



Photo by Alexander Koromilas

Ann Pellegrini is Professor of Performance Studies and Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University. She is founding co-editor of the “Sexual Cultures” book series at New York University Press and co-editor of *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*. Her books include *Performance Anxieties: Staging Psychoanalysis, Staging Race* (1997); *Love the Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious Tolerance*, co-authored with Janet R. Jakobsen (2004); *“You Can Tell Just by Looking” and 20 Other Myths about LGBT Life and People*, co-authored with Michael Bronski and Michael Amico (2013); and the forthcoming *Queer Structures of Religious Feeling*. She was the Freud-Fulbright Visiting Scholar of Psychoanalysis at the Freud Museum in Vienna and the University of Vienna, in 2007, and is currently a candidate in adult psychoanalysis at the Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research in New York City.



Queer Theory for Clinicians (and their friends)

“Sex” and “sexuality” are key concepts for both psychoanalysis and queer theory. Queer theorists have long engaged psychoanalysis; it has even been an influential launching point for some strands of queer theory. Increasingly, the influence is going both ways, with more and more analysts drawing on the insights of queer theory to enrich clinical work. The ongoing emergence and elaboration of gender queer and sexually queer identities makes such cross-pollination urgent. But it can also feel daunting to approach work in queer theory for the first time on your own. This workshop offers a strong and structured introduction to queer theory, showing how the insights of queer theory connect to clinical work. Importantly, the workshop will also demonstrate that these insights can benefit our work with all our patients and not just with those who identify as sexual or gender “queers.”

Queer theory shares with psychoanalysis an interest in the limits of identity: that is, in the way lived experience so often exceeds our capacity to name—let alone classify—desires, pleasures, relations, embodiments. At the same time, queer theory alerts us to how the categories we are called to think with, as clinicians and as patients, may carry with them unexamined assumptions and biases. What are some of these unexamined assumptions? The issue here is not simply whether or not psychoanalysis has historically been homophobic or

LGBTQ-affirming. The answer to this question is both/and. The larger point is that all of us are called by dominant culture to “be” a sex and “have” a sexuality in order to be a legible subject. How has psychoanalysis historically participated in the incitement to speak sexuality as the truth of the self? What are the implications of this calling and this incitement for contemporary clinical work?

The workshop will be structured around an opening presentation by the workshop leader, who will take participants through key concepts. No prior knowledge or familiarity with queer theory is required. Although we will be particularly interested to consider how the organizing questions of queer theory can generate new ways of thinking and practicing in the consulting room, this workshop should also be of interest to anyone curious about this “thing” called queer theory. We will read short excerpts from some key texts that helped to constitute “queer theory” as such, as well as take stock of recent exciting developments in queer and trans* of color critique. Readings will be made available in advance, and authors engaged will include: Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Eve Sedgwick, Gayle Rubin, José Esteban Muñoz, and C. Riley Snorton.

This workshop will take place in an intimate setting (no more than 25 participants) over the course of 1 day (before the conference). 6 CEUs available.