SYLLABUS:

SELF, PSYCHOPATHOLOGY, AND THE MODERN AGE
(= SPMAge; course #: 18:820:560:01 also: 16:195:519:01)

Instructor: Louis Sass (lsass@rci.rutgers.edu)
Spring 2016
(tentative: some adjustments will be made.
Last worked on March 23, 2016.)

Rutgers University:
Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP) &
Program in Comparative Literature
(Meeting time: Mondays 6 to 8:45 pm, seminar room Comparative Literature building)

Summary:
“Self, Psychopathology, and the Modern Age” provides an introduction to
phenomenology, hermeneutics, and aspects of modernism, postmodernist theory, and
psychoanalysis through a study of selfhood, subjectivity, and self-consciousness. The
course offers a comparative, psychologically oriented analysis of experience and
expression in certain psychological conditions (mainly schizoid and schizophrenic) and in
modernist and postmodernist culture (especially literature). Students from literature and
other humanities-oriented fields, as well as from clinical psychology (or other mental-
health professions, including social work), are encouraged to attend. The seminar will
include both lecturing and discussion.

Learning outcomes: Students are expected to acquire knowledge about two
domains: 1, the psychopathology of schizophrenia-spectrum conditions (with a focus on
phenomenological approaches) and 2, aspects of 20th century culture, primarily art,
literature, and philosophy (from a largely psychological standpoint). They will develop
familiarity with phenomenological, hermeneutic, as well as psychoanalytical approaches
to the understanding of human experience and expression.

Note: Some readings listed below are only recommended, or suggested as
background.

CLASS #1: INTRODUCTION TO COURSE: ANTONIN ARTAUD, MADNESS,
AND THE AVANT-GARDE
In class: Overview of the course. Introduction to Antonin Artaud (influential avant-garde
writer who suffered from schizophrenia), a key figure at crossroads of madness and
modernism/postmodernism.
Hear excerpts from audiotape of Artaud radio-play, “Pour en finir avec le jugement de
dieu.”
Lecture: Sass, “The catastrophes of heaven: Modernism, primitivism, and the madness of
Antonin Artaud.”
Readings:
Sass, Madness & Modernism, Revised (= MMRev: Sass (in press) Madness and
Modernism: Insanity in the Light of Modern Art, Literature, and Thought: Revised

Please bring the following three items to class:
Breton, On Artaud (1 page)
Artaud, “To Have Done with the Judgment of God” (English translation: http://www.surrealism-plays.com/Artaud.html)
Sass, “Catastrophes of Heaven” lecture—quotes

CLASS #2: NIETZSCHE AND FOCAULT ON RATIONALITY AND MADNESS
In class: Finish re Artaud.  Discuss Nietzsche and Foucault.
Lecture: “Intro to Foucault, especially on history of madness.”
Watch: YouTube interview with Michel Foucault, 1971 (16 minutes approx): www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzoOhhh4aJg
Readings:

CLASS #3: PHENOMENOLOGY OF SCHIZOPHRENIA SPECTRUM, I
In class: Introductory information re schizophrenia.  Focus on the phenomenological perspective (Minkowski, Blankenburg, Kimura; ipseity-disturbance model).
Lecture: Sass re introduction to phenomenology of schizophrenia, with modernist analogues (“Anxiety and Insight”).
Readings:


**CLASS #4: PHENOMENOLOGY OF SCHIZOPHRENA SPECTRUM, II**

In class:
DVD: DSM-IV interviews of patient (mathematician) by Dr. Nancy Andreasen

Readings:
- Foucault, Mental illness and existence, ch 4 in Foucault, *Mental Illness and Psychology* (see above).
- Störring, G., Perplexity, in Cutting & Shepherd (Eds.), *Clinical Roots of Schizophrenia Concept* (see above), pp. 79-82.

**CLASS #5: MODERNISM AND POSTMODERNISM**

In class: discuss Wallace Stevens’ poem, “13 ways of looking at a blackbird.”
(http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/174503)

Readings:

**CLASS #6: COGNITIVE SLIPPAGE AND RELATIVISM (in Madness & in Modernism/Postmodernism)**

In class: read Robert Walser, “The Street”

Brief lecture: more re Wolfgang Blankenburg and Loss of Natural Self-Evidence.

Introduce Nietzsche “Truth and lies” essay.

Reading:

Review: Störring, Perplexity (see above)

Start reading for next class.

**CLASS #7: DISTURBANCES OF DISTANCE; LANGUAGES OF INWARDNESS (in Madness & Mod/P.mod)**

In class:
Discuss Robbe-Grillet essays, including a summary of “Nature, humanism, tragedy” (a rec. reading).
Discuss Heidegger essay re metaphysics.
Hear: Use Andreasen interview with thought-disordered pt

Readings: to be selected from the following:

**CLASS #8: LOSS OF SELF IN MODERNISM AND MADNESS**

March 21 2016

Lecture: Sass presents “Languages of Inwardness”.

