

YOUTH GENDER DISTRESS

EVIDENCE, ETIOLOGIES, ETHICS, AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

**SEPTEMBER
11-14, 2025
BERLIN,
GERMANY**





EVIDENCE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

- 9:00** WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS
- 9:30** A BRIEF HISTORY OF PEDIATRIC GENDER MEDICINE (ZHENYA ABBRUZZESE)
- 10:00** THE DUTCH PROTOCOL FOR JUVENILE TRANSSEXUALS (MICHAEL BIGGS)
- 10:30** COFFEE BREAK
- 10:45** EVIDENCE REVIEWS FOR PUBERTY BLOCKERS, HORMONES, AND SURGERIES (CHAN MORUZI)
- 11:15** NEW RESEARCH ON DESISTANCE AND DETransition (SPEAKERS TO BE ANNOUNCED)
- 12:15** LUNCH
- 13:15** UNDERSTANDING THE INTERSECTION OF AUTISM AND TRANS IDENTIFICATION (JOHN BLYTHE)
- 13:45** PANEL: GAPS IN THE RESEARCH ON YOUTH GENDER DYSPHORIA
- 14:45** COFFEE BREAK
- 15:00** PANEL: SENIOR CLINICIANS REFLECT ON CURRENT TREATMENT OF GENDER-DYSPHORIC YOUTH
- 16:00** ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY HUMAN-RIGHTS DISCOURSE IN PEDIATRIC GENDER MEDICINE (LINDA HART)
- 16:30** REMARKS FROM THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY (MAJA RADOBULJAC)



ETIOLOGIES

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

- 9:00** COMBINING SOCIAL IDENTITY AND COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THEORIES TO UNDERSTANDING STIGMATIZATION OF IDENTITY (SPEAKER TBA)
- 9:30** THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY IN ADOLESCENCE (SPEAKER TBA)
- 10:00** TRANS IDENTIFICATION AND THE DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES OF PUBERTY (SPEAKER TBA)
- 10:30** COFFEE BREAK
- 10:45** EMPIRICAL FINDINGS AND PSYCHODYNAMIC REFLECTIONS ON PERSONALITY, FUNCTIONING, IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT, AND TRAUMA IN GENDER-DYSPHORIC ADOLESCENTS (ANDRE LEONHARDT)
- 11:15** TAKING ON A DIAGNOSTIC LABEL (LUCY JOHNSTONE)
- 11:45** HOW ONLINE COMMUNITIES SHAPE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS (SARAH MITTERMAIER)
- 12:15** LUNCH
- 13:15** PANEL: GENDER DYSPHORIA AND SAME-SEX ATTRACTION
- 13:45** SOCIOGENIC EPIDEMICS (RIITTAKERTTU KALTIALA)
- 14:15** TRANS IDENTIFICATION AND THE DREAD OF THE SEXUAL (JACO VAN ZYL)
- 14:45** WHAT CLINICIANS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT AUTOGYNEPHILIA (MICHAEL BAILEY)
- 15:15** COFFEE BREAK
- 15:30** PANEL: WHAT IS GENDER IDENTITY? WHAT IS GENDER DYSPHORIA?
- 16:30** MEDICAL MISADVENTURES: LEARNING FROM HISTORY (ALISON CLAYTON)



ETHICS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

- 9:00** COGNITIVE BIAS AND THE RESPONSE TO THE CASS REPORT (SALLIE BAXENDALE)
- 9:30** PANEL: ADDRESSING MISINFORMATION: DOMINANT AND SUBJUGATED NARRATIVES ABOUT SEX AND GENDER IN SOCIETY
- 11:00** COFFEE BREAK
- 11:15** ETHICAL DILEMMAS IN THE CLINICIAN-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP (SPEAKER TBA)
- 11:45** CAN ETHICS 'SAVE' PEDIATRIC GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE, NOW THAT WE AGREE THE EVIDENCE IS WEAK? (JILLES SMIDS)
- 12:15** LUNCH
- 13:15** ETHICAL HEALTHCARE VS. 'BUYER BEWARE': THE MISUSE OF AUTONOMY IN PEDIATRIC GENDER MEDICINE (MOTI GORIN)
- 13:45** PANEL: WHAT ROLE SHOULD PATIENT VALUES AND PREFERENCES PLAY IN YOUTH GENDER MEDICINE?
- 15:15** COFFEE BREAK
- 15:30** A CRITICAL REALIST LOOK AT 'GENDER HEALTHCARE' (SPEAKER TBA)
- 16:00** KEYNOTE ADDRESS (KATHLEEN STOCK)



