
TOPICS: PSYCHOLOGY, ART, AND LITERATURE in Fall 2018 (PY3091)

Course Code	PY3091	Professor(s)	Jens Brockmeier
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	PV-203
Class Schedule	T: 16:55-19:50 in PL-1	Office Hours	by appointment
Credits	4	Email	jbrockmeier@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2018	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

Art and literature create psychological worlds on their own. There are passions and great emotions; there are flowers and shots. But there are also intricate processes of perception and other forms of cognition. There is wonder, love, and despair. There is the impossible, the unspeakable, the unbelievable – and still we fall for it, even using plots and atmospheres from films, operas, and novels to understand our own lives. Where, then, is the borderline between life and art? The psychology of art and literature is a wide and surprising field of interdisciplinary research, ranging from neuroscience to cultural and narrative psychology. This class offers an introduction to it.

It surveys important psychological approaches to art and literature, from the classics of the field (such as Freud, Dewey, Vygotsky, Arnheim, and Bruner) to today's spectrum of scientific psychology ranging from experimental and neurocognitive research on phenomena of art and language to cultural, narrative, and philosophical psychology. Students are invited to critically think through different notions and models of art and culture and to explore their relevance for human self-understanding. Central to our work will be the encounter and discussion of artworks from a variety of genres, types, and media, taking advantage, among others, of the resources of Paris as the city of arts and literature.

Course Learning Outcomes

General Education

Course Outline

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Classes typically consist of a combination of lectures, discussions, student presentations, group work in different formats (including “Flipped Classrooms”), film screenings and discussions, and museum visits. There also might be presentations of guest speakers and visits to departmental or AUP lectures and symposia. The following schedule only lists the topics and readings. It is flexible and subject to change

Week 1

Sep 11: General Introduction

Week 2

Sep 18: Psychology, art, and literature – Introduction

- Guest speaker: Draw-a-Person test (DAP test, or Goodenough-Harris Draw-a-Person test): A psychological projective personality or cognitive/creativity test
- *Further readings:* Cole, M. & Gajdamaschko, N. (2007). *Vygotsky and culture* (pp. 193-200).
- Film: *The Great Beauty* – Extracts (1)

Week 3

Sep 25: Creativity I

- Bruner, J., The conditions of creativity (Chap. 1 in: Bruner, J., *On knowing: Essays for the left hand*, pp. 17-30) **[P 1/2]**
- Oatley, K., *Such stuff as dreams: The Psychology of fiction* (Chap. 3, “Creativity”, pp. 51-79) **[P 1/2]**
- *Further readings:* Otis, L. (2016). *Rethinking Thought: Inside the minds of creative scientists and artists* (Chap. 1 & 9)

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- Film: *The Great Beauty* - Extracts (2)

Week 4

Oct 6 (!): Creativity II – Modernism and the psychology of the creative moment

- Visit to the *Centre Pompidou*

Week 5

Oct 09: Self and Identity, Person and Character

- Bruner, J., *Identity and the modern novel* (Chap. 3 in: Bruner, J., *On knowing: Essays for the left hand*, pp. 43-54) **[P 1/2]**
- Further reading: Brockmeier, J., *Identity*

Week 6

Oct 16: Knowing, Experience, Understanding

- Bruner, J., *Art as a mode of knowing* (Chap. 4 in: Bruner, J., *On knowing: Essays for the left hand*, pp. 59-79) **[P 1/2]**
- Djikic, M. & Oatley, K. *The art in fiction: From indirect communication to changes of the self* **[P 1/2]**
- Self and self-experience: Self-portrait in early Renaissance painting

Week 7

Oct 23: Meaning

- Bruner, J., *Possible castles* [How do scientists and artists construct meaning?] (Chap. 3 in Bruner, J., *Actual minds, possible worlds*, pp. 44-54) **[P 1/2]**
- Heider, F. and Simmel, M. (1944). An Experimental study of apparent behavior, *The American Journal of Psychology* & Film on Heider & Simmel's experiment.
- Oatley on the Heider & Simmel experiment: Oatley, K. (2011). *Such stuff as dreams: The psychology of fiction*, pp. 130-132)
- Further reading: Schiff, B. (2012). The function of narrative: Toward a narrative psychology of meaning.

