

Lacan's Écrits Conference (2019) – Conference Abstracts (draft document)

Badiou's theory of a subject: with, against, and or beyond Lacan?

Joseph Anderson (Duquesne University)

In light of Zupančič's consideration of Badiou's *Being and Event* at the end of *What IS Sex?* and the recent English language translation of Badiou's 1994-1995 Lacan seminars, it seems worth revisiting Badiou's critical appropriation of Lacan's thought in *Logics of Worlds*. Badiou positions himself with Lacan (1) against the phenomenology of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty for whom the subject is immediately given, (2) in the incorporation of "the natural body into the body conceived stigmata of the Other," and (3) in privileging the signified body over the natural body. However, it is precisely at the moment of agreement on a theory of the "two bodies" that division arises. First, the subsumption of the human animal by language, for Lacan, makes the two bodies structurally necessary. Whereas for Badiou, the second body is not necessary but contingent upon the body's incorporation into a truth-procedure (where body = body-of-truth). Second, Lacan writes that "the object of psychoanalysis is not man, it's what he lacks." Not willing to capitulate to philosophy, he goes on to add "not absolute lack, but the lack of an object." Badiou endorses the former but takes issue with the latter as he wants to retain the category of the absolute. Badiou situates the human animal beyond speech wherein there exists the possibility of a subject's inclusion in the creative production of life. In this paper I intend to explore Badiou's engagement with Lacan in *Logics of Worlds* in order to argue for a materialist conception of the absolute not subsumed under language or Totality.

On an Ex Post Facto Syllabary

Yael Goldman Baldwin (Mars Hill University)

On an Ex Post Facto Syllabary is Lacan's postscript to his essay, *In memory of Ernest Jones: On his theory of symbolism*. In *Syllabary*, Lacan takes up Silberer's theory of symbolism and juxtaposes it with his own understanding of the symbolic, which highlights the importance of the signifier in the formation of dreams and their interpretation. For Lacan, the symbol must be understood in relation to other signifiers; however Silberer interprets dreams as if they were based on a symbolism that is real, concrete, and natural. In *Syllabary*, Lacan explains how three theorists--Silberer, Jung, and Jones *in his argument*--fail to grasp the importance of the signifier and do not differentiate between symbol and signifier; thus their ideas lack veracity and clinical significance. In this essay Lacan also differentiates between hermeneutics and psychoanalysis. Ultimately for Lacan, a truly psychoanalytic approach is one that stays true to the *importance of the signifier* in the formations of the unconscious. The chapter connects the ideas in *Syllabary* to the rest of Lacan's oeuvre and discusses in detail the literature that Lacan takes up in his essay.

A Laplanchean Engagement with Lacan's "The Freudian Thing, or the Meaning of the Return to Freud in Psychoanalysis": The Case of Handling Suspicion of Child Sexual Abuse

Magnus Biilmann (University of Copenhagen)

In the vast majority of research on child sexual abuse (CSA) there has been an emphasis on detecting and defining concrete and positively expressed signs of sexual abuse in children's behaviour. The so-called "memory wars" took up the discussion whether children's memories concerning sexual abuse were indicative of actual abuse. Schematically put, two camps with opposing views on the matter took part in the debate. One insisting on the truthfulness of the children's memories concerning abuse and the other camp insisting on the scientific evidence that memory was a purely constructive process, and accordingly, a completely unreliable evidential indicator of CSA. The topic is still relevant in a Danish clinical context. This is expressed in the oft-asked questions: "Did it happen or not?", and "What should we look for and what should we do to uncover CSA?"

From the point of view of my talk, French psychoanalysis has much to offer in the understanding of the phenomena sexual seduction, the expression of trauma, and not least, of the epistemological limitations of mainstream approaches to CSA.

I will approach the topic of professionally handling suspicions of CSA through pointing to relevant aspects of Lacan's "The Freudian Thing, or the Meaning of the Return to Freud in Psychoanalysis". This will be done in dialogue with Laplanche's theory of the 'Fundamental anthropological situation' and the concepts of the 'source-object' and the 'enigmatic signifier'. It will be argued in the talk that 'the Thing' and the 'source object' are quite similar concepts that are highly relevant for understanding CSA.

Apart from elucidating clinical aspects through "The Freudian Thing" and Laplanche's theory, my talk should be taken as an example of attempting to work within a Lacanian-Laplanchean conceptual tension. The two theories should be read together in a critical but constructive fashion instead of starkly opposing them, which to the presenter's mind have been a tendency in the psychoanalytic milieu so far. To read Lacan and Laplanche together in a sympathetic fashion is perhaps only possible today after the masters, or the master and his pupil, have died. At least it is worth the effort once again to confront the two in absentia.

The Mirror in the Real: Autistic Identification in Lacan's Mirror Stage

Leon Brenner (Potsdam University)

Jacques Lacan never provided a comprehensive account of autism in his teaching. As a matter of fact, he delivered only two explicit remarks on the subject of autism at two conferences he attended in the year 1975 at Geneva (1989) and Columbia University (1975). Nevertheless, in the course of Seminar I: Freud's Papers on Technique (1988), Lacan discussed the case of "little Dick" — originally provided by Melanie Klein (1930) — who was not diagnosed as a case of

autism at the time but is now considered to provide an early glimpse into Lacan's account of autism (Tustin, 1983; Lefort, 1988).

In his commentary on this case, Lacan (1988) attempted to explicate Dick's unique mental structure on the basis of the coordinates of the mirror stage firstly presented in *Écrits*. Lacan basically argued that by adjusting the different elements in the model of the mirror stage one can account for the distinct subjective structures constituted within it (neurosis, perversion, psychosis at the time). More specifically, Lacan argued that the distinct constitutive forms of identification established in the mirror stage are dependent on the "inclination of the mirror" (p. 140), which, under certain conditions, causes a certain number of objects to disappear from the model (p. 150).

Basing himself on the development of the early model of the mirror stage (that is, the "schema with two mirrors" that includes a plane and curved mirror; p. 124), Lacan argued that, in the case of Dick, the inclination of the plane mirror is established in such a way that completely expels it from the model. Taking into account that Lacan associated the reflection in the plane mirror with the symbolic order as the locus of signifiers, Lacan came to conclude that Dick does not have access to any form of symbolic mediation of the object (bouquet) and is left to directly face the concave mirror in the model (p. 68). Viewing the bouquet directly from this angle is associated with a real encounter with the object on the level of the drive. More specifically, Lacan argues that without the mediation of the plane mirror, the real bouquet and the imaginary vase cannot be perceived as containing or being contained by one another; but are perceived interchangeably, as the concave mirror does not offer a focal point through which they can be simultaneously perceived (p. 82).

These comments by Lacan are profound in the sense that they provide a novel approach to the understanding of autistic subjectivity on the basis of the coordinates of the mirror stage provided in *Écrits*. In this paper I will further discuss the different facets of Lacan's account of the autistic constitutive identification in the mirror stage. I will develop this account in relation to Rosine and Robert Lefort's notion of the "mirror in the real" (2003). Strictly abiding to Lacan's imperative that defines autistic subjects as subject's of language (1975, 1989), I will go on to provide an integrative model that explicates the singular relationship autistic subject's establish with language on the basis of the lack of the plane mirror; a relationship associated by Lacan (1988) with a "single and unique primary identification, with the following names — the void, the dark" (p. 69).

Decolonizing the Split Subject: a comment on two paragraphs and their footnotes (and a mask)

Clint Burnham (Simon Fraser University)

While the engagement of psychoanalysis and race/decolonization goes back decades (see, in particular, Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Christopher Lane, Kalpana Sheshadri-Crooks, Zahi Zalloua, Ilan Kapoor, and Robert Beshara), much work remains in two key areas. First, we need

a genealogy of its concepts, in terms of both its colonial conditions (as Said begins for Freud) – what is the Algerian context for Lacan’s discussion of *Antigone*, or the Coûfontaine trilogy, for example? – and its racialized or colonizing tropologies and significations (as Beshara, Kapoor, and Zalloua argue, in different ways, with respect to Žižek). Second, we need to not shy away from drawing on psychoanalytic theory to think in a decolonial way. This last, I argue in this paper, we can do via a reading of psychoanalysis, qua its canonical texts. That is, I would like to approach the misprision, in decolonial theory, of authentic subjectivity that necessarily counters fantasies of metissage, splits, and hybridity as have function in postcolonialism, and I want to do this by, as the title of my paper suggests, reading two specific moments in Lacan’s *Écrits*, from the 1960 talk “Remarks on Daniel Lagache’s Presentation” and the 1958 review “The Youth of Gide, or the Letter and Desire.” The question I am asking here, then, is in what way does Lacan’s “split subject,” for instance, extract specifically from Claude Lévi-Strauss’s misreading of Northwest Coast (Kwakiutl) transformer masks, and generally from his anthropological universalist approach to form. In “Remarks,” Lacan describes how a “figure joins together two profiles whose unity is tenable only if the mask remains closed” (*Écrits* 1966, 671), and in “Youth,” after referring to Freud on the “*Splattung* or splitting of the ego,” he asks “Must I ...show them how to handle a mask that unmasks the face it represents only by splitting in two” (*Écrits* 1966, 752). Footnotes to these passages, both from Lacan (for “Youth”) and Bruce Fink (for his translation of “Remarks”), direct the reader to two texts by Lévi-Strauss: his 1943 essay on “The Art of the Northwest Coast,” and “Split Representation in the Art of Asia and America,” which first appeared in book form in 1958. Reading Lacan avec Lévi-Strauss, then, allows us to trace a genealogy of the split subject, from mask to anthropologist to psychoanalyst – but to what end? In what way can or should we read the theory of the split subject – which evidently owes much, on the one hand, to a structuralist theory of the sign, and the *barre* between signifier and signified, and, on the other, to Freud’s *Splattung* and to Lacan’s heterodox splitting of the Ideal-Ego and Ego-Ideal – as originating in mask making or colonial anthropology? Am I arguing that Lacan has colonized Indigenous artefacts for his European theory? Or does this reading demonstrate how Kwakiutl art works turn out to anticipate a key tenet of structuralism? Or, finally, does my method here – tracing influence via Lacan and Lévi-Strauss’s texts – argue for a textual decolonization of psychoanalysis?

Descartes with Freud: Lacan’s Truth as Material Cause

Anthony Casadonte (Duquesne University)

Just as Lacan recognizes in Sade the explicit expression of an implicit sadism in Kant, we can see a more frequent juxtaposition of Freud with Descartes in the *Écrits* and the rest of his work. As early as the seminar on the Mirror Stage, Lacan questions the cogito in relation to psychoanalysis, and later in the *Écrits* with the seminar, “Science and Truth”, we discover that the cogito as the subject of science must be taken as the subject of psychoanalysis as well. But, in the latter seminar, Lacan nevertheless differentiates the truth of psychoanalysis from the truth of science with his idea of truth as cause. Having developed this idea in Seminar XI with respect to the gap of the unconscious, Lacan in “Science and Truth” now distinguishes between truth as efficient cause, final cause, formal cause, and material cause with the truth of science

being that of formal cause and the truth of psychoanalysis that of material cause. If we are to understand Lacan's interpretation of Freud's subject of the unconscious as the explicit expression of the implicit truth of Descartes' cogito, then we must question how the truth as formal cause in science relates to the truth as material cause in psychoanalysis. This paper will analyze the truth as cause of the cogito first with respect to a scholastic background situating the cogito within a master discourse of theological cosmology; next with respect to the breakdown of theological epistemology situating it within a hysteric discourse of subjective, solipsistic skepticism; further with respect to the rise of science and the modern subject situating the cogito within a university discourse which constitutes objective self-certainty. Demonstrating the mass production of hysterical subjectivity from the university discourse of modern thought and science, this paper will make sense of how psychoanalysis, and the discourse of the analyst, could then emerge to tackle the problem of a formalism set to remove doubt and lack by addressing the doubting subject of lack themselves from the site of the doubt and lack itself. Analyzing the different dimensions of truth as cause with respect to the cogito, we will see that psychoanalysis expresses the constitutive lack in science's and modern thought's attempts at formalism and a mastery of the subject and therefore expresses what was implicit in the cogito's truth as formal cause expressed in terms of a truth as material cause. Furthermore, Lacan's interest in the cogito and the notion of the subject, as distinct from his anti-Cartesian, anti-subject milieu, then may be seen as working towards a structure of the subject which avoids the pitfalls of a formalism of university discourse that would reproduce hysterical subjects. By looking more carefully at Lacan's juxtaposition of Descartes with Freud, we will hope in this paper to better understand the truth of the subject in relation to modern thought, science, and psychoanalysis.

The Lack in Transmission: Variations on Psychoanalytic "Training"

Fernando Castrillón (Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis)

Closely following Lacan's comments on analytic training and transmission in his *Variations on the Standard Treatment* and putting them in engagement with his observations regarding the psychoanalytic institution in *L'etourdit*, I advance a set of arguments regarding the vexing issue of psychoanalytic formation, particularly in the U.S., and the implications for clinical practice. I argue that, in the U.S. at least, we all too often refuse to engage in the kind of attempt at a larger cultural rapport that might allow ground for an analytic discourse counter posed to that of the capitalist, thereby providing an aperture, an opening in an otherwise closed horizon seemingly bereft of castration and its generative possibilities. The salutary implications for the clinic are evident.

What if we were to expand the bounds of the clinic such that the psychoanalytic institution approached those in formation in much the same way as I hope we will approach each other at the conference: listening to a *dire* that haunts a *dit*, a *saying irreducible to what is said*, on the part of those attempting to work with the impossible, namely the *dire* of Lacan and his texts, and ultimately the *dire* of Freud, which may come to hold us. This could be a group shorn of the *imaginary obscenity* of the *group-effect*, foregoing both the Master's and the Capitalist's discourse, and thereby revealing the lie that turns capitalism ever faster. A psychoanalytic

association firmly ensconced in the discourse of the analyst as social bond that opens up to the impossible.

Tiresian Breasts

Sheila L. Cavanagh (York University)

In a statement delivered at a conference on feminine sexuality at the University of Amsterdam in 1960, and later published in *Écrits*, Lacan said that we should not be fooled by the ancient prophet Tiresias who famously changes sex. He cannot know anything more about feminine sexuality than we do, which is nothing. Despite Lacan's skepticism about the Tiresian myth, he notes there is something about the clairvoyant that is of great relevance to the psychoanalytic project as he envisions it. Indeed, Lacan refers to Tiresias as "the one who ought to be the patron saint of psychoanalysis".

In this paper, I argue that the function of Tiresias, in Lacanian psychoanalysis, is to remind us that knowledge has a blind spot relating to *objet a*. Lacan's conceptualization of *objet a* is unisex. The breast is, for Lacan, not the object the infant desires. The infant looks beyond the mother and to what Lacan calls *objet a*. Lacan teaches us that the subject is caused by lack, a Real lack in the Other. He speaks of the Other's lack in terms of an infant's fear of the maternal "breast drying up" (2014, 234). This fear is not about actually losing breast milk as object relations theorists may conclude, but is, rather, an encounter with a Real lack. This is how I understand the Lacanian claim that the analyst must have breasts! Lacan writes: "It is not enough that the analyst should support the function of Tiresias. He must also, as play write Guillaume Apollinaire tells us, have breasts" (Lacan 1988, 270).

Lacan uses the signifier 'breasts' to designate *objet a* in the analyst. "When the analysand is 'tickling the tits' of the analyst, he or she is seeing this attention as desired, seeing his or her self as desired by the analyst and insisting upon it" (2006, 719). The analyst must tolerate the tit-play and give the analysand what they, as analysts, do not have. In 'Science and Truth', Lacan explains that the "object *a* must be inserted...into the division of the subject" (2006, 733). He says, "Where it was, there must I come to be as a subject" (2006, 734). The analytic breasts are, in other words, catalysts for the transference. The analytic task is, thus, to support the function of Tiresias" by introducing the truth as absent. In "Science and Truth" Lacan is emphatic, the truth "as long as pure reason can remember, has always kept its mouth shut" (2002, 737).

"An Open Letter:" The Function and Field of Speech and Language in White Nationalist Manifestoes

Rishi Chebrolu (University of Pittsburgh)

This paper seeks to examine how the arguments Lacan develops in “The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis” could aid in assembling a program for the research of white nationalism. Nearly sixty years after the writing of this chapter in *Écrits*, the assumptions of neurobiology and ego psychology that Lacan was attempting to push back against have not yet been decentered, and similar presumptions dominate both academic research and popular discourse regarding white nationalists. White nationalists are seen as “infected” with the pathology of individual, extreme racist bigotry, and the solution to the violence that they advocate for is either to isolate and excise them from the arenas of civil discourse or to rehabilitate them as welcome members of the polity as long as they do not advocate for violence. Against the impossible double-bind of current research on white nationalism—complete exclusion and uncritical inclusion—I argue that Lacanian psychoanalysis, and specifically the claims forwarded in “Function and Field,” offers an orientation through a focus on the rhetorical relationship between white nationalist subjectivity and the symbol of whiteness.

Building on the claims of Lacanian theorists of race such as Derek Hook, Sheldon George, and Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks, I hope to demonstrate how white nationalist speech in the rhetorical form of the manifesto functions to announce the desire of the white nationalist subject in a broader field of global structures of racial capitalism that produce a symbolic economy of racial signification that undergirds exploitation and domination. Manifestoes, such as those of Charleston shooter Dylann Roof, New Zealand shooter Brenton Tarrant, and the recent San Diego shooter John Earnest, are especially crucial to such a psychoanalytic approach to white nationalism because they demand the recognition of the Other, situating their desire in the field of the symbolic. The white nationalist subject retroactively assembles their history and worldview into a short, coherent statement that justifies their act of violence, demanding that society heed their call for a revolutionary war of genocide. If, as Lacan claims, “the subject’s unconscious is the other’s discourse,” the ultimate claim of this paper is that the rhetorical structure of the white nationalist’s demand of the other evinces the unconscious attachments that structure white nationalist subjectivity.

Points of Transmission

Marcus Coelen

My paper will make a few “philological points” on “La science et la vérité” with Freud’s “Constructions in Analysis” as a side text. Between the end of the Lacan’s text, its peculiar use of the verb “pointer” to Freud’s term “Konstruktionen” some lines will be drawn to raise the question of geometrical writing, truth and the transmission of psychoanalysis—beyond the *Écrits*.

The Drive in Lacan’s *Écrits* and His Early Seminars

Dan Collins (Affiliated Psychoanalytic Workbooks)

The concept of the drive develops slowly in Lacan's work. In his earliest writings and seminars, he little distinguishes the drive from desire, and the concept is still largely conceived as libido. The breakthrough text in the *Écrits* is "On Freud's Trieb and the Psychoanalyst's Desire," in which drive and desire are clearly distinguished. In this paper, I'll trace the concept of the drive from Lacan's earliest work through the "Freud's Trieb" paper and Seminar 11, The Four Fundamental Concepts. I'll argue that the drive, in this period of Lacan's career, only begins to take on a clearly Lacan aspect when it takes its position in the big graph as the "treasury of the signifier" at the upper level of the graph. This conception of drive is different from anything in Freud's metapsychology. This difference leads to Lacan's great labor to reconcile his theory of drive with Freud's in Seminar 11. The "Freud's Trieb" paper announces this effort as it was delivered in January of 1964, just as Seminar 11 was beginning. In the conclusion of the paper, I'll suggest why the drive seems to drop out of Lacan's work after Seminar 11.

The Gaze a la "Purloined Letter"; A performative case study of the Unseen behind the Scene.

Diana Cuello (Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis)

Using the Seminar on the Purloined Letter, I will investigate the role of the analyst performing various roles: that of analyst, of analysand; of writer, and of speaker. Lacan interprets the letter as a pure signifier, as a character in itself. Seeing the Seminar as an invitation to performance art, this case study will trace the shifting of the gaze through the imaginary, real, and symbolic registers. In a dramatization of the clinical experience: what does positioning the gaze on the imaginary relationship of analyst to analysand accomplish? What can it achieve in particular with regards to transmission and analytic formation? A play invoking the gaze of the audience to see the characters not seeing themselves be seen; potentially leading me, the analyst/writer to see myself be seen not seeing.

In an Act of seeing myself be seen, I aim to examine the impact of the gaze on the case. How does his experience of watching his mother's blindness, impact his reliance on the gaze of the other? Unable to see himself in the gaze of his mOther, this analysand's imaginary crossed into the real. He could not be misrecognized, he was unseen. He came to analysis because he wasn't sleeping. Distressing panic, linked initially to nothingness itself overwhelmed him. The interchange between analyst and analysand became aimed at provoking my performance anxiety; pressuring me as analyst to "know," but not telling me (at least initially) about the sexual practices that were keeping him up at night. This analysand re-enacted a "mirror position;" attempting to symbolize what remained unseen, while maintaining what he saw hidden. When successful, he was exquisitely and excruciatingly submerged in jouissance. I aim to investigate this in terms of the position of the letter.

Self described historically as the seer (because of his role in observing for his blind mother), he purported (online, through a screen) to see others not seeing him; repeating the scene where his mother had not seen him. By coming into treatment and placing me in a mirror position; he inhabited the position of his mother, losing his sight. His speech rupturing the illusion of control

he maintained from the position of seer, now seeing the scene where he had not been seen; leading to a final punctuation of the treatment, which, albeit premature, was...

I invite the audience to join me on a journey through my examination of the imaginary as a means to access the symbolic and gesture towards the real. Employing my per-formative desire as Sinthome, I take up an invitation to play. A reflection on my experience of the analytic act...and perhaps most anxiety provoking, its failure as such. A performance. A reading à la lettre.

“Transference Interpretation: On Lacan’s ‘Hommage fait à Marguerite Duras’”

James Curley-Egan (Advanced Candidate in Psychoanalysis, Contemporary Freudian Society)

This talk focuses on Lacan’s “Hommage fait à Marguerite Duras, du *Ravissement de Lol V. Stein*” (“Homage to Marguerite Duras, on *The Ravishing of Lol V. Stein*” (*sic*)). My reading takes up the performative aspect of this strange text of Lacan’s: given the theme of the novel in question, in which a young woman (Lol V. Stein) compulsively enacts the scene of her abandonment (by her fiancé for another woman; by her lover for an old friend); and, furthermore, given the complexity of its narrative structure (the entire story is told by the lover himself, which is to say, it is oriented from within this triangle of abandonment), what might it mean for Lacan, as a reader-addressee of that text, to have made such a gesture, an “homage”, to its author? If the novel’s protagonist, that is, is “ravished” by this event of exclusion (a term, as Eric Laurent points out, Lacan hears against its mystical roots is), and given that we, readers of the novel, are thereby also implicated in this ravishing, how does Lacan’s homage to Duras perform that role – that is, the role of the reader-ravisher-ravished?

At stake, I argue, is the question of what is transferred in the act of reading (the topic of my dissertation). For, and with reference to a number of commentaries that pursue this couple Lacan-Duras, the peculiarities of Lacan’s gesture – the way it relies on puns, for instance, or its habit of replicating the strange grammatical and phonetic tics of the novel – do seem to effect a kind of transference: by enacting “outside” the novel, that is, the structure that is repeated “inside” it (a topography that deconstructs), he effectively transmits its symptom to his own readers; a transmission that is legible, or audible, in the punning and strange grammar of the several (and often contradictory) commentaries that follow him.

Revolt! Lacan with Sade

Benjamin Davidson (San Francisco Bay Area Lacanian School/Stanford University)

“Revolt! Lacan with Sade” counterposes the theater and the clinic in a reading of “Kant avec Sade” alongside Peter Weiss’s 1964 play *Marat/Sade*, casting Lacanian conceptions of repetition, death drive, and the psychoanalytic act as potential forms of revolt against the “society of the spectacle” Sade prefigured.

There's something sick and sexy about what repeats, and Freud, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, named it. But something doesn't quite add up in Freud's text—as in Sade's ceaseless scrawling, the sixteen volumes of his *Oeuvres Complètes* comprising thousands of pages of graphic exhortation and fantasy (over 250,000 words making up the novel *120 Days of Sodom* alone, transcribed in near-microscopic handwriting, pasted into a forty-nine foot-long scroll and secreted in a crevice in the wall of his cell in the Bastille). There's a dubious tension there, some enduring, undelineated mismatch running through all the torturous theorization and never fully accounted for, despite Freud's Herculean labors to master it: he tries heroically to reconcile *pleasure's tendency to seek an endpoint*—a *satisfaction* he characterized, variously, as a pacifying reduction in tension, as an effort to maintain arousal at a pleasingly homeostatic minimal level (a kind of Nirvana, a timed-release blow-out) or even as the desire for oblivion, full stop—with the drive to *keep enjoyment going at all costs*, beyond death even. All his efforts prove fruitless.

You can find the same contradiction in Sade (the *Sadian universe* being *riddled*, like the Freudian one, *with philosophical paradox*). Since pleasure is evanescent, disappearing in the very consummation it continually seeks, Sade cleaves to pain. His fictional libertines share an *unquenchable thirst for infinite torments*; they fantasize that by prolonging *their victims' suffering* ad infinitum their stimulations might be indefinitely extended. Their monstrous phalli, perpetually tumescent; their endlessly enumerated, combinatory copulations; their fountains of glistening ejaculate; their *human pyramids* which, in Lacan's words... *fabulously demonstrate the cascading nature of jouissance* all aim, he writes, for *water buffets of desire built to make the Villa d'Este Gardens sparkle with a baroque voluptuousness*; enjoyment *spurting up into the heavens*. In Sade's texts the torturers remain perpetually aroused, their victims fresh and *in the full radiance of their bodily splendor*; *despite the horrendous ordeals to which they are being subjected*, they preserve, unmarred to the very end, *the exquisite delicacy of their physical features*. -The problem is that Sade's libertines' longing for annihilation collides with their desire to keep the orgy going. Dany Nobus describes how the *incomparable and unassailable beauty* of their victims *erects for them a last barrier against the satisfaction of their desire for absolute destruction... the unspeakable horror of seeing their criminal will come to full fruition... which would not only require the annihilation of humanity, God and Nature, but also of the libertines themselves*. This logical failure, never fully articulated, encapsulates what Lacan described as *an incoherence in Sade's work*. His perverts have pledged to live subject to the dictates of its cruelty, seeking nothing less than a full stop, an irrevocable end to the play of pleasure's perpetual extinction and rekindling. They aim for nothing more than to escape its eternal cycling, arousal into consummation, death into burgeoning life. Yet they abjure satisfaction and its concomitant waste, exhaustion, loss; they rush headlong towards the same full stop they seek to prevent at any cost.