PSYCHOTHERAPY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

- 9:00** GENDER CONSTANCY AND NEURODIVERSITY IN CHILDHOOD (SPEAKER TBA)
- 9:30** ASSESSING THE ANTECEDENTS OF A NEW GENDER IDENTITY (STEPHEN LEVINE)
- 10:00** AFFIRMING WITHOUT CONFIRMING: THE VALUE OF UNCERTAINTY WHEN WORKING WITH GENDER-DISTRESSED YOUTH (ANNA HUTCHINSON)
- 10:30** COFFEE BREAK
- 10:45** EXPLORING GENDERED EMBODIMENT IN SYSTEMIC & FAMILY PSYCHOTHERAPY (ANASTASSIS SPILIADIS)
- 11:15** FAMILY CONSULTATION MODEL (SUE EVANS)
- 11:45** PSYCHIC RETREAT IN ADDICTION, AUTOGYNEPHILIA, AND TRANS IDENTIFICATION (JOE BURGO)
- 12:15** LUNCH
- 13:15** INSIGHTS FROM A SPECIALIST PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICE FOR MIXED GENDER IDENTITY PRESENTATIONS (AZ HAKEEM)
- 13:45** TRANS IS NOT THE NEW GAY (ROBERTO D'ANGELO)
- 14:15** TRANSITION-RELATED GRIEF: INSIGHTS FROM CLINICAL PRACTICE (PAUL GARCIA-RYAN)
- 14:45** COFFEE BREAK
- 15:00** PANEL: REFLECTIONS ON CLINICAL PRACTICE
- 16:00** PANEL: THE CASE FOR A NEW DIAGNOSIS
- 17:00** REFLECTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE



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SPEAKERS



ALISON CLAYTON

Consultant psychiatrist and specialist psychotherapist and a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne's School of History and Philosophy of Science, researching the history of psychiatry. Dr Clayton is author of several academic publications, including papers on the history of psychiatry, research methodology in gender medicine research, and placebo and nocebo effects in paediatric gender medicine. In 2024, she organized a symposium on the topic of detransition to the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists' annual congress.



AMBER AULT

Feminist sociologist and mental-health clinician, Amber Ault first studied the social context of Gender Identity Disorder as a psychiatric diagnosis during an NIMH postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Amber studies social movements, sexual identities and the social contestations around them, and violence against women and gay men. Her clinical expertise includes Cluster B personality disorders and suicide risk assessment. In addition to interdisciplinary training in the social sciences, she brings observations from work in medical contexts to her current understandings of the relationships among misogyny, homophobia, and the medicalization of youth gender-nonconformity.



ANASTASSIS SPILIADIS

Systemic & family psychotherapist, psychologist and supervisor/trainer. Anastassis works in London and Athens with adolescents, adults, couples, and families across the lifespan, and specializes in embodied distress, eating disorders, relational difficulties, and gender-related distress, alongside generic mental health. He is a visiting lecturer in King's College London and recently contributed to the training of clinicians in the new youth gender services in the UK. He previously worked in the NHS, where he openly raised his concerns about the overmedicalization of gender-related distress in adolescence. Anastassis is currently completing his Doctorate on embodiment of females with historical gender difficulties.



ANDRÉ LEONHARDT

Research psychologist and psychoanalyst in training. He is currently completing his PhD at the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Medical University of Innsbruck. His research explores psychodynamic and developmental perspectives on adolescence and psychopathology, with a particular focus on gender dysphoria. He practices psychodynamic psychotherapy with adolescents and adults in private practice.



ANNA HUTCHINSON

Clinical psychologist with 25 years of frontline experience, specialising in adolescent mental health and physical health. She serves as the Clinical Director at the Integrated Psychology Clinic in London. From 2013 to 2017, Anna worked at the Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS) at The Tavistock Clinic, where she observed significant changes in patient demographics, referral numbers, and an evolving evidence base that challenged practice at the time. Since leaving GIDS, Anna has been working to raise awareness of the complex needs faced by young people experiencing gender-related distress. She continues to educate and write on the subject, having recently co-led the induction training for the new NHS Children and Young People Gender Hubs in collaboration with the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges in the UK. She is currently co-authoring a book on developmentally-informed therapy for gender-related distress in children.



