*Spring 2017 NYU Anthropology Graduate Course ANTH-GA3399*

Psychoactivity: Cultural Politics of Mind and Brain

Wednesdays 5-7:45 PM, 25 Waverly Place first floor conference room

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Office hours Thursdays 12-1:30PM at 25 Waverly Place room 608

This graduate seminar examines the mind and brain as sites of conflict over difference, value, control and self-determination. Drawing on literature from anthropology and science and technology studies, the course will alternate between two lenses: 1) reconceptualizations of mental phenomena as political, and 2) specific contests over racialized and gendered neurosciences of intelligence and criminality, antipsychiatry/survivor movements, post-colonial psychiatry, neurocapital and neurochemical prosthesis, autism, addiction, trauma and recovery.

The course will survey ethnographic and historical work that informs theory and debate on these topics. In the spirit of embodied knowledge, the course also includes visits to relevant psychoactive sites in New York City and guest speakers with lived experience as activists and/or clinician-scientists working in these areas.

The seminar is interactive and requires each member to prepare for class by completing assigned readings and viewing assigned videos as well as to participate in group discussion. To foster critical reflection on the materials, additional course assignments are as follows:

1. Weekly brief, one paragraph reading responses posted to Classes for viewing by all seminar members, that include at least two questions for class discussion. These are due by Tuesday at midnight prior to class meetings.
2. Two short papers of 8-10 pages each written primarily on the readings for selected week but also citing readings from other weeks or from outside of the course. The papers will be presented at the beginning of class meetings and should address the following questions in while supporting a clearly stated original argument/thesis:

* What is at stake for the authors? To what or whom do they respond?
* Which concept of the brain or mind do they deploy and what implications does that hold for their conclusions?
* In which ways do assigned authors challenge or add nuance to each other’s arguments?

Final grades will be balanced between class participation (25%), weekly reading responses (25%), and the two short papers (25% each).

***Three books that we will read in their entirety that you may want to purchase:***

Paul Brodwin (2013). *Everyday Ethics: Voices from the Front Line of Community Psychiatr*y. University of California Press.

### Carl Hart (2013): *High Price: A neuroscientist's journey of self-discovery that challenges everything you know about drugs and society*

Nicolas Langlitz (2012): *Neuropsychedelia: The Revival of Hallucinogen Research since the Decade of the Brain*

***We will read significant sections of the following books so you could consider buying them but I will post chapters:***

Jonathan Metzl (2009): *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease*

Richard Grinker (2008): *Unstrange Minds: Remapping the World of Autism*

Andrew Pickering (2010): *The Cybernetic Brain*

Tobias Rees (2016): *Plastic Reason – An Anthropology of Brain Science in Embryogenic Terms*

Catherine Malabou (2012): *The New Wounded: From Neurosis to Brain Damage*.

### Gabor Mate (2010): *In the Realm of the Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction* Part III, IV, V

Beck Jordan Young (2011): *Brainstorm: The Flaws in the Science of Sex Differences*

Nicholas Lemann (1999): *The Big Test: The Secret History of the American Meritocracy*

Jill McCorkel (2013): *Breaking Women: Gender, Race and the New Politics of Imprisonment*

Lorna Rhodes (2004): *Total Confinement: Madness and Reason in the Maximum Security Prison*

***Course Schedule:***

**January 25. Introduction: Imagined Psychoactive Pasts and Futures**

*Read and watch the paper and film below as cultural artifacts that may signal something about our societal investments in shaping the activity of mind and brain.*

Jake Dunagan (2015): “Politics for the Neurocentric Age”

Watch before class: Titicut Follies (1967) Frederick Wiseman, Director

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_T5938tDdM0>

Film In Class: That Which is Possible (2015) Michael Gitlin, Director

**February 1. Breaking out of the Cell**

*The recent past and the present of psychiatric liberation movements*

***Guest speakers Sascha DuBrul, the Icarus Project, Issa Ibrahim, The Living Museum***

R.D. Laing (1961): *Self and Others* Chapters 6,7

Nick Crossley (1998): “R.D. Laing and the British Anti-Psychiatry Movement: A Socio-Historical Analysis”

