



### **Inventive Theoretical and Clinical Work Addressing Contemporary Issues Earns UK Professor Alessandra Lemma The Sigourney Award-2022**

**Seattle, WA — Nov. 16, 2022** – The Sigourney Award, founded in 1989, annually rewards outstanding work that represents a significant contribution to psychoanalysis and brings innovation to the field of psychoanalytic treatment or theory. Recipients receive international recognition and a substantial cash prize and this year, a panel of distinguished judges evaluated work from extraordinary international applicants. Today, Robin A. Deutsch, PhD and Analyst Co-Trustee of [The Sigourney Award Trust](#) announces UK Professor Alessandra Lemma’s inventive theoretical and clinical psychoanalytic contributions has earned The Sigourney Award-2022 along with four additional recipients’ work.

“Professor Lemma’s work embodies Mary Sigourney’s intention to promote and expand the benefits of psychoanalytic thinking worldwide. Our notable panel of judges deemed her interdisciplinary approach addressing contemporary social and psychological challenges, especially those directed at youth and those suffering from depression, deserved the prize for her superior efforts and professional results,” says Dr. Deutsch.

Professor Lemma’s inventive theoretical and clinical contributions address contemporary issues such as body modifications, transgender identities, and the impact of new digital technologies on the mind and body, especially applied in youth mental health. Lemma has disseminated her analytic knowledge world-wide, thus promoting psychoanalysis outside the confines of institutes and providing fresh psychoanalytic approaches to treatment in the UK and Europe. Addressing a deep understanding of how modern identity finds its way through our physical self, her work explains widespread social phenomena in young people (e.g., tattooing and cosmetic surgery), broadening the scope of thinking about what drives people to modify their bodies. By translating clinical insights into everyday discourse, Lemma brings the ‘person in the street’ along and introduces them to the unconscious fantasies of modern teens.

In addition, her approach to depression, Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy (DIT), builds on her work to define the essence of a psychoanalytic approach to brief psychotherapy, providing a template for the only psychodynamic approach recognized by the UK National Health Service. DIT is remarkable for being the sole publicly funded brief psychodynamic approach delivered within the British socialized health system and is now available free to patients. DIT has contributed to safeguarding the provision of a psychoanalytic intervention in the UK publicly funded health service where these interventions are under threat and the model is now offered in the Americas, Asia, Australasia, and Europe.

“My work has been driven by a commitment to taking psychoanalysis off the couch and into the wider world creating opportunities for interdisciplinary dialogue, for understanding pressing contemporary social questions and clinical challenges, and for improving access to psychoanalytic interventions through the development and evaluation of a new brief therapy model that has enabled more clinicians to be trained to reach more patients in more countries around the world,” says Lemma.

Lemma, a Doctor of Clinical Psychology, tackles controversial issues in mental health, particularly focused on youth, that concern opinion leaders, young people, and the broader public. She has actively promoted interdisciplinary dialogue through her integration of psychoanalysis and ethics to support best clinical practice and balanced debate and through her editorial work for ten years as General Editor of the New Library of Psychoanalysis book series (Routledge), which encouraged psychoanalytic theoretical pluralism and the application of psychoanalysis beyond the consulting room. As an author, her *Introduction to the Practice of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (2015)* brings psychoanalysis to psychotherapists around the world. Her writings offer a diverse range of application without losing analytic depth as in her book, *The Digital Age on the Couch (2017)*, that spans exploring the impact of new technologies on sexual developmental in adolescence to their impact on how clinicians practice. Her theoretical contributions have focused primarily on the experience of embodiment. Highly cited in the past decade, her academic work including articles and books is translated into 10 languages. She is a Fellow of the British Psychoanalytic Society, Visiting Professor, Psychoanalysis Unit, University College London, and a Consultant at the Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families.

Her leadership as the Independent Chair of the ‘Scope of Practice and Education’ project which oversaw the development of an evidence-based framework to inform the training requirements, competences, and ethical practice standards for 60,000 psychotherapists/counselors across the UK, helped improve quality standards of psychotherapy training.

“Our mission is to answer the intentions set forth by Mary Sigourney when she founded this Trust. Professor Lemma’s contributions are germane to contemporary problems, and have created opportunities for interdisciplinary dialogue, which enhances the perceived relevance of psychoanalysis to everyday life. We applaud her work and encourage others to share their own advancements through applications for The Sigourney Award-2023,” says Barbara Sherland, J.D., Attorney Co-Trustee of The Sigourney Award Trust.

Lemma’s award-winning work is added to a long list of innovative contributions advancing psychoanalytic thought that, since 1990, have been honored with The Sigourney Award. This year, she shares this honor with Dr. Giuseppe Civitarese (Pavia, Italy), Dr. Jack Drescher (New York, USA), Dr. Dorothy Holmes (South Carolina, USA), and Dr. Edward Tronick (Massachusetts, USA), whose work also met the demanding Award criteria.

Visit [The Sigourney Award](#) website to review all recipients' Award announcements, and in early 2023 watch for individual video introductions from each. The Sigourney Award-2023 application period opens March 2023 for qualifying work completed between 2012 and 2022. Stay updated via social platforms for The Sigourney Award on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn @SigourneyAward, and Twitter @sigourney\_the.

#### **About The Sigourney Award**

The Sigourney Award Trust, an independent nonprofit organization established by Mary Sigourney in 1989, annually bestows The Sigourney Award as international recognition and reward for outstanding work that has advanced psychoanalytic principles. Ms. Sigourney was a psychotherapist, publisher, and community activist who had a passionate interest in psychoanalysis and understood its ability to benefit and extend human conversation across various disciplines. To date, 141 Award recipients from 22 countries represent her global vision. Work honored by The Sigourney Award has significantly contributed to human affairs on topics ranging from clinical psychoanalysis, neuroscience, feminism, and political oppression. Since 1990, The Sigourney Award has rewarded and promoted outstanding work. Judges of The Sigourney Award remain anonymous to ensure an unbiased and thorough evaluation practice.

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