An APPI Study Day in the company of Stijn Vanheule

Saturday 25 April 2015
School of Nursing and Human Sciences
DCU, Dublin 9
(Collins Avenue Entrance)
09:15–17:00 / Room HG22

Programme

09.15  Registration and Welcome

09.30–10.45  Panel 1: On Questions of Being, Consciousness, Negation, and the Future Anterior
Sarah Meehan O'Callaghan – Tracing the Void
Mike Holohan – A review of major concepts: Verwerfung, Verneinung, Bejahung, and Verdrängung
Geraldine Cuddihy – Approaching the Unconscious – A Temporal Perspective

10.45–11.00  Coffee

11.00–12.30  Stijn Vanheule – A Close Reading of On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis

12.30–13.30  Lunch

13.30–15.30  Panel 2: On Questions of Delusions and Signifiers (in Literature and on Film)
Nadezhda Chekurova – ‘It is the strangest yellow, that wall-paper!’
Eve Watson – ‘Shining’ a Light on Psychosis and Triggers to its Violent Expression
Cormac Doherty – Abstracting the Real: Take Shelter
Carol Owens – Birdmen: From a “Freudian Psychosis” to a “Lacanian Psychosis” (with a nod to Hitchcock and cinema)

15.30–15.45  Coffee

15.45–17.00  Panel 3: On Questions of the Lacanian Clinic of the Psychoses
Pauline O'Connell – A ‘Singular’ Psychosis
Stephanie Devlin – Psychosis – Towards a Real understanding
Ivana Milivojevic – Intentional Fallacy on the Couch, Anyone?
Abstracts

Stijn Vanheule
A Close Reading of On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis

The text On a Question Prior to Any Possible Treatment of Psychosis is Lacan's most important paper on the topic of psychosis. The signifier ‘treatment’ in the title might suggest that this is a rather practically focused paper which might offer advice for therapy with this kind of psychopathology, yet this is not the case. First and foremost On a Question provides a framework for addressing the precise status of psychosis qua clinical structure. In his presentation Stijn Vanheule will provide a close reading of key sections of On a Question, with the aim of highlighting Lacan's unique approach of psychosis.

Pauline O’Connell
A ‘Singular’ Psychosis

Lacan's seminar is in essence a guide to clinicians working with Psychosis in which he entreats them to adopt a humane client oriented approach. In his adaptation of Freud’s quote “They love their delusions like they love themselves” we see a Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective which is fundamentally patient-centred, focusing on the singular and the particular of a psychotic’s world. In chapter XV Lacan exhorts us to go beyond lost meaning or the neurotic’s fixation at a particular point, to the subject’s relation with the signifier in psychosis. This presentation explores how sensitive attunement to the ebb and flow of the signifier, where there is a lack of a primordial signifier, can relieve the psychotic's psychic pain. Over time some sense of anchorage leading to relative stability may be achieved by allowing the psychotic construct an understanding of his/her place in the world on an imaginary plane, where triadic relating has not been possible.

Mike Holohan
A review of major concepts: Verwerfung, Verneinung, Bejahung, and Verdrängung

This paper is a brief review of the main concepts of Verwerfung, Verneinung, Bejahung, and Verdrängung (foreclosure, negation, affirmation, and repression), with a view to their German etymology and an understanding of their function in Lacan's theory of psychosis.

Stephanie Devlin
Psychosis – Towards a Real understanding

How do we analysts meet the challenge of working with the psychotic subject? Does Freud’s statement ‘The psychotic loves his delusion like himself’ give us something to go on? Lacan follows up on this remark in his seminar. What relevance does it have for our work? I hope to take a closer look at this in my presentation.
Cormac Doherty  
Abstracting the Real: Take Shelter  
I will be exploring the theme of psychosis through the Jeff Nicholls 2011 movie, *Take Shelter*, bringing this into proximity with Lacan's register theory and Korzybski’s semantics. My paper focuses in on the lead character Curtis La Forche's delusion and how a traction and intensity build as Curtis starts to confuse map with territory. This in turn displays how Curtis's investment in the delusion structures the positions the characters take to each other (disruption of family life, inability to stabilise work leading to job loss, ridicule from townspeople).

