

RACE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

ENGLISH 272.401

ASAM 202.401

SPRING 2021

T 1:30-4:30PM (SYNCHRONOUS SEMINAR)

PROFESSOR DAVID L. ENG

OFFICE HOURS T 6:30-7:30PM & BY APPOINTMENT

[HTTPS://CALENDLY.COM/DAVIDLENG/SPRING-2021-OFFICE-HOURS](https://calendly.com/DAVIDLENG/SPRING-2021-OFFICE-HOURS)

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DESCRIPTION This seminar will investigate the relationship between race and psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is often characterized as a theory concerning sexuality and sexual difference. However, we will explore how psychoanalysis might be repurposed to analyze problems of race and racial difference as well. Throughout the semester we will read classic theorists of psychoanalysis (Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Jacques Lacan, D.W. Winnicott) in order to establish a critical foundation for fundamental concepts in the field. We will also read a number of critical commentators and clinicians in order to rethink psychoanalysis within a larger global history of colonialism as well as U.S. race relations. In conjunction, we will examine various novels, films, dramas, and case histories focused on the social and psychic lives of African American, Asian American, and Latinx subjects.

REQUIRED TEXTS Gwen Bergner, "Primal Scenes," *Taboo Subjects: Race, Sex, and Psychoanalysis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), xiii-xxxii.
Philip M. Bromberg, "Standing in the Spaces: The Multiplicity of Self and The Psychoanalytic Relationship," *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* 32.4 (1996): 509-535.
Judith Butler, "Endangered/Endangering: Schematic Racism and White Paranoia," in *Reading Rodney King/Reading Urban Uprising*, ed. Robert Gooding Williams (New York: Routledge, 1993), ???
David L. Eng, "Colonial Object Relations," *Social Text* 126 34.1 (2016): 1-19.
David L. Eng, *Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001)
David L. Eng and Shinhee Han, *Racial Melancholia, Racial Dissociation: On the Social and Psychic Lives of Asian Americans* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019)
Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove, 1963)
Sigmund Freud, "Fetishism" (1927); "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes" (1925); "The Unconscious" (1915); "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" (1922); "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1959)
Patricia Gherovici, "Psychoanalysis of Poverty, Poverty of Psychoanalysis," in *Psychoanalysis in the Barrios: Race, Class, and the Unconscious*, eds. Patricia Gherovici and Christopher Christian, (New York: Routledge, 2019), 221-235.
Jeremy O. Harris, *Slave Play* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2019)
David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly* (New York: Plume, 1993)
Melanie Klein, "Love, Guilt and Reparation," in *Love, Hate, and Reparation*, Melanie Klein and Joan Riviere (New York: W.W. Norton, 1964), 55-119.

- Jacques Lacan, "The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience" (1949), *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977), 1-7.
- J. Reid Miller, *Stain Removal: Ethics and Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017)
- José Esteban Muñoz, "Feeling Brown, Feeling Down: Latina Affect, the Performativity of Race, and the Depressive Position," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 31.3 (2006): 675-688.
- Camille Robcis, *Disalienation: Politics, Philosophy, and Radical Psychiatry in Postwar France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021)
- Avgi Saketopoulou, "Risking Sexuality Beyond Consent: Overwhelm and Traumatizations that Incite," *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 89.4 (2020): 771-811.
- Hortense J. Spillers, "'All the Things You Could be by Now, If Sigmund Freud's Wife Was Your Mother': Psychoanalysis and Race," *boundary 2*, 23.3 (1996): 75-141.
- Michelle Stephens, "Getting Next to Ourselves: The Interpersonal Dimensions of Double-Consciousness," *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* 56.2-3 (2020): 201-225.
- Justin Torres, *We the Animals* (New York: Mariner, 2012)
- Antonio Viegó, *Dead Subjects: Toward a Politics of Loss in Latino Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007)
- D.W. Winnicott, "Ego Distortion in Terms of True and False Self" (1960), *The Maturational Process and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development* (New York: International Universities Press, 1965), 140-52.

FILMS Andrew Ahn, *Spa Night* (Strand Releasing, 2016)
 Deann Borshay Liem, *In the Matter of Cha Jung Hee* (2010)
 Deann Borshay Liem, *First Person Plural* (2000)

(*) Most required texts and films are available on Canvas. I would recommend that you purchase hard copies of Eng & Han, Fanon, Harris, Hwang, and Torres.

CLASS STRUCTURE In order to maintain the safety of all students, faculty, and staff, the class structure may be subject to change over the course of the semester due to shifting conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Zoom Etiquette: We will be discussing difficult social and political issues over the course of the semester. In order to respect our learning process as well as the privacy of your fellow students, you must not record the class for yourself or post recordings, screenshots, or elements of classroom work in any forum.

Please sign into synchronous class meetings at least a few minutes before the start time and make sure that your name and pronouns are on display. This is a seminar, so please leave your video on for the duration of the class. Having video helps to create a sense of shared community in our (virtual) space, and it encourages engagement. If you need to turn off your video for a particular class, please let me know in advance. Please keep your microphone muted unless you are speaking and use plug-in headphones, if at all possible. Please do not use the chat window for any other purpose than questions or comments. Be aware that after each class a transcript of the chat is saved.

