

# QUESTIONING GENDER PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC APPROACHES TO YOUTH GENDER DYSPHORIA

OCTOBER 2024  
ATHENS, GREECE









# WELCOME

**“An explicit clinical pathway must be developed for non-medical interventions, as well as a research strategy for evaluating their effectiveness.”**

— Dr. Hilary Cass

Welcome to *Questioning Gender: Psychotherapeutic Approaches to Youth Gender Dysphoria*. We're excited to bring together researchers and clinicians from 19 countries and look forward to hearing your experiences and perspectives. We also wish to express our appreciation to the Medical School of Athens for hosting us.

We gather at a key moment when it comes to understanding and caring for gender-distressed young people. There is now worldwide recognition of the need to provide holistic support to gender-questioning young people, with careful attention to each patient's life history and other mental health needs, and the provision of ethical, safe, and effective therapies. This puts psychotherapeutic approaches center-stage. These approaches are also at the heart of this conference, which brings together some of the most thoughtful researchers and clinicians in the field of youth gender medicine and draws upon the insights of experts in adolescent development, the treatment of co-occurring mental health difficulties, and evidence evaluation.

As we embark on our time together here in Athens, let us be mindful of the stakes, the need for compassion and understanding across differences of experience and perspective, and the potential—when we come together despite our differences—to shape the care of gender-questioning children and young people for the better.

Sincerely,

Anastassis Spiliadis, Roberto D'Angelo, and Zhenya Abbruzzese, on behalf of the organizing and scientific committee

# QUESTIONING GENDER

## PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC APPROACHES TO YOUTH GENDER DYSPHORIA

### PRE- CONFERENCE RESEARCH SESSION

#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2

- 14:00** DEVELOPING A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR  
PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES FOR GENDER DYSPHORIA  
RICHARD BYNG
- 15:00** STUDYING HOW GENDER DYSPHORIA DEVELOPS AND  
RESPONDS TO TREATMENT  
KATHRYN WEBB
- 16:00** BEST PRACTICES AND GETTING CONSENSUS FOR  
OUTCOME MEASURES  
RAY ZHANG, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
- 17:00** PANEL DISCUSSION: WHAT RESEARCH QUESTIONS DO  
WE NEED TO ANSWER?  
ANASTASSIS SPILIADIS, KATHRYN WEBB,  
KEN ZUCKER, AND LISA LITTMAN, MODERATED BY  
ANNA HUTCHINSON

# THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF YOUTH GENDER DYSPHORIA

## DAY ONE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3

- 8:00** BREAKFAST
- 8:30** WELCOME TO GREECE AND OPENING REMARKS  
NIKOLAOS ARKADOPOULOS, DEAN OF THE MEDICAL  
SCHOOL OF ATHENS
- 8:45** LGBT YOUTH-FRIENDLY SERVICES AND GENDER-  
AMENDMENT PROCEDURES IN GREECE  
ARTEMIS TSITSIKA
- 9:00** ADULT GENDER SERVICES IN GREECE  
FOTEINI FERENIDOU
- 9:15** THE TROUBLE WITH “GENDER IDENTITY”  
ALEX BYRNE
- 10:15** COFFEE BREAK
- 10:30** FROM TRANSSEXUAL TO TRANSGENDER  
ZHENYA ABBRUZZESE
- 11:00** THE DUTCH PROTOCOL  
JILLES SMIDS
- 11:30** TIME FOR REFLECTION AND Q&A
- 12:00** LUNCH
- 13:00** PANEL DISCUSSION AND Q&A: TRACKING CHANGES  
IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH GENDER MEDICINE  
ANNE WÆHRE, ERICA ANDERSON, JAMIE REED,  
KEN ZUCKER, MIKAEL SCOTT BJERKELI, AND  
RIITTAKERTTU KALTIALA, MODERATED BY  
ZHENYA ABBRUZZESE
- 14:00** PANEL DISCUSSION AND Q&A: THE TRANSGENDER  
ZEITGEIST: EXPLORING GENDER AS A YOUTH  
SOCIAL MOVEMENT  
ANNA HUTCHINSON, BERYL KOENER, KRIS  
KALIEBE, LISA LITTMAN, AND SAMUEL VEISSIÈRE,  
MODERATED BY ROBERTO D'ANGELO

