Princeton University  
Department of Anthropology  

SUBJECTIVITY  
Explorations in Anthropology, Psychoanalysis, and Psychiatry  

ANT 435  
W 1:30 – 4:20 pm  
203 Aaron Burr Hall  
Spring 2002  

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Office hours: Tu 4 - 5 pm; Th 11:00 am - noon  

Course Description  

Today there is no coherent or at least single form of subjectivity and experience, and no single approach (phenomenology, interpretive anthropology, psychoanalysis and the “subjected” subject of post-structuralism) holding sway. Our seminar mirrors and addresses this openness in what subjectivity means in the contemporary world. It is an anthropological exploration on changing subjectivities and their connections with transforming institutions, social relations, and cultural norms. The seminar explores how current political, scientific and medical developments interact with older power dynamics in restructuring the patterns underlying everyday experience and personhood. Part of these explorations is to comprehend how inner life and its relationship to values is changing, which new forms of self-governance are taking shape, and how these transformations affect suffering and our responses to it, as well as our understanding of pathology and of care giving. The seminar addresses the interrelatedness of these issues in historical, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspective (anthropology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, social studies of science, philosophy, literature, religion). As we test the limits of traditional approaches, we are also interested in creating new methodological and conceptual tools to assess the impact of these developments on what counts as uniqueness, mental health, and ethics.  

Requirements  

The success of the seminar depends on your commitment to complete all required readings for each session and to participate actively in the discussions.  
Grading will be based on:  
1. Attendance, participation in discussions, and an oral presentation (25 %)  
2. A weekly précis with questions and comments that arise during the reading of the materials for that week (no more than one page -- 25%)  
3. A final research paper (outline is due on March 27 -- 50 %)
Assigned articles and book chapters can be downloaded from Firestone Library’s electronic reserve. The following books (required and optional) will be available for purchase at the U-Store:

“Death
so many deaths, numberless deaths on deaths, no end --
Thebes is dying, look […]
Thebes, city of death, one long cortege
and the suffering rises
wails for mercy rise
and the wild hymn for the Healer blazes out
classing with our sobs our cries of mourning […]
I will speak now as a stranger to the story”

Sophocles 1984: 169, 171

Week One - 2/6

Introduction:
City of Death and the Vanishing Subject


Rorty, Amélie O. “Subjectivity: A Vanishing Subject.” (Manuscript)

Film: Sigmund Freud: Analysis of a Mind

Week Two - 2/13

The Interpretation of Dreams


Suggested Reading:


**Week Three - 2/20**

**Incest and War**


Suggested Reading:


**Week Four - 2/27**

*Affect and the Work of Culture*


**Week Five - 3/6**

*Group Psychology*


Film: *Frantz Fanon: White Mask, Black Skin*, by Isaac Julien.
**Week Six - 3/13**

**Staging the Other and the Loss of the Human**


*** SPRING RECESS ***

**Week Seven - 3/27**

**The Individual Myth of the Neurotic**


Suggested Reading:

Week Eight - 4/3

**Psychiatric Culture**


Week Nine - 4/10

**Self-Governance and the Social Course of Psychosis**


Young, Allan. “Our Traumatic Neurosis and Its Brain.” “America’s Transient Mental Illness: A Brief History of the Self-Traumatized Perpetrator.” (Manuscripts)


Good, Byron. “The Subject of Mental Illness: Madness, Mad Violence and Subjectivity in Contemporary Indonesia.” (Manuscript)

Corin, Ellen. “The ‘Other’ of Culture in Psychosis: The Ex-centricity of the Subject.” (Manuscript)

Suggested Reading:

Week Ten - 4/17

Remembering the Family


Week Eleven - 4/24

Subjectivity Transformed


Zizek, Slavoj. “The Cyberspace Real.” (Manuscript)


Week Twelve - 5/1

Ex-Human:

“A Sentence Without Remedy”


Suggested Reading: