

## **Site for Contemporary Psychoanalysis**

### **Introductory Course 2025/6**

The Site's Introductory Course consists of a year-long experiential group and a series of seminars on psychoanalysis. There are 27 sessions over the year, divided into three terms. The evening starts promptly at 6.30pm and ends at 9.15pm at Westminster Quakers Meeting House in Covent Garden.

Please arrive five minutes early to the first session, when there will be a short welcome introduction.

### **Schedule**

6.30 - 7.45pm Experiential group

7.45 - 8.00pm Break

8.00 - 9.15pm Seminar

## **Term one: 9 October - 4 December**

### **9, 16, 23 October - The psychoanalytic plague:**

#### **Judith Soal**

"They don't realise we are bringing them the plague" - Freud

We will consider what Freud meant in this much-cited comment to Jung as he arrived in America on a lecture tour in 1909. If psychoanalysis was considered shocking and even dangerous at the time, to what extent is this still true today? If not, what might have been lost (or gained) by the widespread dissemination and domestication of psychoanalytic theories?

### **30 Oct, 6, 13 November - Post-Jungian Reflections on**

#### **Creativity, Symbolism, and the Rhizome:**

#### **Cameron Dodds**

While much contemporary psychoanalysis has moved beyond Carl Jung, many of his insights into creativity and symbolic processes remain relevant. Through various post-structuralist concepts, we consider alternative frameworks that resist totalising models of

identity, emphasising multiplicity, process, and relationality. Also focusing on the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, we address challenges associated with Jungian holism and the notion of a unified self that often favours fixity and transcendence over multiplicity and immanence. Through this framework, we consider how creative processes and symbolic expression can be understood as ongoing, dynamic acts of becoming—situated within complex relational networks rather than fixed psychic structures.

**Week 1 – Magic**

**Week 2 – Weirdness**

**Week 3 – Individuation Beyond the Self**

**20, 27 Nov, 4 December - Undressing:**

**Jim O'Neill**

These three seminars respond to James O'Neill's book Undressing, "a remarkable story of what two people can do for each other if they can experiment with trust" (Adam Phillips).

**Term two: 15 January - 12 March**

**15, 22, 29 January - Psychoanalysis and race:**

**Peter Nevins**

We will be looking specifically at black women writers. Session one will be an experiential exercise; session two on Toni Morrison and three on bell hooks.

**5, 12, 19 February - Freud, Farage and Brexit:**

**Madhu Nandi**

We will consider the quandry of Englishness. What do our cultural artefacts tell us about the preoccupation with English identity? To a Freudian it seems there is a compulsion, some repetition, at play here. Is this why we voted for Brexit? Would a Freudian examination permit a different engagement with the colonial myths and fantasies which Englishness evokes?

**26 Feb, 5, 12 March - Palestine :**

**Nick Blackburn**

These three seminars offer a space to think about thought, action, trauma and freedom psychoanalytically in the presence of the Palestinian flag.

1. The Voices of the Unscreamed (Fred Moten)
2. Violent Innocence (Christopher Bollas)

### 3. Freud and the Non-European (Edward Said)

#### **Term three: 16 April - 11 June**

**16, 23, 30 April - Trauma in collective contexts:  
understanding the need for its representation within  
community environments:**

**Luisa Pretolani**

This series will explore the formation of collective trauma and the need for their representations. One of the most recognizable symbols of collective trauma in the twentieth century is the creation of Godzilla, or “Gojira,” which first appeared before Japanese audiences in 1954. The fictional creature—a giant dinosaur awakened and mutated by mankind/exposure to the H bomb—embodies the anxieties of a nation grappling with the aftermath of nuclear devastation. The movie functions as a powerful political statement, reflecting the fears and traumas of the Japanese people during a period characterized by extensive censorship under American occupation.

But if a movie can be perceived as a very sophisticated medium to answer to a collective shared trauma, there are other 'simpler' but equally powerful representations which are borne from the needs of a community to share their deep pain, shame and resilience... What does the representation answer? How does the censorship of a collective voice inform the creation and the meaning of the symbolic representation?

**7, 14, 21 May – Limits & Liberation in Psychoanalysis:  
Andie Newman**

Ideas around limits, restrictions and constraints are everywhere to be found within psychoanalysis. We will reflect on how limits operate within – and are essential to – the psychoanalytic approach, including thinking about the frame, boundaries and 'the rules', and the consequences of limits/restrictions in opening up – or liberating – the space for the work of psychoanalysis to unfold. Alongside other texts, we will read some of Freud's key papers on technique.

**28 May, 4, 11 June - Psychoanalysis: science or occultism?**

**Chrysanthi Nigianni**

Psychoanalysis emerged from a wide range of influences – from German Romanticism and idealist philosophy, to French experimental psychology, psychiatry, mythology, sexology and the ancient Greek tragedy– to create “a powerful synthesis, neither wholly scientific nor wholly humanistic’ which ‘illuminated the ethical struggles of the human being, which arose in relation to the parents and ended in the confrontation with death” (Zaretsky 2018, p.186).

What do we do when we do psychoanalysis? Are we ‘treating’ minds or are we ‘treating’ souls? Is a ‘science of the soul’ as Freud envisioned psychoanalysis possible? The discipline of psychoanalysis has always struggled to define itself as truly scientific. We will start this block of 3 seminars by revisiting

Freud's ambivalent relationship to the occult marked by his interest in thought transference/telepathy and we will then explore Carl Jung's and Sándor Ferenczi's affinity to the occult in their pursued interest in exploring the psyche.

### **Experiential Group**

The experiential group, facilitated by Barbara Cawdron, offers the opportunity to reflect on the experience of being in a group.