

CPSY 563: Working with Transgender Clients

LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE

Graduate School of Education and Counseling

July 8, 2011, 9 am– 5:30 pm

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Location: South Campus Conference Center Rm 107

Catalog Description CPSY 563 Treatment Issues in Family Therapy

Content: Applications of family systems approach to treatment of families in crisis and transition. Topics include issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, sexual abuse, trauma and loss, poverty, and chronic illness. A portion of this course emphasizes clinical case conceptualization and treatment planning.

Course Description

This course will help participants develop a critical consciousness in relation to gender-related bias in therapeutic approaches. Suggestions for practice will include transpositive theoretical approaches, awareness of partner and family relational issues, addressing ethical dilemmas including critical examination of Gender Identity Disorder diagnosis, clinical paperwork, and marketing as a transgender-affirmative therapist.

Course Goals and Objectives

1. Develop critical understanding of terminology related to gender identity using queer and feminist theories
2. Identify and explore personal bias and issues related to transphobia
3. Explore systems of privilege and oppression that impact transgender people's daily lives
4. Critically examine historical mental health perspectives of gender nonconforming people
5. Become familiar with relational experiences with transgender people from multiple perspectives
6. Develop trans-positive clinical practice skills
7. Additional objectives to be developed collaboratively

Class Outline

Morning Session 9am-12pm

- Welcome and introductions
- Develop collaborative course goals
- What is gender? A critical analysis of the binary gender system

Lunch break 12-1pm

Afternoon Session 1-5:30pm

- Relational dynamics in couples and families
- Trans-positive therapy practice

Course Policies

1. Your participation contributes to a larger learning community, which cannot take place without YOU in it! Your reflections and ideas are important as we explore course topics. In order for us to cultivate a vibrant learning community, we all need to be engaged with the material. If you struggle with a topic, tell us how! If you are enlightened by a reading or class conversation, share that with us! Openness to challenges and new ideas push us to grow as therapists.
2. Each person's point of view is to be respected. I invite you to bring questions and challenges to class that are respectfully and thoughtfully made. These strategies help us all to examine and consider our own assumptions and ideas.
3. Email and Moodle will be the official means of communication for this course. Please submit assignments using Moodle.
4. Because each learning community is unique – with unique interests, goals, and conversations – it is not easy to anticipate how our session will develop. Designing the syllabus and all the assignments in advance can backfire (for both the instructor and learners). Therefore, I reserve the right to redesign the syllabus and some of the assignments as we move along. You will be given ample notice if changes should take place.

Non-Discrimination Policy/Special Assistance

Lewis & Clark College adheres to a nondiscriminatory policy with respect to employment, enrollment, and program. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or disability, sexual orientation, or marital status and has a firm commitment to promote the letter and spirit of all equal opportunity and civil rights laws.

Special Assistance

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability and/or you have emergency medical information to share please make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible.

Required Reading

- Alegria, C.A. (2010). Relationship challenges and relationship maintenance activities following disclosure of transsexualism. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 17, 909–916. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2850.2010.01624.x
- Arm, J. R., Home, S. G., & Levitt, H. M. (2009). Negotiating connection to GLBT experience: Family Members' experience of anti-GLBT movements and policies. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 56, 82-96. doi:10.1037/a0012813
- Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling. (2009). *Competencies for counseling with transgender clients*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Broad, K. L., Alden, H., Berkowitz, D., & Ryan, M. (2008). Activist parenting and GLBTQ families. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 4(4), 499-520. doi:10.1080/15504280802191749
- Connolly, C. (2004). A Process of Change: The intersection of the GLBT individual and their family of origin. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 1, 1.2, 5-20.
- Coolhart, D., Provancher, N., Hager, A., & Wang, M. N. (2008). Recommending transsexual clients for gender transition: A therapeutic tool for assessing readiness. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 4(3), 301-324. doi: 10.1080/15504280802177466
- Embaye, N. (2006). Affirmative psychotherapy with bisexual transgender people. *Journal of Bisexuality*, 1(2), 51-63. doi: 10.1300/J159v06n01_04
- Ehrbar, R.D. (2010): Consensus from differences: Lack of professional consensus on the retention of the Gender Identity Disorder diagnosis, *International Journal of Transgenderism*, 12, 60-74. Doi: 10.1080/15532739.2010.513928
- Joslin-Roher, E. & Wheeler, D.P. (P.(2009) 'Partners in Transition: The Transition Experience of Lesbian, Bisexual, and Queer Identified Partners of Transgender Men', *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 21, 30- 48. doi: 10.1080/10538720802494743
- Lev, A.I. (2010). How queer!—The development of gender identity and sexual orientation in LGBTQ-headed families. *Family Process*, 49, 268–290. doi: 10.1111/j.1545-5300.2010.01323.x
- Russell, G. M. (2011). Motives of heterosexual allies in collective action for equality. *Journal of Social Issues*, 67, 376–393. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01703.x

