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ENGL 395/ COML397/GSWS389 / PSYS395  
**Retelling a Life: Psychoanalysis and Autobiography**  
fall 2021  
MW 5:15-6:45  
Fisher-Bennett Hall 323  
course listserv: [ENGL395-401-21c@lists.upenn.edu](mailto:ENGL395-401-21c@lists.upenn.edu)

**Covid-related requirements and protocols as mandated by the University**

- Masking indoors is mandatory for everyone, regardless of vaccine status.
- Students must not remove their masks in class.
- If any student refuses to remain masked, it's considered a health and safety issue, and instructors are required to dismiss class and contact the Office of Student Conduct.
- Not every kind of mask is allowed—please see this [page regarding minimum construction standards for masks](#).

**course requirements**


- attendance at all seminar meetings
- completion of all required readings in advance of each seminar meeting
- regular participation in seminar discussion
- occasional, unannounced quizzes (quizzes will begin promptly at 5:15 and end promptly at 5:20; each quiz will consist of 10 short-answer questions based on the required readings for that day; the lowest quiz grade of the semester will be dropped; no make-up quizzes for late-arrivals or unexcused absences)
- two short essays (Essays #1 and #2)
- one longer essay, to be completed in two stages (Essays #3 and #4)
- one in-class group presentation
- NO mid-term or final exam

**required texts**

NOT AVAILABLE AT PENN BOOKSTORE; PLEASE ORDER THESE BOOKS VIA YOUR PREFERRED BOOKSTORE (E.G., [AMAZON](#), [ABEBOOKS](#), [BOOKSHOP.ORG](#), ETC.), AND BE SURE TO BUY THESE EDITIONS ONLY:

- Joan Didion, *The Year of Magical Thinking* (ISBN 9781400078431)
- Sigmund Freud, *Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria* (ISBN 9780684829463)
- Christopher Hitchens, *Mortality* (ISBN 9781455502769)
- Annie Rogers, *A Shining Affliction* (ISBN 9780140240122)
- David Small, *Stitches: A Memoir* (ISBN 9780393338966)
- Barbara Taylor, *The Last Asylum: A Memoir of Madness in Our Times* (ISBN 9780143133575)
- Greta Thunberg et al., *Our House Is on Fire: Scenes of a Family and a Planet in Crisis* (ISBN 9780143133575)
- Malcolm X (with Alex Haley), *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (ISBN 9789990065169)

## schedule of classes





All readings followed by this symbol  are available on-line as pdfs for downloading and printing; just follow the links. [Note: The pdfs are only available at Professor Cavitch's on-line "[PDF Library](#)," via the links below. They are NOT available in Canvas.]

W 9/1 INTRODUCTION

M 9/6 NO CLASS—LABOR DAY




W 9/8 "HOW CAN I TELL WHAT I THINK UNTIL I SEE WHAT I SAY?"

### REQUIRED READINGS:

- Joseph Breuer and Sigmund Freud, "[Fräulein Anna O. \(Breuer\)](#)" (1895) 
- Sigmund Freud and Wilhelm Fliess, [selected correspondence on "self-analysis" \(1897\)](#), from *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, 1887-1904*, pp. 267-85 
- Stephen Mitchell and Margaret Black, "[Preface](#)" to *Freud and Beyond* (2016) 
- Nancy McWilliams, "[Psychoanalytic Character Diagnosis](#)" (1994) 





M 9/13 SELF, LIFE, WRITING, PART I

### REQUIRED READINGS:

- Sigmund Freud, "[The Method of Interpreting Dreams: An Analysis of a Specimen Dream](#)," from *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) 
- Erik Erikson, "[The Dream Specimen of Psychoanalysis](#)" (1954) 
- Alice Pitt, "[The Dreamwork of Autobiography: Felman, Freud, and Lacan](#)" (2001) 

W 9/15 WRITING AS READING, READING AS WRITING


### REQUIRED READINGS:

- Meredith Anne Skura, "[Literature as Transference: Rhetorical Function](#)," from *The Literary Use of the Psychoanalytic Process* (1981), pp. 171-99 
- Thomas Ogden, "[On Becoming a Subject](#)," from *Subjects of Analysis* (1994), pp. 1-7 
- Judith Butler, "[Psychoanalysis](#)," from *Giving an Account of Oneself* (2005), pp. 50-82 
- Adam Phillips, "[The Telling of Selves: Notes on Psychoanalysis and Autobiography](#)" (1994) 

F 9/17 DUE: ESSAY #1  
*email your essay to both instructors no later than midnight*