OMIT THIS: To be decided among the following: Foucault re panopticism in relation to Schreber. “Person with schizophrenia, or schizophrenic person?” Issue of phenomenological explanation. Negative symptoms, schizophrenia and self.

Reading:
  *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 29, 427-44.
  Background: Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, excerpts in *Foucault Reader* (see above), pp. 170-178 (The body of the condemned), 214-224 (Complete and austere institutions).

**CLASS #9: DELUSION, SOLIPSISM, AND THE SUBLIME**

March 28 2016

Lecture:
Sass presents: finish re Languages of Inwardness (re “autonomization”), then summary of loss of self in schizophrenia (“ipseity”-disturbance view). Also re delusion and double...
bookkeeping. PROBABLY OMIT: Emotional paradox in sz, with “Adolf Wolfli, Spatiality, and the Sublime.”

Reading:

Sass, MM, Ch 9: Morbid Dreamer, pp 268-299. [presentation by Kim Nessel re Morbid Dreamer chapter]

Sass, MM, Ch 10: World Catastrophe 300-323 (discusses two works of fiction: Casares, “Invention of Morel,” and Kafka “Description of a struggle”)
Heidegger, Age of the world picture, in Heidegger (1977), The Question concerning Technology and Other Essays, NY: Harper and Row, pp. 115-54 (read pp 126-134, 142; the rest is only suggested, and will probably be rather confusing)

CLASS #10: PARADOXES OF THE REFLEXIVE April 4, 2016
See: Velasquez “Las Meninas” (including Foucault’s analysis in OT). #

Readings:

Sass, MM, Ch 11: Conclusion: Paradoxes of the Reflexive (somewhat overlaps the previous article)
Rec: Foucault, Order of Things (see above), excerpts: chap 2, section I; chap 3, sec I and II; chap 9, sec II, IV, V, VIII
Note: no new reading for next time; only review some previous items.

CLASS #11: FILMS (excerpts only): “LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD” AND “MELANCHOLIA” April 10 2016 SUNDAY 6 pm [presentation re Marienbad by Daron Darnov; re Melancholia by Eilis Kierans]
In class: View parts of the films by Alain Resnais and Alain Robbe-Grillet and by Lars von Trier; discuss; compare.
Student presentations re each film

Reading:

Review the following: Kafka, “Description of a Struggle”; Robbe-Grillet essays; description of Casares’ “Invention of Morel” in MM pp. 305-310.
CLASS #12: PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF POSTMODERNISM AND POSTMODERNITY  April 11 2016
Lecture: ??“‘Hyped on Clarity’: Diane Arbus, Photography, and the Postmodern Condition.”
In class: Discussion of Jameson’s essay, beginning this class.
Reading:
Jameson, F. (1984), Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism, originally published in New Left Review, 1/146, 153-92.  {presentation re Jameson essay by Virginia Cohn}
Heidegger, excerpt from The Origin of the Work of Art, in Basic Writings (see above), pp. 157-165 (= an excerpt from essay, which is from pp. 139-212 (re Van Gogh’s peasant shoes painting).

CLASS #13: PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS CONTINUED; BEGIN ZIZEK/LACAN  April 17 2016 Sunday 6 pm
In class: Finish (if necessary) discussion of Jameson’s essay.  Begin discussion of Zizek and Lacanian perspective
Reading:
Millhauser, Steven, History of a disturbance, NewYorker March 5, 2007.

CLASS # 14: LACAN: THE MIND OF THE MODERNIST  April 18 2016
In class: Sass lecture re Lacan as modernist
Reading:
Lacan, J. “Mirror stage as formative of I function” (in Lacan, Ecrits) [pres by Daniel Anzolini]
Lacan, J. “Of the gaze as objet petit a” (in Lacan, Four Fundamental Concepts) [presentation by Joseph Hong re Lacan on objet petit a and gaze]

CLASS #15: FINAL CLASS: TO BE DECIDED; CONTINUE LACAN AND MODERNISM POSSIBLY; Paper topics presented perhaps. May 2 2016

Course requirements include:

Choose to write either:
Term paper: 10-15 pages (recommended)
or
Take-home exam (a selection of questions to be provided)
DUE ONE WEEK AFTER FINAL CLASS, BY MIDNIGHT;

Also, 2 (or perhaps 3) times during the semester, each student will present a reading or a reaction to a reading; to be assigned.

Also, of course: attend class, do the reading, participate in class discussion.

Rutgers mandated statement on Academic Integrity:
http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/

Required Rutgers statement on Accommodation

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To begin this process, please complete the Registration form
on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form