

**On Sigmund Freud's "Lecture XXI: The Development of the Libido and the Sexual Organization" from *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis***

Sample Discussion Questions, Professor Karen Weingarten

1. Why does Freud begin by addressing his audience as "Gentlemen"? What does that reveal about his audience and how might it change the way we read the lecture?
2. Freud emphasize in several places that sex and reproduction need to be disentangled from each other (398). Why is this so important to his overall argument?
3. What does Freud mean when he writes that perversion arises out of infantile sexuality? (400-403)
4. How do we know that his audience is skeptical of this idea? Are you also skeptical?
5. What are Freud's examples showing that children, and even babies, behave in sexual ways?
6. How does forgetting, or repression, work in regards to childhood sexuality?
7. How does Freud try to convince his audience that the Oedipus Complex is at work in their own unconscious?
8. Freud argues that "a human being's first choice of object is regularly an incestuous one" (416). Let's look at that passage together since it's a controversial claim. What does he mean by it?
9. Why does Freud say that "the Oedipus complex may be justly regarded as the nucleus of the neuroses" (419)? What is the process one has to go through, according to him, to avoid neuroses?
10. And finally, how does he say the Oedipus Complex influences our relationship with our parents during puberty?