M 9/20 NARRATIVES FOR LIVING *VERSUS* SCRIPTS TO BE LIVED

### REQUIRED READINGS:

- Sigmund Freud, *Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*
- Roy Schafer, "[Narrating the Self](#)," from *Re-Telling a Life: Narrative and Dialogue in Psychoanalysis* (1992), pp. 21-56 

- Toril Moi, [“Representation of Patriarchy: Sexuality and Epistemology in Freud’s Dora”](#) (1981) ✓
- Judy Gammelgaard, [“Why Dora Left: Freud and the Master Discourse”](#) (2017) ✓

W 9/22 SELF, LIFE, WRITING, PART II

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Heinz Kohut, [“The Two Analyses of Mr. Z”](#) (1979) ✓
- Charles B. Strozier, [“Heinz Kohut And ‘The Two Analyses Of Mr. Z’: The Use \(And Abuse?\) of Case Material in Psychoanalysis”](#) (1999) ✓
- Stephen A. Mitchell, [“Self in Psychoanalysis,”](#) from *Hope and Dread in Psychoanalysis* (1993), pp. 93-172 ✓

M 9/27 THE BODY AND ITS DANGERS: I

REQUIRED READINGS:

- David Small, *Stitches: A Memoir* (2009)
- Arthur Frank, [“Illness as a Call for Stories,”](#) from *The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness, and Ethics* (1995), pp. 53-73 ✓
- Sharon Bergner, [“Seductive Symbolism: Psychoanalysis in the Context of Oncology”](#) (2011) ✓

W 9/29 THE BODY AND ITS DANGERS: II

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Christopher Hitchens, *Mortality* (2012)
- Janice Norton, [“Treatment of a Dying Patient”](#) (1963) ✓
- Sigmund Freud, [“Thoughts for the Times on War and Death”](#) (1915) ✓
- Sigmund Freud, [“On Transience”](#) (1916) ✓

M 10/4 NARRATIVE POSSIBILITIES: MEMORIES, FALSE AND OTHERWISE

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Rachel Aviv, [“Past Imperfect \[profile of Elizabeth Loftus\]”](#) (2021) ✓
- Antonie Ladan, [“The Forgotten Child”](#) from *Walking Heads: On the Secret Fantasy of Being an Exception*, pp. 1-15. ✓
- Antonie Ladan, [“The Disavowed Child”](#) from *Walking Heads: On the Secret Fantasy of Being an Exception*, pp. 17-29. ✓

W 10/6 NARRATIVE LIMITS: TRAUMA, PART 1

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Annie Rogers, *A Shining Affliction*, pp. 1-94
- Avgi Saketopoulou, [“Minding the Gap: Intersections Between Gender, Race, and Class in Work With Gender Variant Children”](#) (2011) ✓

M 10/11 NARRATIVE LIMITS: TRAUMA, PART 2

REQUIRED READING:

- Rogers, *A Shining Affliction*, pp. 95-185
- Philip Bromberg, [“Introduction,”](#) from *Standing in the Spaces: Essays on Clinical Process, Trauma, and Dissociation* (1998), pp. 1-16 ☞

W 10/13 NARRATIVE LIMITS: TRAUMA, PART 3

REQUIRED READING:

- Rogers, *A Shining Affliction*, 187-320
- Robert C. Ware, [“Scylla and Charybdis: Sexual Abuse or ‘False Memory Syndrome’? Therapy-Induced ‘Memories’ of Sexual Abuse”](#) (1995) ☞
- Bessel A. van der Kolk, [“Posttraumatic Therapy in the Age of Neuroscience”](#) (2002) ☞

M 10/18 NARRATIVE POSSIBILITIES: LOSS AND REPAIR, PART 1

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Greta Thunberg et al., *Our House Is on Fire: Scenes of a Family and a Planet in Crisis* (2018), pp. 1-114
- D. W. Winnicott, [“Hate in the Counter-Transference”](#) (1949) ☞
- Bertram J. Cohler and Talia Weiner, [“The Inner Fortress: Symptom and Meaning in Asperger’s Syndrome”](#) (2011) ☞

W 10/20 NARRATIVE POSSIBILITIES: LOSS AND REPAIR, PART 2

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Thunberg et al., *Our House Is on Fire*, pp. 115-83
- Kari Marie Norgaard, [“‘People Want To Protect Themselves a Little Bit’: The Why of Denial,”](#) from *Living in Denial: Climate Change, Emotions, and Everyday Life* (2011), pp. 63-95 ☞
- Sally Weintrobe, [“The Difficult Problem of Anxiety in Thinking About Climate Change,”](#) from *Engaging with Climate Change: Psychoanalytic and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (2013), pp. 33-55 ☞