- 15:00** COFFEE BREAK
- 15:15** HOW DO YOUNG PEOPLE SEEKING GENDER REASSIGNMENT FARE OVER THE LONG TERM?  
RIITTAKERTTU KALTIALA
- 15:45** THE ROLE OF THERAPISTS IN ENHANCING COMMUNITY-SUPPORT NETWORKS  
RICHARD BYNG
- 16:15** ESCAP STATEMENT ON THE CARE OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH GENDER DYSPHORIA: RATIONALE AND KEY POINTS  
MAJA RADOBULJAC
- 16:00** PANEL DISCUSSION AND Q&A: THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CASS REVIEW
- 17:00** THE POLITICIZATION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS  
ANDREW HARTZ
- 19:00** VISIT TO BENAHI MUSEUM OF GREEK CULTURE (FREE, OPEN TILL MIDNIGHT) OR GREEK DANCING EVENT AT DORA STRATOU (RESERVATION REQUIRED)

# EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES OF ADOLESCENCE

## DAY TWO

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4

- 8:30** THE TEENAGE BRAIN: WHAT CLINICIANS NEED TO  
KNOW AND Q&A  
SALLIE BAXENDALE
- 9:30** EMERGENCE OF MENTAL DISORDERS IN  
ADOLESCENCE  
RIITTAKERTTU KALTIALA
- 9:45** COFFEE BREAK
- 10:00** SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT FROM BIRTH TO  
ADOLESCENCE  
RAISA CACCIATORE
- 10:30** CHALLENGES OF ADOLESCENCE FOR YOUTH WITH  
DISORDERS OF SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT  
JULIE ALDERSON
- 11:00** AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS AND GENDER  
DYSPHORIA IN ADOLESCENTS AND Q&A  
MICHAEL ABSOUD
- 12:00** LUNCH
- 13:00** EATING DISORDERS AND GENDER DYSPHORIA  
ALEXANDER KORTE AND ANASTASSIS SPILIADIS
- 13:30** BODY DYSMORPHIC DISORDER AND GENDER  
DYSPHORIA  
AMITA JASSI
- 14:00** PANEL DISCUSSION AND Q&A ON BODY IMAGE AND  
CONTROL  
AMITA JASSI, ALEXANDER KORTE, AND  
ANASTASSIS SPILIADIS, MODERATED BY LESLIE  
ELLIOTT BOYCE
- 14:45** COFFEE BREAK

- 15:30**      **TRAUMA, DISSOCIATION, AND GENDER DYSPHORIA**  
ROBERTO D'ANGELO
- 16:00**      **UNDERSTANDING AND TREATING INNATE AND**  
**IATROGENIC BORDERLINE PERSONALITY TRAITS IN**  
**GENDER-QUESTIONING YOUTH**  
LISA DUVAL
- 16:30**      **PANEL DISCUSSION AND Q&A: SEX MATTERS:**  
**DIFFERENCES IN ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT FOR**  
**BOYS AND GIRLS EXPERIENCING GENDER DISTRESS**  
JOE BURGO, ANNA HUTCHINSON, AND PAUL GARCIA-  
RYAN, MODERATED BY SHLOMIT GORIN
- 19:00**      **GROUP DINNER (RESERVATION REQUIRED)**