AZ HAKEEM

Consultant Psychiatrist and Medical Psychotherapist in full time private practice based at Harley Street in London. He was formerly Consultant in Forensic Psychotherapy at the Portman clinic where he single-handedly set up and ran a Specialist Adult Gender Identity Psychotherapy service for 12 years from 2000. He is the author of two books, *Trans* and *Detrans*, and devised the GPSQ and GPSQ2 Outcome Measures for use in gender dysphoria in adults and children/adolescents.



CÉLINE MASSON

Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychopathology and research member of the Center for the History of Societies, Sciences, and Conflicts at the University of Picardie Jules Verne. She has worked as a psychoanalyst at the Œuvre de Secours aux Enfants for 24 years. In her private practice, she works with children and adolescents, including those who identify as transgender. Céline Masson co-founded the Observatoire la Petite Sirène with Caroline Eliacheff in 2021. They have published two books, *The Making of the Transgender Child (La fabrique de l'enfant-transgenre)* in 2022 and *The Sermon of Hippocrates (Le sermon d'Hippocrate)* in 2025.



ERICA ANDERSON

Former President of USPATH and past board member of WPATH, Anderson served as a clinical psychologist at the Child and Adolescent Gender Center at the University of California–San Francisco. Dr. Anderson was one of the first gender clinicians to publicly speak out about inadequate evaluation of gender-dysphoric adolescents and young adults in the US.



FLORIAN ZEPF

Chair and Clinical Director of the Clinic for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Psychosomatics, and Psychotherapy at Jena University Hospital, one of the six competitively selected locations of the German Centre for Mental Health. He has an extensive track record in clinical research, and is the recipient of prestigious awards like the Young Minds in Psychiatry Award (APA) or the Donald J. Cohen Fellowship Award (IACAPAP). From mid 2020 to late 2022, he was a member of the guideline group for the new German language S2k Guidelines on Gender Dysphoria in minors, and left this group upon his own wish because of his clinical concerns.



JACO VAN ZYL

Clinical psychologist and psychoanalytic psychotherapist in private practice. Jaco trained in South Africa and now lives in Ireland. Jaco has a special interest in both individual and group psychology, and uses a psychoanalytic lens to explore the psychology of ideology, particularly of Critical Social Justice. Jaco has been working in the gender space for a few years, and has written articles on the psychology underlying gender dysphoria manifestations. He is a co-director of Critical Therapy Antidote and a co-host of the CTA podcast.



JAMIE REED

One of the first public whistleblowers from a pediatric gender clinic in the United States. Her explosive first-person account was published in The Free Press in February 2023. The story traveled the globe. Jamie is now Executive Director and Co-Founder of the LGB Courage Coalition, an American-based nonprofit of LGB adults seeking to reform youth gender medicine. Jamie is an accomplished public speaker and has been interviewed and profiled in The New York Times and co-hosts Informed Dissent. Jamie is a lesbian and parent of five boys. She holds a Master of Science in Clinical Research from Washington University.



JILLES SMIDS

Philosopher and medical ethicist at Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. His research interests concern justice issues related to expensive medicine and healthcare priority-setting more generally, as well as ethical and philosophical questions around pediatric gender care. He has engaged in in-depth research into the origins of the Dutch protocol, its current form, and the medical-ethical controversies surrounding care for adolescents with gender dysphoria. He is actively engaged in the Dutch scientific discussion on pediatric gender care.



JOE BURGO

Clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst who has been practicing for more than 40 years. He works primarily with trans-identified boys and young men who have detransitioned. He also supervises, teaches, and writes books.



JOHN BLYTHE

Clinical psychologist who directs a network of child & adolescent private practices in NSW, Australia. Clinical interests include diagnosis and interventions for autism spectrum disorders, youth mental health, sex and gender diversity, and integrating emerging technologies (such as AI) into clinical practice. John contributes as an expert witness for Australian legal cases involving young people's attachments, decision-making capacity, and medical interventions for gender dysphoria.



KATHLEEN STOCK

Contributing editor at UnHerd and a co-director of The Lesbian Project. She is the author of *Material Girls: Why Reality Matters for Feminism* (Little Brown 2021). She has written for a range of national newspapers, and is a sometime columnist for the Sunday Times and the Times. Until 2021, she was a Professor of Philosophy at Sussex University. She was awarded an OBE for services to higher education in 2020.