Week 8

Fall break

Week 9

Nov 6: Time

- Film: *The psychology of time*. By Philip Zimbardo
- The psychology of time perception (<http://www.exactlywhatistime.com/psychology-of-time/time-perception/>)
- Further reading: Brockmeier, J., *Time*
- Film/Installation: Christian Marclay's *The Clock*. - A filmic-psychological experiment - Extracts

Week 10

Nov 13: Simultaneity

- Temporality: Time experience and time construction

Week 11

Nov 20: Emotion

- Oatley, K. (2011), *Such stuff as dreams: The psychology of fiction* (Chap. 5: *Emotion*, pp. 107-132).
- Flipped classroom

Week 12

Nov 27: Memory

- Autobiographical memories: A neurocognitive and a narrative perspective
- Brockmeier, J., *Studying memory in the literary and artistic field* (In: Brockmeier, J., *Beyond the archive: Memory, narrative, and the autobiographical process*, pp. 42-46)

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- Film: *The Hours* (1) - Extracts

Week 13

Dec 4: Consciousness

- William James, *Stream of consciousness* [P 2]
- Goldie, p., *The mess inside: Narrative, emotion, and the mind* (Chapter 1: Narrative thinking, pp. 1-13) [P 1]
- Further reading: Oatley, K. (2011), *Such stuff as dreams: The psychology of fiction* (Chap. 1: *Dream and fiction*, pp. 1-21).
- Film: *The Hours* (2) - Extracts

Week 14

Dec 11: Narrative Psychology – Concluding discussion

- Ondaatje, *Warlight* – Extracts [1/2]

Further readings:

- Schiff, B. (2012). *The function of narrative: Toward a narrative psychology of meaning*
- Brockmeier, J. (2014). *Narrative psychology*

Week 15

Dec 18: Exam

Due date final paper: Dec 18, 2019

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
Warlight: A novel	Ondaatje, Michael	Knopf	9781524711399	Yes

Attendance Policy

AUP General Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Class specific Attendance and Participation Policy

- AUP expects students to attend every class.
- Students who miss a class for medical reasons are expected to provide formal documentation.
- Students who miss a number of classes, regardless of the reason, are expected to provide make-up material.
- Students who miss more than three classes have to expect a lower final grade.
- Students who miss more than four classes will fail the course (F).
- If students have agreed to give a presentation in class and do not show up at the agreed date without informing me at least a day in advance, a full letter grade will be deducted (even if they provide make-up material), unless they present a formal doctor's note.
- If students are habitually late to class, late arrivals will count as absences.
- Assignments must be completed by the date indicated on the syllabus. Electronic

submissions of papers are not acceptable.

- Participation means active participation, that is, students are expected to make relevant and thoughtful contributions to class discussion and activities, which contributes, as noted, to 15 % of the final grade.
- During classes, students are expected to respectfully turn off cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices.

Academic Dishonesty

Please take the time to learn about academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Plagiarism includes handing in work that is not your own and cutting and pasting passages (from the internet, journals, books, etc.) without citing the original source. These are very serious academic offenses and could lead to an “F” in the course, suspension, or expulsion from the university. If plagiarism is detected (among others, by appropriate technologies), the least serious consequence is failing the course. Helpful advice on avoiding plagiarism and related AUP policy can be found at <http://www.ac.aup.edu/~writelab/>.

Grading Policy

Course requirements will contribute the following portions to your grade:

Attendance and participation	15%
Thought papers	15%
Presentation	30%
Paper	40%

Other

Thought paper

- Students are required to write and submit five thought (or reflection or response) papers.

Thought papers are on self-chosen issues or problems addressed in (1) the readings, (2) films, (3) the museum visit, or (4) in class discussions.

- The last of these thought papers (5) presents an outline of the final class paper and is to be handed in at least two weeks before the end of class.
- These thought papers are between one paragraph and one page, have a title or subject line, and are meant to give me a sense of how the readings and class discussions speak to you and what you think about them.
- Thought papers (only hard copies!) must be handed in at the beginning of the class after the reading (or film or any related issue) was discussed. Thought papers submitted later than two weeks will not be accepted.
- Each thought paper contributes to about 3 % of the final mark.

Presentation

- Students will give one class presentation of 15-20 minutes on a theme based on the assigned readings according to the class schedule. The presentation is meant to initiate a discussion.

Final Essay

- The final paper (of 8 pages) deals with self-chosen issues or problems that are addressed in the readings, films, visits of special locations, or class discussions. It can, but does not have to, be based on the presentations. It demonstrates that its author is able to represent an issue, a position, or a problem, and to discuss it.
- Due date for papers is 18 December 2018, 7 pm (at the "Final exam"). Only hard copies of the final essays are accepted.
- They can be handed in earlier, but if they are submitted later the grade for the paper will be lowered, the extent dependent on how late it is (which can go as far as "No Credit").
- In case of emergency with your presentation or paper, please contact me at the first moment possible. If you have questions or problems with your paper or an assignment, please talk to me about it early enough so that we can find a solution.