Subversions of the subject: between act and movement

María de los Ángeles Gómez Escudero (Psychoanalytic Forum of Puerto Rico, University of Puerto)

The history of psychoanalysis is traversed by subversion from the beginning. We know that Freud very soon operated a subversion on his medical and neurological training, also on the psychological option of the late nineteenth century to give way to an unprecedented view of the body and the origin and function of the symptoms; a new perspective about reality, temporality, pleasure and satisfaction; new avenues to think about sexuality and the paradox of desire. These subversions in Freud's journey - at the same time enlightening and disturbing - laid the theoretical foundations for a transformative conception of the clinic, the psychoanalytic clinic also giving way to a new perspective on what makes us and inscribes us as humans. But the supposed center of our humanity do not have any essence, it rather remitted to the irrevocable and unrealizable force of desire, subverting the idea of a rational human being, master of his life and actions and apt to achieve what was proposed. It is with Lacan that subversion was first linked to the subject, underlying that there is no subversion without subject or subject without subversion, and that the consequences of such association should be drawn for the ethics of analytic praxis. The context of this proposal refers to the so-called "Return to Freud" begun in the mid-50s, when Lacan began to question the drifts that the international psychoanalytic movement had made, enthroning the self, its defense mechanisms and its imaginary fanfare as guarantors of a harmony and a horizon of normality, oneness and uniformity. In this journey Lacan outlined essential elements of his theoretical proposal: The operator of the great Other introduced in 1955 will be consolidated as a support for the symbolic concatenation of the subject; the dialectic of demand and desire is established; the concept of enjoyment is emerging as distinct from that of desire and the latter becomes the revolving plate of all the elaborations of that time of his teaching, particularly as regards the signifier, the metaphor and the metonymy.

Following the construction of the Graph of desire, presented in Lacan's Seminar VI: The Desir and its interpretation and in his text "Subversion of desire and dialectic of the desire", we aim to elaborate about the subversions of the subject proposed by Lacan. Is subversion of the subject a movement or an act? How can subversion be related to the logical times of the cure when the subject is confronted the question of his lack, and the anguish that arises when the subject faces the failure of the Other to live up to his or her supposed completion. How subversion relates to castration? How subversion can be seen not only as a movement but as an ethical and political act? We also aim to elaborate about the repercussions of these questions.

What's Truth Got to do with It? Or Why forgetting is the problem

Todd Dean (St. Louis Lacan Study Group)

The problematics of a science of psychology were debated for decades before Freud showed up, at least since Kant argued that there cannot be a science of psychology, because, he said, the psyche cannot be reduced to mathematical formulation. Of course, there is today a large and well-respected field of academic psychology and psychiatry for which Kant's objection is

meaningless (after all, who, in preparing the DSM, ever thought about the question of mathematical formulation beyond the application of statistical models?). And while Freud insisted his goal was to see psychoanalysis as a science, both he and it have been largely dismissed by the academy.

My intention in this paper is to show how Lacan's "Science and Truth" speaks to the question of the scientific nature of psychoanalysis in ways that are more meaningful than the empiricist algorithms that inform academic psychology and psychiatry today, but also, in the very fact of being scientifically valid, are a threat to that same academic discourse, as part of the normalizing discourse of our times: it is the science that makes psychoanalysis dangerous to the status quo, and which necessitates attacks on the field from the academy.

Sci-Fi and Truth: Saturated Subjects in the films of Claire Denis and Jordan Peele

Nicholas Devlin (The Graduate Center, CUNY)

Lacan's *Science and Truth* famously details a certain ambivalence between psychoanalysis and post-17th-century science. His assertion that neither psychoanalysis as a practice nor the Freudian unconscious could have developed before science must be taken alongside the argument that positivist science's adherence to the primacy of structure over cause ensures its neglect of the subject. Science, for Lacan's purposes during this time, neither knows nor wants to know anything about the truth as cause, a tension which qualifies the origins of psychoanalysis in this same positivist science.

The status of science relative to truth in contemporary Anglophone film can be equally fraught, especially in an era that has seen a proliferation of wildly successful post-apocalyptic and dystopian films. Two of the more prominent films released in early 2019, Jordan Peele's *Us* and Claire Denis' *High Life*, both take off from a place where the missteps of science have enacted violence in such a way as to either produce marginalized groups or harm already existing marginalized groups. But importantly, while in both films the operations of science "cause" (in the conventional sense of the word) the violence that drives the plots of the films, the science it-self is, in a sense, displaced, and both films instead deal primarily with its aftereffects: the violence of subterranean clones and human bonding in the empty horror of space. In *High Life*, prisoners are sent to space under false pretenses and subjected to sexual experimentation while sexual relationships between them are banned, but much of the present action takes place after the experiments have ended. In *Us*, a long since aborted cloning project of the U.S. Government is the impetus for the violence and terror that constitutes the film's action. Can the displacement of science within two popular contemporary examples of the sci-fi genre be related to the unease around the scientific production of truth, subject, and object in these films, and how can this un-ease be better understood in relation to Lacan's writing about the kinds of truths and subjects that are operational in science?

I propose that by looking at the operations of science in these films in light of Lacan's argument about the subjects of positivist science in his 1965 essay, we can better understand the

displacement of science within these sci-fi films, as well as the sense in which the visual or fantastical pyrotechnics so emblematic of the genre have been de-emphasized in favor of existential and interpersonal terror. In this paper I argue that science, as a narrative element in the films, is subjected to an inverse of the effect that Lacan's scientific positivism has on its saturated subject: it is consigned to a place outside the field of narration. Science as the cause in both films takes on something of the saturated subject, that which science cannot treat, as it sets the stage for the action to come without being the subject of the films.

Gratuitous Goods and Magic Words (Or Why the Unconscious Speaks about Sex)

Daniel Deweese

In his text, *The Freudian Thing*, Lacan delineates why the Unconscious is limited to sexual desire, and at the same time posits the origin of human society as based on, "...the law of preferential marriage alliances and forbidden relations – that the first combinatory for exchanges of women between family lines relies, developing the fundamental commerce and concrete discourses... in an exchange of gratuitous goods and magic words." For Lacan, the origin of human societies and the sexual desire immanent to the Unconscious are interrelated. The prohibition of incest and fundamental exchange of women concomitantly restricted the Unconscious to sexual desire and established human society. If Lacan took this as a starting point for his *Return to Freud*, we should ask ourselves: why is the apparent restriction of the Unconscious to sexual desire as based in the foundational exchange of gratuitous goods and magic words important for psychoanalysis today?

In this paper I review Lacan's assertion in *The Freudian Thing* regarding the Unconscious and foundations of human society through his notion of *jouissance*-value. I will examine the dialectical transformations of the object of exchange, which as Lacan reminds us, is the same object we touch in the dialectic of treatment. Furthermore, I examine what Lacan defines in his essay as the introduction of human signification as instituting the division of desire and labor structured in the Master/Slave dialectic "which accounts for the symbolic emergence for this imaginary struggle" for *jouissance*-value. Apropos Lacan's analysis of the aforementioned dialectic, I will propose that the combinatory for exchanges of women as the phallic object, not only establishes human society proper and limits the Unconscious to sexual desire, but also points to the road of excess (*jouissance*) which marks the body which must be externalized in the object.

In conclusion, I address *jouissance*-value in the context of modernity and market exchange. If the exchange of the object of *jouissance* has been modified through market exchange, then the consequences should be assessed through Lacan's proposition that the symbolic law established the fundamental commerce and concrete discourses on which human societies are based. I posit the re-examination of this fundamental structure in order to grasp the reconfiguration of the exchange of the object of *jouissance*-value. Furthermore, I propose this modification of the exchange is reflected in the subject apropos a shift in the structure of the

myth of the Father of the primordial horde. As a result, I propose psychoanalysts must follow Lacan's assertion at the end of *The Freudian Thing*, that psychoanalysis must constantly subject itself to "what is known as renewal" in order to maintain the institution of analytic experience in the wake of this shifting topology.

Desiring the perfect(ed) body: Lacan's *Ecrits* and notion of body as sites for protest
Claudia Di Gianfrancesco (Birkbeck University of London)

From the Enlightenment onwards, men's desire to measure and 'objectively know' the world has led to another much more problematic desire: that of mastering bodies. The way in which bodies are physically produced and controlled operates both through means of erasure and enhancement. On a discursive plane, narratives produced by 'scientific' investigations further contributed to establishing what counts as human and what does not. Patriarchic master discourses of 'science', psychology, and philosophy, have violently inscribed and organized *other(ed)* bodies in a hierarchical fashion. Subaltern bodies of minority groups have been symbolically defined by a xenophobic and racist post-Enlightenment big Other.

Looking at both human and non-human bodies, this paper seeks to explore how contemporary society's desire for perfection can be critically analysed through Lacan's *Ecrits*. By exploring both the prosthetic human body and that of the cyborg – taken as objects of psychoanalytic and psychosocial inquiry – the current paper asks what do these bodies tell us about contemporary desires and fantasies of perfection, success, and enjoyment.

The cyborg body, as more perfect than our *phallic* human one, is reviewed through Lacan's *Mirror Stage*. Shifting the focus on neoliberal narratives of 'perfectibility', other texts from Lacan's *Ecrits*, are called to the fore and 'put in conversation' with one another. Employing several of Lacan's writing including: *Functions and Fields of psychoanalysis*; *The Mirror Stage*; *The Subversion of the Subject*; and *Position of the Unconscious*; this paper takes as a starting point of analysis different periods in Lacan's theorisation of the revolutionary power of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is thus employed as a means of analysis of socio-political issues as well as a site where new meaning can be engendered, where revolution can be initiated.

A close reading of these texts is accompanied by an analysis of Crichton's 1973 movie *Westworld*. Parallels between Lacan's ideas as developed in the *Ecrits* and the movie are employed to forward a critique of the pervasive neoliberal narratives of perfectibility, consumerism, and individualism which characterise today's society. The artificial body as the non-lacking other, of Lacan's *Mirror stage*, is understood as the embodiment of contemporary society's desire for a more perfect version of the *phallic* human body – as also reflected by the extensive means through which the human body is 'enhanced'. *Westworld's* robotic bodies complicate – while simultaneously expand – our understanding of subject/object relationships in Lacanian psychoanalysis.

The uncanny figure of the cyborg is reviewed as a metaphor of the fear of the White-supremacist Other who through various pseudo-scientific psychological discourses attempts to

master the other cyborg abjected body. The perfect(ed) human body, as achieved through plastic surgery and makeovers, is also taken as a tool to critically analyse the pervasive contemporary desire of perfectibility. As Lacan teaches however, both there is a fundamental impossibility for the master to say it all and keep these initially docile bodies under control. There is always a reminder, a left over which escapes the master's claws. And it is from this surplus that this paper argues that, thanks to psychoanalysis, revolution and social change can be fostered.

'Doing Nothing' — The Refusal and Fantasy of the Fatigued Subject

Amanda Diserholt (*Edinburgh Napier University*)

In 'The Direction of the Treatment and the Principles of Its Power', Lacan expounds the link between need, demand and desire and how this interaction comes to structure fantasy. Specifically, fantasy is a response to the demand of the Other, an interpretation of and an answer to the desire of the Other. Paradoxically, fantasy is further the place in which one dreams of oneself as a self-sufficient being. Lacan explains this is particularly the case for the anorexic, who responds to the suffocating and reductive (to needs) demands of the Other through a refusal, thereby attempting to create space for his/her own desire. The fundamental fantasy is that which structures desire and thus constructs the subject's sense of identity. Accordingly, Lacan compares fantasy to that of being and further links it to falling sleeping. 'To be or not to be, to sleep, perchance to dream' — this illustrates the fundamental ambivalence and split of the subject between being and meaning and further suggests that falling asleep in the fantasy protects against the experience of division.

With these insights we can come to better understand contemporary symptoms increasingly presented in the body without any obvious biological or symbolic material attached to them. This paper will explore the phenomenon of fatigue within a sociocultural context by drawing on interviews conducted with those with the condition. Contemporary society incessantly presents individuals with commandments structured by late capitalism and the metaphor 'the body as machine' under the dominant imperative to 'keep going'; demanding constant presence. Following the injunction constitutes a threat to be reduced to a working and enjoying bodily object on the side of the Other. The scientific discourse further reinforces the imperative to 'keep going': the absence of a valid excuse in the form of a visible biological deviation leads to the belief 'there's nothing wrong with you'. I will postulate that through fatigue, the subject responds with a refusal to incorporate the Other's energy as otherness in an attempt to construct absence and one's own position. The refusal consists of a drive to embody 'nothing': reaching a protective state of sleepiness and self-sufficiency wherein one's energy as needs, desires, affects and ultimately responsibility are eradicated. I will therefore argue that fatigue constitutes an almost literal embodiment of the fundamental fantasy. Analogous to the anorexic who 'eats nothing', the fatigued subject 'does nothing' as an answer and disappearance in fantasy.

I will in this paper further argue how, paradoxically, one 'does nothing' in order to do and be 'something', showcasing the fundamental split of the subject, 'to be or not to be'. Because on the one hand the subject attempts to symbolically signal its aliveness through the body, and on the other there is an endeavour to numb the body (of language) into nothingness. This contradiction will be discussed in relation to Lacan's notions of separation and mourning, which

will also lastly highlight how the fatigued subject does nothing but perpetuate the metaphor 'the body as machine' s/he tried to escape from.

"Science and Truth": Forgetting and Haste in Descartes

Alexander Dolabi (Duquesne University)

This paper will focus on the reading of René Descartes by Jacques Lacan in "Science and Truth." In "Science and Truth," as well as the analyses of Descartes in Lacan's eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth seminars, I argue that we can trace a temporality of this subject—a subject I take to be no different than that of capitalist modernity. Although the subjects of both science and psychoanalysis are homologous—that is, barely more than sites of division—Lacan contends in "Science and Truth" that psychoanalysis treats this subject quite differently. Whereas psychoanalysis "puts to work" the dimension of truth in the subject, science in the modern, absolute sense "forgets the circuitous path by which it came into being" ("Science and Truth": 1966, 738). Science, in other words, is marked by a constitutive amnesia.

Descartes himself seems to have anticipated this forgetting. In the *Regulae ad directionem ingenii*, written between 1619 and 1628 and left unfinished, a young Descartes worries about growing old and having to rely increasingly on the waning power of memory rather than the reasoning powers of youth. In contrast to the *Meditationes*, it seems that Descartes here is not attempting to safeguard himself against a *genius malignus* that wishes to deceive him. Rather, it is the very power of reason that must be protected from an inevitable future degeneration. To do so, Descartes attempts to provide a method (a *meta-hodós*, essentially a 'road of roads') that could both produce *and* be the instrument of a structured mind capable of investigating absolutely anything. I will look closely at Descartes' cognitive procedure and especially the temporalities of his "actions of the intellect," namely intuition and deduction. In brief, Descartes sees intuition as belonging to the order of simultaneity and instantaneity, whereas deduction operates with a temporality of succession, not at all unlike the temporalities of *langue* and *parole*. The *Regulae*, moreover, attempts to overcome the faulty power of memory by 'suturing' intuition and deduction together to form what Descartes calls enumeration, which is described as a procedure of deduction moving so rapidly that it functions as instantaneous intuition.

I will discuss how this attempt at suturing these two "actions of the intellect," and hence their corresponding temporalities, could only form a precarious fantasy characterized by a movement of time that Lacan in his eleventh seminar called "haste" or "thrust." Furthermore, I wish to consider whether Descartes' brand of 'logical time' is as indicative of capitalist modernity as the *cogito* is for the subject of (modern) science. Was Descartes' "cognitive speed," which intended to escape the crisis of a future decline in the power of memory, anticipatory of capitalism's own attempt to avoid its constitutive deadlock by means of constant acceleration? What insights can psychoanalysis ultimately provide for this problem of temporality?

Direction of the Treatment and Lacanian Supervision – A Qualitative Study

Dries Dulsster (University of Ghent)

Supervision is a central component of clinical training, offering a platform of support for the therapist and a place to critically reflect on his or her practice. As such, it is crucial to most forms of talking therapy. Although recent publications have discussed the matter of Lacanian Supervision on a theoretical level, research on a Lacanian perspective on supervision is scarce. As such, we questioned how Lacanian supervision is practiced on a day-to-day basis, by mapping and interpreting what the key features are in a naturalistic Lacanian psychoanalytic supervision from a first-person perspective. Using interview data of participants' personal accounts of their supervision, we applied (phenomenologically inspired) thematic analysis to gain insight into what they believed was at stake in their supervision.

We interpreted the data within the context of Lacan's text "The Direction of the Treatment". Lacan approaches the treatment from the analyst's side, making it very well suited to extract ideas about what is at stake for the analyst and for his supervision. His views on interpretation (tactics), transference (strategy) and lack-of-being (politics) will guide our analysis.

We will discuss four themes deduced from the interview data, linking them to Direction of the Treatment. More specifically these themes will revolve around aspects of strategy: The first three embody a sense of movement and direction: "From ego to subject", "From transference to transmission" and "From structure to singularity". The fourth theme is a statement of differentiation: "It is not analysis".

The first theme (from ego to subject) concerns the shift from ego to Other, or from the imaginary to the symbolic. The supervisor operates with Lacan's famous saying '*Gardez-vous de comprendre*' (Beware of understanding) in mind, emphasizing you don't know the person you're discussing, pointing towards the signifiers instead of the story of the patient. Second, (from transference to transmission) the demand for supervision is directed by transference and is addressed to an analyst who has made a name for himself. Someone who seems to hold the answers to the questions the supervisee is struggling with. This eventually evolves in the supervisee acquiring a certain 'know-how'. Third (from structure to singularity), supervision is a place where clinicians construct a case, thinking about what is going on with their patients. This case construction usually starts with a focus on the structural (Lacanian) diagnostics. Although Lacanian psychoanalysts work with categories (the clinical structures), the focus will be on what is singular in every case. Last, there's a difference between analysis and supervision. This doesn't mean supervision and analysis don't influence each other, but certain pitfalls may arise when they get mixed up.

We will conclude that Lacanian supervision doesn't consider the matter of tactics (avoiding being a mentor or a coach), but focusses on strategy, namely the Symbolic dimension and the Other. Underlying the four strategies we'll argue there's the politics of the Barred Other, being the big secret of psychoanalysis.

Literature and the Letter

Tom Eyers (Duquesne University)

What became of Lacanian literary theory? In the 1970s and 1980s, a notably female-dominated cohort of critics – Barbara Johnson, Shoshana Felman, Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous – resisted earlier vulgar Freudianisms in literary criticism and turned instead to Lacan’s sophisticated, structural repurposing of psychoanalytic theory and practice. With the retrenchment of humanist-historicism in literary theory in the 1990s, Lacan’s influence largely dwindled. When Žižek, Dolar and others of the Slovenian school retooled Lacan for cultural theory in the late 1990s and early 2000s, their analyses were often frustratingly naïve, simply and dogmatically overlaying Lacanian concepts over filmic and literary content, smothering the formal particularities of those media in the process.

In this paper, I propose a renewed Lacanian literary theory by returning to Lacan’s pioneering reading of Poe in the *Écrits*, and by considering the late and, at first blush, inscrutable essay ‘Lituraterre’. While building on the great Lacanian literary theory of Felman, Johnson and others, I will also identify the principle weakness of that tradition, namely its tendency to treat particular aspects of narrative form as merely allegorical of priorly posited psychoanalytic ideas. While an advance on an earlier generation’s attempts to diagnose the psychopathologies of canonical authors, 1970s Lacanian theory still tended to neutralize the material specificity of texts through the undialectical foregrounding of a Lacanian theoretical framework that then remained untouched by the particularities of the text in question. This is very much not what Lacan did when he approached Poe, for instance. Instead, he allowed the immanent formal invention of the text itself to co-author the theoretical ideas that resulted. What if we were to renew that method in Lacanian literary theory today?

Teaching, training and aggressiveness in psychoanalysis: The question of the institution.

Hilda Fernandez-Alvarez

Based on my current research on institutions, I would like to reflect on three texts from *Écrits*:

“Aggressiveness in Psychoanalysis” (1948), “Psychoanalysis and its teaching” (1957) and “The situation of psychoanalysis and the training of psychoanalysts in 1956” (1956).

I want to put to test the critiques Lacan articulated at that time regarding the massification of psychoanalysis, deintellectualization, and arbitrariness and confusion, to the contemporary landscape. My questions in this paper are: What are the challenges we currently face regarding teaching, training and aggressiveness in psychoanalysis? What is the place of the psychoanalytic institution when we face phenomena such as anthropogenic climate change, massification of digital technologies, the worst massive displacement of stateless persons of modern times and the global rising of far-right regimes? It is my intention to reconsider the place of the institution and to seriously pose whether an institution could ever depend on the analytical act.

Traversing the Void that Separates Psychotic and Non-Psychotic Experience

Brett Fimiani (Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis)

My presentation will address the gap (a void) that too often derails the analytic relationship between the clinician and the person experiencing psychosis. I suggest that current misunderstandings of psychosis stem from biological reductionism and, more fundamentally, from an underlying fear of psychosis. Operating from a place of fear leads to clinical approaches that stigmatize and punish those who have extreme experiences.

Lacanian Psychoanalysis remains a vitally important approach to working with people who experience psychosis and other extreme states. Lacan, like Freud, had a deep respect for the experience of, and the specific knowledge inherent to, psychosis. However I am finding that even the most current Lacanian approaches are lacking when it comes to the problematics of the transference.

Although Lacan made several definitive statements that indicated his hesitation regarding the treatment of psychosis, his essay “On a Question Preliminary to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis” is devoted to keeping the question of the treatment of psychosis, in the most radical sense, open. The “question” that is preliminary, Lacan tells us, is the question of the “defect [i.e., foreclosure] that gives psychosis its essential condition.”

It is certain that Lacan advanced the understanding of the structure and true stakes of the psychotic experience. However, on the question of initiating treatment, Lacan did not reach far beyond Freud’s conclusion, particularly regarding the problem of transference. Given the unique relation of the psychotic to knowledge, the transference, according to Freud and Lacan, inevitably reaches an ‘impasse’. At this point in Lacan’s thinking psychosis represented something radically outside the practice of psychoanalysis. Where do we stand today on the question of the psychoanalytic treatment of psychosis and other extreme states?

More recent advances (e.g., see W. Apollon, et al., 2002), have provided us with a guide on how to listen to, and intervene in, psychosis in a way that can create the possibility of a (symbolic) treatment. However, there are shortcomings of current Lacanian approaches that need to be addressed in order for clinicians to make more effective and authentic connections with people experiencing psychosis.

I will emphasize the work of Davoine and Gaudilliere (2004) to discuss ways that we can traverse the void that often separates psychotic and non-psychotic experience—a void that, if left unaddressed, can lead to a ‘transference impasse’. The void is made of ‘zones of non-existence’ already well known to the person experiencing psychosis and that evoke horror in the clinician. When one experiences ‘horror’ in the face of psychosis this is not necessarily to be chalked up to so-called ‘counter-transference’. Rather the experience of horror is the price one must pay to cross the threshold and to gain access to an other’s subjective world. The horror is universal, but one has to have a desire to know it.

The bulk of my presentation will involve a discussion of a clinical vignette that explores how the 'dream-work' is one way to pass through the horror and to limit the violence of certain images seen and felt in the body.

Lacan on the Aesthetics and Ethics of Style: Implications for Writing Psychoanalytic Case Studies

Erica S. Freeman (Duquesne University)

This presentation consists of a portion of the speaker's forthcoming dissertation, a project that attends to the several articulations in Lacan's seminars and *Écrits* between modern science, literature, writing, knowledge, and the network of concepts associated with the sexual, resulting in part in a specifically Lacanian account of the psychoanalytic case study genre. Working in critical response to Michel Foucault's genealogy of cases in *Discipline and Punish*, translator and historian of psychoanalysis John Forrester proposed an account of the case study genre as characteristic of the professions, disciplines that produce knowledge about the object of study Foucault termed "the individual." According to Forrester, the "golden age" of this genre began in the mid-19th century in relation to other sociocultural events, such as the formation of the novel and detective story genres in literature, the rise of secular institutions as moral authorities, and the increasing appeal to psychiatric expertise in courts. This presentation interrogates Forrester's proposed history and philosophy of the case, taking as a point of entry his claim that "the case history as genre, so anathematized by Lacan, is both the pedagogic and the institutional attempt to overcome [the] impossibility" of successfully transmitting psychoanalytic knowledge. Acknowledging that Forrester's modified Foucauldian account of the case owes much to the "style of reasoning" concept first invoked in history of science by A. C. Crombie and subsequently amended by historian and philosopher of the human sciences Ian Hacking, this presentation begins with an introduction to the concept of style as a term imported from art history and sociology of knowledge, and distinguishes between notions of individual and collective style. Drawing from philosopher John Rajchman's *Truth and Eros*, in which he argues that the style, for Lacan, was a specifically *ethical* problem with implications for knowledge production, pedagogy, and subject formation, this presentation then focuses on links between Lacan's remarks on style in the "Overture" to the *Écrits* and Seminars 7 (on ethics) and 23 (on the *sinthome*). What relations are there between style, sublimation, and the possibility of making an original contribution to psychoanalytic tradition? This presentation argues that the style a clinician employs when writing up a case can be decisive in either becoming an alienated disciple or creating a name for oneself from which one can speak/write.

