PSYC 112F

*Psychoanalysis Then and Now: From Freud to Psychosocial Studies*

Fall 2022

Instructor Information

Instructor: Christopher R. Bell, Ph.D.

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Student Hours: MW 11AM—12PM, TTH 10:30AM—12PM, or by appointment.

Course Information

Credit Hours: 1

Meeting Times: TTH 8:50—10:10AM Location: ALLB304

Required Texts

Bailly, L. (2012). *Lacan: A beginner's guide*. Oneworld Publications. ISBN 13: 978-1851686377

Johnson, A. A. (2018). *Introduction to Key Concepts and Evolutions in Psychoanalysis: From Freud to Neuroscience*. Routledge. ISBN-13: 978-1138607132

Lindner, R. (1955/1999). *The Fifty-Minute Hour*. Other Press. ISBN 13: 978-1892746245 All additional readings will be posted to Moodle.

Course Description

Psychoanalysis appears to be little more than an anachronism within the context of modern Psychology, and yet it nonetheless is leading a surprising afterlife—at once defunct as an institutional player and yet at the vanguard of cultural theory and clinical psychology practice. This course traces the trajectory of Psychoanalysis from its origin in Freud’s theory of unconscious mental processes and his talking cure to its current manifestations in the field of Psychosocial Studies. We consider how psychoanalysis is an inherently critical practice with the capacity to uniquely situate an individual in relation to social forces that have influenced their personal development, without reducing a person to their social context and/or family history. The course begins with an exploration of foundational psychoanalytic concepts (e.g. the dynamic unconscious, the drives, topographical and structural models of the psyche, neurosis vs. psychosis) and moves to consider the dimensions of social- unconscious processes in groups, institutions, and nations. We also explore how psychoanalysis can inform the psychosocial study of subjectivity, ideology, the intergenerational transmission of trauma, and current sociopolitical issues.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate a knowledge of the major schools of psychoanalytic thought, including Classical Freudian, Ego-Psychology, Kleinian, and Lacanian traditions.
2. Apply the above psychoanalytic theories to clinical case histories.
3. Engage extensively with modern Lacanian theories regarding the psychosocial nature of the unconscious.
4. Critically consider the topics of psychological mass formation, race and gender from a psychoanalytic perspective that involves both the application of psychoanalytic theories to these subject matters as well as a critique of psychoanalysis itself as potentially complicit in the perpetuation of racism and sexism.
5. Develop one’s writing skills, writing confidence, and authorial voice by comparing, applying, and critiquing complex psychoanalytic theories.

Assignments & Grading

Writing Assignments: There will be five (5) writing assignments of varying lengths assigned at regular intervals throughout the semester. The first writing assignment is a warm-up exercise and will not be graded. Each assignment thereafter will be worth 100 points. Additional instructions and information on each writing assignment will be provided in class and on the course website. Due dates for these assignments are clearly stated in this syllabus. Late assignments will receive a 10% reduction in total points for each day they are late. Students are expected to turn all assignments in on time.

Group Presentations: There will be two Group Presentations worth 50 points each.

Participation: To do well in this course (and to learn!) it is necessary to come to class, be prepared (i.e. read ahead of time), be engaged, participate in class discussions, take notes, and read the assigned readings. Participation can also include attending student hours and includes attendance. Participation is critical to student learning.

Opportunities to earn points are as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Opportunity | Points available | Total Points |
| Graded Writing  Assignments (4) | 100 points each | 400 |
| Group Presentations  (2) | 50 points each | 100 |
| Total Points |  | 500 |

Final grades are based on the following scale:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | Percent | Grade | Percent |
| A+ | 98.3 | C- | 71.7 |
| A | 95 | D+ | 68.3 |
| A- | 91.7 | D | 65 |
| B+ | 88.3 | D- | 61.7 |
| B | 85 | E+ | 58.3 |
| B- | 81.7 | E | 55 |
| C+ | 78.3 | E- | 51.7 |
| C | 75 | F | 45 |

Policies on Missed Exams or Late Assignments

Exams: If you have a conflict with one or more of the exam dates due to personal commitments, please note that a make-up exam will be offered ONLY for UNIVERSITY-APPROVED REASONS:

Medical emergency (verified by a medical professional) Family emergency(verified)

Participation in University-Unsponsored activities (verified in advance) Military service or mandatory public service (verified)

Other reasons for a missed exam – family holiday, friend/relative wedding, etc. – are NOT approved excuses.

