



Gender and Sexuality: Contemporary Psychoanalytic Perspectives

BPSI Spring Semester 2022

Instructors: Laura Crain, MD and Donna Fromberg, PsyD

This course will explore, from clinical and theoretical vantage points, the evolution of ideas about the development and expression of gender and sexuality within classical and contemporary psychoanalysis. We will discuss the effect of caretakers and culture on unconscious psychosexual development and the effects of cultural gender idealizations in childhood and adulthood. We will also review approaches to countertransference that can help us to avoid objectifying or simplifying our patients' experiences.

We invite you to watch two films that may enhance your reading and the discussions for weeks 5 and 7--Susan Streitfeld's film, *Female Perversions*, and Kate Novack's film, *Hysterical Girl*. Viewing the films is not mandatory. The Streitfeld film was originally inspired by Kaplan's writings on perversions and her article, assigned for week 5, is her response to the Streitfeld film. The Novack film depicts psychoanalytic concepts that can be viewed in relation to the "me too" movement and thought about through the lens of intersectionality.

Week 1, February 17 – Course Overview and History of Gender and Sexuality in Psychoanalysis

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, students will be able to describe influences on psychoanalytic theory regarding sex and gender.

Lynch, P. E. (in press). Sexuality and gender in development: Facets of bedrock and beyond. In D. McCann (Ed.), *Same-sex couples and other identities: Psychoanalytic perspectives*. Routledge. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Suggested Readings:

Freud, S. (1905). Three essays on the theory of sexuality (1905) [Parts II-III]. *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud, volume VII (1901-1905): A case of hysteria, three essays on sexuality and other works* (pp. 173-243). [PEP Web Link](#)

Select excerpts from Freud's Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality – will be distributed by the instructors.

Week 2, February 24 – Developmental Theory of Gender and Sexuality

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, students will be able to explain the role of mentalization in the development of gender and sexuality.

Target, M. (2015). A developmental model of sexual excitement, desire and alienation. In A. Lemma & P. E. Lynch (Eds.), *Sexualities: Contemporary psychoanalytic perspectives* (pp. 43-62). Routledge. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsl.org].

Suggested Readings:

Silverman, S. (2015). The colonized mind: Gender, trauma, and mentalization. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 25(1), 51-66. [PEP Web Link](#)

Dimen, M., & Goldner, V. (2011). Gender and sexuality. In *Textbook of psychoanalysis* (2nd ed., pp. 133-152). American Psychiatric Publishing. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsl.org].

Week 3, March 3 – Enigmatic messages and the shaping of the unconscious

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, students will be able to describe Laplanche's concept of Enigmatic Messages.

Laplanche, J. (1997) The Theory Of Seduction And The Problem Of The Other. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 78:653-666 [PEP Web Link](#)

Suggested Readings:

Laplanche, J. (1995). Seduction, persecution, revelation. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76:663-682. [PEP Web Link](#)

Evzonas, N. (2020). Gender and "race" enigmatic signifiers: How the social colonizes the unconscious. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 40:8, 636-656. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsl.org].

Week 4, March 10 – The Perverse Strategies, part one

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session students will be able to identify two factors of a contemporary perspective on perversion.

Dimen, M. (2001). Perversion is us? Eight notes. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 11(6):825-860. [PEP Web Link](#)

Suggested Readings:

Saketopoulou, A. (2014). To suffer pleasure: The shattering of the ego as the psychic labor of perverse sexuality. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 15(4):254-268. [PEP Web Link](#)

Stein, R. (2005). Why perversion? 'False love' and the perverse pact. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 86(3): 775-799. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 5, March 17 – The Perverse Strategies, part two

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, students will be able to define Kaplan's concept of "The Perverse Strategy."

Kaplan, L. J. (2000). Further thoughts on *Female Perversions*. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 1(4):349-370. [PEP Web Link](#)

Suggested Readings:

View: Streitfeld, S. (Director). (1996). *Female perversions* [Film].

Kaplan, L. J. (1991). What is a Perversion? In *Female perversions* (pp. 7-21). [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsl.org].

Week 6, March 24 – Gender Development, towards an understanding of Trans development and Gender Fluidity

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session students will be able to describe the concept of gender trauma.

Saketopoulou, A (2014). Mourning of the Body as Bedrock: Developmental Considerations in Treating Transsexual Patients Analytically. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 62(5):773-806 [PEP Web Link](#)

Suggested Readings:

Alessandra Lemma (2018) Trans-itory identities: some psychoanalytic reflections on transgender identities. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 99(5):1089-1106, DOI: 10.1080/00207578.2018.1489710 [PEP Web Link](#)

Butler, J. (1995). Melancholy gender—Refused identification. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 5(2):165-180. [PEP Web Link](#)

Scarfone, D. (2019). The sexual and psychical reality. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 100(6), 1248-1255. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsl.org].

Harris, A. (2000). Gender as a Soft Assembly: Tomboys' stories. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 1(3):223-250. [PEP Web Link](#)

Week 7, March 31 – Intersectionality and gender

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, students will describe the term Intersectionality and its relevance to psychoanalysis.

Leavitt, J., & Harris, A. (2020). Intersectionality encountering Laplanche: Models of otherness and the incomprehensibility of perpetration. In M. Belkin & C. White (Eds.), *Intersectionality and relational psychoanalysis: New perspectives on race, gender, and sexuality* (pp. 192-217). Routledge. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsl.org].

Suggested Readings:

View Kate Novack's Hysterical Girl

Week 8, April 7 – Meeting the Challenges of Countertransference

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, students will be able to describe one countertransference challenge of working with patients of diverse genders and sexualities.

Hansbury, G. (2017). The masculine vaginal: Working with queer men's embodiment at the transgender edge. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 65(6):1009-1031. [PEP Web Link](#)

Suggested Readings:

Saketopoulou, A. (2017). Between Freud's second and third essays on sexuality: Commentary on Hansbury. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 65(6):1033-1048. [PEP Web Link](#)

González, F. J. (2017). The edge is a horizon: Commentary on Hansbury. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 65(6):1061-1073 [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsl.org].