

Workshop: Radical Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis, and 1968

Understandings of mental health and illness were transformed in the 1960s as a generation of psychiatrists began to question the orthodoxy of their profession, reframing the aetiology of psychic distress as a consequence of an alienating, consumer society. Though the movement's roots in existentialism and Marxist thought are often emphasised, this workshop will centre attention on how radical psychiatry developed through a critical engagement with psychoanalysis: both challenging the assumptions of the Freudian canon, and reinscribing concepts of the unconscious for the postwar age. It will also explore how the actors and theories of the radical psychiatry movement informed – and were shaped by – the political movements that emerged around 1968. It will also explore how ideas about social, institutional or technological coercion, either hidden or in plain sight, were mobilised by radical psychiatrists, echoing contemporaneous political critiques of 'modern civilization'.

Beginning with a short presentation of Camille Robcis's recent work on Félix Guattari's involvement in the development of Institutional Psychotherapy in France, the workshop will then discuss a text by Guattari himself, alongside a contextual delineation of his work by Dagmar Herzog. The second half of the workshop will cast light on comparable practices and debates which unfolded in the USA, UK, Algeria, Italy, and Eastern Europe. By placing radical psychiatry in its broader international context, we will trace the dialogues and transformations that occurred as concepts crossed political and geographical borders.

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BERLIN INSTITUTE FOR CULTURAL INQUIRY

Workshop

Monday, 23 April 2018, 14:00 – 21:00, in English



Disalienation:

Radical Psychiatry in the 1960s

Organized by
Sarah Marks (Birkbeck, University of London)
and Hannah Proctor (ICI Berlin)
in collaboration with
Birkbeck's Hidden Persuaders project,
funded by the Wellcome Trust

Programme

14:00 – 16:00	Part I – Introduction and discussion of pre-circulated texts
16:00 – 16:30	Coffee break
16:30 – 18:00	Part II – Situating French Institutional Psychotherapy in an international perspective
19:30	Keynote – Camille Robcis: Disalienation: Philosophy, Politics, and Radical Psychiatry in France

Please note: there is no need to register for the evening lecture. However, the workshop – due to a limited number of seats – requires prior registration. Workshop materials will be sent to registered participants in advance. Please register by 5 April 2018 for the workshop if you would like to participate. Those who are interested in joining should enclose a short (no more than one paragraph) expression of interest.

19:30

Camille Robcis

Disalienation: Philosophy, Politics, and Radical Psychiatry in France

This talk explores the intersections of politics, philosophy, and radical psychiatry in 20th century France. It focuses on a psychiatric reform movement called “institutional psychotherapy” which had an important influence on many intellectuals and activists, including François Tosquelles, Jean Oury, Félix Guattari, Frantz Fanon, Georges Canguilhem, and Michel Foucault. Anchored in Marxism and in Lacanian psychoanalysis, institutional psychotherapy advocated a fundamental restructuring of the asylum in order to transform the theory and practice of psychiatric care. More broadly, for many of these thinkers, the psychiatric offered a lens to rethink the political in the particular context of postwar France.

Camille Robcis is associate professor of history at Cornell University. Her research focuses on three broad issues: the relationships among intellectuals, ideas, and politics; the historical construction of norms; and the articulation of universalism and difference in the context of modern France. In 2013 she published the book *The Law of Kinship: Anthropology, Psychoanalysis, and the Family in France*, which sought to explain why and how, in the French context, academic discourses on kinship have intersected and overlapped with political debates on the family. She has published widely in journals including *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, *Constellations*, *The Journal of Modern History* and *Social Text*.