The conference brings together scholars and psychoanalysts from the Lower Mainland to examine the relationship between Psychoanalysis and Marxist thought in history and in the contemporary moment. We will examine their intersections and crosspollination, their mutual suspicion and critique, as well as possible avenues of future work and collaboration in the cultural, the social, and the political realms.

Presented with support from Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and Institute for the Humanities SFU
SCHEDULE:

Friday, Dec. 1: Fletcher Challenge Theatre 1900


Andrew Feenberg, “Existential Politics: Marcuse’s Concept of Eros.”

REFRESHMENTS TO FOLLOW

Saturday, Dec 2: Lohn Policy Room 7000

9:15, Doors opening

Jerry Zaslove, “Between Anxiety and Alienation Between a Rock and a Hard Place—Some Reflections of a Maladjusted Anarchist on where Marx and Freud have always had a Dialogue in my Thinking About: Who is Listening?”

Sneja Gunew, “Both Individual and Social: Translating Affect”
Jeff Derksen, “Poetics, Affect and Marx's Working Day Chapter”

12:00 – 13:00: Feature speaker: Svitlana Matviyenko (SFU). Respondent: Hilda Fernandez.
Svitlana Matviyenko, "A Scale, a Storage and a Cage: Wilhelm Reich’s Machines of Sexual Revolution."

13:00 – 14:15: Lunch break

Clint Burnham (SFU), “Žižek avec or sans Jameson?: The Impossible Social Bond between Psychoanalysis and Marxism.”
Hilda Fernandez (Psychoanalyst/SFU), “‘Does what one enjoys enjoy?’ On Labour and Jouissance.”

Michael Zeitlin (UBC), “Thoughts for the Times on War and Death.”
Am Johal (VCE/SFU), “On Badiou’s Our Wound is Not So Recent.”
Robert Nicholls (Douglas College), “Something Fromm ...”

16:45 – 17:45: **Graduate students panel.** Moderator: Samir Gandesha.

Houman Zavareh (SFU Humanities), “Market Fetishism and the Precarious Other.”
Alois Sieben (SFU English), "Working Words: Lacanian and Marxist Approaches to Digital Language."


Samir Gandesha, “Reflections on Left Fascism.”

**ABSTRACTS:**

**Andrew Feenberg, “Existential Politics: Marcuse’s Concept of Eros.”**

Marcuse’s early philosophical reflections on politics treat political choice not as a matter of opinion but as an existential stance, a way of being-in-the-world in Heidegger’s sense of the term. Later Marcuse discovered in Freud’s understanding of politics a similar depth dimension. In his later work Marcuse transforms drive theory into a new version of existential politics. Eros is no longer merely a drive but becomes the form of reality itself.

**Jerry Zaslove, “Between Anxiety and Alienation Between a Rock and a Hard Place—Some Reflections of a Maladjusted Anarchist on where Marx and Freud have a Dialogue in my Thinking.”**

This is the 100th Anniversary of both the Russian Revolution and Freud’s "Introductory Essays to Psychoanalysis," and since then we live in the prison and the madhouse of over 100 years of war of Hobsbawn’s century of total war. The very culture that produced Marx and Freud’s critical principles would not be able to change the direction in which the Capitalist culture has taken us. The policies of failed Bolshevism and the malignant narcissism of Trumped Fascistoid politics might have us ask where are we now in the “Mechanthropoid identity” (Gil Elliot’s *Twentieth Century Book of the Dead*) of a basic form of alienation that allows us to accept the manipulators of the death machines, and whether they are here to stay.
**Samir Gandesha**, “Reflections on Left Fascism.”

In this talk, I revisit the exchange of letters in 1969 between Herbert Marcuse and Theodor W. Adorno on the nature of the West German Students Movement. My question is: To what extent can a psychoanalytical approach to this exchange help us to understand not just authoritarian tendencies on the contemporary Right but also on the Left?

**Svitlana Matviyenko**, "A Scale, a Storage and a Cage: Wilhelm Reich’s Machines of Sexual Revolution."

This presentation offers a Lacanian reading of Reich’s transition from political and clinical practices to biological and bioelectric research that resulted in creating his signature machine, the Orgone Accumulator. According to Reich, this apparatus was a collector and storage of the ‘orgone energy’ to be used for improving sexual potency and achieving a ‘true orgasm.’ Reich’s case, I argue, is representative of the subject of desire as the subject of science: it demonstrates (1) Reich’s inability to accept the nonexistence of sexual rapport that (2) the scientist expressed by theorizing sexual relations in terms of the "full sexual discharge," (3) which, he believed, can only be achieved with the help of techno-augmentation.

