

Madness and Perversion

Spring 2009, Rutgers University
SAS Honors Program 01:090:273 [50820]
W 2:50-05:50pm
Brett Hall Seminar Room (CAC)

Prof. Nicholas Rennie
O. hrs. W 1:30-2:30pm, & by appointment
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What thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are normal? Which are aberrant? This seminar looks at literary treatments (and a selection of film adaptations) of madness and perversion over the last four centuries. Particular attention will be given to the roots and development of modern conceptions of sex and psychology as developed in the literary work of German-speaking Europe. Topics will include the holy fool, the Romantic invention of madness and genius, sexual perversion and bourgeois normalcy, the invention of psychology, and gender and the idea of “natural” social roles.

Required Texts

These titles, available at the Rutgers University Bookstore, are indicated in **boldface** within the list of weekly readings below:

1. Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *The Ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha*, tr. John Rutherford (New York, London: Penguin, 2003) [978-0142437230]
2. William Shakespeare, *Four Great Tragedies: Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth*, eds. Sylvan Barnet, Alvin Kernan, Russell Fraser (New York: Signet, 1998) [978-0451527295]
3. Georg Büchner, *Complete Plays: Lenz and Other Writings*, tr. John Reddick (New York, London: Penguin, 1994) [978-0140445862]
4. Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, *Venus in Furs*, tr. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: Penguin, 2000) [978-0140447811]
5. Frank Wedekind, *The First Lulu*, tr. Eric Bentley (New York, London: Applause Books, 1994) [978-1557831736]
6. Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, tr. James Strachey (New York: Basic Books, 2000) [978-0465097081]
7. Peter Weiss, *The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade*, tr. Geoffrey Skelton, Adrian Mitchell (Long Grove [Illinois]: Waveland Press, 2002) [978-1577662310]

Non-boldface titles in the list of weekly readings below are available online at the “Resources” page of the course’s Sakai website.

Bringing Assigned Texts to Class

In order for us to discuss the weekly readings (both those available in book version, and those available as pdf-files), each seminar participant will need to bring his or her copy of the assigned reading(s) to class. Unless you can both reliably and quickly navigate to the relevant page on a laptop that you bring to class (and, preferably, have a mark-up feature as well to highlight specific passages or add marginal notes), you will need to print each pdf-file out in full and bring it in hard copy. In either case, be sure to download (and print) all available readings at the start of the semester, when you still have time to resolve any technical issues that might otherwise prevent your arriving prepared for a particular class.

Course Sakai website

A website for this course is available to enrolled students at sakai.rutgers.edu (select the tab “Madness & Perversion 2009” and then “Resources” in the left margin). All take-home exams (or papers – see below under “take-home exams”) must be submitted via the “Drop box” at this site as MS Word attachments by the deadlines indicated in the syllabus. Exam questions will in each case become available at this site one week in advance. The site will accept your exam any time thereafter until the deadline. A copy of the syllabus is

available at the website, as are pdf-copies of shorter readings (under “Resources”), and links both to Library Reserves and the University “Academic Integrity” statement.

Undergraduate Reserves

Additional reserve materials are available at the Alexander Library Undergraduate Reserves desk. These texts contain the full versions of a number of readings from which only excerpts have been assigned and made available online. These texts are listed at the “Library reserves” link at the Sakai course-website.

Grade:

Class participation	10%
Take-home exams	90%

Attendance is required, and absences and lateness are factored into the class-participation grade. Those who miss more than two class sessions without a compelling excuse (a doctor’s or college dean’s note, for instance) should expect an automatic one-step reduction in the course grade (i.e. an A becomes a B+, a B+ becomes a B). Three late arrivals count as one absence. Note: It is the responsibility of students who have been absent (for any reason) to find out what they have missed and obtain materials that may have been handed out.

Class participation: The success of each class discussion depends on your active participation. Students who receive an “A” for class participation will do so by coming to each class ready with questions, and by actively engaging in discussion of the assigned readings.

Office hours: Each student is expected to come see me at my office at least once by mid-February. This gives me a chance to get to know you individually a little better than I can during group discussions, and to find out if you have any questions or concerns about the course that I might not otherwise learn about. To make sure that you won’t be kept waiting, I encourage you to contact me (by e-mail, or in person before or after class) to make an appointment either for my regular office hours, or for another time during the week.

Cell phones must be turned off during class. Students using their phones will be asked to leave.

Take-home exams: Each take-home exam will ask you to write essays in response to questions about the assigned readings. You will have one week to work on each take-home exam. Questions may ask you to consider an issue in relation to a single text, or they may ask you instead to compare its significance to two or more readings. Length: 6-10 pp. (12-point Times or Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1” margins) – whatever will do the job, between these parameters.

Typically, questions will refer to ideas that we have discussed in class. However, they may ask you to consider such ideas in application to an assigned text that we haven’t specifically considered in this way in our discussions. In other words, you’ll be asked to retain and synthesize what we’ve discussed in class (I strongly encourage you to take notes during discussions – this will save you time and help strengthen your exam responses). However, take-home essays should not simply repeat back what we’ve already discussed; they should follow the lead of the exam questions in building independently on our discussions.

Prepare your exam essays as you would a short paper. Once you’ve thought about the question, work out your thesis statement (which you’ll need to present clearly in a sentence in the opening paragraph of your response). Go back over your class notes and the relevant assigned text(s) to collect material for your argument. Cite or paraphrase relevant passages (and *always* include page [or act/scene/line] references, as you would in any paper). Check your quotations for accuracy. Don’t quote just for the sake of quoting; cite just the word or passage that you need to make your specific point, not more.