An exam missed for reasons other than the university-approved reasons will result in an exam grade of zero. Contact me as soon as possible – preferably BEFORE the exam – if you will miss an exam due to the above university-approved reasons.

Please note that any missed exams must be made-up within one week of the exam.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity: Students should consult Wesleyan’s Academic Integrity policy outlined in the Student Handbook.

Accommodations Statement

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, its programs and services. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

If you have a disability, or think that you might have a disability, please contact Accessibility Services in order to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting

accommodations. Accessibility Services is located in North College, rooms 021/022, or can be reached by email (accessibility@wesleyan.edu) or phone (860-685-5581).

Religious/Spiritual Observance Resources

If you anticipate that your religious/spiritual observance may conflict with academic obligations such as attending class, taking examinations, or submitting assignments, you can work directly with your professor to make reasonable arrangements. Should you require additional support or guidance, please feel free to reach out to Rabbi David Teva, Director of the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at [dleipziger@wesleyan.edu](mailto:dleipziger@wesleyan.edu) or any of the chaplains in the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at https://[www.wesleyan.edu/orsl/index.html.](http://www.wesleyan.edu/orsl/index.html)

For a list of a religious holidays celebrated by members of the Wesleyan community, go to Wesleyan’s Multifaith calendar which can be found at: https://[www.wesleyan.edu/orsl/multifaith-](http://www.wesleyan.edu/orsl/multifaith-) calendar.html.

Title IX Resources

If past trauma inhibits your ability to fully participate in class, please contact Debbie Colucci, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, at [dcolucci@wesleyan.edu,](mailto:dcolucci@wesleyan.edu) or your class dean. Additionally, and if you are comfortable, you can work directly with your professor to make reasonable arrangements. If you would like to talk with a confidential resource about all of your options for care and support under Title IX, you can contact Johanna DeBari (SHAPE Office Director) at [jdebari@wesleyan.edu.](mailto:jdebari@wesleyan.edu)

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, ability, and nationality. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on the student code.

Discrimination and Harassment

Wesleyan University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment and does not tolerate identity-based discriminatory harassment and/or sexual misconduct against students, faculty, staff, trustees, volunteers, and employees of any university contractors/agents. For purposes of this Wesleyanpolicy, identity refersto one’s race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and gender expression. The Office for Equity and Inclusion serves students, faculty, administrators and develops policies and procedures regarding issues of diversity and equal opportunity/affirmative action. Individuals who

believe they have been discriminatedagainstshouldcontact the Officefor Equity and Inclusion at 860-685- 4771.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is a guide to the course and may be subject to change with reasonable advanced notice.

Electronic Devices

It is permissible to use a laptop computer to take notes, however please refrain from using computers or cell phones for any other purpose (such as browsing the internet, texting, or playing games) during class. Cell phones should be put on silent or vibrate mode during class, in accordance with University policy on electronic devices (please refer to the Student Handbook.