Norman Dain (1989): “Critics and Dissenters: Reflections on ‘Anti-Psychiatry’ in the United States”

Jonathan Metzl (2009): *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease* Preface, Chapters 11,12,13,14

Sascha DuBrul (2014): “The Icarus Project: A Counter Narrative for Psychic Diversity”

Philip Thomas and Patrick Bracken (2004): “Critical Psychiatry in Practice”

John Hopton (2006): “The Future of Critical Psychiatry”

*Recommended if you have not already read it: R. D. Laing The Divided Self Part One*

*Recommended: David J. Rissmiller, Joshua H. Rissmiller (2006): “Evolution of the Antipsychiatry Movement Into Mental Health Consumerism”*

**February 8. Violence and Trauma**

*A contemporary causal explanation for mental distress.*

Didier Fassin and R. Rechtman (2009): *The Empire of Trauma. An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*. Parts I and II

Alondra Nelson (2011): *Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination* Chapter 5

Judith Butler (2014): “Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance” [http://www.institutofranklin.net/sites/default/files/files/Rethinking%20Vulnerability%20and%20Resistance%20Judith%20Butler.pdf](https://mail.nyumc.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=1vJKW8Amc0GVYBHfK1Ey_t0lxTxrUNQIsOMehmiZzKVyWXCPr4x6VoAigXW-7OEgEXotoHexVF4.&URL=https%3a%2f%2furldefense.proofpoint.com%2fv2%2furl%3fu%3dhttp-3A__www.institutofranklin.net_sites_default_files_files_Rethinking-2520Vulnerability-2520and-2520Resistance-2520Judith-2520Butler.pdf%26d%3dDQMFaQ%26c%3dj5oPpO0eBH1iio48DtsedbOBGmuw5jHLjgvtN2r4ehE%26r%3dPITS2k5gOMDC7tiUxovpOjHUZ3n_sNnXdA3Mp-QumfI%26m%3d8D6jUuYStA5t4hKr8piHG0sOpkd5hAamljyT-Um0vG0%26s%3dUt74OAL-OCJQMLx0ASYQai0nXOvDs2b1_YXlpF7VFJ0%26e%3d" \t "_blank)

Byron Good (2015): “Haunted by the Aceh: Specters of Violence in Post-Suharto Indonesia”

Sarah Lewis (2013): “Trauma and the Making of Flexible Minds in the Tibetan Exile Community”

See also: [https://mentalhealthhellenicobservatory.wordpress.com/2014/03/06/hellenic-observatory-for-rights-in-the-field-of-mental-health/](https://mail.nyumc.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=1vJKW8Amc0GVYBHfK1Ey_t0lxTxrUNQIsOMehmiZzKVyWXCPr4x6VoAigXW-7OEgEXotoHexVF4.&URL=https%3a%2f%2furldefense.proofpoint.com%2fv2%2furl%3fu%3dhttps-3A__mentalhealthhellenicobservatory.wordpress.com_2014_03_06_hellenic-2Dobservatory-2Dfor-2Drights-2Din-2Dthe-2Dfield-2Dof-2Dmental-2Dhealth_%26d%3dDQMFaQ%26c%3dj5oPpO0eBH1iio48DtsedbOBGmuw5jHLjgvtN2r4ehE%26r%3dPITS2k5gOMDC7tiUxovpOjHUZ3n_sNnXdA3Mp-QumfI%26m%3d8D6jUuYStA5t4hKr8piHG0sOpkd5hAamljyT-Um0vG0%26s%3d-H4YaGj7t_MftLQpw2o0Gj2UWamepvEb8Cl7hY3YV4Y%26e%3d" \t "_blank)

*Recommended:*

Angela Melitopoulos and Maurizio Lazzarato ( 2012): “Assemblages, Felix Guattari and Machinic Animism” http://www.e-flux.com/journal/36/61259/assemblages-flix-guattari-and-machinic-animism/

*Das, Veena (2003): "Trauma and testimony: implications for political community."*

**February 15. Chronicity**

*Concepts of non-malleability that inspire both apathy and resistance*

*Paper presentation: Monica Naparst*

Byron Good (2010): “Is ‘chronicity’ inevitable for psychotic illness? Studying heterogeneity in the course of schizophrenia in Yogyakarta, Indonesia”

Tanya Luhrmann: (2007) “Social defeat and the culture of chronicity: or, why schizophrenia does so well over there and so badly here”

Paul Brodwin (2013). *Everyday Ethics: Voices from the Front Line of Community Psychiatr*y. University of California Press.