M 10/25 NARRATIVE POSSIBILITIES: LOSS AND REPAIR, PART 3

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Thunberg et al., *Our House Is on Fire*, pp. 184-278
- Jonathan Lear, [“Working Through the End of Civilization”](#) (2007) ☞
- Donald Moss, [“Where Are All the Bodies?—Defensive Representational Strategies in a Time of Cataclysmic Change”](#) (2019) ☞

W 10/27 THE DEATH OF ANOTHER, PART 1

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Joan Didion, *The Year of Magical Thinking* (2005), pp. 1-106
- Sigmund Freud, [“Mourning and Melancholia”](#) (1917) ☞

F 10/29 DUE: ESSAY #2

*email your essay to both instructors no later than midnight*

- M 11/1 THE DEATH OF ANOTHER, PART 2
- REQUIRED READINGS:
- Didion, *Year of Magical Thinking*, pp. 107-227
  - Nicholas Abraham and Marie Torok, [“Mourning or Melancholia: Introjection versus Incorporation”](#) (1972) ✓☞
  - Judy L. Kantrowitz, [“A Psychoanalytic Memoir: The Analyst Enabled and Disabled By What Is Personal”](#) (2020) ✓☞
- W 11/3 SLOW READING / THE POLITICAL IS ALWAYS INTERPERSONAL: PART 1
- REQUIRED READINGS:
- Malcolm X with Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1964), pp. i-xxx and 1-86
  - Jill Salberg, [“The Texture of Traumatic Attachment: Presence and Ghostly Absence in Transgenerational Transmission”](#) (2015) ✓☞
  - Bruce Reis, [“The Subject of History / The Object of Transference”](#) (2005) ✓☞
- M 11/8 SLOW READING / THE POLITICAL IS ALWAYS INTERPERSONAL: PART 2
- REQUIRED READINGS:
- *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, pp. 87-153
  - Kathleen Pogue White, [“Surviving Hate and Being Hated: Some Personal Thoughts About Racism from a Psychoanalytic Perspective”](#) (2002) ✓☞
  - Basia Winograd, dir., [Black Psychoanalysts Speaks](#) (2014) ,
- W 11/10 SLOW READING / THE POLITICAL IS ALWAYS INTERPERSONAL: PART 3
- REQUIRED READINGS:
- *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 153-214
  - Diane M. Gartland, [“Liberation Discourse: A Psychoanalysis of Prison Captivity”](#) (2002) ✓☞
  - Pamela Nathan, [“The BASH HOUSE: Within the Bluestone Walls of a Maximum Security Prison”](#) (2014) ✓☞
- M 11/15 SLOW READING / THE POLITICAL IS ALWAYS INTERPERSONAL: PART 4
- REQUIRED READINGS:
- *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 215-293
  - Joseph Massad, [“Psychoanalysis, Islam, and the Other of Liberalism”](#) (2009) ✓☞
  - Aisha Abbasi, [“Sadistic Transferences in the Context of Ethnic Difference: Before and After 9/11.”](#) from *The Rupture of Serenity: External Intrusions and Psychoanalytic Technique* (2014), pp. 111-61 ✓☞
- W 11/17 SLOW READING / THE POLITICAL IS ALWAYS INTERPERSONAL: PART 5
- REQUIRED READINGS:

- *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 294-389
- Frantz Fanon, "[Colonial War and Mental Disorders](#)," from *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), pp. 181-233 ☞

F 11/19 DUE: ESSAY #3

*email your essay to both instructors no later than midnight*

M 11/22 SLOW READING / THE POLITICAL IS ALWAYS INTERPERSONAL: PART 6

REQUIRED READINGS:

- *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 390-466
- Coline Covington, "[No Story, No Analysis? The Role of Narrative in Interpretation](#)" (1995)

W 11/24 NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING BREAK

M 11/29 MADNESS OF GENDER

REQUIRED READINGS:

Barbara Taylor, *The Last Asylum: A Memoir of Madness in Our Times* (2014), pp. 1-98

- Robert Ehrlich, "[Winnicott's Idea of the False Self: Theory as Autobiography](#)" (2021) ☞

★ ASSIGNMENT DETAILS AND GROUP-FORMATION FOR PRESENTATIONS ON 12/8

W 12/1 ASYLUMS PAST AND PRESENT

REQUIRED READINGS:

Taylor, *The Last Asylum*, pp. 99-196

- Nathan Kravis, "[The Googled and Googling Analyst](#)" (2017) ☞

M 12/6 FEMINISM AND THE FUTURE

REQUIRED READINGS:

Taylor, *The Last Asylum*, pp. 197-264

W 12/8 FINAL CLASS MEETING

★ GROUP IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS

F 12/17 DUE: ESSAY #4

*email your essay to both instructors no later than midnight*