



The New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis

#S104 - Introduction to Freud

Instructor: Wilda Mesias, PhD

Spring 2025

Via Zoom

Course Description:

Psychoanalysis began with Freud and his groundbreaking vision of the unconscious. In this course, the students will learn how Freud created psychoanalysis as a theory of mind and as a method of treatment. The course will present an introduction to basic yet important ideas in psychoanalysis. Students will learn the concepts of unconscious motivation, drives and their expression, repetition compulsion, resistance, transference, and countertransference. Other themes will include Freud's topographical and structural theories, dreams and their relationship to unconscious derivatives, metapsychology, symptom formation, conflict, and defense. Students will become acquainted with some of Freud's most well-known cases. Theory and technique will be consistently examined via ongoing case presentations, case vignettes, and critical engagement with the material.

Course Objectives:

1. Examine the development, thematic parallels, and complexities of the core ideas about mental life that continue to underlie current understandings of the human mind.
2. Demonstrate basic competence in Freudian terminology and technique.
3. Apply theoretical concepts discussed in class to clinical work.

Course etiquette and confidentiality: Given that we will be having our class discussions on Zoom, it is critical that we all be respectful and mindful of one another's time and space. As such, please keep your cameras on and mute yourselves while others are presenting their thoughts. Additionally, because our case discussions and other discussions may feature confidential clinical information (or other sensitive information not to be disclosed outside of the learning environment), **it is imperative that you**

(1) find a place in which to log in to the class that is private and in which you and others cannot be overheard and (2) refrain from discussion of the above-mentioned confidential or sensitive information outside of our class time.

Reading Material:

You will need the following book (available on Amazon):

Mendelsohn, R. (2021). *Freudian thought for the contemporary clinician: A primer on psychoanalytic theory*. Routledge. **{hereinafter Mendelsohn, R. (2021).}**

The rest of the readings will be found on a Dropbox folder I will make available to all of you.

Writing Requirement:

Definition of terms.

Class and Readings:

Class I: Introduction and overview.

The context in which Freud's ideas developed (biographical, historical, social, intellectual, etc.) will be explored. We will critically consider the significance of Sigmund Freud's discoveries and ideas. We will examine the ways in which Freud's theory of mind has had an impact on various psychotherapeutic approaches.

Readings:

- Mendelsohn, R. (2021). Chapter 1.
- Breuer, J., & Freud, S. (1895). On the psychical mechanism of hysterical phenomena: Preliminary communication from studies on hysteria. *Standard Edition, II*, 1-17.
- Breuer, J. & Freud, S. (1893-1895). Fräulein Anna O, case histories from studies on hysteria. *Standard Edition, II*, 19-47.
- Ackerman, S. (2020). A diagnosis for psychoanalysis in the 21st century: Freud as medicine. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 89, 667-688.
- Emre, M. (2024). What does Freud still have to teach us?. *The New Yorker* - June 3, 2024. 1-18.

Optional:

- Zeavin, H. (2023). Psychoanalysis has returned. *The Guardian*. Friday, December 29, 2023.
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/dec/29/freuds-last-session-sigmund-freud-film-psychoanalysis>

Class II: Dreams and screen memories.

By looking at screen memories and dreams we will see how different psychological phenomena can screen and deflect intrapsychic material and obscure it from consciousness. We will critically examine what for many is considered Freud's most important work, *Die Traumdeutung (The Interpretation of Dreams)* (1899). Freud saw dreams as the "royal road" to the unconscious and as such he considered dream analysis fundamental for psychoanalysis. Students will explore this crucial topic.

Readings:

- Mendelsohn, R. (2021). Chapters 2 & 3.
- Freud, S. (1899). Screen memories. *Standard Edition, III*, 303-322.
- Freud, S. (1901). On dreams. *Standard Edition, V*, 633-686.

Viewing:

- Hewitson, O. (2020). VIDEO. *Freud's unconscious the psychoanalysis of a dream and its dreamer*. <https://www.lacanonline.com/2020/08/freuds-unconscious-the-psychoanalysis-of-a-dream-and-its-dream>.

Optional reading:

- Bonnie, W. (2022). Collaborative dream interpretation. *Psychodynamic Psychiatry*, 50, 294-303.

Class III. Drive (Trieb)

Freud used the German term *Trieb* to refer to the notion that human behavior is the result of motivational forces, drives, or instincts. From a scientific standpoint, Freud saw these forces as having source, aim, and object and as being of a maturational and developmental nature. We will explore these ideas along with the notions of symptoms, neuroses, and character.

Readings:

- Mendelsohn, R. (2021). Chapter 4.
- Freud, S. (1905). Three essays on the theory of sexuality. *Standard Edition*, VII, 173-200.
- Freud, S. (1894). The neuro-psychoses of defense. *Standard Edition*, III, 45-61.
- Freud, S. (1896). Further remarks on the defense neuro-psychoses. *Standard Edition*, III, 162-185.