Course Outline and Schedule

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Weeks | Topic | T | TH |
| Week 1 | Classical Freudian Concepts | Sep 6—  Johnson  “Sigmund Freud: We are all in inner conflict”  Recommended Freud Museum London, “What is Psychoanalysis?” | Sep 8—  Sharpe & Faulkner “Where It Was: Freud’s Biology of the Mind”  Freud “Neurosis and Psychosis”  “The Loss of Reality in Neurosis and Psychosis” |
| Week 2 | Classical Freudian Concepts | Sep 13—  Sharpe & Faulkner “Sexuality and its Vicissitudes”  Writing Assignment 1 Due | Sep 15—  Sharpe & Faulkner “To Slip, Perchance to Dream” |
| Week 3 | Kleinian Psychoanalysis and Ego Psychology | Sep 20—  Johnson  “Melanie Klein: Life is terrifying and we must survive” | Sep 22—  Johnson  “Anna Freud: We have strengths as well as conflicts” |
| Week 4 | The Middle School, Heinz Kohut, Harry Sullivan, John Bowlby | Sep 27—  Johnson  “The middle school: with good enough mothering, we evolve from ruthless to ‘ruth’”  “Heinz Kohut: We always need others for our well-being and to create meaning” | Sep 29—  Johnson  “Harry Sullivan: We need relationships to manage our anxieties and to thrive” |
|  |  | “John Bowlby: Lost connection is traumatic; secure attachment is the key to well-being” |
|  |  | Writing Assignment 2 Due |

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| Week 5 | Psychoanalysis and the 20th Century Transformation in Culture | Oct 4—  McGowan  “From Prohibition to Enjoyment” | Oct 6—  Film  Curtis  “Century of the Self part 1: Happiness Machines” |
| Week 6 | Mid 20th Century Case Histories | Oct 11—  Lindner  “Come Over Red Rover”  Group 1 | Oct 13— Lindner “Solitaire” Group 2 |
| Week 7 | Mid 20th Century Case Histories | Oct 18— Lindner “Destiny’s Tot” Group 3 | Oct 20— Film Huston  *Let There Be Light*  Writing Assignment 3 Due |
| Week 8 | Lacanian Concepts— Mirror Stage  The Symbolic Order as the ‘Big Other’ | Oct 25—  Fall Break | Oct 27—  Bailey  “Through the Looking Glass—The Mirror Stage” |
|  | The Paternal Metaphor |  | “In the Beginning was the Word” |
| Week 9 | Lacanian Concepts— Real, Symbolic, Imaginary | Nov 1—  Bailey  “The Other” | Nov 3—  Bailey  “Real, Symbolic, |
|  |  |  | Imaginary” |
|  | Need, Demand, Desire | “The Paternal Metaphor” | “Unspeakable Need, |
|  |  |  | Unquenchable Desire” |
| Week 10 | Psychoanalysis and Mass | Nov 8— | Nov 10— |
|  | Formation | Desmet | Desmet |
|  |  | “The Desire | “The Leaders of the |
|  |  | for a Master” | Masses” |
|  |  |  | Group 2 |
|  |  | “The Rise of the |  |
|  |  | Masses” |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Group 1 |  |
| Week 11 | Psychoanalysis and Mass Formation | Nov 15—  Zaretsky | Nov 17—  Moi |
|  | Psychoanalysis and Feminism | “Trump and the Paranoid Position” | “From Femininity to Finitude: Freud, Lacan, and Feminism, Again” |
|  |  | Group 3 | Writing Assignment 4 Due |
| Week 12 | Psychoanalysis and Feminism | Nov 22— | Nov 24— Thanksgiving Recess |
| Week 13 | Race and Psychoanalysis | Nov 29—  George  “The Oedipal Complex and the Mythic Structure of Race” | Dec 1—  Hook  “The object of apartheid desire: a Lacanian approach to racism and ideology” |
| Week 14 | Race and Psychoanalysis | Dec 6— Malone & Jackson “Dereliction:  Afropessimism, anti-  Blackness, and Lacanian psychoanalysis” | Dec 8—  *Final paper discussion Wrap up* |
| Week 15 |  | Dec 13— | Dec 15—  *Writing Assignment 5 Due Friday,*  *Dec. 16th* |

This FYS course is intended to assist you to hone your writing skills by writing in a variety of styles and formats with different purposes for different audiences. For this ungraded warm- up assignment, write a 1-page paper about your favorite author (possibly including journalists, non-fiction writers, essayists, etc..) and describe what you admire most about their work—this could involve the subject matter they write about as well as how they address their readers through writing style, organization, tone, idiosyncratic features, etc. Why do you find their writing compelling? Is it particularly informative, clarifying, thought-provoking, humorous, descriptive, musical, atmospheric, or evocative? What are the qualities that draw you to their writing? How would you describe their writing to someone who has never read their work?