# IMPLICATIONS FOR PSYCHO- THERAPEUTIC PRACTICE

## DAY THREE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 8:00  | BREAKFAST   |
| 8:30  | PSYCHOLOGICAL FORMULATION AS AN<br>ALTERNATIVE TO DIAGNOSIS<br>LUCY JOHNSTONE   |
| 9:00  | THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN ADDRESSING YOUTH<br>GENDER DISTRESS<br>STEPHANIE DAVIES-ARAI, ALEXANDRE LEDRAIT,<br>RICHARD STEPHENS  |
| 9:45  | CONTEXT, COMPLEXITY AND CONFIDENCE:<br>CASS REVIEW-ALIGNED TEACHING AND TRAINING<br>IN THE UK<br>ANASTASSIS SPILIADIS, ANNA HUTCHINSON, AND<br>TRILBY (TILLY) LANGTON |
| 10:45 | COFFEE BREAK  |
| 11:00 | UK TRAINING, PART II  |
| 12:00 | LUNCH   |
| 13:00 | PROMOTING DIALOGUE, EMPATHY, AND RESILIENCE<br>IN THE FACE OF RIGID IDEOLOGIES<br>PATRICK RYAN  |
| 13:20 | GENDER AND SOCIAL POLARIZATION:<br>EPIDEMIOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL PERSPECTIVES<br>SAMUEL VEISSIÈRE  |
| 13:40 | NAVIGATING CONFLICTING WORLDVIEWS:<br>DIALOGUE AND Q&A WITH PATRICK RYAN AND<br>SAMUEL VEISSIÈRE<br>MODERATED BY SARAH MITTERMAIER                                    |
| 14:30 | COFFEE BREAK  |
| 14:45 | TRANSITION-RELATED GRIEF<br>PAUL GARCIA-RYAN  |

**15:15**

**DESISTANCE IN THE FAMILY**  
**PATRICIA CONSTANTINIAN**

**15:45**

**PANEL DISCUSSION AND Q&A: DESISTANCE,  
DETRANSITION AND MEDICAL HARM**  
**DWIGHT PANOZZO, PATRICIA CONSTANTINIAN, PAUL  
GARCIA-RYAN, AND SOPHIE FROST, MODERATED BY  
ALISON CLAYTON**

**16:45**

**REFLECTIONS**

**17:15**

**CLOSING**

# SPEAKERS



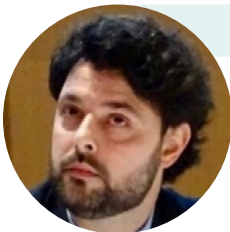
## ALEX BYRNE

Laurance S. Rockefeller Professor of Philosophy at MIT. Alex's most recent book is *Trouble with Gender: Sex Facts, Gender Fictions* (Polity, 2024).



## ALEXANDER KORTE

Senior Consultant at the Clinic for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Psychosomatics and Psychotherapy, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich. M.A. Cultural Studies. Board member of the German Society for Sexual Medicine & Sexual Psychology. (Photo by Christian Angerer.)



## ALEXANDRE LEDRAIT

Assistant professor at the University of Caen in clinical psychopathology, coordinator of the Centre Ressource Information Prévention Adolescence et Radicalité, and director of a service which carries out expert appraisals for the Paris Court of Appeal, the general investigation department, and the anti-terrorist prosecutor's office. His work focuses on the function of the symptom in adolescence, and the role of unconscious "choice" in connection with unelaborated childhood traumatic experiences and family history. His research in radicalization provides insight into the recourse to violence that may be associated with radical phenomena can take on a political guise (jihadist and extreme right-wing discourse) or can be inscribed through contemporary symptomatologies as a form of identity protest (as in the case of anorexia nervosa and/or rapid-onset gender disorders). His writings on trans identity—based on his specialized clinical practice with adolescents—revolve around the differential and functional diagnosis of certain symptomatic forms of gender dysphoria.



## 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 an author of several academic publications, including papers raising questions about research methodology in gender medicine research and of placebo and nocebo effects in pediatric gender medicine. In May 2024, she organized and presented at a symposium on the topic of detransition to the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists' annual congress.





### **AMITA JASSI**

Consultant Clinical Psychologist at the National and Specialist OCD, BDD and Related Disorder Service for Children and Young People (South London and Maudsley NHS Trust). She has worked with this client group since 2006. Amita is the lead for the BDD branch of the service, as well as the research lead for the clinic. This is the only specialist service for young people with BDD in the UK. In her clinical role, she develops and delivers individually-tailored treatment packages, including intensive, home-based and inpatient treatment, as well as offering consultation and joint work with clinicians around the country. Amita has taught and trained nationally and internationally on child and adolescent OCD and BDD. She is the author of several books including 'Appearance Anxiety: a Guide to Understanding Body Dysmorphic Disorder for Young People, Families and Professionals' and 'The Parents' Guide to Body Dysmorphic Disorder'. She has over 50 publications in peer reviewed journals on OCD and BDD and engages in media work to increase awareness and understanding of these conditions. Amita is also a trustee for the BDD Foundation charity.