Optional reading:

Barratt, B. (2022). From “polymorphous perversity” to polysexuality: A note on Psychoanalytic ideologies and the critique of hegemonic normativity. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 23, 4, 225-232.

Class IV: The unconscious and the topographical model of the mind (first topography).

We will discuss Freud’s original model of the mind: the topographic model consisting of the unconscious, conscious, and preconscious. We will critically analyze Freud’s ideas of the unconscious and its derivatives.

Readings:

- Mendelsohn, R. (2021). Chapter 5.
- Freud, S. (1901). The psychopathology of every day life. *Standard Edition*, VI, 1-7.
- Freud, S. (1911). Formulation on the two principles of mental functioning. *Standard Edition*, XII, 218-226.
- Freud, S. (1915). The unconscious. *Standard Edition*, XIV, 159-195.

Class V: Freud’s cases and technique

We will analyze some of Freud’s most well-known cases from a classical perspective and from more contemporary perspectives. Particular attention will be given to transference, countertransference, and the role of interpretation. We will consider Freud’s recommendations for the practice of psychoanalysis. We will pay particular attention to

concepts such as evenly hovering attention, neutrality, analysis of transference, and therapeutic aim/action.

- Mendelsohn, R. (2021). Chapters 9 & 10.
- Freud, S. (1905). Fragment of an analysis of a case of hysteria. *Standard Edition*, VII, 1-123.
- Freud, S. (1912). Recommendations to physicians practising psychoanalysis. *Standard Edition*, XII, 109-120.

Optional readings:

- Werbart, A. & Lagerlöf, S. (2022). How much time does Psychoanalysis take? The duration of psychoanalytic treatments from Freud's cases to the Swedish clinical practice of today. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 103, 786-805
- Cooper, S.H. (2022). The activity of neutrality. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 91, 355-369.

Class VI: On narcissism and mourning and melancholia.

As Freud continued to develop his theory, he expanded on the topographical model and began to consider not only ego libido but object libido. With his writing *Zur Einführung des Narzissmus (On Narcissism)* (1914) he presented ideas of primary and secondary narcissism as well as the notion of the ego ideal. We will consider and explore the evolution and impact of these ideas.

Readings:

- Mendelsohn, R. (2021). Chapter 6.
- Freud, S. (1914). On narcissism. *Standard Edition*, XIV, 67-102.
- Freud, S (1917). Mourning and melancholia. *Standard Edition*, XIV, 243-258.
- Ackerman, S. (2023). Freud's red thread: Explorations of the unconscious sense of guilt. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 71, 189-214.

Optional reading:

- Jenkins, L. (2022). Meditations on psychoanalysis, race and the divided self. *The Psychoanalytic Review*, 109, 13-33

Class VII : The structural model. Second topography.

We will gain insight into how, with the publication of *Das Ich und das Es* (*The Ego and the Id*) (1923), Freud arrives at the structural point of view (Id, Ego and Superego). With this tripartite model Freud creates his theory of personality organization. Students will achieve basic competence in the application of this theory.

Readings:

- Mendelsohn, R. (2021). Chapter 8.
- Freud, S. (1923). The ego and the id. *Standard Edition*, XIX, 1-66.
- Freud, S. (1926). Inhibitions, symptoms, and anxiety. *Standard Edition*, XX, 75-100.
- Allison, E. (2023). *The Ego and the Id*: How and why Freud transformed his model the mind. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 104, 1063-1076.

Optional readings:

- Blum, H.P. & Blum, E. J. (2023). Evolution of Freudian psychoanalytic thought in twentieth-century USA: The influence of the European Émigrés. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 32, 87-92.
- Conci, M. (2023). Psychoanalytic ego psychology: A European perspective. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 32, 4-22.

Class VIII: Beyond the pleasure principle.

Freud said that “Love and work are the cornerstones of our humanness.” As the seminar reaches its end we will evaluate the meaning of those words. We will analyze the turning point Freud reaches in *Jenseits Des Lustprinzips* (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle*) (1920). We will consider the differences between psychoanalysis and psychotherapy and these differences’ implications for treatment.

Readings:

- Mendelsohn, R. (2021). Chapters 7 & 11.
- Freud, S. (1920). Beyond the pleasure principle. *Standard Edition*, XVIII, 7-23.
- Ahlskog, G. (2020). Your therapist is wrong—and so am I: What is psychoanalysis?: 100 years after Freud's ‘Secret Committee.’ By Barnaby B. Barratt. New York, NY. *Psychoanalytical Review*, 107(1), 35-55.
- Mahalel, A.T. (2021). “Are we dead?”: Time in H.D.’s dialogue with Freud. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 102(2), 297-314.