

**45^o Conference of the European Society for
the History of the Human Sciences**

**Sigmund Freud University
Vienna, June 30th to July 3rd, 2026**

Book of Abstracts

Conference Organisers

Dr. Luciano Nicolás García, Fakultät für Psychologie, Sigmund Freud PrivatUniversität Wien.
Ricarda Freitag, Fakultät für Psychologie, Sigmund Freud PrivatUniversität Wien.

Conference Volunteers Team:

Duru Güntut, Sofiiia Levchenko, Rania Nehir Paul, Nair Salgueiro Abad, Daria Senkina, Anastasia Shuboderova, Ilana Tomashpolsky.

Fakultät für Psychologie, Sigmund Freud PrivatUniversität Wien

Dean: Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gerhard Benetka.

Vice Dean: Natalie Rodax, PhD.

Vice Dean Research: Ass.-Prof.in Dr.in Nora Ruck.

Vice Dean for International Affairs: Ass.-Prof. Dr. Dominik Mihalits, MSc., BA.pth.

European Society for the History of Human Sciences

President: Sharman Levinson.

Treasurer: Kim Hajek.

Secretary: Júlia Gyimesi.

Communications Officer: Janka Kormos.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following people and institutions for their support and assistance in planning our meeting: Sharman Levinson, Kim Hajek, Júlia Gyimesi, Janka Kormos, Martin Wieser and Zed Gao from ESHHS, for their help and expertise on the organisation of the conferences. Special thanks go to the Conference Host, the Fakultät für Psychologie, Sigmund Freud PrivatUniversität Wien for providing the conference venue, and the technical and administrative support, in particular to Gerhardt Benetka and Nora Ruck for their enthusiastic support of the event, and Emelie Rack, Peter Lasinger, Tim Jahn, Qadas Bani Hassan, Scharine Ciara Takieddine, Sana Ghassemi, Anja Lehner, and Elisabeth Leitner for their contributions to different aspects of the organization. We are also grateful to the reviewers of the proposals, for their valuable comments and recommendations.

Sigmund Freud
Private University



European Society for the
History of the Human Sciences

Male Sexuality as a Developmental Issue. Reception and Circulation of Knowledge in early-20th-Century Buenos Aires.

Sebastián M. Benítez.

Universidad a Distancia de Madrid.

The aim of this presentation is to reconstruct how ideas about male sexuality circulated and were received in Buenos Aires during the first decades of the twentieth century, shaping a specific model for becoming a man. The analysis focuses on the role of medical and psychological knowledge—and the debates within these fields—regarding the conceptualization, diagnosis, and treatment of sexual inversion, as well as the framing of female prostitution as a hygienic practice in relation to men's sexuality. Particular attention is given to how these expert discourses conceptualized childhood and youth, identifying them as crucial stages in which sexual development, vulnerability, and proper masculine formation were believed to take shape.

This work considers Psychology, Medicine, and Hygienism from a technological perspective: the production of knowledge about sexuality involved prescriptive interventions, regulatory practices, and disciplinary frameworks that defined boundaries of normality and abnormality not only for individuals but also for the population as a whole.

To approach these issues, the study examines several interrelated problem areas: the regulation of prostitution as a social matter tied to concerns about sexual inversion and debates surrounding sexual education, including practices of sexual gymnastics. Prostitution was variously interpreted as a “necessary evil”—in which controlled brothels functioned as instruments of hygienic regulation meant to prevent perversion—and as a potential source of sexual and hereditary degeneracy, particularly when sexual activity was framed as driven solely by bodily pleasure.

Primary sources were analyzed using a qualitative approach, drawing on interpretive methods that explore connections between medical discourse and other contemporary intellectual currents such

as Evolutionism and Hygienism. The southern reception of Neo-Lamarckian Evolutionism and the principles of Mental Hygiene played a significant role in shaping the fields of Psychology and Social Medicine at the time (Stepan, 1997; Talak, 2016).vAmong the central materials studied are articles published by prominent intellectuals as Francisco de Veyga (1866–1942), José Ingenieros (1877–1925), and Quintiliano Saldaña (1878–1938) published in *Archivos de Psiquiatría y Criminología: aplicadas a las Ciencias Afines* [Archives of Psychiatry and Criminology: applied to Related Sciences], the journal of the Institute of Criminology of the National Penitentiary.

Time for development was a key element in framing how one became a man through the unfolding of sexuality. Yet not all forms of sexual experience were considered desirable or normal. Importantly, the biopolitical project of the early twentieth century was not aimed at normalizing deviations but at preventing risk by acting upon bodies and environments (Vázquez García, 2013). Within this framework, Psychology, Social Medicine, Pedagogy, and related expert fields identified and constructed central concerns regarding male sexuality: the role of female prostitution and sexual experience, the threat of sexual inversion, and the importance of sexual education and sexual gymnastics, especially during childhood and youth.

References:

- Stepan, N. (1991). *The hour of eugenics: race, gender and nation in Latin America*. Cornell University Press.
- Talak, A.M. (2016). La psicología en la construcción de ciudadanía en la Argentina (1900-1920): conocimientos, tecnologías y valores. *Revista de Historia de la Psicología*, 37(1), 16-22.
- Vázquez-García, F. (2013). Más allá de la crítica de la medicalización. Neoliberalismo y biopolíticas de la identidad sexual. *Constelaciones. Revista de Teoría Crítica* 5(5), 76–102.