Feb 17, 2022: The early papers (1894 - 1896)

In these early papers we witness the birth of Freud's psychoanalytic thinking – his discovery of the unconscious, intra-psychic conflict and defense and their role in psychopathology and symptom formation. We examine not only the details of Freud's early theories but also the way he goes about observing clinical phenomena and how he devises methods to investigate the mind. We will see how the early theories formed the creative groundwork for the rest of Freud's career.

Learning objective: Participants will be able to describe Freud's early notion of hysteria, e.g. that the patient defends against intolerable ideas and/or experiences by repression and/or conversion of excitation.

Readings:

Please read these papers prior to the first class. The Lucy R. case will be used so that we have a case in common to use in our discussion.

Freud, S. (1894). Lecture 1, Introduction, Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis. SE 15, pp 15-24. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1894). The Neuro-Psychoses of Defence. SE 3, pp 45-61. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1896). The Aetiology of Hysteria. SE 3, pp191-221. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1893-1895) Case 3. Miss Lucy R. SE 2, pp 106-124. [PEP Web Link](#)

Supplemental:

Freud, S. (1896). Further Remarks on the Neuro-Psychoses of Defence. SE 3, 162-185. Focus on pp 163, 167, 169. [PEP Web Link](#)

Seminar 2 – Feb 24, 2022: The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), Chapter II - IV

Freud's Irma dream is probably the most quoted of all his dreams. We will encounter and discuss Freud's method of analyzing and interpreting it, his discovery that the dream is the fulfillment of a wish and that it is presented in distorted ways.

Learning objective: Participants will be able to differentiate between manifest and latent dream content and give examples of the “day residue” in the Irma dream.

Readings:

Freud, S. (1900). The Interpretation of Dreams. SE 4, pp. 96-162. [PEP Web Link](#)

Seminar 3 – Mar 3, 2022: The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), Chapter V

An enriched understanding of Freud’s dream interpretation and many common examples provide the chapter “The material and sources of dreams.” Here we will also find Freud’s first description of the Oedipus complex.

Learning objective: Participants will be able to name at least three mechanisms of dream work: regression to infantile material, condensation, displacement, secondary revision, and use of symbols.

Readings:

Freud, S. (1900). The Interpretation of Dreams. SE 4, pp.163-240. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1900). The Interpretation of Dreams. SE 4, pp. 241-276. [PEP Web Link](#)

Seminar 4 – Mar 10, 2022: “Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria” (Dora), (1905 [1901])

In this famous case history, Freud explores the sexual origins of hysterical symptoms, the part played by dreams in representing these symptoms, and the impact of psychic bisexuality in Dora’s conflicts.

Learning objective: Participants will be able to identify one of the unconscious sexual phantasies of Dora’s symptom of a nervous cough.

Readings:

Freud, S. (1905[1901]). Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria (Dora). SE 7: pp. 3-63.

[PEP Web Link](#)

Seminar 5 – Mar 17, 2022: “Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria” (Dora), (1905 [1901])

We will continue to read the Dora case, focusing on her first and second dream (sections II and III) and the Postscript (section IV) in which Freud describes the impact on this treatment of his failure to appreciate and interpret the negative transference. The Postscript remains one of the first and most important of Freud’s descriptions of the primacy of and clinical use of transference in psychoanalysis.

Learning objective: Participants will be able to describe two features of the latent meaning of Dora's first and second dreams and to identify one impact of the failure to recognize and interpret the negative transference.

Readings:

Freud, S. (1905[1901]). Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria (Dora). SE 7: pp. 64-122. [PEP Web Link](#)

Supplemental:

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

Seminar 6 – Mar 24, 2022: Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality (1905)

This is Freud's basic work on psycho-sexuality. It was reprinted several times and each time Freud included discoveries and concepts from his later years. A special focus of the discussion will be on infantile sexuality. The phase-specific wishes, anxieties, conflicts outlined here are basic to Freud's understanding of unconscious fantasies and character development.

Learning objective: Participants will be able to name Freud's psychosexual stages (oral, anal, phallic/genital) and describe the stage-specific zones and at least one psychological characteristic associated with each of them (wish to incorporate or bite, wish to control, wish to penetrate to control the other, wish to penetrate or to be penetrated to experience pleasure with the other).

Readings:

Freud, S. (1905). Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality. SE 7, pp. 130-243. [PEP Web Link](#)
Please focus your reading on pp. 135-206 and the Summary, pp. 231-243.

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

Supplemental:

Freud, S. (1912). On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love. SE 11, pp.179-190 [PEP Web Link](#)

The Middle Phase (1912-1917)

Seminar 7 - Mar 31, 2022: Drive and Repression

In this class, we'll examine Freud's concept of drives and their function in his mental apparatus. Drive and repression are the core concepts of the dynamics of psychic processes, and both concepts find their specific elaboration in the two papers assigned below.

Learning objective: Participants will be able to describe what Freud meant by the aim of a drive (satisfaction), the object of a drive (the self or the other), to give an example of the transformation of a drive (sublimation, turning the drive into its opposite, repression, turning around on the self).

Readings:

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

Freud, S. (1915). Repression. SE 14, 146-158. [PEP Web Link](#)

Seminar 8 - Apr. 7, 2022: On Transference and Technique

In this phase Freud wrote some of his major technical papers. One of Freud's most important clinical findings is the phenomenon of transference. It is basic to all psychoanalytic understanding. We will discuss the dynamics of transference and transference love.

Further we will see how, according to Freud, the analyst can understand the patient's "behavior" within different phases of the treatment and help him or her to make unconscious conflicts conscious.

Learning objective: Participants will be able to describe Freud's understanding of the positive and negative transference based on the drive model (transfer of libidinal and affectionate or hostile feelings) and to describe Freud's definition of counter-transference and its management in clinical work.

Readings:

Freud, S. (1915). Observations on Transference-Love. SE 12, pp. 159-171. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1914). Remembering, Repeating and Working through. SE 12, pp. 147-156. [PEP Web Link](#)

Supplemental:

Freud, S. (1912). The Dynamics of Transference. SE 12, pp. 99-108. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1913) On Beginning the Treatment (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-Analysis I. SE 12, pp 123-144. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1937). Constructions in Analysis. SE 23, pp.257-269. [PEP Web Link](#)