Sarah Meehan O’Callaghan  
Tracing the Void  
In this paper, I would like to explore the concept of negation and its relationship to the term foreclosure. Negation has a history both philosophically and psychoanalytically, from Hegel to Sartre and Freud to Lacan.

In thinking of the role of representation for the subject and that which eludes or is ex pulsed from representation, I will look at how a reading of Freud's *Project for a Scientific Psychology* may be helpful in understanding Lacan's terminology that psychosis is characterized by the rejection of a primordial signifier.

Eve Watson  
‘Shining’ a Light on Psychosis and Triggers to its Violent Expression  
An exploration of the language of delusion as well as the elemental aspects of paranoid psychosis, specifically including family themes and *delires-à-deux* in the characters of Danny/Jack Torrance in Stephen King’s novel, ‘The Shining.’

Geraldine Cuddihy  
Approaching the Unconscious – A Temporal Perspective  
According to Freud, in dreams and psychosis, ‘there is a complete lack of sense of time’. For Lacan, the unconscious is ‘the discourse of the Other’. The purpose of this paper is twofold: firstly, it will seek to explore the relationship, if any, between psychosis and the unconscious; secondly, it will address the connection between the unconscious and time drawing mainly on texts by Freud, Lacan and Kristeva.

Questions to be addressed include: how are we to understand the concept of time and the timeless? What are the key features of psychosis as outlined by Lacan in *The Psychoses*? and, finally, is the unconscious in fact a form of revolt (in Kristeva’s sense of the term) and, if yes, what are the implications for how we approach the unconscious generally?
Ivana Milivojevic
Intentional Fallacy on the Couch, Anyone?
This paper will open a question about the ‘intentional fallacy’ in the light of psychoanalytic thinking. In other words, how does this term from literary theory help us to understand what kind of a ‘psychotic agenda’ one deals with in any psychoanalytic situation, i.e., where the analysand, with either psychotic or neurotic structure, inevitably offers ‘meaning’, from which the analyst extracts ‘signifiers’? Or, if we use the tools of ‘meaning’ and ‘significance’, coming from the oppositional (in this context yet complementary), hermeneutic theory, what can we say about the ‘natural’ psychotic state even when the subject is ‘culturalised’ into neurosis?

Carol Owens
Birdmen: From a “Freudian Psychosis” to a “Lacanian Psychosis” (with a nod to Hitchcock and cinema)
As an afterword to his interview with Gerard Primeau in 1976, Lacan declared to his audience that they had just seen a “Lacanian” psychosis. I suggest that despite his innovations in Seminar III in reading the Schreber case, he nonetheless read it as a “Freudian” psychosis. This paper will comment on aspects of Lacan’s (and other Lacanian’s) reading of Schreber’s psychosis and of his comments and statements during the interview with Primeau, in order to distinguish a specifically “Freudian” psychosis from a strictly “Lacanian” one. My discussion of the two psychoses which feature men afflicted with birds and the special function the birds qua signifier have in each case, will allow me to comment on some cinematic treatments of psychoses in which the appearance of birds also heralds the real.

