PSYCHODYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGY V

CONTEMPORARY OBJECT RELATIONS: ESSENTIAL TEXTS, MASTER THINKERS, AND CREATIVE ELABORATIONS WITHIN THE EUROPEAN TRADITION

Institute for Clinical Social Work: Fall 2009
Jennifer Tolleson, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.

Course Description: Drawing from psychoanalytic texts, film, and fiction, this course will explore various dimensions of mental experience (narcissism, perversion, hysteria, the true self, group conformity, faith, abjection, and psychic deadness) as creatively imagined by master thinkers within the classic and contemporary European (primarily British) object relations perspective (specifically Bion, Balint, Winnicott, Bollas, Green, Kristeva, Freud, Chasseguet-Smirgel, Stoller, and Symington). The goal of the course is to promote the student’s working understanding of this unique conceptual tradition and how it informs a radical re-visioning of the human experience.

Prerequisite: Freud I and II; Object Relations I

Required Texts: The following texts must be purchased:


Assignments: All readings are required. Students must come to class prepared to reflect upon and integrate the readings into the classroom discussion.

One paper (12-20 pages in length) is assigned, which is due the last day of class. For the paper, students should pick one of the concepts covered in class, using the assigned readings on that concept to analyze the related film or piece of literature (see below). Next, the student should examine the same film or literature using Symington’s, A Pattern of Madness, as the informing text. How do selected elements of Symington’s view of narcissism differentially inform the piece? Finally, based on your analysis, what is the relation of Symington’s view of narcissism to the selected concept? The paper must contain appropriate citations (conforming to APA format), and should be written as a theoretical, rather than clinical, discourse. The paper will be evaluated on quality of writing, creativity of application and integration, and complexity, depth, and clarity of conceptual understanding. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Please
use one of the following film or literature selections for your analysis:

1. The Abject: Poe, E., Berenice, or another Poe tale of your choice.
   1. The Dead Mother: Ozick, C., The Shawl.
   2. Hysteria: Film, Safe.
   3. Group Relations: Film, Triumph of the Will or Ionesco, E., Rhinoceros.
   4. Perversion: Film, The Piano Teacher (2001, Michael Haneke, Director) or Peeping Tom (1960, Michael Powell, Director).

Class grading will be based on the following: Quality of class participation: 40%, Paper: 60%

The course is taught in a lecture/discussion format. Therefore, class attendance is required. For students who miss more than one class session (excepting a personal emergency), the overall course grade will be lowered one level. Students who miss more than two class sessions will automatically fail the course (in cases of personal emergency, the student will be asked to withdraw from the course and retake it the following year).

Except in cases of extreme personal emergency (requiring permission from the instructor before the last class day), there will be no “Incompletes” given for the class. An assignment turned in late will not be accepted.

**Instructor:** Students can contact me at jentolleson@comcast.net, or 312-409-2851. My mailing address is: 1 Iranistan Rd., Burlington VT 05401.

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**Reading List**
*(Please read the core texts, which are italicized, first)*

**CLASS 1: NARCISSISM (NEVILLE SYMINGTON)**


**CLASS 2: MEMORY, DESIRE, AND FAITH (WILFRED BION)**


CLASS 3: THE TRUE SELF (DONALD W. WINNICOTT)


CLASS 4: THE ABJECT (JULIA KRISTEVA)


CLASS 5: THE DEAD MOTHER (ANDRE GREEN)


CLASS 6: HYSTERIA (CHRISTOPHER BOLLAS)


Film: Safe, 1995, Todd Haynes, Director.

CLASS 7: GROUP RELATIONS AND THE PROBLEM OF FREEDOM (SIGMUND FREUD)


Film: *The Triumph of the Will*, 1935, Leni Riefenstahl, Director.

**CLASS 8: PERVERSION (JANINE CHASSEGUET-SMIRGEL, ROBERT STOLLER)**


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