Between Personal and Legal Responsibility: How Psychoanalysis "Unrealizes" [Irréalise] Crime and Its Consumption.

Anwita Ghosh (Fordham University)

With the rise of true crime stories on our binge watchlists, one can hardly overlook the mass appeal of criminal minds in these times of over-enjoyment and blurring social bonds. The complementarity between social bonds and symptoms, therefore, gets translated to the ways we, as viewers, consume the spectacle of crime and perceive the notion of “responsibility.” In this respect, re-reading Lacan’s lecture, “A Theoretical Introduction to the Functions of Psychoanalysis in Criminology,” might help us understand the concept of “responsibility” anew in the context of the consumption of criminal acts, rather than in their perpetration. How can one explain the rise in the number of true crime shows? What keeps this genre going? What does it tell us about our sense of the just and the unjust? Why is it difficult to reconcile legal and personal responsibility while watching these shows? In other words, while viewing the perpetrator confess (in shows like the *Ted Bundy Tapes* and *Mindhunter*), why do we automatically dissociate responsibility from its legal realm to that of the personal? Does this hold the key of reading criminal motives less as a social symptom and more as a subjective acting out against the Symbolic order? In order to answer some of these questions, my paper attempts to unpack the concept of “responsibility” as outlined by Lacan in this lecture. Lacan states that “the structures of society are symbolic. Individuals in so far as they are “normal” use them for real conduct [“behaviour” in the English translation]; in so far as they are psychopathic, express them by symbolic conduct” [“behaviour”]. This is the key insight. Following Lacan, I think one could say that we, “normal neurotic” subjects, act in the Symbolic order in a real way whereas the criminal acts in the Real order in a symbolic way. We take the Symbolic as Symbolic, while the criminal mistakes the Symbolic for the Real. He takes the structures of the Symbolic for something they are not. While Stephen Costello and Veronique Voruz talk about this in terms of criminology as a field that might benefit from Lacanian psychoanalysis, I read this notion of “responsibility” in the context of viewership and consumption. By tracing how shows like *Ted Bundy Tapes* and *Mindhunter* dramatise scenes of confession/articulation, I will argue that these enactments can be seen as variations of the analytic session, not strictly in the Lacanian sense though. These fetishised spaces/portrayals of speech acts de-essentialize (unrealize) the crime itself by refusing to de-humanize the criminal. However, it uncovers a tendency among the viewers that might not fit the schema of de-essentializing so perfectly. My paper is an attempt to understand this vicarious enjoyment of the scenes of confession as a way of dissociating personal responsibility from legal responsibility and its implications in our subjective modalities of enjoyment.

Lacan 56, Lacan 67, Lacan 74: Situation, Proposition, Authorization

Patricia Gherovici

I take three moments in Lacan's work and explore the development of a model of transmission for psychoanalysis whose consequences in the training of psychoanalysts and in the practice of psychoanalysis are still relevant today. In the 1956 *Situation*, Lacan assesses the state of psychoanalysis and that of psychoanalysts at the time. He denounces the pitfalls of classical psychoanalytic training while offering an unapologetic and occasionally scathing appraisal of the state of psychoanalysis at a moment when professional qualifications and the status of the psychoanalyst were questioned and redefined. Ten years later, Lacan proposes a follow up by

putting forward a controversial experiment in the training of psychoanalysts-- the *pass*. Announced in 1967, the procedure in which analysands give testimony of their analysis shows the unique unravelling of a singular cure. In this passage from the position of analysand to experiencing the desire of being an analyst, Lacan offers an anti-institutional institutionalization of the transformative passage from analysand to analyst. This model is based on the idea that the training institute does not have to intervene in an analysand's decision to see patients. Self-authorization thus reveals a desire that does not depend on the Other. In 1974, Lacan reformulates this idea and specifies that analysts authorize themselves with "some others". This is also when he extends the idea of the analyst's self-authorization by stating that one's only authorization as a sexed being comes from oneself. What does it mean that the radical and simple principle of self-authorization for the training of psychoanalysts also applies in matters of sexual identity? Is Lacan putting forward a new ethics of sexual difference that would rely on self-authorization, with its important implications for the transmission of psychoanalysis?

The graph of desire: Neurosis and Perversion

Gabriela R. Giuglioloni (American Association for psychoanalysis in clinical social work)

In subversion of the subject and dialectic of desire, Lacan introduces the graph of desire in an effort to differentiate desire from need and demand and localize it topologically. In emphasizing the ethics of psychoanalysis, Lacan points out that desire goes beyond demand, precisely because desire is articulated but not articulable. Lacan expresses that the purpose of the graph in this essay is to show where desire is situated in relation to the subject, a subject defined by its relation with the signifier. Desire is the desire of the Other as desire appears when the subject confronts the lack in the Other and becomes himself a barred subject, a desiring subject. The access to desire for the subject is possible by not being the imaginary phallus that completes the Other. Lacan situates desire in the second floor of the graph of desire between the Other and the drive, directly related to the formula of the fantasm.

The inscription of the paternal metaphor, the acquisition of the symbolic phallus makes possible the constitution of the fantasm in neurosis and perversion. However, there are differences in the passage from the imaginary phallus to the signifier of the phallus in these structures. In the text *Subversion of the subject*, Lacan says: "perversion adds a reabsorption of (small phi) the phallic image that would scarcely appear original if it did not interest the Other as such in a very particular way." In the same text, he points out: "the neurotic fantasm contains (minus phi), the imaginary function of castration under a hidden form, reversible from one of its terms to the other. That is to say, like a complex number, it imaginarizes alternatively one of this terms in relation to the other."

Therefore, the constitution of the fantasm in the perverse structure differs from the constitution of the fantasm in the neurotic structure. In perversion, the subject acts what the neurotic fantasizes. He does not doubt that his acts serve the *jouissance* of the *Other*. The algorithm of the fantasm in neurosis, barred subject *losange* object *a*, suffers an inversion in perversion. There is a dominance in the privilege place of *jouissance*, the object *petit a* in the fantasm substitutes the subject. In the perverse structure, “the subject imagines himself to be the *Other* in order to ensure his *jouissance*.” He offers himself to be the object for the *Other*’s *jouissance*. My paper will attempt to explore the relation of desire with the formula of the fantasm in neurosis and perversion as well as the differences in the process of inscription of the signifier of the phallus in these structures. The particularities of these differences in the constitution of the fantasm in neurosis and perversion will also be discussed.

Tripping Over the Unconscious: Freud and Lacan on Psychedelics

Nathan Gorelick (Utah Valley University)

Lacan locates the persistent misapprehension that the drive [Trieb] is a synonym for instinct [Instinkt], that is, a natural/biological force, at the basis of psychology’s swerve away from the ethics of psychoanalysis and toward its self-fashioning “in the service of technocratic exploitation.”¹ Today, certainly in the United States, psychology’s technocratic and exploitative interests – its function as a strategy of ego adjustment, a tool of repression that accommodates rather than challenges the social link, that quiets the subject of the unconscious and its disruptive potential – is best represented by the hegemony of biomedical therapeutics. But not all drugs make us comfortably numb. This paper considers the emergent, enthusiastic interest in the therapeutic use of psychedelics in order to ask whether chemical intervention is necessarily at odds with psychoanalysis or if, on the contrary, clinical exploration of the psychedelic experience might open psychology to a renewed concern for the unconscious. The paper establishes that the study of MDMA, psilocybin mushrooms, LSD, DMT and ayahuasca, and ketamine for the treatment of a variety of diagnoses or for end-of-life care is no longer a fringe concern, but is increasingly subject to serious research at institutions like the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, Johns Hopkins University, and Imperial College London. At the core of this research is a methodological problem: how to bring positivist or empirical techniques to bear upon a profoundly subjective encounter with the limits of consciousness? Psychoanalysis, Freud never tired of writing, was invented out of just such a difficulty. Lacan’s emphasis on the radical singularity of the subject and its irreducibility to the imaginary affords a further psychoanalytic precedent to this work. His insistence that consciousness names only “the function of misrecognition that remains tied to [the ego]” reminds us that the limits of consciousness are internal to the subject, so that the beyond of these limits is not a physical or metaphysical “outside” but a recalcitrant inside the ego can never assume or bend to its will.² Having laid this groundwork, I argue that the psychedelic experience, in all its strangeness and perturbation, with its recognized potential for radical personal and social transformation, is – or can be – an experience of the unconscious. The question is, do these drugs introduce a fatal interference into the work of analysis, thus confirming psychoanalysis’ long-standing suspicion that artificially-induced stimuli cannot but

muddy the waters the subject must navigate on the way to their ownmost truth? Or can psychoanalysis, particularly its ethics, provide a control with which psychedelics can amplify the experience of the unconscious? This paper wagers the latter hypothesis for two reasons. First, because the burgeoning interest in psychedelics is no fluke, and the Freudian field will have to address this interest or be (further) eclipsed by it. Second, the cultural fascination with psychedelics has for too long been overrun by a quasi-spiritualist, Jungian metapsychology that, as Jung did in his break with Freud, reifies the misapprehension of the drive as instinct, collapses the difference between human and nature, and thus supports the technocratic exploitation against which Lacan demands we persistently object lest it annihilate psychoanalysis altogether.

Shame and the Formation of the Subject

Sharon R. Green (The New School for Analytical Psychology, Seattle)

Using Lacan's écrit "The function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis" as the basis of my presentation, I will explore the relationship between shame and the formation of the subject conceptually and in relationship to clinical practice. Lacan (2006) writes: "For the function of language in speech is not to inform but to evoke. What I seek in speech is a response from the other... I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it as an object" (p.247). Tomkins (1995) points out that the infant's earliest speech is a form of social *communion* – not an attempt to communicate. However, if the infant's attempts at speech are not met with empathic reciprocity, shame is evoked. Ikonen and Rechartd (1993) describe the origin of shame as a failure by the infant in the pursuit of reciprocity from the other: "when the expressing of aspirations of reciprocity collides with a lack of reciprocity on the part of the other, the consequence is an immediate collapse resulting in an inner paralysis." (pp.106-7).

As Lacan emphasizes, speech is the process by which we seek to evoke a response in our earliest communion. However, there is no complete reciprocity between speaking beings – there is always a piece of the Real that escapes language setting off the search for *Das Ding*. So if the infant's earliest speech is seeking a reciprocal response from the other, and shame is evoked by the inevitable lack of reciprocity, then shame becomes the ontological companion of the speaking being. Agamben (1999) writes, "shame is nothing less than the fundamental sentiment of being a subject...shame is what is produced in the absolute concomitance of subjectifications and desubjectification" (p.107).

It is my hypothesis that shame points to that logically temporal moment when the subject-of-the-unconscious pulses into the gap between signifiers, but then always already fades as soon as it is *turned into an object* by the signifiers of the Other. Shame freezes time – the flow of signifiers is halted when the veil of modesty is ripped away and our ontological lack, our constitutional shame is exposed. When the subject is frozen in time, the flow of time must be restored so that through the temporality of *Nachträglichkeit* -- the temporality that Lacan

'rediscovers' in this *écrit* – the analytic process can resume. Lacan says that the analyst's response to the analysand is "truly to *recognize or abolish* [my italics] him as a subject" (p.248). Underlining the centrality of this dynamic, Lacan goes on to say, "Such is the nature of the analyst's *responsibility* [italics in the original] every time he intervenes by means of speech". We yearn to be recognized, and when this does not happen, we feel abolished (mortified) by shame. The analyst's awareness of the presence of shame, evoked by his interventions, can serve as a vital barometer for comprehending and protecting the analytic situation. If shame becomes too great, the analysand may choose to flee analysis – and if too little, there can be no change.

Time for an Index

Will Greenshields (Zhejiang University, China)

An index... is insurance, in searchable texts, against fruitless queries and unintended results.
The Chicago Manual of Style

The main textual reference for this presentation will be Jacques-Alain Miller's 'Classified Index of the Major Concepts' which, as Lacan puts it, 'is intended to serve as a key' to *Écrits* ([893] 851). The presentation will begin by outlining the reasoning behind this index set out by Miller in his ten-point justification immediately preceding it and in the opening session of his 1982-83 course. I will argue that the index should not be regarded as an entirely neutral piece of scholarly apparatus and that it is instead an important result of Miller's early efforts to systematize Lacan's work. Indeed, Miller himself refers to the index as an 'interpretation' ([893] 851) and in his paper I shall set out what is at stake in such an interpretation.

Following this introduction, I will pose and attempt to answer several questions that the index prompts. What are the intended and unintended results of the index? How and why does this index differ from those found in *Autres écrits* and the published seminars? Why did Miller split the index into five categories and why do they have both explicitly Lacanian ('Desire and its Interpretation') and Althusserian ('Epistemology and the Theory of Ideology') titles? How did Miller handle the temporality of *Écrits* in which terms and concepts are rarely fixed but are instead the subject of a complex development? Can the index be reconciled with Miller's expressed requirement to read 'Lacan contre Lacan'?

In the second half, I will turn to Élisabeth Roudinesco's account of the index's genesis and Derrida's reflections on the status of *Écrits* as a single and coherent volume (in 'For the Love of Lacan'). Both Roudinesco (with regards to the index) and Derrida (with regards to 'the great book') refer to the future perfect tense, arguing that, with the book's binding and the creation of an index, the individual *écrits* are revealed to have anticipated their collective realisation as *Écrits*. An interesting temporality is at stake in Miller's 1982 summary of the index as an attempt to 'verify [the text's] coherence'. What is the 'logical' time of the index? Does it retroactively organise the *écrits* or do they anticipate its construction? To what extent is this revelation of the future perfect an artifice on the part of Miller (and Lacan)?

My hope is that this presentation will spur an interesting discussion about 'real world' research methodologies and assumptions. Have attendees used this index in their own

research? Are there any terms that they think are missing? Can *Écrits* be treated as a coherent whole for which such an index is suitable? With the digitization of texts, has Miller's index been rendered redundant by the search function and how has this altered our approach to researching Lacan's texts?

The essential dimensions of psychoanalytic experience. Epistemological sources of lacanian teachings in "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis".

Antoni Grzybowski (Jagiellonian University)

"Unconscious is structured like a language" has become one of the central slogans of the Lacanian reinterpretation of the psychoanalysis. One can get the impression that the sense of this repeated thesis has been gradually blurred. Did not it just become one of the hallmarks of the next psychoanalytic faction? Or perhaps it has always been just another master signifier determining the meaning of work of Freud, one among other interpretations established by virtue of the arbitrary will of the founder of a new direction in psychoanalysis? In this sense, in the face of a whole range of different versions of psychoanalysis, advocating Lacanian psychoanalysis would be just a matter of preference. Lacan did not, however, attribute the theoretical value to diversity and the introduction of conceptual novelties for themselves. His project of the "Return to Freud" seemed to be an attempt to establish a new paradigm of psychoanalytic theory that would be of universal and scientific value.

"The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis" seems to constitute a founding act of this undertaking, which gives it a considerable importance in the process of recognizing the significance of the Lacanian reinterpretation of Freud's heritage. The axis of Lacan's argument seems to be not, as it is usually assumed, an attempt to formalize psychoanalysis based on contemporary structuralism, but rather a return to the sources and meaning of psychoanalytic experience, for which any linguistic conceptualization is necessarily secondary. In this founding gesture, Miller sees analogy with Husserlian "return to the things themselves" - a phenomenological description of the analytical experience that Lacan tried to carry out in „Beyond Reality Principle“. The Archimedean point of reinterpretation of psychoanalysis is to be found in the very form of its practice framed by the matter of speech and language in which it operates, intersubjectivity of the analytic relationship and the de-alienation and realization of the subject of the unconscious as its goal.

Psychoanalytic process taken from such perspective allows us to determine the proper field of action of psychoanalysis in opposition to the scientific and, consequently, alienating tendencies present from its very beginnings in psychoanalytic theory. In this way, Lacan created a space for criticism for both technical orthodoxy and attempts to translate psychoanalysis into the language of behavioral psychology or neurobiology. The field of action of psychoanalysis is, according to Lacan, closer to the field of medieval "liberal arts" in which the man himself becomes his own measure. Psychoanalysis creates a framework in which the subject in the process of speaking can be realized in accordance with his own, inherent logic. According to Lacan it is a methodological foundation which, in analogy to an experiment in natural sciences, constitutes the source of the epistemological frame of the psychoanalytic practice.

The Ego: Narcissism and Aggressiveness

Judith Hamilton

In this paper I will develop the implications of Lacan's proposal that Freud's development of the concept of the ego was based on his paper "On Narcissism" (1914), an important distinction from the usual basis described as being "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" (1921). Although I will use as background all Lacan's early work, my predominant source from the *Ecrits* will be "Aggressiveness in Psychoanalysis" and I will show that the ego is characterized by many features associated with narcissism. Thus the ego's identifications are narcissistic and include those with its earliest objects, initially in visual form and in the imaginary, with all the affective variety and power and misunderstandings and misrecognitions that this entails. A major component is the ego's aggressive defence of its own positions regarding its identity, its ideals and its beliefs about other people and political causes, which, because they derive from infantile life, are largely unconscious and irrational and are pursued and protected with desperate and irrational force. I will present a brief clinical example of a person dominated by narcissistic libido and show what is required of the analyst in the treatment context.

Working with The Signification of the Phallus in the Clinic: A Clinical Vignette

Kristen Hennessy

"We know that the unconscious castration complex functions as a knot: 1) in the dynamic structuring of symptoms, in the analytic sense of the term, in other words, in the dynamic structuring of that is analyzable in the neuroses, perversions, and psychoses. 2) In regulating the development that gives its ratio to this first role: namely, the instating in the subject of an unconscious position without which he could not identify with the ideal type of his sex or even answer the needs of his partner in sexual relations without grave risk, much less appropriately meet the needs of the child who may be produced thereby" (Lacan, p. 574).

This paper works with the case of a four-year-old boy who underwent the process of the signification of the phallus within the course of his treatment, with all the attending shifts in his relationship to the unconscious, language, symptom, and the Other. Jay presented to treatment with a history of being bitten by mother and sexually abused by an adult male. He presented as unable to play, mumbling instead of speaking, all while spending his time repetitively masturbating and eating. He was disinterested in everyone other than the man by whom he was molested. He was on the path towards a psychotic structure. Through the course of treatment, he made the choice to accept castration and adopted a neurotic structure. In *The Signification of the Phallus*, Lacan states: "It is only on the basis of clinical facts that the discussion can be fruitful. These facts reveal a relationship between the subject and the phallus that forms without regard to the anatomical sexes..." (p. 576). This case provides an opportunity for us to explore the relationship between the subject and the phallus.

Jay's work in treatment allows for an up-close examination of the process of the signification of the phallus. Furthermore, the case demonstrates the process of castration and Oedipalization outside of the traditional nuclear family, thus emphasizing the relevance of Lacanian theory to the contemporary clinic, while also concretely demonstrating the difference between the phallus and the sexual organ. Furthermore, this case offers a chance to witness the shift in the child's relationship to the signifier all while watching his symptoms change. The impact of the symbolization of the phallus is apparent. "For the phallus is a signifier, a signifier whose function, in the intrasubjective economy of analysis, may lift the veil from the function it served in the mysteries. For it is the signifier that is destined to designated meaning effects as a whole, insofar as the signifier conditions them by its presence as signifier" (Lacan, p. 579). Finally, this paper functions as advocacy for the relevance of Lacanian theory to clinical work with young children.

'Man of Foreign Origin' – intergenerational transmission, trauma, and the unconscious in the *Ecrits*

Owen Hewitson (Middlesex University)

Psychoanalysis can be thought of as the exploration of transmission between generations. This paper will argue that this is a common thread running throughout Lacan's *Ecrits*. We find it underpinning his reimagining of Freudian theories like the Oedipus complex, infantile trauma, and later life repetition - all of which testify to intergenerational transmission even if in displaced, deformed, or subtle ways.

Just as Lacan finds in *The Purloined Letter* a model for how a message can be transmitted independently of the receiver's knowledge of its meaning, so in Freud's *Totem and Taboo* and *Moses and Monotheism* Lacan finds "a forgotten drama [that] comes down through the ages in the unconscious", the "transformed cipher in our filial lineage". An intergenerational family drama transmitted and embedded as a complex – the Oedipus complex – is therefore at the heart of the story psychoanalysis tells us about ourselves, the story of psychoanalysis itself, and a constant undercurrent in the *Ecrits*.

This paper will tease out and advocate for a Lacanian theory of intergenerational transmission that can be extrapolated from the *Ecrits*. It will engage, albeit critically, with Lacan's description of the nature, mechanisms, and conditions of what is transmitted down through a generational line, and how it can form the kernel of a descendant's unconscious.

Throughout the *Ecrits* Lacan gives various names to the mechanism behind this phenomenon - the 'agency' of the letter, repetition automatism - and describes different ways in which the existential enigmas of sex and death are metabolised as filial constellations (Freud's 'family romances'). But if the primacy of the signifier accounts for the *mechanism* of intergenerational transmission, what are its *conditions*? How does what appear singular, contingent, even arbitrary about one subject's unconscious constellation descend from the family history or

ancestry? Why do some elements appear in place of others, and why do some appear with thematic regularity (unspoken secrets, unacknowledged debts, unprocessed tragedies)?

In answering this we might - as Lacan does in the *Écrits* - turn to structuralism, just as Freud before him turned to phylogenesis. The independent schemata of a symbolic order – whether totemic (Freud), archetypal (Jung), or anthropological (Levi-Strauss) – offer ways to frame the contingencies of subjectivity. Yet would this make us subjects without agency, “like a pawn, in the play of the signifier” as Lacan describes?

Contemporary trauma theory provides an alternative model which in the post-Holocaust era seems to have a monopoly on theories of intergenerational transmission. This paper will critique such models’ focus on an ‘event’ and its affective magnitude, arguing that this is insufficient for a theory of transmission. A critique of some Lacanian work is also warranted however, and this paper will attempt to prise a Lacanian theory of intergenerational transmission from a theory of trauma, drawing on contributions from Lacan’s pupils, contemporaries, and rivals such as Laplanche, Leclaire, Abraham and Torok. It will also engage with those from post-Lacanian perspectives, including newer work on the origin and treatment of psychosis, and psychoanalytic models based not on phylogeny or language but mimetism.

Function and field of “cause(rie)” in/as the language of psychoanalysis

Ben Hjorth (University of Toronto)

All this is at the beginning only an empty word [*nur leeres Wort*] and only being [*nur Sein*]; this simple [*dies Einfache*], which has no further meaning besides, this void [*dies Leere*], is as such, therefore, the beginning of philosophy.

– Hegel, *The Science of Logic*

Cause toujours. (Devise de la pensée « causaliste ».)

– Lacan, *Écrits*

Lacan’s pun, in the Rome Discourse of 1953, on the concept of—that is to say, the word—“*cause*” sums up much of what is at stake in the debates over knowledge, meaning and agency raised by his own theory of the subject as a fundamentally “linguistic” phenomenon. The parodic “Motto of ‘causalist’ thought” is one of the epigraphs to the first section—“Empty Speech and Full Speech in the Psychoanalytic Realization of the Subject”—of this foundational paper, whose “proper” name outlines these stakes, as well as the arena of their playing-out: “The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis.” They were stakes which were perhaps highest when the chips seemed the furthest down, in the wake of Lacan’s resignation (under duress) earlier that year from the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA). The quip’s critical (that is, negative) assessment of the naïve “causalist” metaphysics of scientism—as a theoretical cause that should have been acknowledged as lost since at least Hume—appears directed at Lacan’s former IPA colleagues who, it was increasingly and alarmingly clear, not only held but clung to one version or other of such a “causalism.” But, alongside and beyond this critique, there is a profound speculative (that is, positive) force

animating this witticism. It is one which partakes of that mysterious, (side-)splitting quality of the joke or *Witz* to which Shakespeare, Freud and Hegel attended so closely, convinced that there are manifold, *Doppelsinnig*, even contradictory truths to be found in jest. While Lacan's own flamboyant performances of wordplay are themselves often dismissed—most vehemently, of course, by those same colleagues, so-called “orthodox” Freudians—as the conscious obscurantism of a sophist, or simply the attention-seeking tomfoolery of a narcissistic poser, in retrospect it seems that this jester may well prove a prophet, at least when it comes to the strange, even paradoxical temporality of this weird object of metaphysical inquiry to which we still give the name “cause.” This paper—one of the traditional forms of academic *causerie*—seeks to take Lacan's cause-gag quite seriously. The muffled tale, told in and between dictionaries, of its wordplay is suggestive both of the promise, and of a vague sense of threat—the threat of loss—embodied in the unstable causative power of speech: the queer, repetitive performativity of the language by which we, as subjects, come to be subjects. Our “cause,” in every sense, is neither more nor less than the causeries, the mere, empty words, the sweet “nothing”s of language that (we) subjects are.