### **ANASTASSIS SPILIADIS**

Systemic and family psychotherapist, psychologist and supervisor/trainer. Anastassis works in London and Athens with individuals, couples, and families across the lifespan and specializes in embodied distress, eating disorders, relational difficulties and gender-related distress, alongside generic mental health difficulties. He is a visiting lecturer in King's College London and currently also works as a trainer through the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, training clinicians in the new youth gender services in the UK. He previously worked in the National Health Service, where he openly raised his concerns about the overmedicalization of gender-related distress in adolescence.



### **ANDREW HARTZ**

Practicing clinical psychologist in New York City. He was formerly a professor in the clinical psychology doctoral program at Long Island University, where he also completed his Ph.D. He completed his clinical internship at Columbia University Medical Center, and he also completed training at Mount Sinai Hospital and the William Alanson White Institute. For several years, he's written about political issues and mental health for outlets such as the Wall Street Journal, City Journal, Discourse, the Federalist, Real Clear Education, Heterodox Academy, and the New York Post.



### **ANNA HUTCHINSON**

Clinical psychologist specializing in adolescent mental health and physical health. She has been working with gender related distress, mainly in young people, for many years both in the UK's NHS and in private practice. She continues to teach, train and write on the topic.



### **ANNE WÆHRE**

Pediatrician working within child and adolescent psychiatry at the Department of Pediatrics, Oslo University. Dr. Wæhre's research interests include child and adolescent mental health, and sexuality, gender identity and mental health in adolescence and disorders of sexual development. Dr. Wæhre recently spent a year as a Research Fellow in Pediatrics at Boston Children's Hospital.



### **ARTEMIS TSITSIKA**

Elected associate professor of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine/Health at the Medical School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA). She graduated from the NKUA Medical School and specialized in Pediatrics and subsequently trained in Adolescent Medicine and Health. She is the founder and head of the Adolescent Health Unit, Second Department of Pediatrics, P. & A. Kyriakou Children's Hospital and scientific supervisor of the "youth-friendly" WHO guidelines, NKUA programs, as well as other programs in child and adolescent medicine. She has been honored with numerous awards and the distinct award for the development of Adolescent Medicine/Health in Greece, has served as a visiting professor at Western Michigan University and an adjunct professor at the University of Kentucky, and has spoken at international conferences. Her research focuses on the quality of life and health of minors, including gynecology, sexuality, Internet use, school health, and sexual abuse prevention. She has been actively involved in MoUs with the Ministries of Education and Health and is the author of books in Greece and internationally, including books for children. She supervises the European and other programs of the NGO For Adolescent Health ([www.youth-life.gr](http://www.youth-life.gr)), and serves as the president of the Hellenic/Greek Society for Adolescent Medicine/Health ([www.youth-med.gr](http://www.youth-med.gr)), and chief editor of the Journal of Developmental and Adolescent Health.



### **BERYL KOENER**

Child psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. After medical studies, Beryl Koener began specializing in neurology and completed a PhD in neuropsychopharmacology focusing on the mechanisms of action of third-generation antipsychotic treatments. She then switched to a complementary master's degree in infant and juvenile psychiatry and completed training in systemic and family psychotherapy at CEFORES (Training and Research Center in Systemic Approach and family therapy). She worked in a general hospital in the emergency ward, around the management of crisis situations and psychiatric emergencies, as well as in pediatric wards, maternity and neonatology in liaison. She also worked in a residential institution for young people with behavioral disorders. Her background in neurology, child psychiatry, and psychoanalysis, lead her work today in close co-intervention with pediatric neurologists, and shares her working time between different multidisciplinary consultation centers. Dr. Koener is passionate about the articulation of therapeutic disciplines, including medical, psychoanalytic and pharmacological. She carries out, within multidisciplinary teams, an assessment activity with diagnostic and therapeutic purposes. In June 2024, she and Jean-Pierre Lebrun, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, vice-president of the international Lacanian association, co-authored *Changing gender? How misunderstanding operates among young people...*, published in French by Campagne Première Publisher.