Office Hours: In order to protect student privacy, when you join my office hours you will first be placed in a Zoom "waiting room." You will see the following message: "Please wait, the meeting host will let you in soon." Stay in the waiting room and do not sign off. When I am finished with the student before you, you will be admitted you into the Zoom meeting room. Please sign up for weekly Tuesday office hours on: <<https://calendly.com/davidleng/spring-2021-office-hours>> If you cannot make my weekly office hours, please email me directly to set up an alternate meeting

time. To sign into office hours, please use the following Zoom link:

<<https://upenn.zoom.us/j/94837365430?pwd=QnY4WE5JMEJxMFRaSURhdktNbUx1UT09>>

REQUIREMENTS This is an upper-division seminar. The course materials are designed to develop your critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. A number of the required texts are dense. We will read them carefully and closely, and I hope that you will come away from the class with the ability to read with precision and imagination but also with the confidence to posit new intellectual arguments for development. To do this, you must honor this social contract and three “yeses” of reading—yes, I will read the text carefully; yes, I will reconstruct its argument; yes, I will identify what is useful in the argument—before moving to any criticism of the required materials.

ASSIGNMENTS Discussion Board: A discussion board, requiring at least two posts per week, will be structured as follows. 1) **Opening post:** read all the materials assigned for this week. Post a 250-word passage in which you offer your own reaction to or thoughts about one aspect or theme in the week’s reading. A good opening post is analytic and engages the readings critically and creatively, i.e., it does not simply summarize what you have read. Please publish your opening post as a new thread to ensure clarity—i.e., by clicking the “reply” button for that week’s discussion board—and begin the paragraph with the following: “**This is my opening post.**” (due by 9am EST on Sunday); 2) **Response post:** post a 100-word substantive response to at least one classmate’s opening post. Merely indicating agreement or disagreement with someone is not a substantive response; rather, you should indicate why you agree or disagree, or if you think the original post’s analysis has left out some important consideration, you should note what the missing concerns are, why they matter, etc. Please be sure to post your response by clicking the “reply” button directly underneath the post to which you are responding and begin the paragraph with the following: “**This is my response post.**” (due by 9am EST on Monday) (30%)

Midterm Paper: A short paper (5 pages) on one of the assigned readings is due on Friday, 5 March 2021 by 4pm EST. (25%)

Final Essay: A final term paper (10-12 typed pages) on a topic of your own devising will be due on Friday, 30 April 2021 by 4pm EST. You are required to meet with me during the final weeks of the semester to have your paper topic approved. (35%)

Please note: Paper extensions will be handed out only in the case of emergencies, and you must contact me in advance. All late papers—including approved extensions—may be graded down approximately one letter grade per day. Plagiarized work will result in an F for the course, and your case will be sent to the Office of Student Conduct. Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s work without fully acknowledging it.

Class Participation: You are expected to do all the reading, to attend each class, and to participate actively in all discussions. More than two absences, including excused absences, will result in the lowering of your final mark by one letter grade. Coming to class more than ten minutes late and inattention during class will be marked as absences. (10%)

COURSE OUTLINE

- 1 26 January Introductions
Socializing Freud Freud, “Fetishism” and “Some Psychological Consequences”
- 2 2 February Eng, *Racial Castration*, 137-166
Passing Hwang, *M. Butterfly*
- 3 9 February Freud, “The Unconscious”
Unconscious and Spillers, “All the Things”
Double Consciousness Bergner, “Primal Scenes,” xiii-xxxii
- 4 16 February Lacan, “The mirror stage”
The Gaze Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 109-140
 Miller, *Stain Removal*, 29-57
 Butler, “Endangered/Endangering”
- 5 23 February Munoz, “Feeling Brown, Feeling Down”
Dead Subjects Viego, *Dead Subjects*, 1-29; 108-137
 Gherovici, “Psychoanalysis of Poverty, Poverty of Psychoanalysis”
- 6 2 March Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*
Group Psychology Torres, *We the Animals*
- 7 9 March Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia”
Racial Melancholia Eng/Han, *Racial Melancholia/Racial Dissociation*, 1-97
 Borshay-Liem, *First Person Plural*
- 8 16 March Bromberg, “Standing in the Spaces”
Racial Dissociation Winnicott, “True and False Self”
 Eng/Han, *Racial Melancholia, Racial Dissociation*, 101-140
- 9 23 March Eng/Han, *Racial Melancholia, Racial Dissociation*, 141-173
Besides Ourselves Stephens, “Getting Next to Ourselves”
 Ahn, *Spa Night*
- 10 30 March (No class)
- 11 6 April Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 83-108, 141-209
Colonial Trauma Robcis, *Disalienation*, 1-13; 48-73
- 12 13 April Harris, *Slave Play*
Racial Trauma Saketopoulou, “Risking Sexuality Beyond Consent”
- 13 20 April Klein, “Love, Guilt and Reparation”
Racial Reparation Eng, “Colonial Object Relations”
 Borshay-Liem, *In the Matter of Cha Junghee*
- 14 27 April Open