Alternative footnotes to Lacan's 'Instance of the Letter'

Derek Hook (Duquesne University)

Lacan's 'Instance of the Letter' could - like any other chapter of his *Ecrits* - be said to condense a library's worth of historical, literary and philosophical references and/or allusions within its pages. This, perhaps, provides a clue as how to go about elaborating - and expanding upon - the concepts foregrounded in this crucial paper: by amassing a library of engagements with Lacan's seminal essay. However, rather than using such a library as the basis of an extensive commentary, as has already been attempted by a number of authors, my ambition here is to offer an alternative - indeed, experimental - set of footnotes to Lacan's 'Instance of the Letter'. These footnotes sample some of the more recent and more provocative engagements with Lacan's 1957 paper. They attempt, furthermore, to link 'Instance' to contemporary times, searching for analogues and extrapolating illustrations as they occur in contemporary literature and film. These alternative footnotes also provide the space to further expand upon and supplement Lacan's ideas, particularly in reference to the enigmatic concept of the letter, his use of (and distance from) Heidegger, Freud's famous ethical formula ('*Wo Es war, soll Ich*'), and the oblique recourse to Leonardo Da Vinci made at the beginning of the paper.

Lacan in Virtual Spaces: Theory and Technique

Thomas Derrick Hull (Columbia University)

New modes of leveraging communication technology for treatment are on the rise and are popular among patients. These modes include the more obvious forms of video and audio. Yet another approach uses messaging systems (like SMS text or multi-media messaging) to deliver treatment. This medium places more emphasis on typed or written language by the patients

and therapists who work together. It also modifies the traditional temporality of how treatment unfolds by enabling daily micro-sessions with a therapist instead of the once or twice weekly 45 to 50 minute sessions.

A challenge for the field is determining how well common forms of psychoanalytic or other psychotherapeutic frameworks can inform treatment on these media (or can they simply resist and oppose their use?). When one thinks of how these media place focus on language and on loosening the use of time, Lacan often comes to mind. But this is just a starting point, other aspects of his work start to suggest themselves as avenues for understanding, even embracing, aspects of technologically-mediated treatment. This full paper will present a series of observations on Lacan's theory and technique that may begin to provide a basis on which to understand and improve how treatment unfolds "online," that is, in virtual spaces.

Phantasy

Robert Jeffery

Lacan developed Freud's notion of the phantasy and articulated it as a defence that veils castration. Constitutive of the subject's perception of the world, and of its object choices, phantasy is what the subject creates for itself to fill a void: the gap of the real. Through phantasy, lack is reformulated and narrativized by the subject as a scene that stages an unconscious desire. This paper seeks to explore the implications and consequences of Lacan's notion of the subject's phantasy through the lens of a recent film, *The Kindergarten Teacher* (2018). The film illustrates the disappointments and superficiality of today's world. Lisa Spinelli, a kindergarten teacher who attends weekly poetry classes, searches for the authenticity that she feels is missing from her family and professional life. Things change for her when she discovers that Jimmy, one of her young students, recites poetry. Lisa's growing obsession with Jimmy and his poetic creativity, however, leads her on what rapidly becomes clear to be a deluded path. I will argue that the film exemplifies in a nuanced and sophisticated manner the way in which the subject structures the (fictional) framework through which it can orient objects that 'touch on the lack of their very being'.

The Kindergarten Teacher touches on themes that are of major interest and significance to psychoanalysis: authenticity, beauty, truth and knowledge. What is of specific interest is the way in which these themes are teased out in the film in relation to language and sexuality. Further to this, the relationship between Lisa and Jimmy provides the (familial and incestuous) dynamic between mother and son - a dynamic which serves as the "case study" of our phantasising subject. The notions drawn on here will be developed in the context of Lacan's 'The Youth of Gide, or the Letter and Desire'. Other sources that will be drawn on are Lacan's *Seminar XIV - The Logic of Phantasy*, Genevieve Morel's *The Law of the Mother* and Freud's essay 'The Paths to the Formation of Symptoms'. The current paper will try to avoid a direct, or hermeneutic, critique of desire, phantasy, and what it means to be authentic in today's world. What it aims at, rather, is exposing how the search for authenticity—no matter how genuine it might appear, or feel like, to the subject—can be misguided. The film shows how phantasy frames structure the subject's reality, and consequently, the way in which the subject sets out

to understand and achieve things. The underlying logic of the film's narrative will be brought to the fore in order to demonstrate, finally, that the notion of phantasy is a crucial Lacanian concept, and one of particular relevance to today's world. As Lisa Spinelli's trajectory in the film demonstrates, tragically, we are victims of the phantasies we enact.

The Demon of the Unveiled Phallus: Jacques Lacan's "Signification of the Phallus" and the Photography of Robert Mapplethorpe

D. Michael Jones (East Tennessee State University)

The recent exhibit of Robert Mapplethorpe's work, "Implicit Tension" (January 25–July 10, 2019), at the Guggenheim, explores the artist's obsession with the magical, the demonic, and the unveiled phallus. It is Mapplethorpe's artistic obsessions, personified in the photographs of the X, Y, and Z Portfolios, as well as the deeply homophobic response his photography, even his name, evoke twenty years after his death, that make this recent exhibit an ideal space to reencounter key concepts from Jacques Lacan's "Signification of the Phallus" in *Écrits*. For as Lacan points out "the phallus is the signifier of this very *Aufhebung* [sublation], which it inaugurates (initiates) by its disappearance. That is why the demon . . . springs forth at the very moment the phallus is unveiled in the ancient mysteries (see the famous painting in the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii)" (Lacan 277). This paper argues that the often hysterical response to Mapplethorpe's work is created in part by the reenactment of this *Aufhebung* between signified and signifier, the splitting [Spaltung] that exiles us into the symbolic and initiates "the paradoxical, deviant, erratic, eccentric, and even scandalous nature of desire" (Lacan 276). Indeed, from a Lacanian position, the Mapplethorpe exhibit at the Guggenheim functions like a twenty-first century American Villa of Mysteries, for at its center is the unveiled phallus and the demonic trespass that its unveiling conjures. In photographs of male nudes such as "Mark Stevens" (1976), "Bill" (1976-77), and "Bob Love" (1979), Mapplethorpe challenges the viewer with the fragile, physical, unveiled phallus. Alongside these tender images of profound vulnerability, more infamous photographs suggest the magical and demonic forces that emerge when the "privileged signifier" is split from "the Logos [it] is wedded to" (Lacan 277). In Mapplethorpe's S&M pieces, like "Joe" (1978) and "Self-Portrait" (1978), where a whip inserted in his anus unmistakably suggests the centaur, along with the demonic self-portraits—"With Gun and Star" (1982) and with devil horns (1985)—the artist reveals images of the magical, transgressive, and demonic that haunt the fissures of the "privileged signifier." It is this magically impossible space between "the appetite for satisfaction" and the "demand for love" (Lacan 276), the space of desire where "the power of pure loss emerges from the residue of an obliteration," (Lacan 276) that the work of Robert Mapplethorpe reenacts the cancellation of the signified and creation of the symbolic that can never reclaim it. Part of the hysterical, homophobic response to Mapplethorpe's work lies in its capacity to touch that "residue of obliteration" at the heart of our coming into the symbolic. The encounter between the Mapplethorpe exhibit, "Implicit Tensions," and Lacan unveils the mutilating mechanics at work in masculine hysteria, while at the same time celebrating—in floral still-life photographs like "Easter Lilies with Mirror" (1979) and "Poppy" (1988), alongside nudes such as "Joe" (1978) and

“Mark Stevens” (1976)— an unspeakably fragile life, one that just escapes: the all-consuming, symbolizing lens.

Aggressivity and Narcissistic Rage, the Capitalist Plague

(Bradley Kaye, Niagra University)

Aggressivity, in my own words can best be described as the force of the forced who impose their will upon those who freely accept their fate. This is what is useful about Lacan’s analysis of aggressivity and narcissism in *Ecrits* – it is useful to us now, as there is disturbing resurgence of what one might call the political ideology of ‘narcissistic rage’ - a neo-fascist aggressivity seems to be a new tactic of the far right, this new phase is constituted by walling-off the bourgeoisie, and manifest by a frantic-stupidity of sovereignty that we see manifest in several places on earth already (Trump, Le Pen, Salvini, Orbán, Kaczyński, Bolsinaro). What can Lacan tell us about what is happening? As Lacan states... Language forms the: “social relativity in the expressive constitution of human emotions.” (pg. 18) ... an emotion as expressive, active, emoting outwards what is inwardly felt... aggressivity is an emoting of rage and language is the “Is it with the gifts of Danaoi or with the passwords that give them their salutary non-sense that language, with the law, begins? For these gifts are already symbols, in the sense that symbol means pact and that they are first and foremost signifiers of the pact that they constitute as signified.” (pg. 61) Danaoi is the violent, subversive way that language creeps in like a Trojan Horse, Danaoi is Homer’s term for the ‘gift’ of the Greeks who laid siege to Troy. Even though language is something we use it circulates so reflexively and with great currency that even though we freely choose to utilize language, by the time the subject has that awareness, the subject has already been ambushed by the effects of its power. The plague of language in capitalism, built on the backs of exploited labor power, the sovereign must emote-fear, the sovereign must emote-aggressivity to drive the mills of modern man. In some cases, the Interpellating aspects of language necessitate a mode of narcissistic identification especially within the context of the fragility of the capitalist economy, the fragility of the narcissistic ego banks upon the expectation of receiving praise. The problem of narcissistic rage occurs when that expectation of unconditional love and affection from the Other, known as mirroring, fails to approve, confirm and reward the self. “aggression is as much bound up in man’s symbolic character as with the cruel refinement of weapons he makes.” (pg. 12) Why does this libidinal investment in aggressivity occur?

Infinity and Jouissance: Between Hegel, Lacan, and Badiou

Jake Khawaja (University of Wyoming)

This paper proposes a reconstruction of the Hegelian notion of the infinite, and of the relation between desire and jouissance as the libidinal actualization of this reconstructed conception of Hegelian infinity. There are four principle works I draw on for this topic - Hegel’s

Phenomenology of Spirit and *Science of Logic*, and Alain Badiou's *Being and Event* and *Logic of Worlds* - and I will be focusing on two main texts from the *Écrits*: *The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire* and *On Freud's Trieb and the Analyst's Desire*. Ultimately, I offer a *psychoanalytic* methodology through which subjective eternity can be realized within the ontology of a *philosophical* subject, rather than one strictly within the purview of the analytic process proper.

The question of infinity has been the central issue from which Badiou draws his criticism of Hegel. This criticism requires a fundamental supposition - the impossibility of any pure disjunction of the same and Other. I argue that Badiou, using "Other" in a Lacanian sense that can most accurately be compared with Hegel's *nothing* (a space/void of finite placement which fundamentally demarcates the possible extent of self-realization), raises an incredibly important issue in the phenomenological realization of Hegelian infinity, but that this demonstration should not entice us to abandon entirely the concept of the Whole or the Infinite in the Hegelian senses. Instead, I propose the notion of a disjunction of *being-there* and *being-other*, where the former is the concrete unity of being and nothing - finite existence (*existence*) - and the latter is another concrete existence external to the subject, or in Lacanian terms, the *little other*. In this disjunction, being-other serves as a paradigm of the infinite - it mediates the immanence of lack in a subject (proximal to an Imaginary phenomenon supported by a symbolic structure) and opens up the space for a new dialectic of infinity. I argue that this paradigmatic representation of alterity in general by a concrete being-other can sufficiently be integrated into a speculative dialectic, and is capable of realizing the standards imposed by Badiou in his ultimate notions of subjective eternity and the localization of singular truth-events.

I subsequently propose a notion of a libidinal realization of this process of infinity. In essence, this is a remodelling of the relation of desire and *jouissance* (which details the necessity of movements from one to the other), examined through the lens of multiple Lacanian concepts, including foreclosure, fantasy, the drives, and castration. This dynamic is resolved essentially in the notion of the Sinthome as a symbolic modality of *jouissance*, which fulfills the actual function prescribed by the Hegelian "good infinity."

Freeing Impersonality: The Objective Subject in Psychoanalysis and Austen

Anna Kornbluh (University of Illinois at Chicago)

"The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious" profoundly departs from psychologizations and biologizations of the Freudian legacy by asserting that there is a "material medium" of psychic experience, a "structure prior to each subject." Psychoanalysis for Lacan and his return to Freud elevates this linguistic structuration beyond the subject who erroneously (for psychologism) appears as its agent, instantiating a pre- or trans-subjective medium that must be studied in and for itself. This talk explores the conceptual affinity between properly psychoanalytic theory as elaborated in this seminal section of the *Écrits* and the strange literary grammar known as "Free Indirect Discourse." I argue that the linguistic, impersonal, social quality of psychic experience innovatively charted by psychoanalysis finds its literary expression (and indeed, anticipation) in the novel performance of objective mentation as crystallized by Jane Austen,

especially throughout her *Sense and Sensibility*. Far from pursuing self-expression or psychological depth, Austen practiced Free Indirect Discourse to critique bourgeois constructs including personal privacy, individuated desires, and self-possession. Her unprecedented grammatical torsions allow the medium of literary narration to present the medium-function of language vis-à-vis psychic consciousness. Just as Lacan's "Instance" explores the letter in its desemantization, as "the essentially localized structure of the signifier," so Austen portrays represented mental acts in their depersonalization, as the communal consciousness of the social contract. Reviewing the competing critical approaches to Free Indirect Discourse that emphasize its production of character's psychic depth and those that emphasize its production of an impersonal disciplinary surveillance, this talk works toward a more convincing alternative in showing how the resonances with psychoanalysis that permeate Austen's novel point toward fathoming Free Indirect Discourse as a disturbance in the order of personalization that makes language palpable as social medium.

On the *Position of the Unconscious*: Its *Position* in the Clinic, and the *Position* of Psychoanalyst

Nate Koser (Aporia Counseling & Psychotherapy, PLLC)

Subsequent to the *Congrès de Bonneval* (30 October - 2 November, 1960), organized by Henri Ey, Lacan (1964/2006) – who had been invited to attend the colloquium, but not to formally present – took it upon himself to consolidate the remarks he made as a participant in, *The Position of the Unconscious*. In this text published in his, *Écrits*, Lacan outlined a number of essential elements for his conceptualization of the unconscious – the Freudian unconscious, specifically – which would summarize his thought on the topic to that point, and further emphasize aspects of the unconscious, which would receive elaboration in following years. These elements would also make clear the necessary distinction between: the Freudian unconscious, the unconscious as it was discussed by other psychoanalysts in terms of "instinct," (p. 704) and as it was theorized in psychology as being merely opposed to the "unitary" (p. 705) nature of consciousness – the latter two being examples of both "illusion" (p. 704) and "error" (p. 705), to quote Lacan.

In the *Position of the Unconscious*, Lacan (1964/2006) began by establishing what may, at first glance, appear as a dichotomy. It may even introduce for the reader an equivocation. The first point is that "the unconscious," as Lacan noted, "is a concept founded on the trail [trace] left by that which operates to constitute the subject;" (p. 703) and, supposedly in opposition, "The unconscious is not a species defining the circle of that part of psychical reality which does not have the attribute (or the virtue) of consciousness" (p. 703). Yet, in outlining these points, Lacan is really establishing his *position on* the unconscious in its specificity: "The unconscious is what I say it is," (p. 704) Lacan asserted, and "the unconscious prior to Freud, is not purely and simply" (p. 704). Lacan's *position on* the unconscious is Freud's, "assuming we are willing to hear what Freud puts forward in his theses," (p. 704) Lacan stated, and it is precisely the *position of the unconscious* that Lacan hoped to elaborate through his *position on* the topic.

This paper will be an attempt to address three, separate, but – it will be argued – inescapably interwoven points. First, the essential elements of the Freudian unconscious Lacan (1964/2006) outlined in, *The Position of the Unconscious* will be discussed. Second, this paper will also attempt to answer two guiding questions: How does this *position on* the unconscious illuminate the *position of* the unconscious in the clinic and establish such a clinic as unique when compared to others; and, what does Lacan’s elaboration suggest is the *position* the unconscious affords the psychoanalyst, what is the *position of* psychoanalyst implied in this *position on* the unconscious? It will be argued that the specifically Freudian unconscious, as Lacan outlined it, always already implies the *position of* psychoanalyst – as “part and parcel of the concept of the unconscious,” (p. 707) to quote Lacan – and that such a *position* must, therefore, be the place from which the psychoanalyst performs its task and serves to cause this unique discourse.

“What don’t you want?”: Equivalence, Rectification, and Allegorical Indirection in *Hell or High Water* (2016)

Scott Krzych (Colorado College)

This paper considers the function of *rectification* as Lacan describes it in “The Direction of the Treatment and the Principles of Its Power,” and uses this review of Lacan’s essay as a means to reorient Lacanian cultural criticism, particularly in the domain of film theory, back to its feminist roots. After Žižek, Lacanian criticism has tended to emphasize, above all else, the traumatic real of the drive that underpins, and unravels, any instance of desire and its myriad sublimations. The “shock” of the real intended by such interpretations, I claim, perhaps lose some of their impact in the aftermath of the 2008 financial collapse, especially given how the recession exposed a financial sector whose economic drive is likewise detached from the worlds of labor, production, or the real-world consequences of its deregulated excesses. Through a reading of *Hell or High Water*, a cinematic allegory of post-2008 devastation, particularly through an emphasis on its marginal and marginalized female voices, I use the film to argue in favor of a psychoanalytic cultural criticism more carefully attuned to the three key moments in analytic treatment—rectification, transference, and interpretation.

As the title of Lacan’s essay suggests, his concern in “The Direction” is to rebuff those contemporary analysts who assert too much control over the clinical exchange. Such analysts risk becoming merely one more authoritative figure in a patient’s life and thereby miss the opportunity to provoke a more fundamental, psychic change on the analysands’ part. At least two errors contribute to this mistake, Lacan offers. First, analysts have both overvalued and misunderstood the function of transference. By treating counter-transference as a guide to the patient’s unconscious desires, analysts mistakenly involve their own personalities in the clinical exchange, appropriating the work of analysis from where it properly resides—with the analysand. This mistake compounds another one: the tendency by analysts to *begin* the treatment with interpretations of the patient’s symptom. Such an approach presumes to locate a hidden cause veiled beneath the subject’s behavior, and thereby invites the patient to *view themselves* from the analyst’s position.

By contrast, in Lacan's account, the analysis only moves in its proper direction once the analysand no longer observes him- or herself from an external position. In other words, the subject must first recognize how they have already adapted themselves to whatever they claim ails them, that is, how they are unconsciously involved, as active participants (like film directors rather than cinematic spectators) in the perpetuation of whatever they have come to analysis to (ostensibly) change. Similarly, in gestures of rectification, each of the marginalized female characters in *Hell or High Water*, I argue, attempt to translate into more immediate terms the grand narratives in which their male counterparts are libidinally invested. While the film may appear to establish an equivalence between the pair of criminal brothers and the pair of lawmen, the film's recourse to hysterical desire—as that which is unsatisfied rather than impossible—provokes an opportunity for spectatorial rectification, I claim, that is, an opportunity to recognize how the masculine narrative, with its emphasis on equivalent acts of retribution, operates according to the very same logic of desire as the financial crisis it attempts to allegorize.

The Virtuality of Rhetorical Truth

Don Kunze (Penn State University)

The publication of the first complete English translation of Jacques Lacan's *Écrits* restored Lacan's essay on Poe's short story, "The Purloined Letter," to a rightful first place. Lacan himself went against chronological order to place it first, and explained this as a reference to *style*, as "the man one addresses," adding that "our message comes to us from the Other ... in an inverted form." Style is not simply a controversial feature of Lacan's thinking, it is the essence of his idea that writing, as *teaching*, should not just be about the unconscious, as the ultimate subject of psychoanalysis, but should actually take on the *style* of the unconscious.

This style is that of the rebus, the object that "wishes to speak" but has had half of its semiologic formula removed. Without the conventional dimension of designation, the rebus is tricked into speaking "literally," and we are astonished to see in front of us a code we know how to read without being taught. This coincidentally was Poe's singular talent. Reputedly, he was able to translate ciphers replacing one letter with another "on the fly." Add to this Poe's advice, that to win at the odd-even guessing game of Morra that one need know only whether one's opponent is bright or dull. The purloined letter itself is a rebus, its conventional message suppressed by folds, and this suppressed by concealment in an openly exposed and phonetically palindromic card-rack/kcardrac.

Suddenly we are in an arctic vortex that freezes conventional approaches to Lacan. Truth within rhetoric sits atop a *mons delectus* of inversions, extimations, and half-objects. I propose refinancing the many aspects of concealment under the single account of virtuality. Following Žižek's inversion of perspectival "virtual reality" into an "orthopsychic" *reality of the virtual*, each component of Lacan's RSI system has a virtuality-rhetoric, reflected not just in Lacan's thinking but in the unconscious which is his model.

Where does virtuality come from? I suggest re-formulating the forced choice aspect of the Symbolic's demand of the pre-subject at the crisis of the Mirror Stage. Fink shows that forced choices present hierarchical elements as if they were "flat" alternatives ("your money or your life"); this logical scandal can be resolved by separating the "possessing" from the "possessed" forms of elements within a virtual space-time where contiguity rules are suspended. This odd procedure finds its place even in Lacan's demonstration, at the end of this essay, of how a random number sequence is able to "remember" its first elements and retain its "necessity" in the face of additional exposure to "chance."

My argument is routed through Richard Kopley's analysis of reversed predications in Poe's story and Lewis Carroll's sorites puzzles, the "one grain more, one hair less" logic of accumulation and emergence, the basis of Žižek's idea of exaptation and the architectural spandrel. Even the Real has its virtual, an automatism where a weak signal purloined within a series is amplified simply by the stochastic presence of noise.

Psychoanalysis in the Bedroom: "Kant with Sade"

Meera Lee (Point Park University)

Originally written as a preface to Sade's novel, *Philosophy in the Bedroom*, Jacques Lacan's "Kant with Sade" (1963) illuminates the knot of desire, fantasy and the moral Law. Because of the conjunction "with" in Lacan's title, the title should be read as indicating that the Sadean fantasy is a parody of the pervertedness of Kant's moral Law, defining the "pure" or "practical" reason (e.g., drive or feeling) as "pathological" and to be overruled by the super-ego. Hence: Kant as a Sadean philosopher. A more radical reading, to which Lacan himself also alluded, is the paradoxical formulation of "Kant *in* Sade," suggesting that the Sadean perversion is structured *like* the Kantian universal ethics. Put simply, perversion as the moral Law (i.e., Sade as a Kantian philosopher).

To support this formula, in this paper I will specifically examine Lacan's maxim (presumably a reconstruction of Sade): "'I have the right to enjoy your body,' anyone can say to me, 'and I will exercise this right without any limit to the capriciousness of the exactions I may wish to situate with your body'" (*Écrits*, 648). Here, Lacan stresses the "right to enjoyment," that "I" have the full privilege to enjoy the other's body limitlessly without any restriction, designating the subject's *jouissance*. The phrase, "anyone can say to me," however, catches our attention. It suggests that the "whom" to which this statement is addressed is in fact the "I" (a sadist and pervert) who utters it. Considered in this way, I will elucidate that for Lacan the right to *jouissance* lies paradoxically not in the enunciator "I" (the subject who utters it) but in "the subject being enunciated" ("statement"). I will subsequently claim how the right to *jouissance* is the Other's right to enjoy "my" body, and, in turn, that "my *perverse* will to *that jouissance*" is void of any "pathological" reason. This, accordingly, amounts to saying, contrary to classical ideas of sadists as aggressors, that the desire of sadists in the Lacanian sense is to make themselves an object to be enjoyed for the other.

To re-read “Kant with Sade” in this specific way, ultimately, is to rethink the ethics of psychoanalysis in relation to the other (body). From the perspective of “real world” implications, my paper intends to assert that it is the subject’s absolute hospitality to the Other’s demand of “my” body—that is, *perversion*—that sustains our community and brings people together as “neighbor.” Put another way, “my” perverse status of being is an ethical relation to the other, warranting the latter’s linguistic *jouissance*. The “bedroom” of psychoanalysis (the Sadean Lacan), paralleling the “bedroom” of philosophy (the Kantian Lacan), is thus a place where, as Lacan put it, “no sexual relationship [in reciprocity] but only sexualization [in the Sadean moral Law].” Accordingly I will conclude the paper by arguing that the bedroom (or community) demands the *moral fantasy for impossible love*.

The Novel Without Oedipus

Emma Lieber (The New School)

This paper examines Lacan’s “A Theoretical Introduction to the Functions of Psychoanalysis in Criminology” alongside Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. Dostoevsky’s novels are pre-psychoanalytic—and even pre-Lacanian—documents, in which an interrogation of the unconscious and the social link serve to subvert many of the standard tropes of the detective or crime novel. At the same time, these standard devices are presented as anathema to the specificities of a Russian cultural milieu in which the influences of Protestant individualism, industrial capitalism, and Reformation empiricism were notably absent. As Laura Engelstein has pointed out, Foucault’s notions of bourgeois discipline do not apply to Russia, and thus as opposed to the novels of the Victorian age in which many of the tropes of detective fiction developed, policing—social, subjective, novelistic—is not the mechanism of the Russian novel as Dostoevsky presents it. In this sense Dostoevsky’s attention to the unconscious in its individual and social manifestations—the dialectical procedure of his texts, in which successive scenes bring the criminal closer to the truth of his desire and his responsibility; the emphasis on confession in its relation to unconscious truth rather than to legal utility, as well as on the criminal’s various transferences; the presentation of legal figures not as policemen so much as psychoanalysts used as fulcrums in this process; the question of the function of crime and punishment as enactments of collective formations—is bound up in his intention to write non-Western, distinctively Russian detective novels: in which the criminal proceeding is a psychoanalytic rather than a correctional endeavor.

I take up these ideas alongside Lacan’s paper both to open up a reading of the novels and of Dostoevsky as a dialectical thinker, and to articulate the relationship of universal to specific—Oedipus and the superego as they find their place in crime and punishment, and as they imbricate questions of cultural difference—as both texts present it. As much as crime to Dostoevsky “emanate[s]...from the superego” (Lacan), his crime texts also ask whether a society in which “the family situation is disintegrating” (Lacan) (both as an independent social condition, and in the political arena, with the decline of the Russian empire and the birth of Russian radicalism) can provide an alternative to Oedipalism, as well as to punitive judicial arrangements.