**February 22. Recovery as Community**

*Further experiments in breaking out of the cell – and into…?*

***Guest speakers: Kim Hopper, Professor, Columbia Mailman Sociomedical Sciences***

***Bradley Lewis, Professor, NYU Gallatin Center***

Kim Hopper (2007): "Rethinking social recovery in schizophrenia: what a capabilities approach might offer"

Bradley Lewis (2012): “Recovery, narrative theory, and generative madness”

Nora Jacobson (2004): *In Recovery: The Making of Mental Health Policy*. Chapter 3.

Joel Braslow (2013): "The manufacture of recovery"

Film In Class: *Bethel: Community and Schizophrenia in Northern Japan*. (2013) Director Karen Nakamura

**March 1. Temporal-Spatial Self-Regulation**

*Imagining the neuro-consequences of modernity*

*Paper presentation: Anisha Chadha*

Doreen Massey (1992): “Politics and SpaceTime”

David Harvey (1999): “Time-Space Compression and the Postmodern Condition”

Kevin Birth (2007): “Time and the Biological Consequences of Globalization”

Matthew Wolf-Meyer (2011): “Natural Hegemonies – Sleep and the Rhythms of American Capitalism”

**March 8. Autistic Alliances**

*The social matrix of the non-social brain*

***Guest speakers: Peter Bearman, Professor of Social Sciences, Columbia***

***Martine Lappé, ELSI Fellow, Columbia Medical Center***

*Paper presentation Stephanie Schiavenato*

Richard Grinker (2008): *Unstrange Minds: Remapping the World of Autism* Part 1

Marissa King and Peter Bearman (2010): “Social Influence and the Autism Epidemic”

Martine Lappe (2016): “The Maternal Body as Environment in Autism Science”

In Class Film: *Neurotypical* (2013)Adam Larsen, Director

**March 22. Self and Substance**

*A brief meditation on one of the largest industrial drivers globally – psychotropic pharmaceuticals*

**Site visit: NYU psilocybin lab, with introduction by Stephen Ross, Director, Substance Abuse, Bellevue Hospital**

Janis Jenkins (2008): “Pharmaceutical Self and Imaginary in the Social Field of Psychiatric Treatment”

Nicolas Langlitz (2013): *Neuropsychedelia: The Revival of Hallucinogen Research since the Decade of the Brain.*

**March 29. Addiction**

*Autoethnographies and histories of addiction neuroscience*

*Paper presentation: Sonia Mendoza*

### Carl Hart (2013): *High Price: A neuroscientist's journey of self-discovery that challenges everything you know about drugs and society*

### Gabor Mate (2010): *In the Realm of the Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction* Part III, IV, V

### Nancy Cambell (2012): “Toward a critical neuroscience of ‘addiction’”

Film In Class: *The Narcotic Farm* (2008) Nancy Campbell, JP Olsen, Luke Walden, Directors

**April 5. Cybernetics**

*Brains as components of larger social systems*

*Paper presentation: Sujit Thomas*

Andrew Pickering (2010): *The Cybernetic Brain* Chapters 1, 4, 5, 6

E. Hutchins (1995). *Cognition in the Wild* Chapters 7,8,9

Jonna Brenninkmeijer (2015): “Brainwaves and psyches: A geneology of an extended self”

Cornelius Borck (2012): “Toys are Us: Models and Metaphors in Brain Research”

*Recommended if you haven’t read it previously: Gregory Bateson Steps To an Ecology of Mind* Parts III and V. And/or film: An Ecology of Mind (2010): Nora Bateson, Director

**April 12. Plasticity**

*The hopes and threats of ultimate malleability*

*Paper presentation: Stephanie Schiavenato*

Tobias Rees (2016): *Plastic Reason – An Anthropology of Brain Science in Embryogenic Terms* Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5

Nikolas Rose and Joelle Abi-Rached (2013): *Neuro: The New Brain Sciences and the Management of the Mind.* Introduction, Chapters 5-6

Victoria Pitts-Taylor (2016): *The Brain’s Body: Neuroscience and Corporeal Politics*. Introduction and Chapter 1.

