

## Editorial

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*Gender* is the focus of this issue of *Ricerca Psicoanalitica*. The gender question has stimulated cultural, ethical, legal and clinical debate in recent years. Perhaps this is simply a consequence of the deconstruction of millenary beliefs surrounding the question, analogous to that of many themes, as we know, since post modernity.

The many considerations surrounding the concept of gender, which by its very nature upsets our deepest convictions and identities, in the social and the contemporary psychoanalytic landscape, activate more conservative or innovative visions. In our context, which involves people with scientific and clinical skills, it becomes even more important to appreciate and confer complexity of meaning to studies, and social movements, as well as to the fears and contradictions that have permeated through generations in our society.

Dimen's question "Does gender exist?", or the famous phrase "Woman is not born, it becomes" by De Beauvoir, confront each other in everyday life with ever-present gender stereotypes. General confusion reigns, even among experts, between sex and gender identity or sexual identity, with sedimented convictions that certain behaviours are male and others female, and while progress has been made in the field of work and rights – though always called into question – there has been a recent opening on matters relating to motherhood and fatherhood. To give you an example of how the path in Italy is anything but uniform or defined, think of the discussions, some sterile some profitable, which emerged recently after the *Immuni* application for Covid tracking was released: the application used the image of a woman at home and a man at work. We rightly consider ourselves to be post-modern citizens, but gender issues have to deal with the eternal dualisms of nature *vs* culture and genetics *vs* environ-

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ment, which suggests that liquidating the contradictions of modernity as if they belong to the past may be premature. As we are well aware of the fact that western subjectivity cannot be universal objectivity, it is important to continue signalling social changes, including them in complex theories about humankind which respond not only to our patients who ask for help, but also to social questions that arise every day. We need to understand without falling into the trap of treating issues superficially or debasing what has characterised the debate on gender and sexual identities in the West over the last hundred years.

To address the theme we thought it appropriate to chose contributions which place it on a horizon of complexity, drawing on perspectives from different disciplines and focusing on different levels. In this way the clinical declination, in the contributions of Levi and Curti (2020), and Fortunato et al. (2020), fits a scenario that allows the reader to appreciate the context and background, illustrated above all by Migliorini (2020) and Rigliano et al. (2020).

We present various historical vicissitudes of gender identity, processes related to the construction of same (Rigliano et al., 2020), situations which lack correspondence between gender assigned at birth and gender experienced. We retrace the direction that gender-variance-related diagnosis has taken over time (Fortunato et al., 2020), trying to shift our gaze from the historical to the meta-theoretical level and avoid slipping towards the antithetical, but equally ideological positions which characterise the current debate (Levi & Curti, 2020).

Our intention, in theory, is to move more towards contribution proposals that have an affinity with Migliorini's concept "ethics of ethical production", "meaning listening to the complexity of situations, medical and psychotherapeutic practices, the various theoretical positions (anthropological, philosophical), the complexity of life that takes place in a thousand psychic configurations" (Migliorini, 2020).

Apart from the gender focus, we have included other interesting works: Neil Altman and Jillian Stile (2020) offer us a text with an original perspective, namely the relationship between Italian American culture and American psychoanalysis; Diego Frigoli (2020) offers a presentation of the theoretical-clinical perspective called ecobiopsychology, which integrates subject-related knowledge and the subject's malaise in a unitary and original form.

There follow several book comments: Dettori and Girelli (2020) comment on Perel's book about betrayal; Migone (2020) comments on Corbelli and Bonalume's book about research and psychoanalysis; Ceccanti (2020) comments on Lazzari's book on health, body and psyche; and Vanni (2020) comments on Ingrosso's book about treatment.

Emanuele Arletti (2020) then describes the Jodorowsky theatre's encounter with the theme of the couple which reveals its evocative and transformative force.

Vanni (2020) offers his reflections on couple love, and more, which came to him after seeing two Netflix series. The issue ends with a proposal regarding university education written by Vincenza Pellegrino (2020) which suggests rethinking the system to make it more contextualized and more alive.

Enjoy reading.

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