

Innovations in Counseling: Working with Minority Populations- Part 3 Counseling Transgender Clients

Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session with Jason Patton

Question from Wendy Willing-Hall

Dr. Patton mentioned "puberty suppression" for children. Wouldn't there be ethical concerns related to such treatment? A 2-4 year old child does not have the mental capacity to understand his/her gender identity. Then to have a "parental" figure make a decision to suppress a child's puberty could present ethical concerns. What are your thoughts on this? A child at 2-4 yrs. old does not have the mental capacity to understand gender identity. Then to have "parental" figures make a decision to manipulate a child.

Answer from Presenter

Thank you for your question. I would like to refer you to the DSM V on work with children with Gender Dysphoria, as well as the WPATH guidelines. Statistical information should be available through those sources. I have no personal thoughts, other than play therapy would not be a bad idea, in any case.

Question from Wendy Sabin

Please repeat the resource you mentioned as very important to view--something with the word "dragway".

Answer from Presenter

RuPaul's Drag Race—a popular media show on LOGO. There are multiple seasons and I do not endorse all of the behavior, negativity, etc. However, to learn the language and much of the culture, this is a great resource. Also, Paris is Burning is a good but dated resource. There are many others—ALGBTIC through ACA would be a good place to go and ask.

Question from Annette Larie

There seems to be a contradiction. On the one hand there is the movement to gender neutrality. At the same time you talk about people who want to transition to male or to female. These individuals pursue that specific identity. Can you comment?

Answer from Presenter

Gender Identity is such a *very* personal, intimate detail. Many are experiencing freedom in gender neutrality (gender queer/gender non-conforming/etc.). However, many experience significant distress because of incongruence between how their bodies look, how others see them, etc., and their internal experiences. They may wish to transsex their bodies as a result. This is a generally complex concern, but I would suggest the chapter on Transgender Identity in Michael Kocet's (ed) book:

Reicherzer, S.L., Garland-Forshee, A., & Patton, J. (2014). Counseling in the periphery of queer discourse: Transgender women and men. In M. Kocet (Ed.) *Counseling Gay Men, Adolescents, & Boys: A*



Minority Fellowship Program

The National Board for Certified Counselors

Strengths-Based Resource Guide for Helping Professionals and Educators (pp. 178-194). New York: Routledge.

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