KEN ZUCKER

Editor-in-Chief of the Archives of Sexual Behavior, a peer-reviewed journal that has led the way in platforming debate in the field of youth gender medicine. Dr. Zucker served as the chair of the DSM-5 Work Group on Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders. A clinical psychologist with 40+ years of experience working with gender-dysphoric youth, Dr. Zucker formerly led the Child Youth and Family Gender Identity Clinic at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto.



LUCY JOHNSTONE

Consultant clinical psychologist, author or co-editor of books including *Users and abusers of psychiatry* (3rd edition 2021) and *Formulation in psychology and psychotherapy* (2nd edition 2013). She is the former Director of the Bristol Clinical Psychology Doctorate in the UK and worked in Adult Mental Health settings for many years. She is Visiting Professor at London South Bank University. Lucy was lead author, along with Professor Mary Boyle, for the Power Threat Meaning Framework (2018), a British Psychological Society publication which outlines a conceptual alternative to psychiatric diagnosis. Lucy currently works as an independent trainer, and lives in Bristol, UK.



MICHAEL BAILEY

Professor of Psychology at Northwestern University and author of *The Man Who Would Be Queen*. His research has primarily focused on sexual orientation, broadly construed. This includes paraphilias, especially autogynephilia. Sexual orientation is associated with different kinds of gender dysphoria, and his recent work also addresses gender dysphoria.



MICHAEL BIGGS

Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Oxford and Fellow of St Cross. He was the first to discover the experiment with puberty blockers conducted by the Tavistock's Gender Identity Development Service and the first to publish its unfavourable results. His research on puberty blockers and on suicide by adolescents who identify as transgender has been published in *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, *Journal of Pediatric Endocrinology and Metabolism*, and *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, and in two edited volumes: *Inventing Transgender Children and Young People* and *Sex and Gender: A Contemporary Reader*.



MOTI GORIN

Philosopher and bioethicist. He is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Colorado State University.



PAUL GARCIA-RYAN

Executive director of Therapy First. Paul holds a Masters of Social Work from Hunter College's Silberman School of Social Work and completed graduate training in LGBT behavioral health at Callen-Lorde Community Health Center. Paul was profiled in Pamela Paul's New York Times article *Gender Dysphoric Kids Deserve Better Care*, published in February 2024, and subsequently authored an op-ed published by the Washington Post addressing the challenges experienced by clinicians working with youth gender dysphoria. He works in private practice in New York City.



PATRICIA CONSTANTINIAN

Clinical psychologist who works with gender-questioning and transgender-identifying young people and their families. She approaches psychotherapy from a perspective that considers the complexities of development, attachment, family dynamics, neuropsychological status, as well as broader social and cultural factors affecting individuals who seek her help.



RIITTAKERTTU KALTIALA

Professor of adolescent psychiatry, leader of one of the two nationally centralized gender identity units for minors in Finland, and committee member for national guidelines for health services related to medical and surgical gender reassignment. Dr. Kaltiala was the first leader of a national pediatric gender clinic to raise concerns regarding the risk-benefit ratio of treating gender-dysphoric youth with puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones. Finland was the first country to revise the standard of care to prioritize noninvasive approaches, sharply restricting eligibility for hormonal interventions. Dr. Kaltiala is currently involved in two major international evidence review projects in the field of gender medicine.



ROBERTO D'ANGELO

Psychiatrist and psychoanalyst in private practice in Byron Bay, Australia. Dr. D'Angelo works with adolescents and young adults with gender dysphoria, using a contemporary psychoanalytic approach. He is a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists and a Training and Supervising Analyst at the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis, Los Angeles. His publications explore clinical and ethical issues in the treatment of gender dysphoria. Roberto D'Angelo serves as the President of SEGM.



SALLIE BAXENDALE

Professor of Clinical Neuropsychology at the UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology and the Lead Consultant Neuropsychologist for the epilepsy surgery program at the National Hospital for Neurology, Queen Square. She has over 200 academic publications in neuropsychology, including books, book chapters and original research studies and was awarded the International Neuropsychological Society Arthur Benton Prize in 2018 in recognition of her outstanding scientific contributions to the field of neuropsychology and received the Distinguished Contribution Award from the British Psychological Society in 2023. She is a passionate advocate for the application of neuropsychological principles and knowledge in public policy and discourse. Her research and clinical interests focus on understanding the multifactorial nature of cognitive impairments in clinical populations. Her review of the impact of puberty blockers on neurodevelopment featured in the Cass Review.



