

PL 260 Freud and Psychoanalysis

Seminar Leader: Dr. Jan Völker
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Office Hours: By appointment
Course Times: Tue 17:30-20:45

Course Description

Freud and Freudianism are part of daily life, for instance in the concept of the “Freudian slip” and other revealing symptoms supposed to betray the operations of the unconscious in otherwise apparently rational discourse and action. Also considered characteristically “Freudian” is the assumption of the primacy of sexual desire in human motivation, particularly the desires rendered taboo by family and kinship structures, epitomized in Western culture in the story of Oedipus. These general conceptions linked with Freud derive from elements of his writings but are also sometimes distant from the complex development of the theory he founded, psychoanalysis, and its significance for theory and philosophy. This course traces the evolution of Freud’s practice and thought from the early engagement with the notion of the “talking cure,” explorations of individual case histories and the workings of dreams, to the elaboration of more ambitious accounts of the basis of human society, culture, and subjectivity. Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920) became the principal point of departure for later psychoanalysis, with its radical reformulation of the theory of the “drives,” and its insistence on the preeminence of repetition. Throughout, we will focus on specifying and understanding Freud’s fundamental concepts and the transformation of these, as well as the role of narrative or the very process of theorization itself in the establishment of his conclusions.

All texts will be provided via email!

Requirements

Attendance at every class is essential, as is full advance preparation of the course readings for each session of the seminar. There will be two essays, the first of 1800-2500 words or 5-7 pages, and the second of 8-10 pages, or 2800-3500 words, as well as in-class presentations, which form part of the participation grade.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section III Academic Misconduct.

Attendance

Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than two absences (that is absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester will significantly affect the participation grade for the course.

Students should consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.

Assessment

Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than two absences (that is absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester will significantly affect the participation grade for the course.

Students should consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.

PLEASE NOTE: No electronic devices are allowed in class.

Writing Assignments

Mid-Term Paper: 1800-2500 words, 5-7 pages. Final paper: 2800-3500 words, 8-10 pages.

Essay deadlines: Midterm paper: Friday 18 October 23.59. Final paper: Thursday 19 December 23.59

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Syllabi for core and elective classes should note or refer to the following policy from the Student Handbook on the submission of essays: *essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C.*

Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grade Breakdown

Mid-term essay: 20%

Final essay: 30%

Seminar grade: 50% (20%presentation, 30%participation)

All texts will be provided via email! We will work with the following edition:

Schedule

Tuesday, 3 September

- „The Method of Interpretating Dreams: An Analysis of a Specimen Dream“, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. IV, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, first part, London: Hogarth Press 1953, pp. 96-122.

Tuesday, 10 September

- „The Dream-Work“ (a)-(d) and (i), in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. IV, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, first part, London: Hogarth Press 1953, pp.277-338 (a-c)

and *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. V, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, second part, London: Hogarth Press 1953, pp. 339-350, and 488-509.

Tuesday, 17 September

- “The Psychology of the Dream-Process”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. V, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, second part, London: Hogarth Press 1953, pp. 509-62.

Tuesday, 24 September

- “The Psychology of the Dream-Process”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. V, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, second part, London: Hogarth Press 1953, pp. 509-62

Tuesday, 1 October

- “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality”, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. VII, London: Hogarth Press 1953, pp. 135-230.

Tuesday, 8 October

- “The Unconscious”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XIV, London: Hogarth Press 1957, pp. 159-215.
- “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XIV, London: Hogarth Press 1957, pp. 109-140.

Tuesday, 15 October

- “Repression”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XIV, London: Hogarth Press 1957, pp. 141-158.
- “Instincts and their Vicissitudes”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XIV, London: Hogarth Press 1957, pp. 109-140.

Tuesday, 22 October

- “From the History of an Infantile Neurosis”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XVII, London: Hogarth Press 1955, pp. 7-123.

Tuesday, 29 October

- Fall Break

Tuesday, 5 November

- “From the History of an Infantile Neurosis”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XVII, London: Hogarth Press 1955, pp.7-122.

Tuesday, 12 November

- “The Ego and the Id”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XIX, London: Hogarth Press 1961, pp. 12-68.

Tuesday, 19 November

- “Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XX, London: Hogarth Press 1959, pp. 77-175.

Tuesday, 26 November

- “Civilization and its Discontents”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XXI, London: Hogarth Press 1961, pp. 64-148.

Tuesday, 3 December

- “Beyond the Pleasure-Principle”, in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. XVIII, London: Hogarth Press 1955, pp. 7-66.

Tuesday, 10 December

- Alenka Zupančič: “Death Drive I: Freud”, “Death Drive II: Lacan”, in: *What Is Sex?* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 2017, pp. 94-128.

Tuesday, 17 December

- Completion

