

# The Notion of Gender in Psychiatry: a Focus on DSM-5

MARIA CRISTINA AMORETTI

*Abstract:* In this paper I review how the notion of gender is understood in psychiatry, specifically in the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). First, I examine the contraposition between sex and gender, and argue that it is still retained by DSM-5, even though with some caveats. Second, I claim that, even if genderqueer people are not pathologized and gender pluralism is the background assumption, some diagnostic criteria still conceal a residue of gender dualism and essentialism. Third, I consider gender dysphoria, which is characterized by an incongruence between one's experienced or expressed gender and one's assigned gender; since this condition pertains to distress and disability, not to the incongruence *per se*, it does not pathologize transgender people. Still, I contend that it should be removed from DSM-5 for theoretical reasons.

*Keywords:* DSM-5, Gender, Gender dysphoria, Gender pluralism, Sex.

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