

# 2023 Seminar

## Relational Identity & Erotic Orientation: Polyamory and Kink as Identity Constructs

with Gary Hirshberg, LCSW

**Oct. 14 & 21 | 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.**

- St Louis Psychoanalytic Institute
- In-person
- Fee: \$75
- 3 Credits
- Experienced

### Registration

[Stlpi.org/RelationalIdentity](http://Stlpi.org/RelationalIdentity)



### Course Description

This two session workshop will challenge clinicians to look at our own deeply held beliefs about sex and coupling, specifically what is 'perversion' and what is 'healthy' coupling. Most of us have come of age and been trained to still consider kink as deviant



and as deriving from early childhood trauma or exposure to overt sex. Most of us think of multiple partners, open relationships and group marriages as resulting from overly sexual men. This workshop will challenge all of that and more as we explore the reality that kink is just as valid an expression of healthy sexuality as missionary position between a male and a female and that polyamory is also a deeply embedded aspect of identity for many, just as monogamy is for some. With more of our patients opening up to all aspects of their identity and sexuality we clinicians need to catch up.

**Required Reading:** Saketopoulou, A. (2014) To Suffer Pleasure: The Shattering of the Ego as the Psychic Labor of Perverse Sexuality. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 15:4, 254-268.

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## Course Objectives:

1. List a variety of kinky sexual practices
  2. Explain the basic guidelines of engaging in safe and consensual kink sex.
  3. Explain the role of Dom and its relation to sub
  4. Critique the hold that monogamy has on ideas of healthy coupling.
  5. Analyze the history of perversion in psychoanalytic thought and it's impact on therapists ability to work effectively in these areas.
  6. Describe various kinds of polyamory and some of the steps necessary as patients consider this way of being in relationship.
  7. Cultivate a deeper understanding of the role fantasy plays in all healthy sexuality and coupling.
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## Biography:



Gary Hirshberg received his Masters degree from the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University. He graduated as a psychoanalyst from the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute and subsequently received his clinical credentials from the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis. Mr. Hirshberg was one of the founders and the Associate Clinical Director of one of the first mental health agencies in the U.S. created in response to the AIDS epidemic. In 1992, Mr. Hirshberg opened his own practice in St. Louis. He specializes in work with gay men, artists, patients from diverse cultural & ethnic backgrounds, and adult male survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Mr. Hirshberg served as a faculty member and Program Coordinator for residential diversity training programs with youth and adults through

the National Conference for Community & Justice. He continues to do workshops and trainings in the areas of diversity, cultural competency, and social justice with an emphasis on intersectionality around cultural constructs. He has worked as a consultant on Diversity to the Rockwood & Ft. Zumwalt School districts. Mr. Hirshberg has been adjunct faculty at Washington University, St. Louis University, the University of Missouri – St. Louis, the Nashville Center for Psychoanalysis & Psychotherapy and the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute.



This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of American Psychoanalytic Association and the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute. The American Psychoanalytic Association is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The American Psychoanalytic Association designates this Live Activity for a maximum of 3 AMA PRA category credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

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