### **DWIGHT PANOZZO**

Clinical social worker in private practice, an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Research at the SSSW at NYU, a member of the Board of Directors of Therapy First, the Chair of Therapy First's Research Committee, and co-author of *Ethical Care in Secret*, which presents the qualitative findings of the Therapy First Clinician Study. For more information, visit [www.dwightpanozzophd.com/](http://www.dwightpanozzophd.com/).



### **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.





### **FOTEINI FERENIDOU**

Graduate of the Medicine School of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH). Dr. Ferenidou completed a Master's degree on medical research methodology and her PhD on Female Sexuality. She is also a Fellow of the European Board of Sexual Medicine. Her major domain of interest is Sexual Medicine. Since 2006, she has been a Research Associate at the Center of Sexual and Reproductive Health of the AUTH, taking part in research on sexual dysfunction. She completed the Sexual Medicine Specialist training course" organized by the European Society for Sexual Medicine, as well as a two-year postgraduate course on the "Therapy of Psychosexual dysfunctions" organized by the University Mental Health Research Institute of Athens, being part of the organizing committee since then. She is a member of the European Society of Sexual Medicine since 2006, the year that she was awarded the award for the Best Presentation on Female Sexual Dysfunctions. She has scientific publications in PubMed, which have received more than 100 citations, scientific publications in Greek literature, while she has presented more than 40 oral and poster presentations in Greek and international congresses. She completed her training in Psychiatry at the Eginition Hospital of the University of Athens in 2017. Currently, she is a Research Associate at the First Psychiatric Clinic of the University of Athens and a member of the Research and Educational Committee of the Post-Graduate Course of the University of Athens "Therapy of Psychosexual dysfunctions." She has a private practice in Kifissia, Athens.



### **JAMIE REED**

One of the first public whistleblowers from a pediatric gender clinic in the United States. Her explosive first person account, "I thought I was saving trans kids, Now I am blowing the whistle" was published in The Free Press in February 2023. The story traveled the globe. Jamie is now the Executive Director and Co-Founder of the LGBT Courage Coalition, an American-based nonprofit of LGBT adults seeking to reform youth gender medicine. The LGBT Courage Coalition seeks to impact culture and medicine to accept and support gender non-conformity in a non-medicalized way. Jamie is an accomplished public speaker and has been interviewed and profiled in The New York Times, the podcast Triggernometry, Gender: A Wider Lens, and Transparency. She has spoken at numerous conferences including Genspect: The Bigger Picture in Colorado, at the International Perspectives on Evidence-Based Treatment for Gender-Dysphoric Youth in New York, and Psychotherapeutic Process with Young People Experiencing Gender Dysphoria in Tampere, Finland. Jamie is a gay woman and foster and adoptive parent of five boys. She holds a Master of Science in Clinical Research from Washington University in St. Louis and a bachelor's degree in Cultural Anthropology.



### **JILLES SMIDS**

Philosopher and medical ethicist at Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. His main 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. As a citizen of the birth country of the Dutch protocol, he was surprised to see the international criticism emerging, and the developments in Finland, Sweden, and England towards prioritizing non-medical approaches. As a result, he engaged in in-depth research into the origins of the Dutch protocol, its current form, and the medical-ethical controversies on what is the best 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 forty years. He works primarily with trans-identified boys and young men who have detransitioned. He also supervises, works as an expert witness, and writes books.



### **JULIE ALDERSON**

Consultant Clinical Psychologist within the UK National Health Service. Julie has worked clinically and in research with people with variations in sex development/variations in sex characteristics (formerly referred to as intersex conditions and disorders/differences of sexual development). She was a founding member of The British Association for Paediatric and Adolescent Gynaecology (BritSPAG), Chair of Trustees of the charity dsdfamilies, and NHS England Clinical Lead for DSD Psychosocial Care. She chaired the NHS England Training and Education Group as part of the Children and Young People (CYP) Services Portfolio. She is Chair of the British Psychological Society's task and finish group to develop a CYP discussion paper. Her current clinical work is with parents of newborns, children, and adults attending endocrine and gynecology services regarding sex development. She also sees a wide range of other pediatric presentations for short-term advice and guidance. Her organizational role for the previous year has been to establish a new CYP Gender Service in the South West of England that will provide holistic healthcare as part of the national implementation of the Cass Review (2024). This service will begin meeting with children from November 2024.