What is the experience of reading their writing like? Then comment on an author whose writing style you don’t particularly admire and what it is you find unappealing or problematic about their writing. This could also involve commenting on a piece by your favorite author that wasn’t as compelling to you as some of their other work. Finally, upload a photo of a representative page or paragraph by the author you have commented on.

Imagine you are writing an article for an on-line psychology magazine such as *Psychology Today* with the goal of informing the general public about different kinds of psychotherapy. This issue of the magazine is a special feature that will be exploring different kinds of psychoanalytic psychotherapy—a therapy that’s often talked about but rarely well understood. You are tasked by the magazine editor with writing an article describing to a non-specialist audience with little to no background in the subject the main theoretical premises of three different kinds of psychoanalysis—Classical Freudian, Kleinian Psychoanalysis, and Ego Psychology. The purpose of the article is to inform the public about the similarities and differences between these kinds of psychoanalysis, as well as to suggest what kinds of difficulties each type of analysis is best suited to address.

The magazine editor asks you to cover the following questions:

1. How does each psychoanalytic theory provide a model for the functioning of the human psyche?
2. How does each theory understand the causes of psychopathology?
3. What are the therapeutic goals for each type of psychoanalysis?
4. In your opinion, what kind of person could benefit most from each type of psychoanalysis and why?
5. How might each kind of psychoanalysis help a person understand their own self-experience better and ultimately think, feel, and act differently?

*All papers should be in either Times New Roman or Calibri Light 12-point font, double spaced, with an additional APA style in-text citations and a references page. Please use at least three outside references in addition to the course readings.*

Through their respective works *Century of the Self (Part 1: ‘Happiness Machines’)* and “From Prohibition to Enjoyment,” Adam Curtis and Todd McGowan argue that a significant shift occurred in the organization and functioning of American culture during the 20th century.

For this assignment, write an argumentative essay that features a thesis statement in your introductory paragraph describing how you understand the relation between Curtis’ and McGowan’s respective arguments.

Do you see their arguments as being compatible or incompatible? If so, how so? If not, why not? What is distinct about each argument and how do they relate? Provide supporting examples from Curtis’ documentary and McGowan’s chapter.

Finally, what role, if any, do you see for psychoanalysis in the 21st century, given the kind of culture that presently exists?

*All papers should be in either Times New Roman or Calibri Light 12-point font, double spaced, with an additional APA style in-text citations and a references page.*

Topic I

Apply either one or two psychoanalytic theories (e.g. Freudian, Kleinian, Ego Psychology, Lacanian) to two of Robert Lindner’s clinical case histories in *The Fifty Minute Hour*.

Begin by describing the presenting problem / symptom of Lindner’s patient and how this affects the person’s overall functioning. Then provide an overview of how the symptom developed into its current form by reviewing the various precipitating life events and episodes leading to the development of the symptom(s), going back to early childhood. How did Lindner’s analysand make sense of those life events and how did this contribute to the development of symptoms? How does one of the psychoanalytic theories we have discussed help explain the development of symptoms? Construct an argument for why the theory you have chosen fits particularly well with the specific case history. How does the theory help illuminate the psychical dynamics that you observe at play in Lindner’s analysand? Finally, describe Lindner’s interventions in psychoanalytic sessions. What effects do Lindner’s interventions appear to have on the person?

