



B P S I

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Winter I, 2021-2022

## Ethics Seminar Syllabus

Instructors: Elizabeth Marks, MD and Stephanie Schechter, PsyD

This course is designed to help us think and talk about the ethical dilemmas we face every day in our clinical work and in our analytic institutes. We will explore the competing tensions around prioritizing the needs of our patients, while acknowledging that our own needs inevitably play a role in every treatment. The course is intended to help participants grapple with experience-near clinical situation in which there are no clear “right” or “wrong” solutions, but rather a myriad of competing ethical principles.

This course is by no means an exhaustive survey of dilemmas that will arise in the course of a career, but we hope it can serve as a foundation for thinking about clinical ethics, as well as some of the ethical challenges endemic to psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic training. We hope to create a safe environment in which we can openly explore a range of topics, some of which you have likely considered before throughout your training and some of which are rarely, if ever, discussed. The readings and the use of vignettes are intended to spark your thinking and exploration of dilemmas you may or may not have encountered so far in your clinical work.

### **Week 1 – December 2: Introduction: How do we think about ethics?**

#### **Reading:**

Ackerman, S. (2020). Impossible ethics. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 68(4), 561-582. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from [library@bps.org](mailto:library@bps.org)].

Sample vignette – For Richer or For Poorer. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from [library@bps.org](mailto:library@bps.org)].

APsaA Ethics Codes. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from [library@bps.org](mailto:library@bps.org)].

## **Week 2 – December 9: Confidentiality**

### **Reading:**

Lear, J. (2003). Confidentiality as a virtue. In C. Levin, A. Furlong & M. K. O'Neil (Eds.), *Confidentiality: Ethical perspectives and clinical dilemmas* (pp. 4-17). The Analytic Press. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org)].

### **Optional Reading:**

Ackerman, S. (2018). (How) can we write about our patients? *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 66(1), 59-81. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org)].

## **Week 3 – December 16: Referrals and Dual Relationships**

### **Reading:**

Epstein, R. S. (1994). Whom should a psychotherapist treat? Problems of patient selection when a dual relationship exists. In *Keeping boundaries: Maintaining safety and integrity in the psychotherapeutic process* (pp. 127-143). American Psychiatric Press. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org)].

## **Week 4 – January 6: Ethical “Misdemeanors”**

### **Reading:**

Slochower, J. (2003). The analyst's secret delinquencies. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 13(4), 451-469. [PEP Web Link](#)

## **Week 5 – January 13: Erotic Countertransference**

### **Reading:**

Gabbard, G. O. (1994). Sexual excitement and countertransference love in the analyst. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 42, 1083-1106. [PEP Web Link](#)

## **NO CLASS JANUARY 20 – ACADEMIC LECTURE**

## **Week 6 – January 27: Sexual Boundaries**

### **Reading:**

Levine, H. B. (2010). Sexual boundary violations: A psychoanalytic perspective. *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, 26(1), 50-63. [PEP Web Link](#)

### **Suggested Reading:**

Gutheil, T., & Brodsky, A. (2008). Vulnerabilities. In *Preventing boundary violations in clinical practice* (pp. 219-240). The Guilford Press. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org)].

## **Week 7 – February 3: Coercion**

### **Reading:**

Ginsburg, S. A., & Cohn, L. S. (2007). To coerce and be coerced. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 55(1), 55-79. [PEP Web Link](#)

## **Week 8 – February 10: Illness in the Analyst and Professional Wills**

### **Reading:**

Fajardo, B. (2001). Life-threatening illness in the analyst. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 49(2), 569-586. [PEP Web Link](#)

Professional Will Templates [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from [library@bpsl.org](mailto:library@bpsl.org)].