**Sneja Gunew**, “Both Individual and Social: Translating Affect.”

Affect is often defined as sensation before it has been contained by being named as emotion. Affect overwhelms us with sensation so that we corral/articulate it as a specific emotion in panic-stricken response. We might also shuttle uneasily between seeing affect as a component of our sovereign subjectivity and considering it as a group phenomenon shared among others. Along the way we know that emotions are gendered in their performance and performativity. Anger for men has always had different meanings than for women (see the last US elections). Underpinning this process is the question of translation—not just from sensation to named emotion but an awareness that we are often doing this within an assumed monolingual (Anglophone?) and shared Eurocentric context. Arising out of a long-term project that looks at the ways in which affect theory is largely dependent on European concepts, my paper examines the recent Man-Booker winner Han Kang’s *The Vegetarian* to ask questions concerning the translatability of affect. To what degree, for example, do we need to take into account other taxonomies of affect informed by other languages and cultures as, for example, the Sanskrit aesthetic framework of rasa/bhava? (https://emotionsblog.history.qmul.ac.uk/2016/07/decolonising-theories-of-the-emotions/). Is it useful, for example, to invoke the Korean concept of ‘han’ as an interpretive lens for considering Kang’s text or does this land us inevitably in cultural essentialism? As we open up our concepts to the world, translation will be an unavoidable foundational factor.
KEYNOTES AND FEATURE SPEAKER BIOS:

Andrew Feenberg is a professor in the School of Communication, Simon Fraser University, where he directs the Applied Communication and Technology Lab. He also serves as Directeur de Programme at the College International de Philosophie in Paris. His books include Questioning Technology (Routledge Press, 1999), Between Reason and Experience: Essays in Technology and Modernity (MIT Press, 2010), The Philosophy of Praxis: Marx, Lukács and the Frankfurt School, (Verso Press in 2014). He has co-edited collections including Community in the Digital Age (Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), and (Re)Inventing the Internet (Sense Publishers, 2012). A book on Feenberg’s philosophy of technology entitled Democratizing Technology appeared in 2006 with the State University of New York Press. His most recent book is Technosystem: The Social Life of Reason (Harvard).

Jerry Zaslove, Professor Emeritus in Humanities and English, teaches and writes in the fields of European Comparative Literature and the Social History of Art. His work is influenced (but not limited) by the radical traditions of critical theory for the arts, aesthetics, psychoanalysis, and critique of culture. Among his most recent writing are “Kafka in the’ Penal Colony”, essays on the place of the University in society, Exile and memory, the City in History, and forms and social realities of thinking about community. Professor Zaslove has taught at SFU since its opening year and was the founding director of the Institute for the Humanities. He is currently Simons Chair in the Graduate Liberal Studies Program at SFU.

Svitlana Matviyenko is an Assistant Professor of Critical Media Analysis in the SFU’s School of Communication. Her research is located on the intersection of political economy of information, social and mobile media, information and cyber-war. She writes about the networking drive, user complicity and practices of resistance; the politics of creation, demise and persistence of the imperial infrastructures, including that of the Internet. Her publications include The Imaginary App (co-edited with Paul D. Miller, MIT Press, 2014) and the forthcoming collection Lacan and the Posthuman, co-ed. with Judith Roof (Palgrave Press). Currently, she is working on a book with Nick Dyer-Witheford, Cyber-War and Revolution.

Samir Gandesha is an Associate Professor in the Department of the Humanities and the Director of the Institute for the Humanities at Simon Fraser University. He specializes in modern European thought and culture, with a particular emphasis on the 19th and 20th centuries. His work has appeared in Political Theory, New German Critique, Kant Studien, Philosophy and Social Criticism, Topia, the European Legacy, the European Journal of Social Theory, Art Papers, the Cambridge Companion to Adorno and Herbert Marcuse: A Critical Reader, as well as in several other edited books. He is co-editor with Lars Rensmann of Arendt and Adorno: Political and Philosophical Investigations (Stanford, 2012). Reification and Spectacle: On the Timeliness of Western Marxism with Johan Hartle (Amsterdam University Press, 2017) and Aesthetic Marx (Bloomsbury Press) also co-edited with Johan Hartle.