Who's Trans? Transmasculine Lacunae in Lacanian Theory

Matthew Thomas Lovett (University of Pittsburgh)

My presentation will turn to Lacan's *Écrits*, especially "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialect of Desire," "The Signification of the Phallus," and "On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis," to offer an interpretation of *transmasculine* subject positions and sexual practices. More specifically, I will try to give a Lacanian interpretation of C. Jacob Hale's seemingly phenomenological account of transmasc topping based on his article "Leatherdyke Boys and Their Daddies: How to Have Sex Without Women or Men."

Lacanian scholarship on transsexual and transgender "identifications" has not been well received by trans* communities. For instance, Kate Bornstein's take on Catherine Millot's *Horsexe* reads: "Gender terrorists ... like Ms. Millot, bang their heads against a gender system which is real and natural; and then use gender to terrorize the rest of us. These are the real terrorists: the Gender Defenders." It is understandable that Ms. Bornstein, alongside other trans* folks, would consider *Horsexe* an absolute affront, as it seems to consign them to psychosis. It is also true that Ms. Bornstein does not seem to understand the Lacanian theory undergirding Ms. Millot's argument. Indeed, the difference between sexuated subject positions and gendered identifications marks perhaps the most fundamental fissure between Lacanian theory and postmodern gender theory. Recent scholarship by Patricia Gherovici, Shanna Carlson, Sheila Cavanagh, and a special edition of *TSQ* on Transpsychoanalytics has turned to the questions of transsexuality from a perspective that seems more hospitable to trans* identifications. Gherovici in particular has advocated for a rethinking of Lacanian sexuation in terms of the *sinthome* of his 23rd seminar.

Even still, most Lacanian scholarship on transsexuality circumscribes it as psychotic and takes Schreber and the push-to-woman as its primary orientations. Even those explicitly seeking to "depathologize" transness give the lion's share of their attention to transwomen and to the feminine. Even in Gherovici's work, transmen are only examples, and she herself only barely indicates this ambivalence. Thus my goal is to return to Lacan's writing on the phallus, the phallic function, the genesis of the sexed subject, his reading of transsexuality and psychosis, and his diagnostic categories to try to interpret transmasculinity. C. Jacob Hale outlines different modalities of transmasculine sexual behavior and of the transformations in behavior and comportment that occur in moving between subject positions, which culminates in transmasculine embodiments of fucking. What is of especial significance is the way he describes the strap-on as becoming a part of his body, as an incorp(us)oration. While subtended by this scholarship and Lacan's seminars, this presentation will try to understand how the dildo can or cannot become a penis.

From *petits papiers* to *petits fils*: Navigating "genetic criticism" with "The Youth of Gide"

Dipjan Maitra (SUNY)

While extolling the virtues of Jean Delay's multivolume psychobiography of André Gide in "The Youth of Gide, or the Letter and Desire" (1958/1966) Lacan saw the advent of literary criticism that privileged an author's unpublished, "short(er) writings" or *petits papiers* as "revolutionary":

But this practice [...] has instead engendered a revolution in literary values. It has done so by introducing into a market, whose effects have been regulated by printing techniques for the past four centuries, a new sign of value: what we call short(er) writings [*petits papiers*]. The manuscripts that print had relegated to the function of the unpublished reappear as an integral part of the work with a function that deserves examination. (p.625)

In this paper I will reread Lacan's essay on Gide to reopen the question of the unconscious in textual criticism. I will underpin how for Lacan the "unpublished" gathers renewed significance in comparison with the "printed." Jean-Michel Rabaté has recently (2019) identified this thrust on unpublished, short(er) writings or *petits papiers* as Lacan's alertness to the advent of "genetic criticism" as "a critical school that has dominated the study of modern and contemporary literature since the 1990s and takes pre-publication materials such as drafts, letters and diary entries as its main object." This paper will re-interrogate the debate between archival studies of literary works and psychoanalysis, keeping Lacan's pronouncements on Gide's unpublished writings—which for Lacan acted as "subjective" notes where the subject of the unconscious made an appearance—at the center. While genetic criticism itself had had its early proponents of psychoanalytic textual criticism of "avant-textes" or even "textanalysis" (Jean Bellemin-Noël), this paper will argue how Lacan's remarks on "short(er) writings" can be utilized to reintroduce the subject of the unconscious into textual/archival studies, in terms I argue, Lacan continued to evoke after *Écrits* (1966).

My paper will begin by locating the status of unpublished, *petits papiers* for Lacan in this essay as an instance of "deferred communication" (p.627) having a distinct relation with their audience. If for Jacques-Alain Miller (2005/2016), the Gide essay marks Lacan's recognition of the letter's "tangible, destructible, and divisible character, which is not ideal but very material," I will show how this recognition could owe something to Lacan's interest in Gide's "short(er) writings" and destroyed correspondence. I will then demonstrate how Lacan's remarks on Gide's unpublished archive can be seen together with several crucial remarks on two important authors: Pascal's own *petit papiers*, consulting which becomes for Lacan an act of profitable pickpocketing ("faire les poches") after death, and a way of reading Pascal's *Wager* (Seminar XIII, Session IX). And secondly, another Gide-like homo litterarius, James Joyce's vast pre-publication drafts. I will comment on Lacan's term "petits fils," his "little threads" in navigating through Joyce's "large quantity of notes and doodles" (Seminar XXIII, Session V). I will thus finally contend that Lacan's remarks on Gide's "short(er) writings" can help formulate newer methods of introducing the subject of the unconscious in genetic/archival studies.

Time Crimes of the Superego

Evan Malater (psychoanalyst)

“A Theoretical Introduction to the Functions of Psychoanalysis in Criminology” is hardly a celebrated Lacanian text. Nevertheless, a careful examination of the text finds a series of murders and references to crimes of the superego that foreshadow a future betrayal, one in which the text’s co-author, Michel Cenac, will side with those who pass the judgment that led to Lacan’s split in the French psychoanalytic group SPP, a split that eventually led to Lacan’s banishment by the IPA in 1963. The conflict was in large part due to the controversy regarding Lacan’s use of variable sessions as well as a fear that he had an undue transference influence on trainees under his spell. Reading this ecrits, one in which Lacan’s own writing is blended with Cenac’s, we can read the text through the lens of the eventual controversy and conflict between the authors. We therefore can read the text as an awkward blending of two voices that will fragment in time to reveal fault lines which render the text the bearer of potentiality of a judgment-to-come, a judgment about transgression, time and transference. We will examine some of the criminal cases mentioned in the text in light of the text’s application of the theory of the Mirror Stage to group psychology through a discussion of the recent Jordan Peele movie *Us* and the 2017 Las Vegas mass shooting by Stephan Paddock. Finally we will ask how the never ending fascination with Lacan’s use of time can be understood by a reference to the ideas in the text regarding judgment, responsibility and various aspects of time, including normative/linear and mythological/symbolical, ideas that eventually were enacted in a conflict that pitted the two authors on opposing sides, a judgment in and on Time.

The Foiled Escape : Jordon Peele’s films of horror

Kareen Malone (Après Coup Psychoanalytic Association)

In interviews, Jordon Peele has said his interest in horror movies began with his watching, as a child, *Night of the Living Dead*. George Romero’s independent film became a remarkable success. It was all the more remarkable for one of its protagonists (of the undead variety) being black. The sole survivor of the gruesome zombie attack was a black man, whose attempt to emerge from his final shelter was met by a gunshot between the eyes. The last scenes are still shots, grainy, where his body is about to be lifted by meat hooks wielded by a posse of white men. This double horror is not difficult to discern; being black and the appropriateness of the medium of horror, seems to undergird the director of the recent films, “Get Out” and “Us”. Peele has revealed that in his films one character is tied to a personal/social trauma, one she or he has attempted to erase. Aimed to African American audiences, Peele’s films tease out a certain horror that is simultaneously intimate and social. Coming to terms with one’s past, repeatedly encountering oneself as image and object, bearing an ambivalent relation to historical and personal trauma are not unfamiliar clinically. Yet the questions of trauma are difficult. It is important for young African Americans to ‘pay it forward’ and to celebrate racial difference while hearing the somber themes of Afro-pessimism. Peele necessarily brings such aspects of the history of African Americans to a wider audience. It is cagey. Shall we see “Get

Out” as satirizing the continuum from slavery to modern Caucasian exploitation of blacks by wealthy white folks? Shall we see the film along the axis of Chris Washington’s attraction to the murderous white vamp, Rose Armitage and its costs? “Us” engages the underground of the successful black family. The themes of black and white can’t and certainly don’t disappear.

Lacan noted that the psychoanalyst should be ...”well acquainted with the whorl into which his era draws him in the ongoing enterprise of Babel...an interpreter in the strife of languages.... (Lacan, 1966/2006, 264). This admonition alerts one to the spoken as a cultural event/historically founded. Rather than taking a Relational turn wherein social categories are at odds with psychoanalytic ones, this query looks at a few chapters from the *Écrits* to formulate the intimacy of race in the United States as seen through Peele’s films. Examining Lacan’s writing in terms of the mirror stage, aggressivity, the function of *jouissance*, the place of the object allows a more psychoanalytically informed tracking of race, as caught up in its own tangles of desire.

Instance of the letter in the Unconscious or Reason Since Freud

Calum Lister Matheson (University of Pittsburgh)

This paper analyzes Jacques Lacan’s influential work “Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason Since Freud,” given in 1956 for the *Fédération des Étudiants ès Lettres*. Lacan derived a theory of the “letter” as an element of concrete discourse borrowed from the structure of language overall. In doing so, he both utilized and critiqued concepts drawn from structural linguistics, particularly the work of Ferdinand de Saussure. Freud’s revolutionary addition, according to Lacan, is the notion of the unconscious, which defines the subject through the operations of condensation (metaphor) and displacement (metonymy). This essay particularly emphasizes the role of rhetoric in Lacan’s work, arguing that because speech is the fundamental medium of psychoanalysis, attention to rhetoric is a vital element of the analyst’s repertoire. Lacan concludes by leveraging his arguments in the context of philosophy, particularly Cartesian concepts of the subject and Heideggerian notions of being. “Instance of the Letter” is a valuable part of Lacan’s corpus for a diverse set of audiences, and forms one of the most important works of his early career.

No Gods, No Masters: Social Bond among Lacanian Psychoanalysts in 2019

Michael McAndrew (Colorado Analytic Forum of the Lacanian Field)

In the transmission of Lacanian psychoanalysis, social bond is paramount. The transmission of psychoanalysis has largely taken place outside of universities in North America, usually in institutes of the American Psychoanalytic Association, chapters of the International Psychoanalytic Association in the New World. It is on the outside of these institutes that Lacan knew social bond among analysts could be fostered—such as forums, or the School.

American society demands we be happy, we enjoy, that we pursue success at any cost. Coupled with the manualized care of the mental health industry, that demands these same

results at a fixed cost, desire is scarcely spoken of. Today, the formation of the Lacanian Psychoanalyst in the United States is inherently transgressive; in that it is predicated on enthusiasm, and desire; rather than institutional standards, or that of the university to mental healthcare pipeline.

Lacanian psychoanalysis still promotes social bond, even in an increasingly atomized world; both the world at large and the mental health industry. Today, many clinicians may feel adrift; both in their own practice, and own life-after all, most graduate training programs in mental health do not require therapy anymore; as analytic formation does. We must submit ourselves to the same cure we administer to our analysands.

Too often clinicians are as atomized as their patients; often in the ant-maze of their community service agencies; leaving them with no agency at all! Through a close reading of Lacan's *The Situation of Psychoanalysis and the Training of Psychoanalysts of 1956*, (as well as Lacan's epistle to the Italians in 1973), we can see the enthusiasm Lacan had for the social bond among analysts, that would lay the keystone for the formation of analysts today, in which Lacan places the enthusiasm of the one way trip of the analysis at its center: "If he is not fired with enthusiasm for it [psychoanalysis] there may well have been an analysis, but no chance of an analyst."

It is this same enthusiasm that Lacan places at the center of *The Situation of Psychoanalysis and the Training of Psychoanalysts of 1956*; in his condemnation of the institutes of his day, and their ways of producing "a hundred mediocre psychoanalysts" in columns of a Who's Who the size of an old fashioned telephone book. For this reason, Lacan opened and closed, and opened and closed his school-rather than submit himself or his analysands to another authority.

For analysts beginning their formation today, in which Lacan has always been the Dead Father, we don't have (or need) another Lacan, or a simulacra of him. What we need, and have, is our own enthusiasm for social bond with each other, to create with each other; and to challenge the orthodoxy of institutions, the wisdom of the Old Guard, and the desire to have formations unique unto ourselves.

The Conceptual History of Empty Speech: Lacan atop Kierkegaard and Heidegger

Samuel McCormick (San Francisco State University)

This paper begins the long-overdue task of locating Lacan's theory of empty speech (*parole vide*) in the broader philosophical tradition of critical commentary on the communicative practices of everyday life. Building on my forthcoming book-length study of this tradition (to be published by the University of Chicago Press in Fall 2019), I suggest that Lacan's treatment of empty speech, particularly in his essay on "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis," can and should be read as the culminating moment in a conceptual history of everyday talk stretching from Søren Kierkegaard's inaugural notion of "chatter" (*snak*) to Martin Heidegger's recuperative discussions of "idle talk" (*Gerede*).

Phenomenology Beyond the Imaginary: Reading Freud's "Elizabeth von R." with Lacan's "The Mirror Stage"

Jeffrey McCurry (Duquesne University)

Freud in the 1895 case studies is significantly phenomenological: neurotic symptoms have experiential causes and are curable through experiential means. Yet Lacan is often interpreted as one of the French structuralists who sought to overthrow the phenomenology of first-person human consciousness and lived experience. In many ways this account of Lacan is correct, but it perhaps hides some resonances between phenomenology and Lacan's work. One such resonance is Jacques-Alain Miller's notion of Lacan as a "phenomenologist of language" who shared phenomenology's anti-objectivism. Another resonance is that between Freud's own phenomenological psychoanalysis and the role of the imaginary in Lacanian theory and practice. Lacan claimed to be returning to Freud—and often to the early Freud. But if this Freud offers a phenomenological account of the unconscious and a phenomenological cure for neurosis, then Lacan's own work can be seen to link up with these phenomenological dimensions in Freud.

Thus I propose to use the concept of the mirror-stage (or -phase) as a key to read Freud's early case study on Fraulein Elizabeth von R. I will suggest that Freud's treatment of Elizabeth was an attempt to liberate her from imaginary illusions of selfhood that constrict her real concrete experience. Freud is trying to liberate her from an imaginary "capture" in which she is trapped so that her experience and desire can be acknowledged for the first time. The cure for Elizabeth is to learn to live beyond a unified but false self-image in which her multifarious desiring has been denied and frustrated. Freud helps Elizabeth live out her *conscious* experience for the first time instead of repressing dimensions of it (somaticizing it, which is not so much making something unconscious as it is making it *differently* conscious)—and this conscious experience is discontinuous, incoherent (it does not cohere), and conflictual. Freud brings Elizabeth to a place where her first-person experience (beyond an imaginary self, so to speak) is consciously conflictual.

Lacan's famous paper on "The Mirror-Stage" shows how the baby must pass from the originary fragmentary real into the imaginary in order to begin to be a subject at all, but it also hints that this imaginary stage frustrates a dimension of being human, one located in the experience of the real and the fundamental body-experience, which cannot be simply discarded. We have to learn to live within and after the mirror-stage, to be sure, but we also must realize that the unified self (a self without experiential conflict and libidinal diversity) created by the mirror-stage presents its own problems and causes its own neuroses. Reading Freud's case study in light of issues of the imaginary helps us remember to tarry loosely in whatever imaginary of selfhood we are embracing so as to allow the conflicting differentials of desire to flow in our conscious lived experience.

Law Without a Legislator: Sacrificing Castration to the Other's Enjoyment

Todd McGowan (University of Vermont)

Focusing on two of Lacan's most philosophical *Écrits* ("Kant with Sade" and "The Subversion of the Subject"), this talk will examine the role that the subject's relation to the law plays in structure of its enjoyment. While Lacan does not think that one can do without the law, he shows that the barrier that neurosis constructs relative to the law is that it imagines that the law is authorized, that it is the product of a knowledgeable legislator. Even Kant falls victim to this neurotic trap when he constructs the content of the categorical imperative out of the purely formal moral law. The point of psychoanalytic theory, in contrast, is to reveal the non-authorized and yet still binding status of the law, which is what enables the subject to give up its investment in its own castration and thereby allow for the Other to enjoy.

Kant Avec Sade: A Sex-Robot Ethics?

Isabel Miller (Kingston University)

In a blazing assault on enlightenment values and rationality, Lacan's *Kant avec Sade* attempts to read D.A.F de Sade, the infamous French Marquis, as the consummate Kantian and in doing so, uncover the structural logic (and inconsistencies) underpinning both the virgin philosopher of old Königsberg and the libertine novelist's ethics.

Published just 8 years after Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*, Sade's *Philosophy in the Bedroom* details the depraved acts inflicted by a band of libertines on their virtuous and beautiful victim Eugénie de Mistival, and is, Lacan argues, not just an extension of Kant's ethics, but in fact serves to complete them. Sade shows us the disturbing truth of Kantian ethics that Kant himself had failed to recognize or admit. But rather than the more obvious route of trying to prove the existence of "bad intentions" in the Kantian categorical imperative however, Lacan is more interested in locating a solid adherence to an ethical maxim in the Sadean fantasy.

For Kant the ultimate objective of the moral law is the realization of the supreme good, the point at which virtue and happiness coincide. But by removing all emotional factors such as sympathy or compassion as "pathological" in the moral realm, Kant paved the way for a system of ethics which exposed the true and hideous face of *jouissance* and its structuring as the other side of the law. Kant proposes the establishment of a law which excludes any consideration of the relation between subject and object, and the capacity for the latter to produce pleasure or displeasure in the former, but rather is based upon the extent to which the subject's will is in accordance with an a priori law.

Following this logic, Lacan is able to discern in the barbaric and licentious acts of Sade's libertines a certain adherence to a strict moral code which is articulated in the form of a maxim, which when enunciated takes as its foundation the acknowledgment of the other's supreme right to dominion over the subject's body. Such that "'I have the right to enjoy your body', anyone can say to me 'and I will exercise this right without any limit to the capriciousness of the exactions I may wish to satiate with your body'". In highlighting the position of the enunciated "I" in this maxim as *not* the subject but the voice of law, Lacan proceeds to analyze its value as a universal and unconditional categorical imperative. Crucially it is the non-reciprocal nature of this edict that is significant. In the Sadean universe the right to *jouissance* is dependent upon

the non-negotiable inequality between victim and aggressor in any sexual configuration and thereby all forms of social interaction.

This paper will attempt to imagine how a reading of *Kant avec Sade* may furnish us with modes of understanding a future ethics that derives from individualized relationships with forms of embodied Artificial Intelligence, given that the law and *jouissance* are for Lacan inexorably connected. If Sade's fantasies of a perpetual victim grow out of his fascination with the "second death", the inescapable law of castration, how would the "immortality" of the robot body, and potential for endless torment feature as a mode of fantasy for the desires of the libertines? What kind of ethics can be built around the assumption of a subject who does not know castration and who, supposedly, cannot suffer? And is the sex-robot the Sadean ethical imperative incarnate?

Between the Pantheon and the Prefecture of Police: Tobogganing in Circles on the Rue. St. Jacques

Michael Miller (State University of New York, Syracuse)

Paraphrasing Canguilhem, Lacan describes psychology as "sliding...like a toboggan from the Pantheon to the Prefecture of Police." We are left to infer a warning to psychoanalysis not to get in that toboggan, which we see Lacan dismantle in "Science and Truth," "Psychoanalysis and its Teaching," and elsewhere throughout the *Ecrits*. These texts, which skewer scientism, yet seek to maintain a radical embrace of the scientific spirit, can be read in part as critical inspections of the political boundaries erected in the imaginary between disciplines, ideologies, and identificatory allegiances. Yet the reader finds himself on a toboggan of Lacan's own design—one that goes uphill and downhill, shuttling labor between police work and preservation. We are incited to rescue psychoanalysis from the rigid, deadening clutches of imaginary interpretations, and to balk at the costs of legitimation through scientism, which include boundarying-out the "spiritual" nature of psychoanalysis. Yet we are also recruited to *patrol and enforce* boundaries against any misinterpretation or misapplication of the "style" that is psychoanalysis, which cannot but reinforce an imaginary approach to psychoanalysis itself. Even as Lacan excoriates psychoanalysis for its formalistic lack of creativity, he lauds Freud's own rigidity, on the interpretation that Freud's teaching was thereby preserved (like those "great men" in the Pantheon) only for those who could understand it: Lacan himself, and whether by edification or identification, his reader. The present paper aims to explore these textual contradictions and their reverberations in teaching, clinical work, and the cultures of psychology and psychoanalysis.

Negative symptoms as a "disturbance in the inmost juncture of a subject's sense of life"

Nienke Moernaut (Ghent University)

Negative symptoms are high on the agenda in the current psychosis literature. Whereas Lacan never uses the term as such, in his "On a question" he succeeds in sketching the issue rather clearly. Because indeed, what else than the diminished inner experience so characteristic of

negative symptoms, is it Schreber is talking about when he speaks about “soul murder”? Lacan makes this even more clear when he describes it as “a disturbance that occurred at the inmost juncture of the subject’s sense of life” (p. 558).

This presentation will discuss how we can use Lacan’s theory on psychosis, as elaborated in “On a question” to grasp something about the experience of negative symptoms. To be able to grasp this experience to the fullest, we conducted semi-structured interviews with psychotic patients about their experience of negative symptoms. An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2008) will be used to analyze the data. Based on a preliminary analysis, the following elements appeared to be of importance: patients describe to feel like a zombie, a plant, to function on autopilot, some report a shortage of thoughts or not to know how to relate to others. After a psychotic episode, they often feel depressed and disappointed that their delusions appeared not to be true. Furthermore, it is striking that patients deny to have suffered from negative symptoms, while other elements in their story imply the contrary. We will discuss how the concept of the hole in the signifier-chain can be used to make sense of these experiences of emptiness patients experience after a psychotic episode. Furthermore, we will question whether the current standard treatment for psychosis might actually maintain this hole. Indeed, patients relate that the flattening is caused or enhanced by antipsychotic medication, that they are encouraged to be quiet in psychiatry and that there is only limited time to talk about their experiences. It seems that this way, patients are offered little help in building something that can help them to cover up this hole they are confronted with. So, instead of encouraging quietness, a little more craziness, like one participant put it, might be a good thing in psychiatry to tackle the issue of negative symptoms. Either way, Lacan’s theory on psychosis appears to be a useful framework to think about negative symptoms.

Sexuation/Deprivation: Two Contemporary Approaches to the Question of the Sexual Relation

Bethany Morris (Lindsey Wilson College) & Alexander Aronson

This talk comes out of ongoing research on two online communities: Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW’S) and Incels (“involuntarily celibate”). These groups are comprised of men discussing their issues with women, dating and their culture in online forums. MGTOW’s concerns seem to stem from women not recognizing their place as subservient to men and that feminism made it either impossible or very unlikely to date women who understand this. Their solutions seem to be premised in an escapist fantasy, meaning that men should cultivate a life without women, or on the other end of the spectrum, only have relationships with women who are willing and able to be trained appropriately. Incels, on the other hand, are men who desire relationships with women but for a number of reasons, such as biology and the presence of dominant men referred to as “Chads”, are unable to secure a partner. Their frustrations seem to come from their perceptions that women keep choosing to be with partners that do not treat them well, and the belief that they would be more suitable partners if given their chance. Incels gained

notoriety after Eliot Rodger, self-proclaimed Incel, murdered 6 people and injured 14 more in California, after a series of Youtube videos proclaiming his frustrations with women.

We would like to consider these groups through two distinct perspectives: First, we are interested in the ways in which the relational trajectories of MGTOW and incels reflect their encounter with and understanding of the sexual non-rapport. Both groups strive to reconcile with the effects of castration through different relationships to the exception, or the mythic man-- identifying either with the one who enjoys women as they are "meant" to be enjoyed, as in the case of MGTOWs, or with his subordinates--those for whom the phallic function is in question, in the case of Incels. To maintain this frame, groups rely on distinct and complex dialects, melding concepts from evolutionary psychology and the philosophy of enlightenment rationality with moralistic tropes about men and women, to safeguard spaces where members may speak candidly regarding sexual struggles. It is through this mode of speaking that members of both communities strive to attenuate anxieties regarding the increasingly evident non-complementarity of men and women.

Second, in accord with the above assertion that the non-complementarity of the sexes has become a more nakedly evident cause of anxiety than when this truth could be obscured by (now retrograde) ideological injunctions about the sexual relation, we assert that MGTOW and incel rhetoric stages a complaint worth examining about the dissolution of the fantasies they inculcated. The tropes of phallic signification which once served to delimit the subject's possible encounters with enjoyment in its traumatic non-reciprocity are now understood as radically incompatible with the ethical horizons of the subject under global neoliberal capitalism; expressed interpersonally in discourses on masculinity, feminism, and social justice warped by the alienating machinations of capital, the work of deciphering the obligation to the other is indefinitely extended and abstracted, perhaps to the point of foreclosure. We propose that the subjects we consider are those for whom the injunction to "enjoy" has become a struggle against.

The Masochian Woman: a fantasy of male desire?