### **KATHRYN WEBB**

Clinical psychologist and academic based in the UK. She works in the NHS clinically, and at the University of Oxford as an Academic Tutor and Visiting Researcher. She is currently part of the UK Independent Review of data, statistics and research on sex and gender, led by Professor Alice Sullivan. Kathryn's wider research focuses on concepts of gender identity, and how we can understand and support individuals experiencing related distress. Her doctoral research at the University of Oxford explored concepts of choice and wellbeing, including regret after 'gender-affirming surgery.' She is also an advocate for academic freedom, and has written widely on the topic, due to the challenges she has faced herself. She is on Twitter at @kathryn\_webb\_.



### **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 (CAMH) in Toronto, Canada.



### **KRISTOPHER KALIEBE**

Professor of psychiatry at University of South Florida, in Tampa, Florida. Dr. Kaliebe is Board certified in Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Forensic Psychiatry. He is a distinguished fellow of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP). Dr. Kaliebe's teaching, publications and presentations focus on the effect of digital technologies on mental health, psychotherapy, Mind Body Medicine, nutrition, mental health in primary-care settings, and preventing overdiagnosis and overtreatment.



### **LESLIE ELLIOTT BOYCE**

Independent coach and consultant in Washington State with an educational background in clinical mental-health counseling. She is co-founder of Solid Ground, an online peer support community, and the host of The Radical Center, a podcast series focusing on ideological bias in the fields of education and psychology. Learn more about her work at <https://theradicalcenterconsulting.com/>.





### LISA DUVAL

Licensed clinical psychologist based in Charlottesville, Virginia. She works with patients of all ages and presenting issues while specializing in adolescence and personality disorders. She earned a BA in English and Psychology from Yale University (1988) and an MS and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from San Francisco State University (1992) and the Wright Institute in Berkeley, CA (1996), respectively.



### LISA LITTMAN

Physician-researcher who is trained in Preventive Medicine and Public Health and in Obstetrics and Gynecology. Her current research is focused on adolescent-onset gender dysphoria, young adult-onset gender dysphoria, detransition, and desistance. Dr. Littman is currently the President and Director of the Institute for Comprehensive Gender Dysphoria Research and serves on the advisory board of Genspect. Previously, she has held academic positions at the Brown University School of Public Health and the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.



### LUCY JOHNSTONE

Consultant clinical psychologist, author of *Users and abusers of psychiatry* (3rd edition Routledge 2021) and *A straight-talking guide to psychiatric diagnosis* (PCCS Books, 2nd edition 2022); co-editor of *Formulation in psychology and psychotherapy: making sense of people's problems* (Routledge, 2nd edition 2013); and co-author of *A straight talking introduction to the Power Threat Meaning Framework*, 2020, PCCS Books) along with a number of other chapters and articles taking a critical perspective on mental health theory and practice. She is the former Director of the Bristol Clinical Psychology Doctorate in the UK and has worked in Adult Mental Health settings for many years, most recently in a service in South Wales. She is Visiting Professor at London South Bank University, an Honorary Fellow of the BPS, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Lucy was lead author, along with Professor Mary Boyle, for the *Power Threat Meaning Framework* (2018), a British Psychological Society publication co-produced with service users, which outlines a conceptual alternative to psychiatric diagnosis and has attracted national and international attention. Lucy is an experienced conference speaker and lecturer, and currently works as an independent trainer. She lives in Bristol, UK.



