WOMEN'S STUDIES 300-5
WOMEN AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

SPRING SEMESTER, 1983
Instructor: Meredith Kimball

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Course Outline

In the first part of this course we will examine the basic concepts of psychoanalysis and Freud's writing on feminine development. With this as background we will examine modern, feminist reinterpretations of Freud's work, focusing on Chodorow's work. In the second half of the course we will concentrate on other women psychoanalysts and how they have modified and reinterpreted Freud's theory. Horney, Thompson and Dinnerstein will be the primary theorists included in this section. The focus of the course will be on how psychoanalysis as a methodology has been used by writers of varying cultural background in an attempt to understand female psychology and/or psychological sex differences. We will examine the usefulness and the limits of a psychoanalytic methodology in understanding and explaining women's life choices. The class will be conducted as a seminar. As such, students will be expected to do the readings before each class and to facilitate class discussions on a regular basis. While the amount of reading will vary from week to week, most of it is quite difficult and will require concentration and effort on the part of the reader.

Assignments:

A major paper will be required and will count for 50% of the final grade and will be due at the end of the term. The paper should be approximately 15-20 pages long. The topic of the paper will be decided by the student in consultation with the instructor. Possible topics would include: 1) exploring an important psychoanalytic concept such as the Oedipus complex or the masculinity complex in some depth using the work of several theorists and their critics; or 2) exploring the work of one theorist using both biographical information and their own writing and showing how intellectual, social, and economic factors influenced their psychoanalytic work.

Short Essays:

Two short essays (approximately 5 pages in length) will also be assigned. Topics for these essays will be handed out early in the term and students will choose two essay topics from a list of 5 or 6. No extra reading beyond the class readings will be required to complete the short essays. Each essay will count for 15% of the final grade. One essay will be due in the middle of the term and the other at the end of the term.
Class Participation: Class participation will count for 20% of the final grade. This will be based both on the student's general participation during class and also on several presentation/facilitation assignments. These assignments will consist of summarizing an assigned reading and presenting several questions or comments based on the reading in order to facilitate discussion.

Assigned Readings:

(Reprint package to be handed out in class at a cost to the student.)

Prerequisites:
Women's Studies 100 and two Women's Studies 200 courses.

Seminar: Wed. 13:30 - 16:20
Thurs. 13:30 - 15:20