Jennifer Morowski (University of Western Ontario)

The Masochian woman is a figure who stages what is at stake for women when desire and the law come together. This requires an examination of the conflict that exists between the idea that women's masochism is the fantasy of men and the truth about who wields power in the masochistic theatre. Thus, the inquiry into women's masochism means following Jacques Lacan's conception of women's masochism in *Anxiety*, which describes it as holding a "completely different meaning, a fairly ironic meaning, and a completely different scope" from the pervert's masochism or moral masochism (Seminar X 190). Beginning with a critical analysis of Freud and Lacan's theories on masochism, I will decipher what feminine masochism is and why we are usually only presented with cases where the man exhibits this type of masochistic desire. In order to reach a full understanding of this different and ironic meaning for women's masochism, it is important to examine the connection between the gaze and masochism to comprehend the way in which the fantasy of the Other is an essential mechanism in the design

of the masochistic theatre. However, connecting these two perversions as both belonging on the passive side of the erotic register, as Lacan does in “The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis,” does not go far enough, and it must be understood that masochism itself is inherently reliant on the gaze as an essential part of the masochistic theatre, and allows it to function as a fantasy. Thus, for masochism to exist in women, even if it is ironic, Lacan proposes that the fantasy imagined by the Other, or the male fantasy, is what is enacted. This leads to the question of what role anxiety plays in the male fantasy. Lacan believes the masochist’s aim is the anxiety of the Other. If woman is enacting a male fantasy, and one which causes anxiety in the face of the Other’s desire, and man sustains his *jouissance* through his own anxiety, what is this anxiety? I believe Deleuze provides the answer to this question in his own discussion of the three women figures in Masoch’s work. It is the figure of the Grecian woman, who “believes in the independence of women and in the fleeting nature of love; for her the sexes are equal” (Deleuze 47), that is the cause of anxiety for man. For Aphrodite, equality between men and women is the “crucial moment at which she gains dominance over man, for ‘man trembles as soon as woman becomes his equal’” (47-48). In *Écrits* Lacan reminds us of Freud’s advice “not to reduce the supplement of the feminine with respect to the masculine to the complement of the passive with respect to the active” (*Écrits* 615). In representing what Lacan calls the ‘absolute Other’ the Masochian woman is able to wield the power of law through her control of the masochistic *mise en scène*.

Eating the *Écrits*

Calum Neill (Edinburgh-Napier University)

In the closing session of this seventh seminar, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, Lacan raises the idea of ‘eating the book’. This final point of the seminar can be understood to underscore the identificatory processes entailed in our engagement with knowledge and the concomitant assumption of a subjective position, with all the weight of responsibility this assumption suggests. This keynote address will consider this issue of consumption in relation to the *Écrits* themselves.

Here are the *Écrits*, offered up to us to eat, for our nourishment, but perhaps also prone to induce some indigestion and even, in some, not a little nausea. What advice can we discern from Lacan himself as to how to proceed here? Faced with the *Écrits*, how do we hope to eat well? What, that is, might be the ethics of reading the *Écrits*?

Reading the Sign of ‘Something To Be Read’: On Lacan’s Other Introduction to *Écrits*

Dany Nobus (Brunel University)

On 14 December 1969, some three years after the publication of *Écrits*, Lacan wrote a new introduction to his *summa*, on the occasion of its being released in paperback format. Although

Lacan's text is substantially longer than his 'Overture' to the original volume, and contains a great many innovative propositions, including an alternative reading of Poe's 'The Purloined Letter', it is rarely referenced, let alone studied. In this paper, I shall consider Lacan's 1969 introduction as a crucially important, yet neglected écrit in its own right, whose rigorous opposition between the signifier and the lekton constitutes both a departure from Lacan's yearlong engagement with structuralist linguistics, and a carefully crafted opening onto an analysis of the confluences between 'saying' and 'writing'.

Daedalic Horror and Uncanny Subjectivity

Chase O'Gwin (Northwest Missouri State University)

Space, and how the subject occupies it physically and, more importantly, psychically are concepts fundamental to subjectivity. This is evidenced by Lacan taking up both topics within the *Écrits* and his use of topography as way to demonstrate the spatial relationship at various intervals during subjective constitution. i.e. the physical and psychological space a being finds itself in as part of mirror stage and then later knotted to reality in psychic space as it is brought into the symbolic register, as is outlined in the *Subversion of the Subject* (Lacan, 2006). A subject's relation to spaces both corporeal and psychological are also important themes found within the horror genre. Making use of motifs and sequences from Kubrick's *The Shining*, Rami's *Evil Dead 2*, and other horror films, and highlighting the similarities between them and Lacan's work, I want to suggest an alternative explanation for society's fascination with horror. Rather than the tired notion of the degeneracy of the human mind, I will contend that perhaps our societal fascination with horror is the result of the effect of our body becoming inhabited by subjectivity.

I hope to illustrate that many features of horror suggest that this idea, of a subject taking habitation within a body, entails the impasses between culture and the body, frequently emphasized with issues surrounding space. In particular, I will employ Mieli's concept of "labyrinth-space": an "inconceivable space, a topography that defies mapping is one of the typical topoi of the emergence of [anxiety], very often used in fiction as a trigger for horror" (Mieli, 2017). Making use of Lacan's reconstrual of anxiety and taking Mieli's argument to understand that space does not just merely represent a body in space, but the body itself is a place in which the subject resides. Horror points out the Real of the body, and how the body itself can become the site of the uncanny, in particular the body's own (mis)reflection. Often films position the "monster" as a gaze showing the body's blindness to its own fragility and of its being seen. Lacan's mirror stage indicates one way of structuring this moment. Horror reveals a haunting alterity in the making of the bodily image, just as symptoms and inexplicable anxieties are woven with the needs, dependencies, and traumas of the body becoming human. This spatial analysis furthers itself a bit on the difficult notion of Lacan's *petit objet a*, which we may simply remark as a remnant of the erotic exchange between subject and other, mediating

the interiority of the drive within desire. This will be expanded upon utilizing Dolar's (1991) work on the uncanny and the doppelgänger. As such, *petit objet a* reveals the precarious nature of our libidinal infrastructure, whether of the body or the lived world/reality. This inevitably leaves the subject feeling quite *unheimlich* and with no way out.

Against an Archaic Illusion: Revisiting the Traumatic Neuroses through Lacan's "Science and Truth"

Cecelia Opatken-Ringda (University of California, San Diego)

In the wake of the First World War, European psychoanalysts were confronted with a completely new set of symptoms that challenged the orthodoxy of the talking cure. In this interwar period, psychoanalysis both gained traction and incurred problems with the influx of soldiers presenting with new pathologies including shell shock, wound shock, and more generally, the traumatic neuroses. These patients failed to respond to treatment that involved free association; they, in some way, were not able to let their symptoms "speak." As a result, analysts adapted their theories of trauma to account for the inability to confront the symptom via the signifying chain. Rather than trauma related to psychosexual regression, analysts such as Sándor Ferenczi and Abram Kardiner understood traumatic neuroses as a return to birth trauma. The traumatic symptom was fundamentally reconfigured as somatic, pre-linguistic, and fundamentally stripped of symbolic meaning.

Interwar analysts reacted to this emptiness of the subject in horror, much as Lacan's audience responded to his famous *La Chose Freudienne* as he details in his essay "Science & Truth" from *Écrits*. In describing how Freud, upon his original discovery of the unconscious, let the symptom speak, Lacan claims that one can only ever hear the symptom "as [it] must be pronounced: in horror." In this context, the horror that Lacan identifies, and that the interwar analysts responded with, is related to the rejection of the psychologization of the subject. In response to these depthless patients, interwar analysts grasped once more towards the *archaic illusion*: they conceptualized the traumatized soldier as a pre-cultural subject in an attempt to suture truth and knowledge and maintain a humanist psychology, what Lacan has pejoratively called a "Jasperian understanding" of the subject of psychoanalysis that completely fails to register the fundamental split in the subject of science.

In my paper, I will argue that the traumatic neuroses were a visceral materialization of the fundamental split between knowledge and truth in the subject of science, but that, in an attempt to confront the meaninglessness of this symptomology, interwar analysts engaged in what Lacan calls a "liberal heart-to-heart," suturing the split subject yet again in the context of ego psychology in the US. I aim to understand, through close readings of the case studies of István Hollós, Sándor Ferenczi, and Abram Kardiner, how these analysts reacted in horror to the emergence of the subject of science in its purest form. Furthermore, I will connect this trend in symptomology with the wider crisis in liberal democracy that faced Europe in the 1930s and early 1940s. While the split subject seems to present itself at full force by way of soldiers returning from the First World War, the very world from which the subject of science was born

is also under threat of dissolution. Therefore, we can view these neuroses in the context of the undermining of the fundamental epistemological, political, and ethical foundations of liberal humanist democratic science, and scientific medicine.

The reveal of the Real in hashtag politics

Rosemary Overell (The University of Otago)

This paper tackles contemporary *mediated* politics through a discussion of the *hashtag* as an interstice of the Real and as a vital site for the (re)production of ideology. Media studies regularly pivots off discussions of how 'reality' is (re)presented and circulates in popular culture (see for example Couldry and Hepp's latest work *The Mediated Construction of Reality*, 2018). Such discussions hinge on a vaunting of the signifier and leverage a politics of the 'reveal' of the 'actual' significance of media texts, as opposed to their ideological meaning, as crucial to critical analysis. This approach is valuable. Nonetheless, in this paper, I consider the limitations of media studies' analyses that work in this mode using a Lacanian approach. I propose that the notion of the *reveal-of-the-real* assumes an understanding of the signifier as bound by the Symbolic and the Imaginary and does little to account for the effects and, perhaps more importantly, *affects* generated by the Real. Here, I nuance an understanding representations of the 'real' in popular media as more than simply the devious machinations of 'false consciousness' demanding of a illumination of the 'actual' (things as they really are). Rather, I call for an account of the media which grapples with the Lacanian Real as crucial for considering how ideology works. To demonstrate this, I focus on the ascent of the politicised hashtag ('#') on social media sites such as Twitter and Instagram. The hashtag denotes a word or phrase which, through sheer repetition can become trending: recent examples include #BlackLivesMatter; #NotAllMen and #MeToo. In media studies, as well as popular journalistic accounts, these linguistic signifiers are either revered, as evidence of a burgeoning social justice movement, or reviled, as 'not enough' to bring about structural social change. This revered / reviled approach depends on an assumption of the signifier as either a wholly and immediately an index for actual events, or as 'just' a word or phrase which is immaterialised due to its repetition / repe-Tweet-tion and its position as just one among many trending hashtags on a scrollable feed. Rather, I suggest that, pushing off from Lacan's *Ecrits*, and in particular his work on the 'subject', we can read the metaphorical function of #politics as indicative of the Real, more commonly associated with the 'later Lacan'. In short, the hashtags mentioned above index, but are also generative of affects. The 'reveal' here is of the Real – that of anguish, the not-whole and the impossible subject. The '#' attempts to anchor the 'blah blah blah' to which Lacan refers in 'The Metaphor of the Subject' and will later associate with *lalangue*, but fails. This failure, though, is not simply the 'not enough' of those who revile the representation / signification – rather it indexes the embodied subject to whom the 'tag' or the word is *real* both in the ideological sense as presumed to index an actual experience (say of sexual trauma in #MeToo) but also in the Lacanian sense in that this 'actual' experience will also exceed the '#'. That is, the affects (UnSymbolisable and associated with the Real) generated by the socially marginalised subject's experience as structural outside the Symbolic of patriarchy, whiteness *etcetera* are disavowed but also indicated by the attempt to universalise through recourse to

the hashtag. This paper, at least, attempts a provocation to media studies to account for the nuances of this mode of mediation.

What can Lacan's cybernetics teach us about the AI revolution?

Demetris Pachnis

Artificial Intelligence is the hot topic of today. The rate of 'progress' in this field of research is such that AI is even tackling the "final frontier" of human interaction: humour. The late Stephen Hawking issued a stark warning: "in the future AI could develop a will of its own, a will that is in conflict with ours". A point of "singularity" would be reached whereby AI could recursively improve itself without human intervention, leading to an explosion of 'intelligence'.

At the heart of this view lies a certain conception of human 'intelligence'. For some psychologists and neuroscientists, the human brain is believed to work like a computer. We process information, 'store' memories and are guided by sets of rules to achieve certain outcomes (algorithms). This view was put forward as early as 1958 by mathematician John von Neumann, who drew parallels between the components of a computing machine and those of a human brain: the human nervous system was deemed 'prima facie digital'. For Dylan Evans (2005), the mind is not just like a computer, it is a computer."

Lacan, it would appear, was prophetic in taking up the concepts of computational theory in his early work in the mid-1950s. It has even been claimed that "Lacan urged his audience to think of the mind in information-processing terms" before eventually abandoning cybernetics and computational theory.

This is a gross misinterpretation. Lacan's work indeed offers a fruitful path to shed light on the impact of artificial intelligence on society today, but not because he took up the concepts of game theory in order to articulate human intersubjectivity. Rather, it was the emphasis on the interaction of speech with language that was novel in his approach.

Indeed, game theory and cybernetics helped to reveal the structure of the symbolic order. Artificial intelligence is an extension of these two fields. As such, artificial intelligence has nothing to say about consciousness and the constitution of the subject. The essential problem has not changed: namely, understanding the subject's interaction with the symbolic order through speech. This essay will utilise two key texts in *Ecrits – The Seminar on "The Purloined Letter"* and *The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis* – to shed light on artificial intelligence and to contribute to the urgent debates around its impact on society. In fact, understanding AI through a Lacanian perspective has the potential to illuminate AI debate in many fields, including economics, sociology and politics.

Re-turn of the Drive: A Lacanian Analysis of Freud's *Trieb*

Eduardo Valsega Piazza (Psychoanalytic Forum of Puerto Rico; University of Puerto Rico)

Freud's concept of "trieb" has a problematic history of translations and conceptualization. It's been taken as synonym of *instinct* or *need* even though the german term for those concepts are

clearly different. This “confusion” is not a mere translation problem, but a conceptual and clinical one. Neofreudian, egopsychologist, and now, neuropsychanalyst take the Freudian trieb as a biological need (instinctual or otherwise) reducing psychoanalysis to a simple organic conflict. In this scenario, which is the one Anna Freud brought to the USA, the Ego is the only resource able to defend psychical integrity and, ultimately, the Id and most of the Unconscious are the same for everyone. This is the foundation for Ego Psychology and practice. Lacan’s return to Freud goes back to Freud’s concept of trieb and, notwithstanding the biological metaphors and references, finds a complex economy and structure that has little to do with need or instinct. Trieb as “drive” means the breaking of homeostatic or environmental balance in favor of repetition. Lacan’s discovery, against Freud, is that this trieb, in its every form is the result of the interaction of the living being with language. Especially oral and anal drives are not seen as “instinctual” but as a result of the interaction with the Other of language, acquired by the transformation of need by the demand of the Other. In this analysis, developed by Lacan in “Subversion of the Subject and Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious”, this drive can be specifically situated in the convergence/divergence between the signifiers of demand and desire itself. Thus, the coinage of the matheme ($d \ll D$). The clinical implications of this are vast. This means that these drives, their fixations and transformations are re-conceptualized in terms of the effects of the signifier on the body. In this sense the drives and the Id are not the same for everyone but singular in each case. This is the foundation for a practice of psychoanalysis based on listening, not the Ego, but the unconscious, its repetitions and its signifiers. It’s also a clinic that understands lack as structural, for the effects of language cannot be undone. But this lack is not the same lack-of-being (*manque à être*) of the Phallus but a lack-of-enjoyment (*manque à jouir*) that forces Lacan to formulate a new clinic, not of the Ego, nor the supremacy of the signifier, but of the real and its knots.

This paper will make explicit this problematic of the trieb in Anna Freud’s, as well as in the more recent Neuropsychanalysis. It will also develop in detail Lacan’s concept of trieb and its theoretical and clinical implication. This analysis will be a development of Lacan’s elaboration in “Subversion of the subject and dialectic of desire” and “Position of the unconscious”.

Sex, lies and polygraphs: On the “sex offender”

Celeste Pietrusza (Duquesne University)

In “A Theoretical Introduction to the Functions of Psychoanalysis in Criminology,” Lacan (in collaboration with Michel Cenac) writes that the idea of punishment in a society corresponds to prevailing notions of responsibility. As such, “[n]either crime nor criminals...can be conceptualized apart from their sociological context” (p. 103). Rather than seek internal coherence—as the physical or natural sciences do with regard to truth productions—psychoanalysis, then, offers to criminology a “dialectic in motion.”

The use of polygraph tests or “lie detectors” in contemporary mandated forensic treatments for sex offenders provides a scene through which to explore tensions laid out by Lacan and Cenac. Despite the range of possible crimes filed under the category of “sex crimes,” polygraphs are

most often used for those with offenses related to the figure of the Child, as determined by the Law. Despite overwhelming scientific evidence against the scientific validity of polygraph examinations for distinguishing fact from fiction, these continue to be used as markers of successful treatment progress. A “passed” polygraph is indicated by a lack of significant bodily reaction to answers given to yes or no questions regarding sexual attraction to as well as behaviors involving individuals under the age of legal consent. “Failed” polygraph examinations are often used by probation officers and courts in taking punitive measures or extending mandated treatment.

If, as Lacan and Cenac note, “the most characteristic form of expression of the subject in Western society is the assertion of one’s innocence,” what does the use of polygraphs for convicted crimes against the Child under the Law offer with regard to this claim? Taking the operations of the superego and unconscious into consideration, I consider how the polygraph test can, in certain instances, function to, in the words of Lacan and Cenac “force the subject to confess to something he does not know.”

In this paper, I explore, through brief case vignettes, “scenes” of the administration of the polygraph, and its relationship to and between “the truth of the crime” and “the truth of the criminal.” I consider how working in a Lacanian psychoanalytic fashion in a forensic setting with polygraphs produced particular speech productions and psychic scenes as polygraph tests approached. Finally, I consider how, given the open secret of the unreliability of polygraphs, the interrogation of the “sex offender” may serve as a scapegoat in and for American society.

From the Schema to the Matheme and Back? The Imaginary in Lacan’s “Science and Truth” and Beyond

Ed Pluth (California State University, Chico)

This paper will engage with Lacan’s essay “Science and Truth” by considering two of its main theses and how they represent a shift in how Lacan was thinking about psychoanalytic concepts and how to communicate about them at the time. The first is on the relationship of psychoanalysis to modern science and mathematization, and the second is what Jean-Claude Milner calls the “equation of subjects” (the subject of science with the subject of psychoanalysis, or Descartes with Freud). I will spend some time explaining these points, and then I will use as a contrast case the spherical mirror schema that Lacan presented in his (slightly) earlier essay “Remarks on the Report of Daniel Lagache”. I will discuss why Lacan constructs the schema, why he resorts to it, what sort of space it represents, and what its potential shortcomings are given the perspective he develops in “Science and Truth”. Does the schema ultimately rely too much on our intuitions, on what can appear to us? Is this ultimately what is deceptive about how it tries to situate such central Lacanian concepts as object a, the Other, and the ego? Does this attempt at modelling a space for psychoanalytic theory become untenable once the signifier starts to play the central role it does play in Lacanian theory? Or, is a sort of imaginized space not appropriate for the topics he was considering in his essay on

Lagache? Ultimately the issue, as I see it, has to do with whether thinking can at all free itself from certain imaginary traps. Or, as Lacan suggests, is thinking necessarily Aristotelian?

Lacan's Prosopopoeia: The Unconscious Speaks "Truth"

Concetta Principe (Trent University)

According to Lacan, the work of the analyst is a complicated project of truth and deception: "Analytic praxis must move forward toward a conquest of the truth along the paths of deception [*tromperie*]" ("The Names of the Father," 1966, 90). As if to embody what is provocative of that truth, Lacan uses a part of a Catholic prayer, 'The Name of the Father,' otherwise known as the NOF, to signify the Master Signifier: the divine figure-head functions as the law that drives the Subject's desire underground so that when desire returns, it does so disguised as the horrifying speaking unconscious, "I, truth, speak" ("Science and Truth," 1965, 736). In "Science and Truth," Lacan explains why his science is so scripted with religious concepts. Even though the analyst uses scientific rigour in exploring truth by resisting closing the gap between 'cause' and 'truth,' it is religion that provides the framework with which to recognize that, for the Oedipalized subject, 'truth' and 'cause' are held by God. In short, the divided subject sees truth and cause as beyond her/him. If 'cause' is knowledge for the split subject, then that "division between truth and knowledge," as Lacan says, is exemplified in Freud's expression, "*Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*," ("Where it was, there must I come to be as a subject," 734). Described in Lacan's prosopopoeia of the unconscious speaking ("I, truth, Speak") is a Feuerbachian dismantling of the divine hierarchy, and placing truth in the personal "other" of the subject's unconscious, which, structured like a language, speaks the horrifying 'truth' that the analyst aids the analysand to meet.

If Lacan, the secular scientist, relies on religion merely for a topology of the psyche's relationship to truth, why does he choose such a graphically Catholic prayer, to signify the law that holds the truth? In his essays, "On the Names of the Father," Lacan defends his Catholic term as a universal, non-partisan, signifier. For one, the NOF signals the paternal figure, as introduced by Freud's father of the primordial horde, and as witnessed in various cultures and religions in human history. For another, since all three monotheistic faiths share the same God, then God must be universal (1966, 743). The secular move to bring a sacred idea into the quotidian of scientific discourse, serves to profane it. Some secularists might find some *jouissance* in that. By converting the phrase into the acronym, NOF, we can suppose that its Christian odour has been eliminated. That is the secular wish, at least. On closer look, Lacan's use of the NOF appears grounded in unproven assumptions: that the secular strategy of moving a religious principle into the public sphere neutralizes its bias and that God is as universal a figure as the father. In this paper, I will review scholarship that questions both secularism's neutrality and the universality of God, so as to give us ears to hear Lacan's NOF speak the unconscious horrifying 'truth' of his Catholic bias, thus contributing to a small school of scholars who have observed the same horrifying 'truth.'

Questioning Variations on the Standard Treatment of Children

Adam J. Schneider (Pacifica Graduate Institute)

This paper seeks to argue for the ongoing relevance of Lacan's text, *Variations on the Standard Treatment*, in the treatment of children, adolescents, and their families. The author's work as a child and family psychotherapist in a community mental health clinic will frame the concerns Lacan raised in regard to contemporary popularity of short-term, behavior-focused treatments. These approaches are often marketed as adolescent variations of adult treatments but what they most share in common is movement away from the importance of speech. Adjunctive, often nonverbal treatments such as sand tray and play therapy, while standard in the treatment of children, falls within range of Lacan's critique of those who prefer every other characteristic of the patient to the patient's speech.

Lacan's dismissal of the (attempted) use of countertransference as a new standard, or variation on the old standard, in analytic technique is timely with the rise of relational psychoanalytic perspectives. Their offered "corrective emotional experiences," which presume to provide an emotionally substitute to heal for adults what they were denied or missing as children. This technique is especially problematic with children, as the role of the therapist - and how the child attempts to situate themselves in relation to the therapist - becomes unnecessarily confused by the demands of the therapist's own speech.

One can then understand why Lacan spends much of the text addressing the training of analysts, and the author's additional experience as a doctoral student in clinical psychology will be used to illustrate these concerns. The multitude of specializations for work with children is problematized by Lacan's insistence that training is not about the collection and retention of provided knowledge, nor instillation of an ethic of personal reflection. Rather, Lacan seeks analysts who are able to articulate what it is they are doing, not to or with the patient, but in themselves, to "silence the intermediate discourse" within oneself to better able to listen to the client. This is the necessary ignorance of which Lacan speaks, not of a lack of knowledge, but of not knowing what will come next in the treatment. Working with children is instructive in this regard.

Therefore, the importance of this text endures, as Lacan writes, not for the sake of its articulation of standards or variations in treatment, but of the *standing* of psychoanalysis as a profession and how it distinctly varies from any other form of mental health treatment. If there is any variation, it is in how our practice has deviated from the standard of speech, and this variation implicates the training of those who practice. Children and adolescents do not need to learn emotion regulation or receive substitute love but have their speech respected, to have the subject of their unconscious respected; to use Lacan's term: welcomed.

What is the clinical relevance of the place of truth?

Maileen Souchet (Interamerican University of Puerto Rico)

Jacques Lacan *Écrits* takes us through his considerations on the relevance of "truth" as a central issue on the analytical field. His exploration emphasizes truth linked to the incident of language and related to the constitution of subjectivity. In reference to Aristotle's philosophical formulation of "*material cause*" (structural consideration of truth) Lacan invites us to consider

an ethical and political subversion relevant to our clinical practices. He highlights Freud's discovery of the unconscious his "odd" request of free association, which today can still be considered as subversive. Freud's act of listening faults, omissions, repetitions and latent content subverted his medical practice giving voice to the manifestation of human miseries and suffering. As Lacan explains, the analytical act intercedes toward what structures and sustains each subjective position. Truth is not considered a final content or object "to be found" but that which locates the real difficulties of discovering the structural conditions of its lacks. Subjectivity as an effect of language places a structural division that, for example, marks the limitations of what can be said and what cannot. Lacan's teaches about how to understand subjective constitution *by* and *through* language. He carefully explores how Freud subverted science inquiry from empirical prove and occurrence as a *formal cause* focused on finding "objectivity" to an emphasis on psychic reality as inseparable to a fictional -symbolic- structure. His insistence on the concept of truth and its variations can be traced from the beginning to the end of his teachings. The several *Écrits* references that elaborates the concept are: In 1946, "Presentation on Psychical Causality", 1950's, "A Theoretical Introduction to the Functions of Psychoanalysis in Criminology", 1955, "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis" and "Variations on the Standard Treatment", "Seminar on *The Purloined Letter*", 1960's "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious" and in 1965, "Science and Truth". These last references introduced a shift in Lacanian conceptualization. Truth oscillated from something inherent of the subject, passing through what can be "revealed" in analysis, to the relationship and conceptual differences between *truth* and *knowledge (savoir)*. Lacan explicitly states how his theory of the "object *a*" provides an understanding on the truth as "cause" in relation to the structural relationship between knowledge and ignorance. As Lacan underlines the praxis of psychoanalysts and how to "detect" the structural causes of subjectivity: How to place the understanding of truth in our clinical practices? What are the ethical and political consequences of Lacan's ideas about truth in today's inquiry of scientific "evidence"?

