

# Center for Psychoanalytic Study

## Introduction to the work of Jacques Lacan

Every other Saturday from 9:15 to 11:30

12 – 2 hr. meetings

September 12, 2009 – February 20, 2010

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### Course Description:

This course is conceived of as an introduction to the work of Jacques Lacan. Lacan, who introduced Freudian psychoanalysis to French psychiatry, insisted upon a “return to Freud,” to correct what he saw as a derailment of Freud’s intent by his followers. Through the medium of his own genius he extended Freud’s thought by making use of the linguistic science and the structuralist point of view that Freud did not have access to, but which - Lacan asserts - were immanent in his work.

Lacan developed his own concepts based on an exhaustive study of Freud’s works. Its public face was a seminar- consistently attended by the Parisian intelligentsia – that lasted for 20 years. Lacan shared with Freud a wide breadth of knowledge, an open-ended turning over of concepts and a persistently inquisitive attitude.

Neither Freud nor Lacan presents us with a “closed system” – yet Lacan – as he himself admits – “did not want to make the way in easy.” Thus an American readership is presented with a daunting challenge in accessing his alternately murky, allusive and impenetrable writings. These were mostly lectures delivered extemporaneously, after Lacan had immersed himself in a particular subject. Thus they consist of transcriptions of verbal presentations made from notes taken by those in attendance.

## **Course Objectives:**

**Introduce participants to basic Lacanian concepts.**

**Animate these concepts through group discussions of assigned readings, and presentations.**

**Understand the relevance of these concepts to what is at stake in the treatment of neurosis, perversion and psychosis.**

## **Course Requirements:**

**Participants should have access to the four texts listed below – they are central to the discussions. Additional material will be distributed during the seminar.**

**One paper will be due by the end of the seminar. Its intent is to help you assimilate new material. The topic is how your view of the field and your own work is affected by your encounter with Lacan. Optimally it should be approached as a “work in progress,” to be worked on throughout the seminar**

**This paper is to be emailed to me by February 7, 2010 so that we may discuss your ideas in our last meeting.**

## **Texts:**

- 1. Apollon W., Bergeron D., Cantin L. (2002). *After Lacan – Clinical Practice and the Subject of the Unconscious*. New York: SUNY Press. (ISBN 0-7914-5480-0)**
- 2. Lacan, J. (1977). *Ecrits –A selection*. New York: Norton. (ISBN 0-393-30047-1)**
- 3. Lacan, J. (1978). *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. New York: Norton. (ISBN 0-393-00079-6)**
- 4. Lacan, J. (1988). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan – Book I: Freud’s papers on technique 1953-1954*. New York: Norton. (ISBN 0-393-01895-4)**

## **Course Format:**

**The course is taught in a lecture/presentation/discussion format. The central text is *After Lacan*, with other readings arranged to supplement. The participants will find this text to be reasonably accessible and will serve as a bridge to Lacan’s own texts.**

## **Seminar schedule:**

Meetings to be held every other Saturday from 9:15 to 11:30 am in the sixth floor conference room at 67 E. Lake Street.

- #1. Sept. 12 – “Bonjour, M. Lacan! What have you to say to us?”  
Reading: Introduction to *After Lacan*  
Presentation: Schema – how the subject is structured by language
- #2. Sept. 26– The centrality of language and the universality of effraction in its anthropologic and structural dimensions.  
Reading: *After Lacan* - Chap. 1 – The trauma of language:  
*Four Fund. Concepts* – Chap. 6 The split between the eye and the gaze.
- #3. Oct. 10  
Readings: *Seminar of J.Lacan – Book I*  
Chap.10- The two narcissisms  
Chap 11 – Ego-ideal and ideal ego
- # 4. Oct 24 – The symbolic, the imaginary and the real:  
Reading: *After Lacan* - Chap 3 – The signifier:  
*Four Fundamental Concepts* - Chap. 2 The Freudian Unconscious and Ours  
Chap. 4 The network of signifiers
- #5. Nov.7 - Lack – the fundamental split.  
Readings: *Ecrits* – Chap.1 – The mirror stage  
Chap.2 - On aggressivity
- #6. Nov 21 – Jouissance, Dream and Delusion  
Presentation: Schema of the structure of psychosis  
Readings: *After Lacan* – Chap. 4 - The work of the Dream and Jouissance in the treatment of the psychotic  
Chap. 5 - From Delusion to Dream
- #7 Dec. 5 – Distributed texts: Bergeron: “The stakes in the cure of the psychotic”  
Apollon: “The basis of clinical practice.”
- #8 Dec. 19 - Otherness: the “Grand Autre”  
Readings: *After Lacan* - Chap 2 – The jouissance of the Other and sexual division in psychoanalysis.  
Chap 6 - The letter of the body
- #9. Jan. 9, 2010 – Inscriptions:  
Readings: *After Lacan* – Chap. 7 – The symptom  
Chap. 8 – From symptom to fantasy

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**#10 – Jan. 23 - The fantasy of seduction: narration vs. discourse:**

**Readings: *Seminar of J.Lacan – Book I - Chaps 16-18* “Michael Balint’s blind alleys”**

***Ecrits*: Chap. 3 - The function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis. pp 34-56**

**#11. Feb. 6 - The topic of perversion**

**Readings: *After Lacan - Chap. 9 – Perverse features and the future of the drive in obsessional neurosis***

**Chap. 10 – Perversion and hysteria**

**Chap. 11 – The fate of jouissance in the pervert-hysteric couple**

***Ecrits* – Chap. 8 - Signification of the Phallus**

**Feb. 7 - Paper (5-7 pages) due – to be emailed to seminar leader.**

**#12. Feb. 20 – Summing up:**

**Discussion – with reference to your papers**

**This syllabus is subject to alterations in pace and content as the seminar progresses.**