SARAH MITTERMAIER

Researcher exploring the online communities where young people adopt new attitudes and beliefs about gender and set expectations and intentions for transition. Her M.Sc. thesis, *Questions and doubts in online trans communities*, is available through McGill University. She is currently writing a book about gender medicine for Polity.



STEFAN DE VILLIERS

Mental-health practitioner and holds a master's degree in social work from the University of Calgary, Canada. A trans man himself who transitioned nearly 20 years ago, Stefan has a particular interest in gender and sexuality issues. He has post-graduate training in traumatic stress, family violence, grief education, and hypnosis. Since 2018, Stefan has worked in community mental health and in private practice.



STEPHEN LEVINE

Psychiatrist who started one of the first gender clinics for gender patients in 1974 and has continuously been active seeing patients and writing about his and his colleagues' observations since. Most of his recent experience has been with transgender youth. Six of his recent co-authored or sole authored papers have been downloaded over 325,000 times. Long interested in psychotherapy as an investigative and therapeutic tool, he posits the hypothesis that a new trans identity is a creative unconscious solution to existential woes that must be understood in terms of the youthful sensibilities of the minor.



SUSAN EVANS

Registered psychoanalytic psychotherapist. She trained as a nurse and has worked with the NHS for 40 years. She was also a senior fellow at University of East London and a clinical lecturer for Middlesex University. From 2003 to 2007, Susan worked in the Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS) at the Tavistock, where she raised concerns about inadequate assessment of young patients. In 2019, Susan applied to the High Court in the UK for a Judicial Review of GIDS' treatment of children (Keira Bell v. Tavistock). Issues exposed during the Judicial Review contributed to the decision to appoint Dr. Hilary Cass to conduct an independent clinical review. Susan co-authored *Gender Dysphoria: A Therapeutic Model* with her husband, Marcus.



TOBIAS BANASCHEWSKI

Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Medical Faculty Mannheim of the University of Heidelberg and Medical Director of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry of the Central Institute of Mental Health in Mannheim (since 2006), and Deputy Director of the CIMH (since, 2014). He studied psychology and medicine at Marburg University. His main research areas are developmental trajectories of child and adolescent psychiatric disorders with associated risks and protective factors, their underlying etiological and neurobiological mechanisms, development of individualized treatment strategies, and evidence-based clinical guidelines.



ZHENYA ABBRUZZESE

Healthcare researcher and author of several widely-read peer-reviewed publications in pediatric gender medicine. After observing an influx of teens presenting with gender dysphoria for the first time in adolescence in 2018, Zhenya began to study the Dutch protocol and its applicability to the current clinical dilemmas. Eventually her work led her to co-found the Society for Evidence-Based Gender Medicine. Previously, Zhenya worked for a major US-based health insurer identifying low-value healthcare interventions, and led a venture-backed startup focused on patients suffering with medically-unexplained symptoms.



THE SOCIETY FOR EVIDENCE-BASED GENDER MEDICINE

OUR AIM IS TO PROMOTE SAFE, COMPASSIONATE, ETHICAL, AND EVIDENCE-INFORMED HEALTHCARE FOR CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS, AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH GENDER DYSPHORIA

The Society for Evidence-Based Gender Medicine (SEGM) is an international collaborative of more than 100 clinicians and researchers dedicated to improving the quality of research and its application to gender medicine. As our name indicates, we advocate for evidence-based medicine – protocols, guidelines, and practice based on the results of rigorous research and the best available evidence. Our specific focus is on care for children, adolescents, and young adults.

Our primary activity is evaluation and dissemination of evidence in the field of youth gender medicine. Individuals collaborating under the auspices of SEGM have published original research and reviews of evidence, as well as critiques of previously published studies in peer-reviewed journals. We evaluate interventions for gender dysphoria using systematic reviews of evidence, promote the development of effective treatment approaches, advocate for ethical research capable of generating trustworthy information, and promote open and robust scientific debate. In addition, SEGM provides grants to individual researchers and research organizations, and we underwrite open-access fees for publications in scientific peer-reviewed journals to ensure widespread access to quality data and clinical practice guidance.

SEGM has no political, ideological or religious affiliations and is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

To learn more about SEGM, please visit our website at segm.org.