Psychotic Landscapes

Keaton Studebaker (University of Maine)

This paper draws upon Lacanian theory in an analysis of increasingly common zones referred to as non-places, which include zones such as airports and freeways. While it may seem counterintuitive to bring psychoanalytic theory into conversation with spatiality studies, this paper begins from the premise that being *someone* is tied up with being *somewhere*. This is to say that identity is inherently spatial because as the ego identifies itself as *this* and not *that*, the ego simultaneously positions itself *here* and not *there*. This locating action is precisely what Lacan describes in his essay "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function" in which he explains how the subject develops a relationship between *Innenwelt* and *Umwelt*, or their inner experience and the environment. In Lacan's estimation, nothing less than the ego is built up out of this relationship between *Innenwelt* and *Umwelt*. As such, the same motion that negotiates

identity simultaneously negotiates place. For this reason, I suggest that psychoanalysis has much to offer efforts to understand the production and occupation of place.

Building on the spatiality of identity as indicated by Lacan, I argue that non-places are structurally psychotic. *Non-place* is a term coined by French anthropologist Marc Augé which refers to unintegrated and undifferentiated zones. Recalling Lacan's expression that there is no such thing as a sexual relation—which is to say that men and women are determined by different symbolic relations to the constitutive lack at the heart of language—I contend that non-places are organized by distinct signifying chains which relate to space differently than places do. I claim that non-places result from a fundamental foreclosure. This foreclosure makes it clear that there is no place/non-place binary and also foregrounds the importance of the symbolic in the constitution of non-places. From this emphasis on the symbolic, I go on to examine how the certainty of the psychotic in their delusion is born out in the uniformity that marks the structure of non-places. I assert that the uniformity of non-places, like the certainty of the psychotic in their delusion, is a consequence of the disjunction between signifiers and signifieds. This uniformity is key to the capacity non-places have to absorb the subject passing through them. Ultimately, non-places absorb the subject by forcing the subject to assume the position of the object of the Other's desire. In this way, the subject is used by the non-place as a means of reproducing itself. Essentially, at stake in the proliferation of non-places in contemporary culture is a shift from places being inhabited to being inhabited by non-places.

Purloined Relations: Dickens Reads Lacan

Rithika Ramamurthy (Brown University)

“For there to be purloined letters,” Lacan cannily asks in his eponymous seminar on Poe's elusive little tale, “we wonder, to whom does a letter belong?” In his complex analysis of “The Purloined Letter,” Lacan poses this question in order to complicate the interpretation of the mystery as a simple drama of theft and rightful return of a scandalous letter. Disagreeing with Baudelaire's translation of the story's title to “La lettre volée”—the stolen letter—Lacan points out the polysemous perversity of the term *purloin* and its more ambiguous implication. While the word “stolen” implies a solid sense of individual property and objective ownership, “purloined” undermines possession and ownership and augurs displacement or detour. These two resonances—of property and dislocation—anchor the entire trajectory of the letter: it is never where it is supposed to be, it is never with whom it belongs, and its spaces are produced by its hidden existence. It is this “unclaimed” status of the letter that allows it to create the contours of the narrative itself, lining up its subjects in its path.

Why, I wonder, does Lacan's seminar seem to require the nineteenth-century mystery to teach us this lesson? Perhaps the nineteenth-century narrative of the purloined letter has a special purchase on constructing and interpreting overdetermined structures. In this paper, I hope to show how Charles Dickens, that other mid-century mystery maker, echoes and enlarges Lacan's excursus on Poe, especially its insistence that narrative can demonstrate and determine the social link and its creation of a reciprocal and dynamic structure of

intersubjectivity. In his 1865 novel *Our Mutual Friend*—a drama of murky motives centering around a will and its inheritors—narrative affiliations proliferate, problematizing private property in order to approach this question of where to locate the limits of possession and freedom. While the very title of the text connotes sharing, reciprocity, and honesty, these motives are in ineluctable tension with the opposing values of personal gain and private enjoyment. By materializing emotional feelings of dispossession and dislocation and confusing objects and mental states, the narration of the novel examines the idea of a “mutual” relation or reciprocal feeling, something held in common. This repetition and perversion of interpersonal possession in all its forms insistently poses questions about how nineteenth-century capitalist life is increasingly revealed as having depended upon what Lacan calls “the true gymnastics of the intersubjective register.” How does mutual feeling emerge under conditions of structural privation, and what sort of relation is excepted by these conditions? In *Our Mutual Friend* as in “The Purloined Letter,” libidinal positions are carefully coordinated in order to construct a social space that circulates around ownership, striving to represent a “between” that is hiding in plain sight.

Was Lacan an “author”?

Jean-Michel Rabaté (University of Pennsylvania)

In “What is an Author?” Michel Foucault highlighted the concept of the “author” when coining the concept of “inventors of discursivity,” among whom Freud and Marx figure preeminently. A return to their foundational texts transforms the discursive practices governing their fields. Founders of discursivity cannot be accused of factual error because their theories demand a constant reactivation. According to this definition, Freud would figure as the only « author » in the field of psychoanalysis, Lacan finding his place as a reader, a re-reader rather, that is a “translator” who can be a redoubtable critical commentator. Lacan’s “return to Freud” never entailed respectful imitation but combined literalist readings with creative rewritings. However, if we take « author » in the more conventional sense of man or woman of letters, thinking of writers like Marguerite Duras, James Joyce, Dante, or André Gide, Lacan comes up to the level of a writing capable of knotting the *sinthome*. Such writing bypasses the division between seminars and *écrits* so as to launch what I might call *séminécrits*, as we see in his latest text on Joyce. I’ll begin by discussing Lacan’s practice of translation to conclude by comparing his responses to Duras, Joyce and Gide.

Power and Uneven Identification: The Father of Matrifocal Southeast Asia.

Ahmad Fuad Rahmat

My paper demonstrates how the Lacanian notion of the father could be deployed for a critical study of comparative patriarchies. I shall do so in three parts. First, I reference the concept's historical assumptions, referencing Seminar XVII among others. Secondly, I will underscore its context-specific features further via an overview of Southeast Asian matrifocality, where

women retain considerable social power in spite of being subjects of a patriarchal nation-state. This will show that while 'the father' applies as a universal category - insofar as the modern symbolic order is quintessentially masculine - its tenuous status as a privileged signifier manifests differently in Southeast Asia where patriarchal power remains only relatively institutionalised against the maternal historically established cultural influence. The context sketched in the two parts makes way for the third, where I reflect on how the cultural variety of patriarchal anxieties might inform a context sensitive conversation with The Signification of the Phallus. Here I argue for the notion of uneven identification where identification with the father is a process entangled within specific historical permutations of globalised modernity. Through putting the essay in dialogue with the Southeast Asian contest between a future oriented modernisation, and its deeply entrenched matrilineal past, we are able to see how the death of the father is a contentious and constantly re-written affect rather than simply a quilting point for the symbolic as such.

Traversing the Space Between: The 'Black Mirror Stage,' The Clinic, and *Beloved*

Miguel Rivera (Tufts University)

In Fred Moten's *In The Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (2003) he provocatively poses the question, "Is there a black mirror stage? Is the plenitude of Lacan's mirror stage always already an illusion, one that always already demands compensation for or an impossible reconstitution of that which it would constitute?" This question initiates one of the most interesting interrogations of Jacques Lacan's notion of the mirror stage as articulated in "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" (1949). "The Mirror Stage," published in *Écrits* in 1966, has had a complicated reception in the English-speaking world to say the least. It is, for example, responsible for what Joan Copjec calls in *Read My Desire* (1993) "the central misconception of film theory: believing itself to be following Lacan, it conceives of the screen as a mirror; in doing so, however, it operates in ignorance of, and at the expense of, Lacan's more radical insight, whereby the mirror is conceived as a screen."

Copjec's point offers, in an oblique way, an answer to the second question posed by Moten. What is at stake in the mirror stage is precisely "an impossible reconstitution of that which it would constitute," insofar as what the infant recognizes in the specular image is a non-existent gestalt. Lacan suggests, "this form is more constitutive than constituted," pointing to the mirror stage's dual function: children, always premature, conceive of the *I* in the same moment as they become jealous of the specular image. Likewise, the subject aspires to a gestalt in the same moment it fears *le corps morcelé*, the body in pieces. My claim is that Lacan's "Mirror Stage," read mostly divested of its film theory baggage, provides a valuable analytic tool for understanding subjectivity and racial identification in particular. It is this insight that Copjec points us toward in her articulation of "the mirror ... conceived as a screen," a screen that projects an image of both self and other. Frantz Fanon suggested as much in his footnoting of Lacan in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). But it is also the necessary confluence of fear, jealousy, and identification that make the mirror stage, as Moten might have it, "plentiful" in what it offers subjects who identify along various identitarian lines.

Signification of The Black Phallus: Mbembe's *Critique of Black Reason* and Notes Towards Lacan's Race 'Real-ism'

Wayne Wapeemukwa Robinson (Pennsylvania State University)

I read Lacan's 'Signification of the Phallus' through Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe's *Critique of Black Reason* in order to sketch a Lacanian theory of race. Mbembe famously argues that anti-black racism arises from a 'racist fantasmagoria' mediated by the phallus (167). Alloying Frantz Fanon and Jacques Lacan's shared concept of (mis)recognition, Mbembe writes that "at the centre of the specular hallucination where we find the Black phallus [le phallus Nègre], so too resides the problem of incest which thrives in all racist consciousnesses" (167). For Mbembe, racism is as fundamental to the unconscious as language (57). And the link between these fundamentals—language and race—is the phallus. Below I argue that a Lacanian theory of race must be informed by Mbembe's psychoanalysis of anti-black racism. As the signifier which stands for meaning effects as a whole (Écrits 579), the phallus "is the privileged signifier of this mark in which the role of Logos is wedded to the advent of desire" (Écrits 581). However, Mbembe reminds us that "race is equally an expression of desire" (166). What is this link between race, desire, and the phallus? I introduce Lacan's 'Race Real-ism' to answer this question.

With this new theory I intend to both: (1) Interlink race with Lacan's libidinal-ontological category of the Real; and (2) Homophonically play-off of—yet theoretically distinguish Lacan from—the fossilized racist discourse of 'Race Realism'. Also known as 'scientific racism', race realists theorize that 'race' is a 'real' quality essential to certain peoples. Pseudoscientists like Josian Clark Nott (1843) and Franz Boas (1899) marshalled this pejorative doctrine in their efforts to subordinate non-whites. Here I deploy Lacan's distinction between 'reality' and the 'Real' in order to contrast the specious and baleful canon of Race *Realism* with what I call Lacan's Race *Real-ism*. Unlike the scientific reality Nott and Boas identified with race, the Real is the domain of "the impossible." Indeed, it is this hostility to symbolization which makes the Real an effective ontology for resistance (S11: 167). Lacan, I argue, would view race as a 'Real' which cannot be symbolically pinned down. Viewing race from this perspective opens up emancipatory possibilities which only come into focus through engaging Lacanian feminism. Demarcating a Lacanian theory of race will require me to proceed through recent feminist scholarship concerning the subject. When Lacan says that "woman does not exist" (S20: 68) he means that her essence resides outside the Symbolic, i.e., the ontological domain of the signifier. "Woman can but be excluded from the nature of words," since her sexual modality—her jouissance — conjoins with the Real (S20: 44). For Mbembe, the Black subject is similarly predicated on a unique relationship to the Real. Transatlantic slavery eschewed the Black subject for the 'subject of work', thereby puncturing a "hole in the Real" (212). Here Mbembe echoes Lacan: "*le Nègre n'existe pas*" (167). In this parallax between woman and 'nègre' I engage Claudia Leeb's (2017) work on a new feminist subject of the Real. Leeb identifies certain parallels between the categories of 'class', 'race', and 'sex'; each category depends on a set of symbolic oppositions which only congeal in reference to a 'surplus' (Real). The racial categories

of 'white' and 'black', for example, remain thwarted by subjects whose 'race' does not easily fit into these neat oppositional poles. Similarly for Lacan, that 'there is no such thing as a sexual relationship' does not refer to the impossibility of sexual relations—as Luce Irigaray (1985) argues — but, rather, to the impossibility of fully capturing these signifiers via hierarchical oppositions (Leeb 149). "Insofar as sexed, classed, and raced categories are located in the moments of the real and non-identity, these categories have holes pierced in them" (Leeb 151). In contrast to Judith Butler's (mis)reading of the Real as a transcendental and heteronomous *beyond*, Leeb's *immanent* Real comprises a subject "in the holes of the signifier, when the signifier fails to fully subordinate us. It is this subject, which allows us to rethink agency within a theoretical framework that connects language to power" (148). Turning to Lacanian feminism in order to parallax Lacan's 'woman' with Mbembe's 'nègre', then, allows us to glimpse new, racialized, and emancipatory subjectivities from the persecutive of the Lacanian Real and phallus.

Subversion, Knots, and Echoes of Transmission

Jason Royal

Reading backwards from the Borromean knot to "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire," I will briefly explore the knotty quality of this text, characteristic of Lacan's writing, its effect on the reader, and questions about the nature and conditions of transmission. I will suggest that to read *Subversion* in relation to clinical work—with its tantalizing, elusive glimpses of a possible knowledge—demands a shift in one's position vis-a-vis knowledge and its link to the doing of psychoanalysis. As an act of transmission perhaps essential to the aims of the text, this knotty quality, along with the shift it implies, thus connotes or echoes a subjective reorientation to the vicissitudes of desire that itself may mark the movement from analyst to analysand.

Screening Psychoanalysis - Reading "Écrits" with Legendre

Mark Stafford (Après Coup Psychoanalytic Association)

This presentation will consist of a short film that uses Lacan's *Écrits* as an inspiration and a challenge. In the spirit of Alexander Kluge's luminous tribute to Eisenstein's plan to film "Capital" we offer a more humbly conceived "Filming Lacan's *Écrits*". This film is inspired by the films (particularly *Dominum Mundi*) and writings (God in the Mirror) of the Lacanian analyst and jurist Pierre Legendre. Using found footage from films that suggestively echo or ironize different texts in the *Écrits* - beginning with "The Purloined Letter" we will offer a cinematic translation of the *Écrits* and a translation of the *Écrits* into cinema."

With the exception of "The sophism on Logical Time" and "The Youth of Gide" every text in the collection is based on an oral presentation. As Lacan states in the "Ouverture" to the *Écrits* that style can only be understood as the style of the one to whom speech is addressed. This theme - the style of the one to whom it is addressed will be the theme of the film, with its content drawn from the classic films of Lacan's lifetime. We hope in this way to address the reception of

Lacan in the English speaking world of psychoanalysts - to whom it was in part addressed and to film theorists who attempted to use it to build a cultural theory and critical practice.

“Kant avec Sade” avec Melville: Deontological Desire in *Pierre; or, The Ambiguities*

Russell Sbriglia (Seton Hall University)

Lacan famously asserts at the outset of “Kant avec Sade” that Sade’s *Philosophy in the Bedroom* “yields the truth of” Kant’s *Critique of Practical Reason* by pointing us to its “subversive core”: namely, that the moral law lies altogether beyond the pleasure principle. As Slavoj Žižek has on more than one occasion noted, Lacan, in so doing, is typically understood as arguing that Kant is a closet Sadean (in the sense that Kant’s moral law, as a superegoic agency that tortures the subject, is akin to Sade’s various torturer-executioners), when, in fact, Lacan’s claim is the opposite: it is Sade who is a closet Kantian insofar as his works depict “the paradoxical reversal by means of which desire itself can no longer be grounded in any ‘pathological’ interests or motivations, and thus meets the criteria of the Kantian ethical act, so that ‘following one’s desire’ overlaps with ‘doing one’s duty.’” As Žižek concludes, what Lacan presents us with in “Kant avec Sade” is a “critique of pure desire”: whereas for Kant desire belongs exclusively to the realm of the sensuous, the pathological, for Lacan desire has a transcendental, non-pathological dimension. In short, if, as Lacan insists, Kant’s Second Critique “distinguish[es] the rational from the reasonable”—the former being strictly of the will, the latter being strictly of the senses—“Kant avec Sade,” in a further turn of the screw, transposes desire from the mere “reasonable” to the “rational.”

In this talk, I will bring Lacan’s “critique of pure desire” to bear on what has long been considered Herman Melville’s most unreasonable novel—that which effectively killed his literary career—1852’s *Pierre; or, The Ambiguities*. Reading the novel through the lens of “Kant avec Sade” entirely upends recent scholarship on it, nearly all of which considers it as either an earnest attempt at a sentimental novel gone awry—“a rural bowl of milk” (as Melville teased it to Nathaniel Hawthorne’s wife Sophia) turned sour—or a caustic parody of a sentimental novel. Contrary to such readings, what makes *Pierre* such an unreasonable, discomfiting novel, I argue, is not its putative perversion or deconstruction of the sentimental ethics of sympathy, but rather its deontological ethics of desire. In recognizing his illegitimate half-sister Isabel—a recognition that entails severing his engagement to his betrothed, Lucy Tartan; destroying his idyllic relationship with his mother; and, finally, foregoing his inheritance of his family’s patrimonial estate—the eponymous Pierre, we are told, acts in accordance with his “strong sense of duty, that painful renunciation of self.” In short, in line with the Kantian categorical imperative, Pierre, the “Enthusiast to Duty,” “sacrific[es him]self for Duty’s sake” (to again quote Melville’s narrator). And yet, in so doing, Pierre at the same time adheres to the ethics of psychoanalysis, for doing his duty (recognizing Isabel) necessarily entails refusing to give ground relative to his desire—that desire being his (unconscious) incestuous desire for Isabel, whom he recognizes by taking as his wife. In this regard, *Pierre*, I claim, deserves to be considered not

only *avec* “Kant *avec* Sade,” but also “*avec*” the great literary readings of Seminars VI (*Hamlet*), VII (*Antigone*), and VIII (Claudel’s *Coûfontaine* Trilogy).

The Vertical of Veridical: Anthropological Paradox at the Crime of the Scene

Patrick Scanlon (City University of New York, The New School)

In the *Ecrits*’ chapter, “A Theoretical Introduction to the Function of Psychoanalysis in Criminology” Lacan makes several references to anthropology, presenting it in a certain relation to psychoanalysis in the consideration of criminology. At one point, psychoanalysis is an extension of anthropology; in another instance, Lacan states that while the truth of the crime “concerns the police,” the truth of the criminal is connected to anthropology. In discussing responsibility and the punishment of the criminal, he has cause to mention the scapegoat, a concept appropriate for Freud’s *Totem and Taboo*, and also one that occupies a prominent place in the work of the French anthropologist René Girard (*Violence and the Sacred*, and *The Scapegoat*). In fact, although Girard is critical of Freud’s attempt to provide an origin to culture, he is one of the few to offer real praise on the psychoanalyst’s anthropologically minded text. The other major advocate of Totem, Girard’s student Eric Gans (*Origin of Language, Signs of Paradox, and The End of Culture*) is perhaps more sympathetic to Lacanian psychoanalysis as his innovations to Girard’s theory of human origin is more purely linguistic, and even presented in relation to Jakobson and Saussure, essential figures for Lacan. One of the radical facets of Girard and Gans’ work is the necessity of a scene, that the birth of the language, and thus of the human is at its core, scenic.

In this paper I will explore the anthropological elements of criminology as they arise in Lacan and Michel Cénac’s essay, attempting to find in these references some trace of what Gans calls the originary scene, that event from which language emerged as a deferral to appetitive violence. For Gans’ *Generative Anthropology*, the appetitive and instinctual motivation toward something attractive, an animal for consumption say, is horizontal and mimetic. Language — or in its earliest ostensive moment, through an abortive gesture of appropriation, a modified turning toward — creates a vertical dimension where the object exists on an imaginary plane, transcendent and accessible to the group without the same threat of violence. This moment needs only to exist long enough that it is memorable, which is to say, successful at deferring the immediate pressure of mimetic tension. From the first, language and the subsequent religious and juridical institutions have been fastened to violence and the kind of prohibitions that remain essential to understanding crime and the criminal. We might reinvigorate our efforts then, not simply with what is original, but with something of the originary.

Psychotic Landscapes

Keaton Studebaker (The University of Maine)

This paper draws upon Lacanian theory in an analysis of increasingly common zones referred to as non-places, which include zones such as airports and freeways. While it may seem counterintuitive to bring psychoanalytic theory into conversation with spatiality studies, this paper begins from the premise that being *someone* is tied up with being *somewhere*. This is to say that identity is inherently spatial because as the ego identifies itself as *this* and not *that*, the ego simultaneously positions itself *here* and not *there*. This locating action is precisely what Lacan describes in his essay “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function” in which he explains how the subject develops a relationship between *Innenwelt* and *Umwelt*, or their inner experience and the environment. In Lacan’s estimation, nothing less than the ego is built up out of this relationship between *Innenwelt* and *Umwelt*. As such, the same motion that negotiates identity simultaneously negotiates place. For this reason, I suggest that psychoanalysis has much to offer efforts to understand the production and occupation of place.

Building on the spatiality of identity as indicated by Lacan, I argue that non-places are structurally psychotic. *Non-place* is a term coined by French anthropologist Marc Augé which refers to unintegrated and undifferentiated zones. Recalling Lacan’s expression that there is no such thing as a sexual relation—which is to say that men and women are determined by different symbolic relations to the constitutive lack at the heart of language—I contend that non-places are organized by distinct signifying chains which relate to space differently than places do. I claim that non-places result from a fundamental foreclosure. This foreclosure makes it clear that there is no place/non-place binary and also foregrounds the importance of the symbolic in the constitution of non-places. From this emphasis on the symbolic, I go on to examine how the certainty of the psychotic in their delusion is born out in the uniformity that marks the structure of non-places. I assert that the uniformity of non-places, like the certainty of the psychotic in their delusion, is a consequence of the disjunction between signifiers and signifieds. This uniformity is key to the capacity non-places have to absorb the subject passing through them. Ultimately, non-places absorb the subject by forcing the subject to assume the position of the object of the Other’s desire. In this way, the subject is used by the non-place as a means of reproducing itself. Essentially, at stake in the proliferation of non-places in contemporary culture is a shift from places being inhabited to being inhabited by non-places.

Empathy with Extimacy

Stephanie Swales (University of Dallas)

Alluding to the federal deficit by comparison, former U.S. President Barack Obama said in 2007 that “the biggest deficit that we have in our society and in the world right now is an empathy deficit.” Obama is not alone in his assumption that empathy could help decrease acts of violence and xenophobia, as empathy has become a buzzword in our day in many arenas of social life. A 2018 book entitled *The Empathy Effect: Seven Neuroscience-Based Keys for Transforming the Way We Live, Love, Work, and Connect Across Differences* is just one of many recent books which line the figurative shelves of Amazon, promising to teach us how, via empathy, we can reduce misunderstandings and conflicts so that we may love our racially or religiously different neighbors as ourselves. What’s more, the practice of psychotherapy and

several types of psychoanalysis—including self-psychology, intersubjective, and relational psychoanalysis—are thought to revolve around empathy as the cornerstone of clinical practice. So how, then, from a Lacanian perspective, might we view empathy as a proposed solution to aggression? In this paper, I take up Lacan’s various formulations of extimacy (as well as the imaginary, symbolic, and the real) to critique the fantasized cure by empathy in social efforts such as anti-bullying campaigns and in clinical practice.

Lacanian nonsense

Kristian Olsesen Toft

I will treat the Lacanian notion of *nonsense* found in *Écrits* (p. 197, 270, 410, 574) and throughout Lacan’s seminars. In *Seminar 11*, Lacan enigmatically defines the aim of psychoanalytic interpretation to be “to isolate a kernel of nonsense” in the subject’s discourse, which will “destroy all meaning”. In doing so, he outlines a radical, anti-hermeneutical notion of psychoanalytical interpretation, which is explicitly opposed to, among others, Paul Ricoeur’s exposition of Freudian metapsychology in his 1965 *De l’interprétation*. However, in *Seminar 11* it remains unclear just how we are to understand Lacan’s paradoxical notion of an interpretation that does not aim at “sense” – nor even of merely apparent nonsense, which on closer examination reveals its latent meaning – but which consists in making a “kernel of nonsense” patent. In short, we may ask, what does it mean to interpret nonsense? To get a hold on this question, I propose to backtrack to Lacan’s earlier texts of the 1950s and trace his first, scattered discussions of nonsense. In doing so, I will follow two thematic strands: One the one hand, in *Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage en psychanalyse* and in the early seminars, Lacan picks up the notion of nonsense from Freud’s discussions in *Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewußten*. Here, Lacan presents the signifier as the foundation of meaning which is in itself meaningless, drawing on the Freudian theme of *Sinn in Unsinn* which makes up certain jokes. On the other hand, the concept of nonsense is central to Lacan’s treatment of psychotic language in *D’un question préliminaire de toute traitement du psychose* and in the third seminar. Schreber’s *Grundsprache* exemplifies how psychosis is structured around words that cannot be defined but “refer to signification as such”, and hence may be said to be either entirely meaningless or much too meaningful (i.e. enigmatic) in comparison with the words of common language. I aim to show how in jokes as well as in psychosis, the relationship between sense and nonsense emerges as being complex and ambiguous. In short, this ambiguity may be referred to the fact that the signifier “in itself, signifies nothing”, i.e. is pure nonsense. By developing this conception of nonsense in the following seminars of the 1950s and 1960s, Lacan is by *Seminar 11* able to formulate the aforementioned notion that psychoanalytic interpretation is not a matter of disclosing the hidden sense of the symptom, but rather revealing its radical nonsensicality. The early discussions of nonsense set the scene for Lacan’s subsequent development, in the 1960s and 1970s, of *lalangue*, *jouis-sens* and the real. Though the paper focuses on his early thought, the later Lacan will never the less serve as a broader perspective for the discussion.

