

**ENGLISH 4001: SENIOR HONORS SEMINAR I**  
**PSYCHOANALYSIS AND NARRATIVE: LANGUAGE, SYMBOL, SELF**

University of Memphis, Fall 2003

Monday/Wednesday 12:40-2:05

Patterson 209

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Office hours: MW 10:15-11:30 and by appointment

**OBJECTIVES**

Examining important texts in the development of psychoanalysis, we will seek to understand how this theory may enrich our understanding of narrative. We will pay particular attention to

- the interaction between ideology and experience in narrative and development.
- the relationship between creativity and the unconscious.
- the role of language in fantasy and in self/other relations.

We will also explore academic writing as a genre, examining rhetorical structures that facilitate clarity in argumentation.

**POLICIES**

- Attendance and active, consistent participation are mandatory.
- You are required to write 3 short (2 page) essays (one on each novel), and one substantial (12 page) final paper on a topic of your own choosing.
- All essays should address at least one of the central objectives of the course.
- Your grade will comprise a weighted average:
  - 30% class participation
  - 30% short essays/presentations
  - 40% final papers/workshop

**SHORT ESSAYS/PRESENTATIONS**

- Short essays need not produce a fully developed argument, but should gesture toward one. In other words, you should have a tentative or prospective thesis, and you should be able to explain what led you to this thesis, and how you would seek to confirm or develop it. You need not be convinced of your accuracy, and your paper may trace your own process of discovery; in other words, it may be more informal than, for instance, your final essay. It should, however, have some depth and coherence; a collection of disparate and superficial observations concerning the text will not suffice.
- For each short essay, you will also conduct a 5-10 minute class presentation, leading the class in a discussion of your argument.
- For each novel, you may turn in your paper and conduct your presentation on any of the discussion days listed in **bold print** on the syllabus. Tell me in advance what date you have chosen.

## **FINAL PAPERS/WORKSHOP**

- You will develop a final paper on a topic of your own choosing.
- For format guidelines and a guide to evaluation, see [www.people.memphis.edu/~lduck/paperguidelines.html](http://www.people.memphis.edu/~lduck/paperguidelines.html).
- You must submit a brief prospectus for this paper by **November 10**. This prospectus may be tentative and informal; its purpose is to ascertain that you have chosen a manageable topic.
- You must submit four copies of a rough draft of your final paper to class **December 1**. No one expects perfection in this draft. The purpose of the following workshop will be not only to provide each other with ideas that may help to correct such problems, but also to share our work, and to consider the diverse kinds of arguments that psychoanalytically-informed reading may produce. The degree to which your draft is completed will determine, in part, the quality of feedback that you receive from your peers and from my comments on the rough draft.
- For the workshop on **December 3**, you must read each of your colleagues' drafts. You need not provide written comments, but you should be prepared to discuss the following questions concerning each:
  - What is the thesis of this paper?
  - What did you consider its most intriguing point?
  - What aspect of the paper (a certain area of the argument, a certain facet of the interpretive method, a certain stylistic trait) did you find most confusing?
  - In what way did this paper expand/clarify your sense of how psychoanalytic theory could illuminate areas of literary analysis, or vice versa?

## **READINGS**

Page listings for Freud's essays refer to *The Freud Reader*, available at the University Bookstore. Read Gay's headnotes, which are useful for placing the works in the trajectory of Freud's oeuvre. Other essays will be available for photocopying by August 27. Other necessary books can also be found at the bookstore; these are:

- William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*
- Shirley Jackson, *The Haunting of Hill House*
- Jacques Lacan, *The Language of the Self*
- Alice Walker, *Meridian*

## **SCHEDULE**

**8/25** Introduction

### **Methods**

**8/27** Sigmund Freud, "The Aetiology of Hysteria" (96-102)  
Melanie Klein, "The Psychoanalytic Play Technique: Its History and Significance," 116-21, 126-9 (hand-out)  
Thomas Ogden, "On the Use of Language in Psychoanalysis" (hand-out)

**9/1** **LABOR DAY/NO CLASS**

### **Shaping the Self**

**9/3** Freud, "Repression" (568-572)

---, "Mourning and Melancholia" (584-589)  
---, "On Narcissism: An Introduction" (545-562)

**9/8** Freud, "The Ego and the Id" (628-658)

**9/10** D.W. Winnicott, "Playing: Its Theoretical Status in the Clinical Situation"  
---, "The Location of Cultural Experience"

**9/15** Jacques Lacan, "The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I . . ."  
Franz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness"

**9/17** Alice Walker, *Meridian*, 17-42

**9/22** *Meridian*, 49-79

**9/24** *Meridian*, 80-125

**9/29** *Meridian*, 127-81

**10/1** *Meridian*, 183-220

**Dreaming, Reading, Writing**

**10/6** Freud, "On Dreams" (142-172)

**10/8** ---, "The Unconscious" (572-584)  
---, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming" (436-443)

**10/13** **FALL BREAK/NO CLASS**

**10/15** Freud, "The Uncanny"  
---, "Family Romances," 298-300  
Christopher Bollas, "The Aesthetic Moment and the Search for Transformation"

**10/20** Shirley Jackson, *The Haunting of Hill House*, pages TBA

**10/22** *The Haunting of Hill House*, pages TBA

**10/27** *The Haunting of Hill House*, pages TBA

**Speaking the Self**

**10/29** Jacques Lacan, *The Language of the Self*, 1-28

**11/3** Lacan, *The Language of the Self*, 29-52

**11/5** Lacan, *The Language of the Self*, 53-88

**11/10** William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, pt. 1

**11/12** *The Sound and the Fury*, 76-113

**11/17** *The Sound and the Fury*, pt. 2, complete

**11/19** *The Sound and the Fury*, pt. 3

**11/24** *The Sound and the Fury*, pt. 4

**11/26** *The Sound and the Fury*

**Academic Writing**

**12/1** Workshop

**FIRST DRAFTS OF FINAL PAPER DUE! BRING FOUR COPIES!**

**12/3** Workshop

**12/10** FINAL PAPERS DUE IN MY OFFICE BY 3:00!