Finally, be sure to proofread your essays to make sure that they’re coherent, that they answer all aspects of the question, and that they’re articulated grammatically and clearly. Poorly written essays will lose points.

Your essays should be your work only. From the moment the take-home exam questions are made available, all of your preparation and writing in response must be entirely your own. You will need to develop your own thesis statement, collect on your own the material (from your notes and the assigned readings) that you'll need to cite, and come up with your own formulations in making your argument.

Paper option: Students who have received a B+ or A on a take-home exam have the option of writing a paper of their own in place of the following take-home assignment, but only after receiving my approval for their proposed topic. Plan to contact me about this option a good two weeks before the next submission deadline, so that we still have time to discuss your topic and its feasibility before you get down to writing. Papers should focus on one or more texts assigned for classes since the last take-home deadline. Expectations (about presenting a thesis, for instance, and supporting it with a clear argument and judicious citations) will be the same as those outlined above with regard to take-home exams. Minimum length: 6pp. (12-point Times or Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1" margins).

Plagiarism is an extremely serious matter, and can lead to a student's failing the course and being referred to his or her dean for disciplinary action. When referring to ideas other than your own, always acknowledge your sources clearly and completely, whether you are quoting or paraphrasing. Please read carefully the University's policies on academic integrity at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml> (or click on the "Academic Integrity" link at course website) and discuss with your instructor any questions you may have about this and related issues.

Weekly assignments

(Readings must be read in advance and brought to class on the dates assigned.)

1/21/09 Introduction: Sebastian Brant (1458?-1521); Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466/1469-1526); Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616)

- Brant, *The Ship of Fools* (1494) tr. Edwin Hermann Zeydel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962) 56-59 (*hand-out in class*).
- Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly* (1511), in: *The Praise of Folly and Other Writings*, tr. and ed. Robert M. Adams (New York: Norton, 1989) 27, 38-39 (*hand-out in class*)
- Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (1605 [Part I], 1615 [Part II]), 11-136.

1/28/09 Cervantes; Paul Auster (1947-)

- Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, 137-243; 483-514; 975-982.
- Auster, *New York Trilogy* (1987), 116-120.

2/4/09 Michel Foucault (1926-1984); William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

- Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*

(1961), tr. Richard Howard (New York: Vintage Books, 1988) ix-xii, 3-37.

- Shakespeare, *King Lear* (1606).

2/11/09 Shakespeare; Marquis de Sade (1740-1814)

- Shakespeare, *King Lear*.
- Sade, *Philosophy in the Bedroom* (1795), in: *Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom, and Other Writings*, tr. Richard Seaver and Austryn Wainhouse (New York: Grove Press, 1990) 190-93, 209-220, 295-339.

Questions for take-home exam 1 available by end of this week at Sakai.

2/18/09 Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) and Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969); E.T.A. Hoffmann (1776-1822)

- Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947), ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, tr. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2002) 63-70, 86-88, 91-93 (marks in margins indicate start and end of excerpts to be read; students who have the

time are encouraged to read the entire chapter).

- Hoffmann, *The Sandman* (1817), in *The Golden Pot and Other Tales*, tr. and ed. Ritchie Robertson (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992) 85-118.

Fr 2/20, 5:00pm: take-home exam 1 due at Sakai.

2/25/09 Hoffmann; Walter Scott (1771-1832); Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

- Hoffmann, *The Sandman*.
- Scott, essay on E.T.A. Hoffmann, *The Foreign Quarterly Review*, Vol. 1 no. 1 (1827) 81-82, 94-98.
- Freud, "The Uncanny" (1919), in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, tr. and ed. James Strachey, vol. 17 (London: Hogarth Press, 1968) 219-52.

3/4/09 Jacob Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786-1859); Angela Carter (1940-1992); Georg Büchner (1813-1837)

- Brothers Grimm, "Bluebeard," in: *The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*, tr. Jack Zipes (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1987) 660-63.
- Carter, "The Bloody Chamber," in: *Burning Your Boats: The Collected Short Stories* (New York: Henry Holt, 1996) 111-43.
- Büchner, *Woyzeck* (1836).

3/11/09 Büchner

- Büchner, *Woyzeck*

3/18/09 Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1835-1895); Foucault

- Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction* (1976), tr. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1980) 3-35.
- Sacher-Masoch, *Venus in Furs* (1869) 1-119.

Questions for take-home exam 2 available by end of this week at Sakai.

3/25/09 Sacher-Masoch; Freud

- Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), 1-72 (Essays 1 and 2).

Fr 3/27, 5:00pm: take-home exam 2 due at Sakai.

4/1/09 Frank Wedekind (1864-1918); Freud

- Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 73-109 (Essay 3).
- Wedekind, *Lulu*.

4/8/09 Wedekind; Georg Wilhelm Pabst (1885-1967)

- Wedekind, *Lulu*.
- In-class film viewing: excerpts from Pabst, *Pandora's Box* (1929).

4/15/09 Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840-1902); Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935); Fritz Lang (1890-1976)

- Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), ed. Brian King, tr. Charles Gilbert Chaddock, F.J. Rebman, Brian King et al., ix-xxi, 277-89.
- Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women* (1914), tr. Michael A. Lombardi-Nash (Amherst [NY]: Prometheus Books, 2000) 11-17, 23-32, 431-55.
- In-class viewing of Lang, *M* (1931)

4/22/09 Peter Weiss (1916-1982)

- Weiss, *The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade* (1964)

Questions for take-home exam 3 available by end of this week at Sakai.

4/29/09 Weiss; Peter Brook (1925-)

- In-class film viewing: *Marat/Sade* (1964)

Fr 5/1, 5:00pm: take-home exam 3 due at Sakai.