The Direction of the Treatment for the Homeless Subject Who is Finally in Question

Chris Vanderwees (Western University, Toronto Psychoanalytic Society)

In North America, contemporary psychoanalysis has the reputation of being only accessible for society's educated, elite class at an immense financial cost where the privatized treatment is likely to last for many years (think Woody Allen). Of course, this is a caricature as there are Lacanian practitioners involved in a wide variety of clinical settings in the social service sectors across Canada and the United States, but this caricature does convey the widespread perception of psychoanalysis in the social imaginary as a discipline detached from social responsibility, from community, and from the progressive ideals of institutional psychotherapy. In contrast to this perception, Freud and his early followers were actually deeply engaged in making psychoanalysis available to the working class and the poor especially between the world wars from 1918-1938. These analysts established free outpatient clinics in ten cities and seven countries across Europe including Vienna, Berlin, and Budapest as documented by Elizabeth Ann Danto in *Freud's Free Clinics* (2005). Despite the significance of this psychoanalytic social justice effort in the past, there is very little psychoanalytic research or writing (at least in English) on working with people who are marginalized, impoverished, homeless, and addicted.

While conducting psychoanalytic sessions with and working alongside a homeless population in a city that is experiencing a "housing crisis," I have begun to think about how adaptations of Lacanian psychoanalysis might be a crucial antidote an antidote to the contemporary mental health predicament in North America where mental health providers have moved dramatically towards privatization, psychopharmacology, and short-term cognitive behavioral therapies (CBT). This shift privileges neuropsychiatry and biogenetics, but comes at the expense of the human subject's lived experience, leaving those who cannot afford humane care rather destitute without a stable place to live. The recent implementation of Housing First programs are rather absurd since the signifier of the home does not generally have a "home sweet home" signified. Further, these programs are put forth as the only form of support for those without proper shelter. As a result, many homeless people are not able to live in long term housing since they have never experienced a long term psychotherapy or analysis that might help them to tolerate living in one place for some amount of time.

In this paper, I will specifically return to Lacan's "On Variations to the Standard Treatment" and "The Direction of the Treatment and the Principles of Its Power" in the *Écrits*, exploring these fundamental texts through a conceptualization of psychoanalytic and institutional psychotherapy treatment for a homeless community. I will specifically outline the significance of Lacan's contentions within the context of my work at St. John the Compassionate Mission, a homeless refuge on the eastside of Toronto, Canada. Throughout this paper, I will highlight Lacan's emphasis on clinical concepts such as desire, non-understanding, and true speech while also reflecting on how these concepts may be carried further for thinking about the therapeutic structure of the institution itself through an inversion of power relations where the impoverished are understood to be the masters, where doctors wash dishes and mop floors with the patients who lead the day to day operations of the organization. I will highlight the increasingly relevant radicalism of Lacan's contentions in "On

Variations to the Standard Treatment” and “The Direction of the Treatment and the Principles of Its Power” while exploring the ways in which these papers are fundamental for my work in developing a psychoanalytic clinic of the poor alongside mutually constitutive elements of the institution and the community that provide ethical and comprehensive treatment for those in need of food, shelter, and mental health care.

The father function revisited. A knot-theoretical reading

Stijn Vanheule (Ghent University)

Starting with his structural approach in the 1950s and ending with his knot-theoretical move in the 1970s Lacan elaborates different perspectives on the father function. His classic view originates in the 1950s, when he suggests that the father is a symbolic operator. Yet, by the 1970s his ideas on what the father function entails have changed profoundly. In my talk I will explore these later changes, and present a knot-theoretical interpretation of the father function, which, next to the Name-of-the-Father also includes the concepts *père-version* and Father-of-the-Name. I will discuss both concepts in detail, and related these to Lacan’s ideas concerning *lalangue* and the *jouissance* emanating from the sexual non-rapport.

Exploring Dialectics in Lacan’s Early Work

Eve Watson

Lacan’s use of dialectics in his early work serves to affirm linguistic complexity in psychoanalytic work. In making the unconscious accessible to verbalization, speaking is more important than the realms of experience and phenomenon. Moreover, it is the saying that is more important than what is said. This prioritizes structure over content, signifiers over meaning and signification. We could say that Lacan’s work, from beginning to end, is a deliberation on precisely the importance of maintaining this as the principal focus of analytic practice. This short paper explores Lacan’s considerations in his early writings and seminars of dialectics, including those of Hegel, in characterizing the symbolic field for analytic practice.

Pathology, Religion, and Science in “Science and Truth”

Molly Wallace (Duquesne University)

“Science and Truth” is primarily concerned with situating the relation between psychoanalysis and science—a science that is radically tweaked insofar as it must resist its habit of “suturing” the subject who is cut off from truth. In a puzzling maneuver, Lacan also turns to magic and religion in order to show precisely how the forms of causality (taken from Aristotle’s *Physics*) and the relation of knowledge to truth in both make them unsuited to psychoanalysis. Lacan would never return to some of the themes brought out in these discussions, so much of what he says here remains obscure. I aim to further explore Lacan’s position on religion in particular

in order to illuminate more nuanced relations among science, psychoanalysis, and religion. I will focus specifically on the pathology of religion implied in “Science and Truth” insofar as it poses an intriguing problem. Although praising Freud’s comparison of religion and obsessional neurosis, Lacan’s exposition of the relative positions of truth and knowledge in religion seems to indicate a different pathology: that of perversion. Religion negates truth as cause, placing it in the hands of God, or the Other, to whom the subject sacrifices. To these two possible pathologies of religion, I add a third: that of psychosis. Using Jacques Alain-Miller’s “ordinary psychosis” as a model, I hope to demonstrate how psychosis can exist in mass, specifically in the religious certainty of medieval Catholicism (while also avoiding the notion of a collective unconscious).

How does such a reconfiguration of the relation between psychosis and religion relate to science as a “successful paranoia,” one in which the *Verwerfung* (foreclosure) of truth as cause succeeds insofar as what is foreclosed does not return as it normally does in psychosis (“Science and Truth”: 1966, 742)? Furthermore, can science be complicated in the same way: in other words, is science as a “successful” psychosis only one form science can take? I will demonstrate that Lacan’s use of non-psychoanalytic categories that are far from absolute results in a splitting of these terms. By analyzing the three pathological structures—neurosis, perversion, and psychosis—alongside their various applications to religion and science, I hope to provide a subtler understanding of both, as well as help elucidate why science as Lacan describes it lends itself to psychoanalysis. Finally, I will show how these fissures in the non-psychoanalytic categories Lacan uses in “Science and Truth” prefigure his later turn to topology insofar as “[t]opology is not ‘designed to guide us’ in structure. It *is* this structure” (*L’Étourdit*: 1972, 14).

The Analyst’s Analysis

Jamieson Webster

Many psychoanalysts are unaware of Lacan’s idea of the transformation of the patient and the termination of analysis as centered on the analyst’s analysis - in particular the place of the analyst’s body and symptom. Through a reading of both Lacan’s paper “Variations on the Standard Treatment” and a clinical case, I will discuss the conversion of both patient and analyst in the psychoanalytic process.

An Interpretation of “Metaphor of the Subject” with the Example of Contemporary Chinese Cross-talk Show

Yang Yu (Beijing Normal University/SF Bay Area Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis)

The present paper aims to interpret “Metaphor of the Subject”, one of the two Appendix essays in *Écrits* by referring to a traditional Chinese comedy show, Cross-talk (*Xiangsheng* in Chinese). Cross-talk takes the form of a dialogue between two performers who stand on stage, using various speech skills to make

audience laugh. This paper will show that as a verbal art committed to exploring every possible aspect in language for producing laughter, Cross-talk is a living evidence of the working mechanism of the signifier in the Lacanian sense. Following the argument of Lacan in “Metaphor of the Subject”, this paper is divided into two parts. The first part explores the nature of metaphor as the substitution of one signifier for another with the examples from Cross-talk. Lacan argues, “two signifiers are involved, which can, as such, be reduced to a phonetic opposition.” In cross-talk shows, the most frequently used skill is phonetic substitution and a successful phonetic shifting is based upon two conditions: one is that the two words share the same syllable structure, and the other is that within the same syllable structure phonetic difference must be established. We will show that neither of the two conditions involves heterogeneity in meaning. At the same time, the shifting must be constructed in a brief manner and happen in an instant. With this lack of time for providing the taxemic material needed for logical connections, an unexpected meaning is produced. This is the structural reason for the production of laughter in Cross-talk. The second part analyses the subtle relationship between the metaphorical meaning and the subject. In “Metaphor of the Subject” Lacan argues, “I myself intend not to lose sight here of the dimension of insult in which metaphor originates.” In Cross-talk shows, the new meaning produced by phonetic substitution cannot ensure effects of laughing unless it brings the “dimension of insult” into the dialogue: one performer is enunciated by the other to be the unlucky guy who is trapped in a series of misfortunes among which the most common ones are the death of his father or the philandering game played between his wife and his partner. We find that this presence of Oedipal structure or the breaking of incestuous taboo never fails to bring forth an outburst of laughter among the audience. Here lies the ultimate secret of the Cross-talk: With a verbal creation of these subversive images in the dialogue, it stirs the unconscious desire that unanimously exists in the audience without letting them know about it at the moment of hearing. This situation best illustrates Lacan’s statement at the end of his essay, “What must be said is that the I of this choice is born somewhere other than in the place where the discourse is enunciated—namely, in the person who listens to it.”

The situation of psychoanalysis today, topologically speaking

Jennifer Yusin (Drexel University, School of the Freudian Letter)

On the occasion of the hundred-year anniversary of Freud’s birth, Lacan poses the question: *what is the real situation of psychoanalysis?* As he elaborates it in “The Situation of Psychoanalysis and the Training of Psychoanalysts in 1956,” Lacan shows that the real situation of psychoanalysis consists in a knowledge of what happens in analysis. In it turns, this knowledge implies a knowing where speech comes from. The publication of the commentaries on Lacan’s *Écrits* compels us to renew and reformulate this question. In this paper, I ask: what

today is the real situation of psychoanalysis and how to teach it as a knowledge acquired by each psychoanalyst?

In this paper, I will attempt to deepen the coherence and consistency of the real situation of psychoanalysis from its topological and clinical references. Using Lacan's topological hypotheses from the second part of his teaching (1970-1980), I suggest that the situation in 1956 was already the situation of the divided subject as a Borromean knot (Real, Symbolic, Imaginary) insofar as it is realized as a spatial singularity in the immanent field of language/lalangue. We see that the question of the clinic and the training of psychoanalysts involves a dynamic that is finalized in what, with Lacan, psychoanalysis named the Borromean knot. The subjective structure of each psychoanalyst tries account for this structure of space.

Today, the study of psychoanalysis is defined by a global approach and not only by a local approach, as it was during Freud and Lacan's time. This means, I suggest, that the study and teaching of psychoanalytic questions and concepts cannot be separated from the spaces underlying the structure of the subject-of-the-unconscious. The innovation that Lacan brought in relation to Freud has been to situate the problematic of psychoanalysis in coextension with language and topology. We are thus compelled to think about the ways the real situation of psychoanalysis involves a finality proper to the subjective structure and to its structure of space. I propose that the real situation of psychoanalysis and its possible object of teaching today is an intrication between topology and the knowledge of the psychoanalyst.

To help establish this hypothesis, I will focus on the psychoanalytic operation and the question of the cure led by psychoanalytical praxis. The advances made in the Borromean structure of the unconscious allow us to understand that the psychoanalytical operation is an iteration of cuts into conscious knowledge and unconscious knowledge. This implies that the cure is mostly made out of repeated cuts within jouissance, at the level of the real consistency of the letters of lalangue and in the elaboration the Real, Symbolic, Imaginary of the fundamental fantasy of the subject. If we start with the question of posed by Lacan in 1956, we see that in a fundamental way, his topological approach to the psychoanalytical situation also enables us to renew and transform what is called "the end of the cure."

An Unanswerable Silence: Dora's Mother

Cindy Zeiher (University of Canterbury)

My father was standing beside my bed and woke me up. I dressed quickly. Mother wanted to stop and save her jewel-case; but Father said: 'I refuse to let myself and my two children be burnt for the sake of your jewel-case.' We hurried downstairs, and as soon as I was outside I woke up.

(Sigmund Freud, Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria, Standard Edition, Vol. VII, p. 64).

Much to Freud's chagrin, Dora chose to remain silent following analysis with him. Dora was a great disappointment to him, a failure he did not hesitate to hide. She ended the sessions in

outrage at Herr K's declaration that his wife Frau K did not mean anything to him and that he no longer desired her. As the story goes, 'The Lake Scene' depicts his clumsy attempt to seduce her and make her his mistress. To us now, Dora's persistent cough during analysis in which her mother is hardly mentioned, signals a strange malady of the voice. Freud did cure Dora's cough, but not it seems her anguish, whilst because Freud privileged paternity, Dora's mother remained an unanswered question.

What was so traumatic about Dora's revelation of Herr K's attempt to seduce her was not only his dogged persistence but also his sundry dismissal of Frau K without understanding that she was in the position of feminine jouissance for Dora. Dora confided in Frau K, sometimes at length; she enjoyed her company and trusted her. What is also striking is that Dora's mother, usually portrayed as obsessively neurotic, is given no part to play in the unravelling relationships of this bourgeois Viennese family. In *Écrits* Lacan also barely mentions her in his critique of Freud, instead commenting on Otto, Dora's brother. This is a curious omission, given that the Mother, the original object of desire, is a pivotal concept of psychoanalysis.

This paper attempts to track a different reading of Dora's Mother, not as failed feminine jouissance or as an obsessive woman trapped in a loveless marriage, but rather as a case of silenced jouissance from which Dora's mother peripherally contributes to her daughter's burning question: *what does it mean to be a woman?*

PANELS

Back to the Future; or, Reading Écrits in the Nineteenth Century

Lacan believed that in order to rescue psychoanalysis from those whom he derisively dubbed “orthopedists of the unconscious,” the ego psychologists, one must “return to Freud,” the Freudian text above all. The wager of this panel is that in order to rescue psychoanalytic theory—Lacanian psychoanalytic theory in particular—from its dissolution into affect studies and empathogenesis, on the one hand, and its dismissal as a “hermeneutic” by the rapidly ascendant movement of “postcritique” on the other, we must return to that upon which the entire Lacanian edifice (like the Freudian edifice) can be said to rely: not simply textual interpretation, but, more specifically, literary interpretation. Just as the work of literary interpretation was indispensable to many of Freud’s major breakthroughs—most obviously his interpretations of Sophocles’s *Oedipus Rex* and Hoffman’s “The Sandman,” but also of Jensen’s *Gradiva*, Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*, and Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and *The Merchant of Venice*—so too did literary interpretation serve as the catalyst for many of Lacan’s breakthroughs regarding language, semiotics, ethics, desire, and drive throughout both the Seminars and the *Écrits*—especially his interpretations of Poe (“The Purloined Letter” and “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar”), Sade (*Philosophy in the Bedroom*, *Justine*, and *Juliette*), Shakespeare (*Hamlet*), Sophocles (*Antigone*), Claudel (the Coûfontaine Trilogy), and, of course, Joyce (whose entire “litter” is the subject of Seminar XXIII). Indeed, one could very well argue that crucial Lacanian claims such as “the unconscious is structured like a language,” “Woman does not exist,” “there is no sexual relationship,” and “desire is the desire of the Other,” as well as crucial Lacanian concepts such as the “ethics of psychoanalysis,” “between the two deaths,” the *sinthome*, and, above all, the *objet a*, would not have been possible without these acts of literary interpretation.

With this in mind, this panel aims to go “back to the future” of the *Écrits* by way of literary interpretation—that is, to read the *Écrits* backward, into and alongside works of nineteenth-century literature as a means of further carrying its insights forward into the twenty-first century. Its papers will do so by considering the three *écrits* most interested in and most relevant to the literary—the “Seminar on ‘The Purloined Letter,’” “The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious,” and “Kant *avec* Sade”—“avec” three classic nineteenth-century novels: Jane Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*, Charles Dickens’s *Our Mutual Friend*, and Herman Melville’s *Pierre; or, The Ambiguities*. Freud repeatedly avowed that nineteenth-century novelists had invented his “wild science” before he could; our return to these three novels—all of which make available the contours of modern psychosexuality—acknowledges this debt while avowing anew the indispensability of literature to Lacanian psychoanalysis, to “repeating Lacan,” the *Écrits* especially.

Chair: Todd McGowan

Presenters: Anna Kornbluhn, ‘*Freeing Impersonality: The Objective Subject in Psychoanalysis and Austen*’

Rithika Ramamurthy, *'Purloined Relations: Dickens Reads Lacan'*
Russell Sbriglia, *"'Kant avec Sade"' avec Melville: Deontological Desire in Pierre'*

Clinical, Political and Ethical Implications of Subversion, Drive and Truth

The panel aims at exploring and developing three fundamental concepts and ideas presented in the text "Subversion of the Subject and The Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious": Subversion, Drive and Truth. Although these concepts are further developed by Lacan this 1960's text is a very important seeding ground for later elaborations. The concept of Subversion, in this text applied to the subject, implies a clinical, epistemological, conceptual and political questioning of the established status. In Lacan it is the signifier, the Other and effects of language which compels to re-think everything, most of all the psychoanalytical act. This subversion implied by the signifier is formalized in his "Graph of desire". More than a conceptual or theoretical tool, it will be argued that this graph is a clinical guide for the subversions that the subject goes through during the psychoanalytic cure. The concept of Drive, badly translated and gravely misunderstood, embodies the effects of language in the living (vivant). Far from being a need or instinct it's a fundamental concept to understand repetition and the libidinal economy. This conceptualization of the Drive is a means for understanding structure, specially the function of lack (of enjoyment) and its paradoxes. Lastly, Truth will be presented as a pivotal concept for psychoanalytical practice. It will be discussed that Truth is inseparable from language and does not implies an object or empirical concordance. In Lacan Truth is also subverted as a very specific function of language intrinsically related to the Subject. As in Freud, this is an indispensable category for the understanding of the psychoanalytic cure. All three of these concepts have pervasive clinical, ethical and political implications that we wish to emphasize as fundamental for a true psychoanalytical act

Chair: María de los Ángeles Gómez Escudero

Presenters: María de los Ángeles Gómez Escudero, *'Subversions of the subject: between act and movement'*

Eduardo Valsega Piazza, *'Re-turn of the drive: A Lacanian Analysis of Freud's Trieb'*

Maileen Souchet, *'What is the clinical relevance of the place of truth'*

The Ecrits as a site of protest

This panel seeks to explore, through Lacan's *Ecrits*, contemporary issues which range from: an exploration of the function of phantasy (Jeffery); the role of A.I. in today's society (Pachnis); and an investigation on the image of the cyborg body as a critique of neoliberal narratives of consumerism and perfectibility (Di Gianfrancesco). The authors will engage with current debates pertaining to science, technology, feminist studies, post-colonial theory, and the socio-political realm. The first and last of the papers proposed will rely heavily on analyses of films as sites of inquiry and critique. The second of the papers will engage with Lacan's work in a novel and critical way by taking current debate on A.I. as its starting point. Beyond engaging with

these debates, the proposed papers attempt to explore possible future theoretical developments and avenues of thought within the above-mentioned fields. Lacan's work, seemingly inexhaustible in its complexity and sophistication, will here be evaluated in these contexts through the theoretical and practical issues that we face today. Ultimately, the hope is to unsettle current debates on desire, fantasy, and subjectivity present in economics, to politics, science and social theory *via* Lacan, while simultaneously asserting the relevance of Lacan's *Ecrits* in and outside the clinic.

Chair: Robert Jeffery

Presenters: Robert Jeffrey, '*Phantasy*'

Demetris Pachnis, '*What can Lacan's cybernetics teach us about the AI revolution?*'

Claudia Di Gianfrancesco '*Desiring the perfect(ed) body: Lacan's *Ecrits* and notion of body as sites for protest*'.

On "A Theoretical Introduction to the Functions of Psychoanalysis in Criminology"

This panel explores issues raised by the rarely commented upon text "A Theoretical Introduction to the Functions of Psychoanalysis in Criminology." The 1950 presentation by Lacan, written in collaboration with his later detractor Michel Cenac, contests the prevailing notion at the time of the existence of a criminal instinct and situates psychoanalysis between "the truth of the crime" and "the truth of the criminal." Instead, its authors explore how psychoanalysis might engage with criminology by recognizing "truth effects" produced by analysis and the "legitimate limits" of psychoanalysis in relation to truth.

The text considers the ongoing dialectic between crime and law vis a vis the symbolic as social link and with regard to issues of time, responsibility, judgment and punishment. Criminal psychopathology, Lacan and Cenac posit, is not motivated by id impulses, but rather, the compulsion of symbolic narratives regarding parricide and incest. Instead of fetishizing criminal behavior, the question instead becomes how neurotics manage to *avoid* criminality through partial adaptations to reality.

"A Theoretical Introduction to the Functions of Psychoanalysis in Criminology" traces scenes of crime through the "psychopathological agency" of the superego, aggressivity in the mirror stage, and the possibilities for analysis's interventions in economies of repression and negation. The text works analytically to map sociological movements from religious concepts of sin to questions of motivation in social psychology under capitalism. In the spirit of this text and its creation, the papers in this panel engage Lacanian psychoanalysis with the fields of sociology, anthropology, film theory, literature and forensic psychology.

Chair: Celeste Pietrusza

Moderator: Anna Fishzon

Presenters: Evan Malater, '*Time Crimes of the Superego*'

Emma Liber, '*The Novel Without Oedipus*'

Patrick Scanlon, *'The Vertical of Veridical: Anthropological Paradox at the Crime of the Scene'*

Celeste Pietrusza, *Sex, lies, and polygraphs: on the "sex offender"*

Psychoanalysis & Film

Focusing on the *Écrits*, this panel examines what its title indicates. In the first instance, two participants will take a shared terrain between psychoanalysis and horror cinema. Analysts must confront horror, not to say their analysand, and the spell must be broken, even as the horror of something emerges by surprise or with a history. Using horror movies, two papers will examine how the genre "displays" fundamental moments of subjective structure and the perceived world. A second paper brings in Jordan Peele's recent successful work, "Get out" and "Us" to reveal a dense intersectionality, a knot tying subjectivity, race, trauma, and class, which asks for a psychoanalytic reading. In a reverse angle shot, the third presentation is a short film portraying the *Écrits*, through its most essential transmission, style, reading Lacan's writing through its address to cinema itself.

Chair: Chase O'Gwin

Presenters: Chase O'Gwin, *'Daedalic Horror and Uncanny Subjectivity'*

Kareen Malone, *'The Foiled Escape: Jordan Peele's films of horror'*

Mark Stafford, *'Screening Psychoanalysis - Reading "Écrits" with Legendre'*

"Science and Truth" and Consequences

This panel will take up Jacques Lacan's essay "Science and Truth," which was originally presented by Lacan at the beginning of his thirteenth seminar in December 1965 and published soon thereafter in the first issue of the *Cahiers pour l'Analyse* in February 1966. "Science and Truth" would appear in *Écrits* later that year. It marks a move toward in dealing with issues of mathematical formalization while simultaneously taking as its starting point several themes and concepts developed earlier by Lacan: the subject as represented by a signifier to another signifier, the strange bedfellows in Descartes and Freud, as well as the *Spaltung* of the subject in psychoanalysis. This split is taken here to be between truth and knowledge, and it is insofar as psychoanalysis must remain "grounded" in this split that Lacan turns to science insofar as it has the potential to offer a dehumanized subject. This essay is atypical insofar as it is, at times, relatively thesis-driven, in contrast to much of Lacan's corpus, containing a mix of relatively clarified topics. Nevertheless, there are still several that are discussed—and left—in obscurity. As such, the individual topics of this panel range from the more general themes of "Science and Truth" to its often-neglected observations. Ed Pluth shall discuss the potential shortcomings of the mirror schema offered in "Remarks on the Report of Daniel Lagache" following the development of psychoanalytic concepts in "Science and Truth." Concetta Principe, moreover, will put Lacan's discussion of religion in "Science and Truth" into dialogue with Lacan's work on the Name-of-the-Father. Molly Wallace will work through Lacan's discussion of religion therein alongside the structures of neurosis, perversion, and psychosis. And Alexander Dolabi will read "Science and Truth" alongside Descartes' *Regulae ad directionem ingenii* in order to ask

whether Descartes anticipated and tried to account for modern capitalist time. In short, this panel attempts to put Lacan's essay into dialogue with his broader work and, by doing so, further explicate the attempt in "Science and Truth" to locate the object of psychoanalysis in order that we may both understand better what Lacan himself meant and attempt to plot the course for psychoanalysis today.

Chair: Ed Pluth

Presenters: Ed Pluth: *'From the Schema to the Matheme and Back? The Imaginary in Lacan's "Science and Truth" and Beyond'*

Alexander Dolabi: *""Science and Truth": Forgetting and Haste in Descartes'*

Concetta Principe: *'Lacan's Prosopopoeia: The Unconscious Speaks "Truth"'*

Wallace: *'Pathology, 'Religion and Science in "Science and Truth"'*