Catherine Malabou (2012): *The New Wounded: From Neurosis to Brain Damage*. Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 9, 10, 11

**April 19. Engendering Critique: Feminist Neurosciences**

*A movement to change the terms of neuroscientific inquiry*

***Guest Speakers: Beck Jordan Young, Professor of Gender and Women’s Studies, Barnard***

***Rayna Rapp, Professor of Anthropology, NYU***

Beck Jordan Young (2011): *Brainstorm: The Flaws in the Science of Sex Differences.* Chapters 1,2,9,10

Rayna Rapp (2011): “A Child Surrounds this Brain: The Future of Neurological Difference According to Scientists, Parents, and Diagnosed Young Adults”

Cordelia Fine (2010): *Delusions of Gender: How Our Minds, Society and Neurosexism Create Difference.* Part 2 “Neurosexism.”

Karen Barad (2007): *Meeting the Universe Halfway*. Introduction, Chapters 1,4

Suparna Choudhury, Saskia Nagel, and Jan Slaby (2009). “Critical neuroscience: linking neuroscience and society through critical practice”

**April 26. Colonies of the Mind**

*Racial sorting by mind and brain*

*Paper presentation: Sujit Thomas*

Franz Fanon (1963): *The Wretched of the Earth*. Parts I and IV

Joch McCulloch (2006): *Colonial Psychiatry and the ‘African Mind.’* Chapters 1,2,4,6,9

John Carson (2004): “The Science of Merit and the Merit of Science: Mental Order and Social Order in Early Twentieth Century France and America”

Nicholas Lemann (1999): *The Big Test: The Secret History of the American Meritocracy* Book Two

Kimberly Welch (2001): “The Bell Curve and the Politics of Negrophobia”

John Ogbu (2001): “Cultural Amplifiers of Intelligence: IQ and Minority Status”

*Recommended: Richard Keller (2007):* *Colonial Madness: Psychiatry in French North Africa*. Chapters 1,5,7

**May 3. Violent Biologies**

*Managing dangerous minds*

**Site visit to Bellevue Hospital Forensic Unit (A part of Rikers Jail)**

*Paper presentation: Monica Naparst*

Jill McCorkel (2013): *Breaking Women: Gender, Race and the New Politics of Imprisonment*

Parts I and II

Lorna Rhodes (2004): *Total Confinement: Madness and Reason in the Maximum Security Prison*

Parts I and II

**And, End Game**

*Each seminar member will present a short video, article or other artifact that they think illustrates a useful concept from the course. Psychoactive substances such as sugar, caffeine and alcohol will be provided.*

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES  
  
Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at [212-998-4980](tel:212-998-4980" \t "_blank).   
  
NYU's Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities  
726 Broadway, 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10003-6675  
Telephone: [212-998-4980](tel:212-998-4980" \t "_blank)  
Voice/TTY Fax: [212-995-4114](tel:212-995-4114" \t "_blank)   
Web site: [www.nyu.edu/csd](https://mail.nyumc.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=01GrsvFj0kSEopH69IY4DKMZGo3L2NMIAXUqEYkP6Fc_tnRgUM0zMEU08wQw79q8lBSgTiwEadQ.&URL=https%3a%2f%2furldefense.proofpoint.com%2fv2%2furl%3fu%3dhttp-3A__www.nyu.edu_csd%26d%3dDQMFaQ%26c%3dj5oPpO0eBH1iio48DtsedbOBGmuw5jHLjgvtN2r4ehE%26r%3dPITS2k5gOMDC7tiUxovpOjHUZ3n_sNnXdA3Mp-QumfI%26m%3d0AGLg9dqmT0q5LINmT9Sd4HFbyxFBMTEDjH921D4hIA%26s%3dTDZprOCFKo4KiQdnhK4GLvKDjJNO4Gp6nPc0qJJc8Mg%26e%3d" \t "_blank)