

A Psychoanalytic Investigation of Aesthetics

New School University, Social Sciences Department

Fall 2001

Course NPSY3838

Thursdays, 7:⁴⁵ - 9:³⁰ pm

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How do we explain the relationship between works of art and our emotional responses to them? Addressing this question forms the central thrust of the course. Psychoanalytic theory is particularly adaptable to this undertaking: it can offer special insight into works of literature, art and music; it can be applied to decipher the artist's creative process; and, perhaps most significantly, provide an expansive understanding of the aesthetic experience itself. We examine the dynamic interplay between perception and response, interpretation and meaning, and thought and feeling. We also clarify distinctions between applied and clinical psychoanalysis.

THE CLASS: STRUCTURE & REQUIREMENTS

	PERCENTAGE OF GRADE
(i) Regular attendance and consistent, informed contributions to class discussions.	
(ii) Discussants will commence the class discussion regarding each week's assigned readings. Each student needs to 'volunteer' her/himself as a discussant at least once during the semester.	[30%
(iii) Timely completion and submission of all assignments. Requests for extensions and/or other special dispensation must be made in advance and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Written works are to be wordprocessed/typed.	[
(iv) Mid-Term assignment: 3-5 pages — due: Session 6	25%
(v) Final Paper: 10-12 pages — due: Final Class	45%

Note: Photocopies of most readings will be in a binder on reserve in the Fogelman Library [Graduate Faculty building: 65 Fifth Avenue, basement level] and/or distributed as needed; other readings/books indicated below with an asterisk will be available for purchase at Barnes & Noble, 18th Street and Fifth Avenue.

THE SYLLABUS: READINGS & ASSIGNMENT

Introduction

Session 1.

Introductory remarks.
Discussion of syllabus and overview of course.

Session 2.

Roy Schafer (1992) *Reading Freud's Legacies*, pp. 147-164 (chapter 9) in Retelling A Life: Narration and Dialogue in Psychoanalysis. New York: Basic Books.

Ellen Handler Spitz (1985) *On the Dialogue Between Aesthetics and Psychoanalysis in Art and Psyche: A Study in Psychoanalysis and Aesthetics*, New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 1-24.

Session 3.

Roy Schafer (1992) *The Sense of An Answer: Clinical and Applied Psychoanalysis Compared*, pp. 165-186 (chapter 10) in Retelling A Life.

Francis Baudry (1984) *Essay on Method in Applied Psychoanalysis*. Psychoanalytic Quarterly, (53) pp. 551-581.

Session 4.

Gilbert Rose (1992) *Reality Flow*, pp. 21-32 (Chapter 1) in The Power of Form: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Aesthetic Form. Madison: International Universities Press^{*}

Ernst Kris (1952) *Introduction: Approaches to Art* in Psychoanalytic Explorations In Art, New York: Schocken Books, pp. 12 - 63.

Session 5.

Roy Schafer (1983) *Psychoanalytic Interpretation*, pp. 183-192 (chapter 11) in The Analytic Attitude. New York: Basic Books.

Gilbert Rose (1992) *Self as Form*, pp. 33-47 (Chapter 2) in The Power of Form.

Session 6.

Sigmund Freud (1908) *The Relation Between the Poet and Daydreaming*. In The Collected Papers of Sigmund Freud. Edited by Joan Rivière. vol. IV (1949) London: Hogarth Press

Gilbert Rose (1992) *Recapitulation and Preview*, pp. 91-94 (Chapter 6);

——— *The Body and Creative Imagination*, pp. 97-109 (Chapter 7) in The Power of Form.

Mid-Term Assignment Due

Session 7.

Gilbert Rose (1992) *The Locus of Imagination*, pp. 110-129 (Chapter 8);

——— *The Dynamic Structure of Aesthetic Form*, pp. 130-143 (Chapter 9) in The Power of Form.

Session 8.

Ellen Handler Spitz (1985) *Psychoanalysis and Aesthetic Experience in Art and Psyche*, pp. 136-165.

Hanna Segal (1952) *A Psycho-Analytical Approach to Aesthetics*. The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, 33:196-207.

Session 9.

Pinchas Noy (1979) *Form Creation in Art: An Ego Psychological Approach to Creativity* (chapter 11) in Psychoanalytic Explorations in Music (First Series). Edited by S. Feder, R. Karmel, G. Pollock. Madison: International Universities Press. (1990).

Session 10.

Gilbert Rose (1992) *The Plasticity of Time*, pp. 144-167 (Chapter 10) in The Power of Form.

Stuart Feder (1982) *The Nostalgia of Charles Ives: An Essay in Affects and Music* (chapter 12) in Psychoanalytic Explorations in Music (First Series).

Session 11.

Stuart Feder (1993) *Promissory Notes: Method in Music and Applied Psychoanalysis* (chapter 1) in Psychoanalytic Explorations in Music (Second Series). Edited by Stuart Feder, Richard L. Karmel, George Pollock. Madison: International Universities Press.

Pinchas Noy *How Music Conveys Emotion* (chapter 7) in Psychoanalytic Explorations in Music (Second Series).

Session 12.

Gilbert Rose (1992) *On Aesthetic Experience*, pp. 193-204 (Chapter 12);

——— *Affect: A Biological Taproot of Art*, pp. 207-228 (Chapter 13);

——— *Coda & Reprise*, pp. 229-236 in The Power of Form.

Session 13.

Alexander Stein (1999) *Well-Tempered Bagatelles—A Meditation on Listening in Psychoanalysis & Music*. American Imago, 56:4, pp. 387-416.

Open for residual readings from syllabus and discussion of texts and issues proposed by students.

Final Papers due.