

Gender as/in Psychoanalysis

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Spring 2023

2 credits

This seminar takes up psychoanalytic gender theory with an emphasis on relational psychoanalytic approaches to gender. At the same time, the course has as a meta-level of analysis, the study of gender's role in the unfolding story of relational psychoanalysis. By examining how "gender" and "psychoanalysis" work hand in hand, we can frame a contemporary goal: to read current social and political events informed by psychoanalytic gender theory so as to further elaborate relational gender theory in view of current events.

We will trace concepts that were deployed to describe gender and gender relations and at the same time, to summon evidence for the relational perspective about mind, body, and human relations. Further, by studying how gender was used in the formulation of a relational psychoanalysis, we will study how gender works as a bridge that links the psychic to the social and positions psychoanalysts to participate in culture. Psychoanalysis and gender thus map the iteration of psychic and social structure in an effort to make sense of how bodies occupy personal, clinical, and political space.

We will also examine how the questionable materiality of gender comes to bear in psychoanalytic considerations of transgender experience as well as discussions about the online representation of the body and desire taking the "more than human" into account. In these recent debates that extend from gender and sexual expression to climate activism, gender and psychoanalysis are once again partners in staking out mutually useful theoretical and political positions.

Thanks to feminist and queer interventions in the discipline, psychoanalysis began to consider subjectivities that had heretofore been repressed or relegated to the liminal margins of white male privilege. Theoretical advances were grounded in this regard by the telling of clinical stories that included the personal reflections of no-longer tight-lipped clinicians. We will make a special effort to bring memoirs and clinical material into our discussions so that postmodern positions about "the subject" can be reconciled with in-person subjectivities. To this end, participants are invited to suggest supplementary materials to round out the syllabus. Please consider this a provisional draft.

The course is divided into four sections. Rather than survey all the subtle transformations that occurred in the history of psychoanalytic gender theory to compose a master narrative, each section aims to study approaches to how to tell gender's story which, in turn, tells the evolving story of psychoanalysis.

It has been very hard to limit the many possible readings that tell this story. I have assigned more than I expect anyone to read! PLEASE do not get bogged down in the intricacies of theory or the historical details unless they fascinate you (particularly for readings marked with an * that are rich in detail). Some of the readings are long: feel free to skim or land wherever you do. Our goal is to examine ways gender has been used in order to think about what kind of work a psychoanalytic gender story can do.

I. gender's history: looking for neverland

How does the concept "gender" come into psychoanalytic discourse, and how does the way theorists tell this history matter? How was gender put *to use*? And how do theoretical and political imperatives render *gender* to psychoanalysis? In short, what are the stakes involved in gender?

Week 1. composing a psychoanalytic history: how and where to begin?

Dimen and Goldner and Corbett survey frameworks that psychoanalysts have used to describe gender as a path toward articulating their particular relational spin. Sheehi and her colleagues, mindful of what had long been left out of the official story, tell the story of gender from the position of "talking back." We begin here and explore how where you begin the story determines what you might be able to see in the study of gender. In this way, finding the entry point is both a theoretical and clinical challenge.

* Dimen, M. & Goldner, V. (2005), Gender and Sexuality. In Person, E.S., Cooper, A.M. & Gabbard, G.O. *The American Psychiatric Publishing Textbook of Psychoanalysis*, pp. 93-102. (see attached pdf)

Sheehi, L (2020). Talking back – introduction to the special edition: Black, indigenous, women of color talk back: Decentering normative psychoanalysis. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 21: 73-76.

Jones, A.L. (2020). A black woman as an American psychoanalyst: Some observations of one woman's life over four decades. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 21: 77-84.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...describe how different conceptual strategies for organizing the literature lead to different approaches to the study of gender

...evaluate the pros and cons of reading the canon backwards from a present perspective

Week 2. Gender Now

Corbett's bold statement gives us the current playing field of gender in relational psychoanalysis. Before we dive into how we got there, let's discuss where we, our colleagues and our patients are at now.

Corbett, K. (2008). Gender now. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 18: 838-856.

Appollon, S. (2021). The triple entendre. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 31: 6-12.

Haq, S. (2021). Castes in the mind. *Psychoanalysis Today*, 16 July 2021, <http://www.psychoanalysis.today/en-GB/PT-Articles/Haq157130/Castes-in-the-Mind.aspx>

Atlas, G. (2020). Intergenerational transmission of hope: The legacy of trauma in the face of COVID-19. *Psychoanalysis Today*, 12 May 2020, <http://www.psychoanalysis.today/en-GB/PT-Covid-19/Intergenerational-Transmission-of-Hope-The-Legacy.aspx>

*Charlap, L.O. (2019). The Locker room. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 20: 263-273.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...apply Corbett's description of current gender theory to a case formulation.

...apply the lens of gender to elaborate other clinical topics.

Week 3. What are the stakes?

Starr and Aron's account of gender's emergence in clinical psychoanalysis as an alternative treatment to genital stimulation poses how "gender stories" demarcate moments in psychoanalytic time. We will use these readings to ask how personal experiences of gender might best be used to foster interventions in the narrative of

psychoanalysis and, in turn, in society? What are the stakes in any theoretical move: for gender, for psychoanalysis, for the author, and for the patient?

* Starr, K. & Aron, L. (2011). Women on the couch: Genital stimulation and the birth of psychoanalysis, *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 21: 373-392.

Hartman, S. (2011). Darren and Stephen: Erotic interludes in political transference. In M. Dimen, ed., *With Culture in Mind: Psychoanalytic Stories*. New York: Routledge, pp. 19-23. Also in *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, (2011) 12:1, pp. 8-10.

*Saketopoulou, A. & Pelligrini, A. (2023). Preface: A book that was not to be. In, *Gender Without Identity*. New York: The Unconscious in Translation, pp. vii-xxxvi.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...demonstrate how the study of gender can be used to tie theoretical and clinical ideas to social practices.

...explain how disputes about clinical approaches to gender often carry political agendas that have clinical and political stakes.

4. gender in use

By studying how gender is being to make a political case, we can map gender's usefulness to psychoanalysis. Ahmed's canny lecture is being used here to set a tone that is at once curious and subversive.

Ahmed, S. (2018). Uses of use: Diversity, Utility and the University. (Video lecture available on YouTube):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=avKJ2w1mhng>

*Ahmed, S. (2017). Bringing feminist theory home. In, *Living a Feminist Life*. Duke University Press, pp. 1-19. Available from the publisher at:

https://www.dukeupress.edu/Assets/PubMaterials/978-0-8223-6319-4_601.pdf

Srinivasan, A. (2021). Preface, In, *The Right to Sex: Feminism in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: FSG, pp. xi-xvi.

*selections from SNAPSHOTS: Bodies Under Siege: Reflections on Gender Related Violence, *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 33, pp. 427-455.

(these are very short essays by 13 writers. Please choose among them):

-Abaracadabara by Gohar Homayounpour

-An Afghan Girl's Exile Journey,	Shaista Shams
-The Erotic as a Site of Survival,	Rebecca Sivitz Tew
-Whose Burden is it Anyway,	leasha Ramsay
-A Few Small Nips	Mehr-Afarin Kohan
-A Snapshot March 23, 2023	Deborah Waxenberg
-On Becoming A Witnessing Professional	Betty Tang
-On the Difficulty of Not Falling into Despair and to Continue Actively Resisting	Manal Abu Haq
-Bodies in Peril: Assaults on Women's Rights and the Intrusive Other	Danielle Novack
-A wish for an Implicated Psychoanalysis: some notes from Chile	Maria Par Ardito and Adrea I. Rihm
-On the "Handmaid's March" and the Endless Circularity of Human Existence	Dana Amir
-Snapshot Times Three: Sunday, March 19 th , 2023, New York	Limor Kaufman
-Fetal Fetish	Katie Gentile

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...discuss how Ahmed's work on the uses of use can be used to influence how gender is approached in treatment contexts

...explain recent developments in feminist theory that are germane to the evolution of psychoanalytic gender theory with regard to political engagement

II. A Selection of Key Texts in the Gender Canon

Having reached together to find a theoretical framework, let's dive into some of the key texts in the gender canon with the question: what did this turn in theory and clinical practice allow? What did it foreclose?