### **MAJA RADOBULJAC**

Child and adolescent psychiatrist (CAP) and associate professor of psychiatry. She is also a wife and a mother of two children who enjoys reading, sports and has practiced yoga for 30 years. She graduated in medicine from the University of Ljubljana in 2002, received her PhD in 2009, and completed EU-certified training in child and adolescent psychiatry in 2012. She also completed training in Systemic Family Therapy, MBT-A training at the Anna Freud Centre in London UK and is a certified Child Attachment Interview Rater from the Anna Freud Centre. She specializes in working with adolescents with (emerging) personality disorders, depression, anxiety disorders, gender dysphoria and psychosis. She was the Head of the Department of Adolescent Psychiatry (2013-2019), the Department of Intensive Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (2019-2022) and accompanying outpatient clinics at the Ljubljana University Psychiatric Hospital, where she currently works. She is a member of the Advisory Board for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry of the Slovenian Ministry of Health since 2018, the President of the Slovenian Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry since 2023, a member of the European Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (ESCAP) Governing Board since July 2023 and a Chair of the ESCAP Policy Division.



### **MICHAEL ABSOUD**

Consultant in Paediatric Neurodisability, and head of service children's neurosciences at Evelina London Children's Hospital. He is a clinician in the United Kingdom National Health Service Children & Young People's Gender Service (NHS CYPGS) and medical lead for service evaluation/ research for the NHS CYPGS. He is the deputy chief investigator for the proposed puberty blocker trial. Dr Absoud is also an adjunct Reader clinical academic in the Department of Women & Children's Health @ King's College London. He holds multiple research grants as lead and co-applicant (£3+ million) and has published over 80 peer reviewed papers (H-index 33). His research focuses on neurodevelopmental conditions, with a track record of active patient and public involvement.



### **MIKAEL SCOTT BJERKELI**

Trained social worker, and co-founder and managing director of the Harry Benjamin Resource Center (HBRS), a Norwegian organization supporting individuals with identity challenges related to gender. He has over 30 years of experience.



### **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.



### **PATRICK RYAN**

Graduate of Maharishi International University. Since 1984, Patrick has been a cult intervention specialist (exit counseling, mediation, religious conflict resolution), helping people with destructive groups, cults, mind control, brainwashing, parental alienation, estrangements, abusive relationships, gurus, multi-level marketing, violent extremism, and other forms of undue influence. He established the International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA) online resource (1995-2013), was the editor of AFF News, a news publication for former cult members (1995-1998), has contributed to the Cult Observer, ICSA's book, *Recovery From Cults*, is co-author of "Ethical Standards for Thought Reform Consultants," *Cultic Studies Journal*, Volume 13, No.1, 1996, co-editor of *News for ICSA Today* and has presented 50 programs about hypnosis, inner-experience, trance-induction techniques, communicating with cult members, conversion, cult intervention, exit counseling, intervention assessment, mediation, religious conflict resolution, thought reform consultation, eastern groups, transcendental meditation and workshops for educators, families, former members and mental health professionals at universities in the US, Europe, China, and Australia. Mr. Ryan received the International Cultic Studies Association Lifetime Achievement Award (2011).



### **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.





### **RAISA CACCIATORE**

Child psychiatrist and adolescent health specialist dedicated to improving health literacy and promoting sexual health, well-being, and safety across all age groups. For over 25 years, she served as a specialist physician with the Family Federation of Finland, managing the parenting center, training education and health professionals, and contributing as a researcher and author. Her work spans school health services and adolescent sexual health clinics. Since 1994, Raisa has collaborated with Finland's National Agency of Education to develop comprehensive models for sexuality education, aggression management, and bullying prevention for ages 3-25. Her groundbreaking work contributed to implementing compulsory age-appropriate sexuality education for children aged 0-6 in Finnish early education in 2022, making it a global pioneer in this field. She has authored/participated in over 100 books for various audiences, including babies, children, parents, grandparents, health professionals, and educators. As a member of the WHO/BZgA European expert group since 2008, she has played an important role in promoting comprehensive sexuality education across Europe, contributing to landmark publications like the "Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe" (2010). She has also served as a consultant for the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and UNICEF, focusing on childhood sexuality education, violence prevention, LGBTI sexual and reproductive health and rights (as in the four technical briefs "Building Strong Foundations"). Raisa has received numerous accolades, including lifetime achievement awards from the Finnish Cultural Foundation and the Association of Finnish Non-Fiction Writers, as well as the State Award for Public Information.



