

Tamkin Hussain

State University of New York at Binghamton

COLI 211 B - 02 Literature and Psychology: The Age of Anarchy

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Tuesdays & Thursdays: 10:05 – 11:30 am

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Office Hours: TBA

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### **Course Description:**

The history of modernity both emanates from, and challenges a coherent theorizing of psychoanalysis. Group identifications, such as nationalism, ideology, race and gender demand an intricate study of individual orientations and their connection with larger collectivities. The emergence of the nation-state in the past two hundred years, and the ensuing World Wars behoove us to seek new definitions of ‘modernity’. With the “birth of the clinic” and the initiation of the “talking cure”, it has become possible to interpret collectivities via a psychoanalytic armature, without constructing clinically dysfunctional subjects. As such, we wish to undertake an intensive study of Freudian psychoanalysis and its subsequent criticism by contemporary French theory. What are the limitations of Freudian psychoanalysis, and in what ways does psychoanalysis promise a consummation of history? What constitutes a subject, and how this channels the flowing of desires within the individual psyche? How does memory relate to trauma? How does ‘modernity’ relate to violence and territory, heralding a new aesthetic for our age?

### **Principles of Freudian Psychoanalysis**

Sigmund Freud, “The Ego and the Id”, *The Freud Reader*

Sigmund Freud, “A Project for a Scientific Psychology”

Sigmund Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia”

### **Misrecognition and Identity Formation**

Jacques Lacan, “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the function of I”, *Ecrits*

### **Masculinity, Aggression and Fascism**

Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies, Vol. 1 and 2* (selections)

### **Nation-state as a Symptom**

Jacques Derrida, “Geopsychanalysis: ...and the rest of the world”, *The Psychoanalysis of Race*

### **Desiring Machines and Territory**

Deleuze and Guattari, “The Machines”, “The Whole and Its parts”, “The Urstaat” in *Anti-Oedipus*

### **War and Profit**

Bertholt Brecht, *Man Equals Man (Mann ist Mann)*

### **Incarceration and the New Order**

Breyten Breytenbach, *Windcatcher: New and Selected Poems 1964-2006* (selections)

### **The Violence of Modernity**

Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism”, in Lawrence Cahoon, *From Modernism to Post-Modernism: An Anthology*

### **All the World’s a Stage**

Antonin Artaud, “The Theater of Cruelty”, *The Theater and Its Double*  
Edward Bond, “Saved”

### **The Aesthetics of Destruction**

J.G. Ballard, *The Atrocity Exhibition*, or  
William S. Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*

### **Grading:**

1. Quizzes: There shall be in-class writing assignments on the subscribed readings. Students must write in continuous prose in response to a given query, reflecting strong textual connection. 20%
2. Paper 1: Due 3/13, 30%
3. Paper 2: Due 4/29, 40%
4. Class Response: 10%

### Papers:

Students shall have to address assigned questions, strictly tailoring their writing to the query. Students are required to write about 1500-2000 words (around 6-8 double-spaced pages), with both in-text referencing and bibliographies. Either the MLA or the Chicago Manual Style must be followed. Students are advised to read the questions very carefully, and do substantial research for their response. Deadlines must be met. No extensions shall be given. Where appropriate, re-writes might be assigned, and such papers MUST be rewritten in consultation with the instructor.

### Grading Criteria for Term Papers:

#### A Grade:

- strong, independent thesis with coherent, well-argued exploration of issues taken as problematic and defying simplistic rationale. Argument takes a meticulous and well-nuanced approach in reifying text, utilizing variety of critical material from books,

journals and articles of credible academic standing, to supplement, refute or synthesize the central stance of the paper.

- lucid presentation, i.e. systemic organization of arguments, so that the meaning is at once graspable.
- mature diction with negligible grammatical and spelling errors
- consistent, adequate, demonstrative referencing

**B Grade:**

- thesis lacks rigor and direction, hesitant to commit to a particular notion; scattered or loosely arranged arguments; at points self-contradictory, failing to penetrate the surface of things; digressive, vague and repetitive, but the overall effect of the argument remains undisturbed and sufficiently workable
- minor errors in paragraph and sentence structuring
- mediocre referencing, i.e. with slips here and there

**C Grade:**

- failure to engage with the argument; simplistic contentions; frequent theoretical and textual misconceptions; failure to support arguments with direct textual reference so that the central theme is never clear and hence does not emerge
- frequent errors of grammar and syntax
- argument wholly lacks structure producing confusions and contradictions
- slipshod referencing; hasty, inadequate research

**D Grade:**

- the text wholly lacks any attempt to produce a thesis or to engage in decent, scholastic argumentation
- paper ridden with mistakes of grammar; non-existent structuring
- presentation bespeaks lack of concern and interest in course material

**F Grade:**

- paper(s) not presented
- plagiarism
- disrupting instructorship decorum with repeated, baseless provocation

Attendance and Class Response:

Students are encouraged to participate in class discussions. More than three absences shall result in the lowering of letter grade.

**Class Calendar:**

- 1/29: Introduction
- 1/31: Freud, "The Ego and the Id"
- 2/5: Freud, "A Project for a Scientific Psychology"
- 2/7: Freud, "A Project for a Scientific Psychology"
- 2/12: Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia"
- 2/14: Lacan

2/19: Lacan  
2/21: Theweleit  
2/26: Theweleit  
2/28: Theweleit  
3/4: Derrida  
3/6: Deleuze and Guattari  
3/11: Deleuze and Guattari  
3/13: Deleuze and Guattari  
3/18: Brecht  
3/20: Brecht  
4/1: Brecht  
4/3: Breystenbach  
4/8: Breystenbach  
4/10: Marinetti  
4/15: Marinetti  
4/17: Artaud  
4/22: Bond  
4/24: Bond  
4/29: Ballard/Burroughs  
5/1: Ballard/Burroughs  
5/6: Ballard/Burroughs  
5/8: Ballard/Burroughs