Week 5. Freud

Freud, S. (1920). The psychogenesis of a case of female homosexuality. *IJP*, 1: 125-149.

Freud, S. (1925). Some psychic consequences of the anatomical differences between the sexes, *Standard Edition*, XIX: 241-258.

Klein, M. (1952). The Origins of transference. In, *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works*. New York: Delacorte Press, pp. 48-56.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...use Freud's early thoughts on gender to provide context for the debates that followed them

...read Freud's ambivalent contribution to gender theory to apply Klein's view of the transference to a clinical case

Week 6. Women fighting back

Horney, K. (1926). The flight from womanhood: The masculinity complex in women, as viewed by men and women. *IJP*, 7: 324-339.

Riviere, J. (1929). Womanliness as a masquerade. *IJP* 9: 303-313.

**(this would be a good time to review the Dimen and Goldner survey from week one)

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...discuss the stakes involved in early feminist critiques of Freud and

...explain how the problem of adopting a critical position toward "gender" was addressed in these early feminist critiques

Week 7. The invention of "gender" as a category among categories

Stoller, R.J. (1964), A contribution to the study of gender identity. *IJP*, 45:220-226.

Person, E. & Ovesey (1983). Psychoanalytic theories of gender identity. *Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis*, 11:203-226.

Fast, I. (1990). Aspects of gender development: Toward a reformulation. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 7 Suppl:105-117.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*: Vol. 1989: Issue 1, Article 8.

Available at: <http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8>

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...evaluate the innovations and shortcomings of these early theories that linked gender to identity

...use these important texts to contextualize the relational feminist approach that followed them; discuss whether they fell short regarding “intersectionality.”

III. relational uses of gender

Psychoanalytic feminists advanced relational theory while advocating for clinical populations or dyadic pairings that might otherwise go un-served or unmarked for their particularity by the mainstream. The personal political expressly became part of the relational approach to gender.

Week 8. Gender relations: Accounting for others as subjects and objects.

* Dimen, M. (2003). The engagement between psychoanalysis and feminism: A report from the front. In, M. Dimen, *Sexuality/Intimacy/Power*. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, pp. 41-62.

Dimen, M. (1991). Deconstructing difference: gender, splitting, and transitional space. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 1:335-352.

Goldner, V. (1991). Toward a critical relational theory of gender. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 1: 249-272.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...show how aspects of early relational theory emerged from the feminist critique of gender

...evaluate the innovations and shortcomings in the early relational position on gender

Week 9. Problems of identity and identification.

Benjamin, J. (1995), Father and daughter, identification with difference: a contribution to gender heterodoxy. In, *Like Subjects, Love Objects*. New York: Yale University Press, pp. 115-142.

Butler, J. (1995). Melancholy gender—refused identification. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues* 5: 165-180.

Preciado, P. (2011/2018). What is countersexuality? and The Genitals as biopolitical technology. In, K.G. Dunn, trans., (Introduction to) *Countersexual Manifesto*. New York, Columbia University Press, pp. 20-30.

(available free as a 'look inside the book' on Amazon:

<https://www.amazon.com/Countersexual-Manifesto-Critical-Life-Studies/dp/0231175620?asin=0231175639&revisionId=&format=4&depth=1>

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...explain how relational gender was used to shift attention away from one-person theories of development toward two-person theories of identification and difference

...apply Butler's depiction of melancholy gender to a current case

Week 10. Gender states and the State of gender—intersectional encounters

The postmodernism suspicion of metanarratives led relational psychoanalysts to theorize gender in terms of shifting self-states and as one register in an intersectional view of the subject. Recently, political realities have led theorists to ask how intersectionality fares when threatened by ideology.