### **RICHARD BYNG**

General practitioner in Plymouth, UK, at Adelaide Street Surgery and as a General practitioner with a Special Interest in mental health in the Icebreak Team at The Zone in Plymouth. He is Professor in Primary Care Research at the University of Plymouth specializing in developing and evaluating care for individuals with complex health and social needs. He has developed innovative community based services including the Rushey Green Time Bank and collaborative care for prison leavers, and individuals with dementia and psychosis. He is currently supporting evaluation of the pilot sites for NHS Community Mental Health transformation, including understanding population based approaches. He was a member of the original NICE review panel chaired by Dr Hilary Cass for gender dysphoria treatments. He leads the Community and Primary Care Research Group and is Deputy Director of the South West Peninsula ARC.



### **RICHARD STEPHENS**

Served as a lay member of the NHS England working group on gender dysphoria and of its national quality improvement taskforce for children and young people's mental health inpatient services. He has fulfilled various stakeholder roles at the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust, including helping to develop their autism strategy. He was a co-founder of the Bayswater Support Group, a nationwide parenting forum for families experiencing gender-related difficulties. He has degrees from Cambridge and London universities.



### **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*.



### SAMUEL VEISSIÈRE

Anthropologist, psychosocial clinician, and consultant working at the intersection of psychiatry, cognitive science, and the social sciences. Dr. Veissière held multiple research grants to study the impact of the Internet on cognition, wellbeing and social relations. His work on social and behavioral dimensions of screen addiction led to one of the first interventions to reduce problematic smartphone use successfully tested in a randomized controlled trial. His current work examines risk and protective factors against violent radicalization and extremism, with an emphasis on digital, narrative, and gendered dimensions of social polarization.



### SARAH MITTERMAIER

Researcher and writer exploring the online communities where young people adopt new attitudes and beliefs about gender and set expectations and intentions for transition. Her MSc. thesis, *Questions and doubts in online trans communities*, will be available this autumn through McGill University. She writes gender:hacked on Substack.



### SHLOMIT GORIN

Clinical psychologist based in San Francisco, CA. She provides psychoanalytic psychotherapy to children, adolescents, and adults. For the past several years, she has dedicated the majority of her practice to gender-distressed and trans-identified adolescents and young adults, as well as detransitioners. Shlomit is also co-director of a training program for doctoral-level students at a community mental health outpatient clinic serving chronically and severely disturbed individuals suffering from traumatic immigration histories, personality disorders, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, and economic precarity. She holds a bachelor's degree in Comparative Literature and a master's degree in Slavic Languages & Literatures from Northwestern University, and a doctorate in clinical psychology from the Wright Institute.



### SOPHIE FROST

Psychotherapist. Sophie finished her clinical training and Masters in Psychodynamic Psychotherapy at the renowned Tavistock and Portman Trust in North London. She is currently based in Berlin, Germany, and practices psychotherapy in private practice with individuals and couples.



### STEPHANIE DAVIES-ARAI

Founder of Transgender Trend (2015), the first UK organization to advocate for evidence-based healthcare for gender-dysphoric children and young people, and fact-based teaching in schools. She was shortlisted for the John Maddox Prize 2018 for the schools guide, Supporting gender diverse and trans-identified students in schools. She is also a communication skills expert, teacher trainer, parent coach and author of *Communicating with Kids*, and an experienced speaker. Stephanie was an intervener in the High Court in support of Keira Bell and Mrs A's landmark case against the Tavistock Gender Identity Development Service. In 2022 she was awarded the British Empire Medal as Director of Transgender Trend for services to children, in the late Queen's Jubilee Birthday Honours list.



### **YUAN (RAY) ZHANG**

Assistant Clinical Professor (adjunct) in the Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact at McMaster University, and an Assistant Professor at Brock University. Ray's research expertise includes evidence-based medicine, guideline development, patient values and preferences, health economics, and health technology assessment. Yuan has authored over 60 peer-reviewed articles, amassing more than 10,000 citations and achieving an h-index of 40.



### **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. Zhenya consults for a range of healthcare organizations, working at the intersection of physical and mental health and the promotion of culturally-competent evidence-based healthcare.





# 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](https://segm.org).**



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