

PC 699
Psychoanalysis of War
Spring, 2008

Stephen Soldz

Syllabus

Week 8, May 2: Why War?

Annie Stopford: *Interviews with Neil Altman and Nancy Hollander*

Neil Altman: *Why War?*

Altman et al. *Discussion of Why War?*

Week 9, May 16: Contemporary America

Stephen Soldz: *Thinking Critically in the Midst of the Maelstrom: Can Psychoanalysis Help Us Stay Sane in an Insane World?*

Nancy Hollander: 'Psyche, Ideology and the Creation of the Political Subject': *A Summary*

Hollander, et al.: *Discussion of 'Psyche, Ideology and the Creation of the Political Subject'*

Soldz: *Security, terror, and the psychodynamics of empire* [At:

<http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=1&ItemID=4948>]

Suggested Reading: Clarke, S., & Hoggett: *The Empire of fear: The American political psyche and the culture of paranoia* [On web:

http://www.btinternet.com/~psycho_social/Vol5/JPSS5-PHSC1.htm]

Week 10, May 30: Torture and Denial

Scott Horton: *Six Questions for Darius Rejali, Author of 'Torture and Democracy'* [Available at: <http://www.harpers.org/archive/2008/02/hbc-90002387>]

International Psychoanalytic Association Statement on Torture [Available at: <http://internationalpsychoanalysis.net/2007/09/11/ipa-statement-on-torture-passed-in-berlin-on-july-2007/>]

Soldz: *The dynamics of occupation and the abuse at Abu Ghraib: An interpretation after one year of revelations* [Available at

www.sociology.umb.edu/journal/Vol81PDFS/25482413.pdf]

Soldz, et al: *Letter to Senate Intelligence Committee: Psychologists out of Abusive Interrogations* [Available at:

<http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=80&ItemID=14196>]

Soldz: *Closing Eyes to Atrocities: U.S. Psychologists, Detainee Interrogations, and Response of the American Psychological Association*

Week 11, June 13: The Passions of War

Chris Hedges: *War is a force that gives us meaning*. [Buy paperback.]

David Grossman: *On Killing*, chapters 2-4. *NonFirers Throughout History; Why Johnny Can't Kill; The Nature and Source of the Resistance*.

Week 12, Date TBA: [I will be out of town June 27. Will reschedule.] Terror Management Theory

Pyszczynski: *What are we so afraid of? A terror management theory perspective on the politics of fear* [Available at: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2267/is_4_71/ai_n13807478/print]
Willer: *The effects of government-issued terror warnings on presidential approval ratings* [Available at: http://www.uiowa.edu/~grpproc/crisp/crisp10_1.pdf]

Sources and Some Additional Materials:

NOTE: Many interesting materials are on web site from a 2005 course I taught on State Sanctioned Violence:

<http://soldzresearch.com/courses/ISVStateSanctionedViolenceSpr2005.htm>

My blog contains many relevant materials, especially on psychologists and torture:

<http://psychoanalystsopposewar.org/blog/>

- Bulhan, H. A. (1985). *Frantz Fanon and the psychology of oppression*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Bunzl, J., & Beit-Hallahmi, B. (2002). *Psychoanalysis, identity, and ideology : Critical essays on the Israel/Palestine case*. Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publisher.
- Clarke, S., & Hoggett, P. (2004). The Empire of fear: The American political psyche and the culture of paranoia. *Psychodynamic Practice: Individuals, groups and organisations*, 10(1), 89-106.
- Ducat, S. (2004). *The wimp factor : Gender gaps, holy wars, and the politics of anxious masculinity*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Evans, P. B., Rueschemeyer, D., Skocpol, T., Social Science Research Council (U.S.). Committee on States and Social Structures., Joint Committee on Latin American Studies., & Joint Committee on Western Europe. (1985). *Bringing the state back in*. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire] ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gregory, D. (2004). The angel of Iraq: Paradise and progress. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 22(3), 317-324.
- Hedges, C. (2002). *War is a force that gives us meaning* (1st ed.). New York: Public Affairs.
- Kovel, J. (1984). *White racism : a psychohistory*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Martain-Barão, I., Aron, A., & Corne, S. (1994). *Writings for a liberation psychology*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Milburn, M. A., & Conrad, S. D. (1996). *The politics of denial*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Miliband, R. (1969). *The state in capitalist society: An analysis of the Western system of power*. New York,: Basic Books.
- Pyszczynski, T. A., Greenberg, J., & Solomon, S. (2003). *In the wake of 9/11 : the psychology of terror*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Soldz, S. (2004a, May 1, 2004). *Abuse at Abu Ghraib, the psychodynamics of occupation, and the responsibility of us all* [Web page]. ZNet. Retrieved May 25, 2004, 2004, from the World Wide Web:
<http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=15&ItemID=5439>

Soldz, S. (2004b). *Security, terror, and the psychodynamics of empire* [Web page]. ZNet. Retrieved May 25, 2004, from the World Wide Web:
<http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=1&ItemID=4948>

Staub, E. (1989). *The roots of evil : the origins of genocide and other group violence*. Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Assignments:

For each class (2-11), a 1-2 page typed paper critiquing the week's readings. While you can briefly summarize the argument, the paper should focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the argument, whether there is evidence that is ignored, how the arguments of the reading fit with other readings, etc. [You do not have to cover each of these each week.] The goal is to develop a thoughtful, well-reasoned, evidence-based set of ideas about the nature, roles and functions of state sanctioned violence.

A paper of about 15-20 double-spaced pages exploring one aspect of the psychodynamics of war. It should include a discussion of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the various perspectives utilized, and should draw upon theoretical and empirical evidence.

The paper should clearly describe the phenomenon under examination, so that a reader unfamiliar with it knows exactly what you are writing about. Draw upon what you have learned in other classes, as well as this one. While you can draw upon your personal opinions, all claims should be defended by evidence, including citations where appropriate.

Use APA reference style.