Harris, A. (2005). Tomboy's stories. In, *Gender as Soft Assembly*. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, pp. 131-153.

*Harris, A. (2005). Gender as a strange attractor: gender's multidimensionality. In, *Gender as Soft Assembly*. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, pp. 155-173.

Merchant, A. (2020). Don't be put off by my name. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 31: 125-126.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...discuss how the notion of multiplicity was expressed in relational gender theory

...elaborate how gender is assembled in contexts that may undermine gender's multiplicity

Week 11. Relational and/or intersectional interventions in gender

Suchet, M. (2010). Crossing over. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 21: pp. 172-191.

Guralnik, O. (2011). Ede: Race, the law, and I. In, M. Dimen, ed., *With Culture in Mind: Psychoanalytic Stories*. New York: Routledge, pp. 41-48.

Hartman, S. (2018). Carter is so Handsome. *Psychoanalysis Today*, <http://www.psychoanalysis.today/en-GB/PT-Articles/Hartman164721/Carter-is-so-Handsome.aspx>

Butler, D. (2019). Racialized bodies and the violence of the setting. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 20: 146-158.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...describe how an intersectional approach to gender tasks relational theory to expand its points of reference

...apply an intersectional approach to gender to a clinical case with an elaborate social context

Week 12. Relational re-readings of Classical gender theory

Fox, A. (2018). Gay-friendly psychoanalysis and the abiding pleasures of prejudice. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 19: 265-278.

*Saketopoulou, A. & Pellegrini, A. (2023). A Feminine boy: Trauma as a resource for self-theorization. In, *Gender Without Identity*. New York: The Unconscious in Translation, pp. 11-76.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...compare and contrast clinical strategies among Contemporary Freudians to "relational" approaches

...locate Saketopoulou and Pellegrini's notion of self-theorization in the context of clinical strategies for working with trans subjects and describe ways that their Laplanchean framework pushes the "relational" envelope

IV. bodies that matter

As the materiality of the body becomes contested turf and biology is no longer destiny, the link between gender and "the social" comes increasingly under scrutiny.

Week 13. Renegade bodies

How does the Other-ed body look, feel, find itself among others as anything other than lacking? Adding to that inquiry, trans studies help us factor in the questionable materiality of the body.

*Salamon, G. (2010). The bodily ego and the contested domain of the material. In, G. Salamon, *Assuming a Body*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 13-42.

Hainsbury, G. (2011). King-kong and Goldilocks: Imagining transmasculinities through the trans-trans dyad. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 21: 210-220.

*Corbett, K. (2009). Fantastic phallicism. In, *Boyhoods*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 208-234.

Snorten, C.R. (2017). Introduction. In, *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity*. Minnesota University Press, pp. 1-14.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...explain how the evolution of trans theory complicates relational thinking about gender's materiality

...apply lessons from trans theory to a clinical case of gender nonconformity

Week . 14. Unconscious bodies, technology, and the noisy environment: sameness, difference, mystery, lack

How bodies perform gender carries many legacies and traces psychic and social currents in the unconscious. How does gender's unconscious life give psychoanalysis a self-conscious text?

Hartman, S. (2024). The Stork. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, TBD.

Clough, P. (2024). Noisy treatments: Rethinking the frame and social reality. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, TBD.

Calderaro, B. (2024). *Bosquando*. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, TBD.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...evaluate the relative capacity of psychoanalytic theory to entertain the gendered and raced body's materiality

...apply theories of "noise" to a clinical case that involves gender identity

Week 15. Actual / Virtual Gender

Gentile, K. (2021). Kittens in the clinical space: Expanding subjectivity through dense temporalities of interspecies becoming. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 31: 135-150.

Del Mar Miller, K. (2024). Caring for cryptids: Welcoming the more-than-human into psychoanalytic treatment. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, TBD.

ce objectives

participants will be able to:

...apply the notion of "tensegrity" to an intersectional formulation of gender that includes attention to the nonhuman environment

...describe how the clinical frame might evolve to take account of Deleuze's statement that *the virtual is real because it is actual*