Suggested Reading

- Bockting, W. O. (2009). Transforming the paradigm of transgender health: A field in transition. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 24(2), 103-107. doi: 10.1080/14681990903037660
- Brill, S. & Pepper, R. (2008). *The Transgender Child: A Handbook for Families and Professionals*. San Francisco: Cleis Press.
- Butler, J. (2004). *Undoing Gender*. New York: Routledge.
- Cashore, C. & Tuason, M.T.G.(2009). 'Negotiating the binary: identity and social justice for bisexual and transgender individuals', *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 21: 4, 374- 401. doi: 10.1080/10538720802498405
- de Vries, A.L.C. & Cohen-Kettenis, P.T. (2009). Review of World Professional Association for Transgender Health's Standards of Care for Children and Adolescents with Gender Identity Disorder: A Need for Change? *International Journal of Transgenderism*, 11, 100- 109. doi: 10.1080/15532730903008040
- Grant, J.M., Mottet, L.A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J.L., & Keisling, M. (2011). *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. Washington: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Retrieved from <http://endtransdiscrimination.org/report.html>
- Kessler, L. E., & Waehler, C. A. (2005). Addressing multiple relationships between clients and therapists in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 36, 66-72.
- Lev, A. I. (2004). *Transgender Emergence: Therapeutic Guidelines for Working with Gender-Variant People and their Families*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.
- Malpas, J. (2006). From otherness to alliance: Transgender couples in therapy. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 2(3), 183-206. Doi: 10.1300/J461v02n03_10
- Nuttbrock, L. A., Bockting, W. O., Hwang, S., Rosenblum, A., Mason, M., Macri, M., & Becker, J. (2009). Gender identity affirmation among male-to-female transgender persons: A life course analysis across types of relationships and cultural/lifestyle factors. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 24(2), 108-125. doi: 10.1080/14681990902926764
- Piper, J., & Mannino, M. (2008). Identity formation for transsexual individuals in transition: A narrative family therapy model. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 4(1), 75-93.

- Raj, R. (2008). Transforming couples and families: A trans-formative therapeutic model for working with the loved-ones of gender-divergent youth and trans-identified adults. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 4, 133-163.
- Ryan, C. (2009). *Supportive families healthy children: Helping families with lesbian, gay, bisexual, & transgender children*. San Francisco, CA: Marian Wright Edelman Institute, San Francisco State University. Retrieved from http://familyproject.sfsu.edu/files/English_Final_Print_Version_Last.pdf
- Samons, S. L. (2009). Can this marriage be saved? Addressing male-to-female transgender issues in couples therapy. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 24(2), 152-162. doi: 10.1080/14681990903002478
- Transgender Law Center. *Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth Recommendations for Schools*. Retrieved April 1, 2010 from: <http://www.transgenderlaw.org/resources/tlcschools.htm>

Assignments

Participation 40%

Participation is essential to a productive learning environment. Please be prepared to answer the following question throughout our time together:

- In what ways does the conversation push, challenge, deepen, or focus your understanding of a relevant concept, experience, theory, or practice?

Project Menu 60%:

Please select one of the following class projects to complete by **Friday, July 15, 2011**. Draw from material discussed in class and presented in course readings to guide your project. Be sure to complete class readings before you begin, as they will help to frame your approach to your project. Once you have completed the experiential portion of your project, critically integrate class readings into a reflective 7-10 page double spaced paper of your experience. Please use APA 6 format.

Analysis of Popular Media

View an episode of a show or film that depicts a transgender person or character (for example: *Transgeneration*, *Boy I Am*, *Becoming Chaz*, *Normal*, episode(s) of *Degrassi*, *CSI*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *Just Shoot Me*, *Oprah*, *Tyra*, *Dr. Oz*). In what ways does this media example disrupt or reinforce social norms? How do you think popular culture representations of transgender people influence cultural understandings of gender? Would you recommend the show or film you viewed to a client and/or clients' relational system? Why or why not? What is your response to the show or film? Do you find these depictions to mirror what you are learning from the MCFT therapy literature? How might you address the issues they discuss from a CFT theory and social justice perspective?

Website Review

Locate and review at least 4 gender advocacy/ education websites. Who hosts the site? Who is the web site's intended audience? What issues/ topics are addressed? Did you find the information accurate? What is your response to the website? Would you recommend the site to clients? Why or why not? How does the material presented on the site compare/contrast with material covered in the class and in the subsequent readings? Be sure to provide the URL.

Legal Review

Carefully review local, state, and federal laws relevant to transgender people and their families. Possible issues include (but are not limited to) anti-discrimination laws, name changes, drivers licenses and passports, restrooms, marriage, safe schools for youth, healthcare, and hate crimes. You may want to review the GLAD Webinar titled *Representing Transgender Clients in Family Law* on the web at: <http://www.glad.org/current/video/webinar-representing-transgender-clients-in-family-law/> and/or materials provided on the websites of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, The Transgender Law and Policy Institute, and the Transgender Law Center.

Create a Project

Develop an idea you have for a course project that integrates readings and material from class. This may include an annotated bibliography, case study, content paper on an area of interest to you, a critical reflection of your own gender identity and role as a therapist. Please discuss your idea with me immediately.

Grading

A = 93-100

A- = 90-92

B+ = 88-89

B = 83-87 B- = 80-82

C+ = 78-79

C = 73-77

C- = 70-72