Topic 2

Jacques Lacan’s revisioning of Freudian theory has a reputation for bordering on the incomprehensible. Imagine a friend or family member asks you to explain two Lacanian concepts in a manner that even a novice like themselves could understand. Provide your interlocutor with a comprehensive overview of any two Lacanian concepts discussed by Lionel Bailly in *Lacan: A Beginners Guide* using your own examples and anecdotes to illustrate the concept. How do these Lacanian concepts provide a theoretical basis for an explicitly *psychosocial* version of psychoanalysis compared with Classical Freudian psychoanalysis?

Topic 3

During the past 15 years social media has become a ubiquitous presence in contemporary life. A generation has grown up not only as ‘digital natives’ but also as ‘social media natives’, navigating identity development and social interactions in both on-line and an off-line settings. The theoretical apparatus of Lacanian psychoanalysis provides a compelling resource to reflect on the *psychosocial* nature of the psyche, i.e. the manner in which the psyche is intimately, or, more accurately*, extimately* structured by the social dimension (see Extimacy).

For this assignment, use the conceptual resources of Lacanian psychoanalysis to describe the nature of identity in the social media era. Specific questions to address are: Who or what represents the ‘Big Other’ in the on-line environment and who represents the ‘little other’?

the nature of the relation between the Imaginary and Symbolic dimensions on-line as compared with being off-line? How is desire structured in an on-line setting and how might this be different from the structuring of desire in a pre-social media world?

From a social media perspective, consider the variety of different social media platforms and their differing structures / experiences, the functioning of algorithms, and the emergence of new social types such as the ‘influencer’.

Lacanian concepts to consider using:

Imaginary Order (little other) Symbolic Order (Big Other) Real

Ideal Ego (Imaginary identification) Ego Ideal (Symbolic identification) Other’s demand

Other’s desire Metonymy Metaphor

Paternal Metaphor / Name-of-the-Father Master Signifiers

Repression vs. Foreclosure

*All papers should be in either Times New Roman or Calibri Light 12-point font, double spaced, with an additional APA style reference page. Please use at least two outside references in addition to the course readings.*

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Writing Assignment 4 (5 - 6 pgs.)

Sexism and Racism are two systemic social conditions that can affect a subject’s ability to access the Symbolic Order, which, from a Lacanian perspective, impacts their ability to become desiring subjects. For this paper, describe how these two social conditions affect a subject’s access to the Symbolic Order, and the related impact this has on the functioning of the subject’s desire.

Section 1:

In her book *Penis Envy and Other Bad Feelings,* Mari Ruti explores the subjective impact of modern heteropatriarchy. For Ruti, what are the defining characteristics of the modern heteropatriarchal social condition? In what way is it different than the older heteropatriarchy? In what way is it similar? How are women and men positioned differently in the heteropatriarchal Symbolic Order? How does the social condition of heteropatriarchy affect the possibilities of being a desiring subject, particularly for women? What would a Symbolic Order look like that is no longer heteropatriarchal in nature?

Section 2:

According to Sheldon George as argued in “The Oedipal Complex and the Mythic Structure of Race” and “Jouissance and Discontent”, what is the position of African Americans in a racialized Symbolic Order? How does this position contrast with that of white subjects in a racialized Symbolic Order? How does this positioning affect African Americans’ capacity to desire? From a Lacanian perspective, why did the Symbolic Act of Colin Kaepernick kneeling during the national anthem encounter such vehement resistance from the NFL and segments of the broader public? What are some solutions created within African American culture that are discussed by Sheldon George to redress African Americans’ default positioning in a racialized Symbolic Order?

Concepts to consider using:

Symbolic Castration

Desiring Subject / Lacking Subject ($) Mirror stage / Ideal Ego

Alienation in the Other’s demand Separation via the Other’s desire

Phallic Signifier / Master Signifier / Paternal Metaphor

*object a /* Fantasy Suture vs. Un-suture

Phallic Jouissance vs. Other Jouissance