Nadezhda Chekurova
‘It is the strangest yellow, that wall-paper!’
This paper will explore Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s story The Yellow Wall-Paper. Written in America at the beginning of 19th century, the story describes a woman in a condition of ‘temporary nervous depression’, ‘slight hysterical tendency’ who has just moved to an isolated country house to recover under the care of her husband who is also a physician. Many interpretations tend to read the story in light of feminist thought and see the illness of the woman as a result of the oppressive patriarchal order, which deprives her from intellectual work (writing), and which remains deaf to her pain. Taking into account the cultural context from which the story emerges, I will draw on the hysterical question what is a woman? While I will briefly remark on some readings, my focus will be on the text- exploring the subject’s relation to the signifier. Furthermore, I will ask the question of whether this story can be taken as an example of Lacan’s idea that ‘psychosis consists of a hole, a lack, at the level of the signifier?’ and finally how can we conceptualize the signifier yellow?
Biographies

Nadezhda Chekurova is a psychoanalytic therapist based in Dublin and member of the Dublin Lacan Study Group. She graduated from Sofia University Bulgaria with a degree in Social Work, an MPhil in Psychoanalytic Studies from Trinity College Dublin and a MA in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy from Independent Colleges. She has presented a number of papers at previous A.P.P.I. Congresses such as Working with New subjectivities: The Barbarred Subject? and A Name which is not Oedipus? Subjectivity in a Society without Fathers. She also regularly participates in workshops and group presentations.

Geraldine Cuddihy has a BA in Women's Studies and Policy Studies from London Metropolitan University and an MA and PhD in Women's Studies from University College Dublin. Her PhD thesis is based on the novels of Julia Kristeva. Main areas of interest include: Postmodernism/Poststructuralism; Queer Theory; Feminist Theories of the Body and the Unconscious.

Stephanie Devlin became interested in psychoanalysis while studying for a degree in Literature some years ago. Nowadays her interest lies in two particular areas; the application of certain Psychoanalytic concepts to Literature, and the area of Psychosis. She completed a Masters last year in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy. Currently she practices clinically on Dublin's Southside in a centre for Psychotherapy and privately on the Northside.

Cormac Doherty holds a B.A. in Psychology, his final year thesis looked at the efficacy of brainwave entrainment when paired with musical composition. He has interests in philosophy of mind, science and Lacanian psychoanalysis. He volunteers at a Dublin based mental health agency, works as a team lead for Citigroup, and is part of the Dublin Lacan study group.

Mike Holohan has an interdisciplinary background in psychoanalysis, literary theory, and philosophy. He earned his doctorate from the University of California Santa Cruz, department of History of Consciousness. His dissertation explores the role of rhetoric and figurative language in the construction of psychoanalytic theory. Michael is part time lecturer in the Sexuality Studies MA at Dublin City University, and is undergoing psychoanalytic training at University College Dublin.
Sarah Meehan O’Callaghan holds a B.A. in French and Economics and her final dissertation focused on Lacan and French Literature. Since then she has had a long running interest in psychoanalytic theory and its correlation with other disciplines. She is a member of the Dublin Lacan Study Group and the Monkstown Freudian Group.

Ivana Milivojevic is a psychoanalytic therapist (MA) in private practice in Dublin. She is the author of monographs: Authorial Figures (2001) and Love of Diversity (2000) and holds a Ph.D. in James Joyce studies as well as an M.A. and B.A. in Comparative Literature and Literary Theory, an M.Sc in Hydro-technical Engineering and a B.Sc in Civil Engineering.

Pauline O’Connell graduated with an MSc in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy in 2013. She is now seeing clients in private practice in Dublin.

Carol Owens works in private practice. She is the founder and convenor of the Dublin Lacan Study Group. She is a Registered Practitioner member of the APPI and is current Chair of the APPI Scientific Committee and member of the APPI Training Committee. Forthcoming published work includes an essay on Anhedonia, Bulimia and Film, in


Stijn Vanheule is professor of psychoanalysis and head of the department of psychoanalysis and clinical consulting at Ghent University (Belgium), as well as a practicing psychoanalyst, member of the New Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis. He is the author of multiple papers, and of the monographs The subject of psychosis: A Lacanian perspective (2011) and Diagnosis and the DSM: A critical review (2014).

Eve Watson is a psychoanalytic practitioner working in a Dublin city centre practice. She also works at American College Dublin and Independent College Dublin in academic and clinical programmes in psychoanalysis. She is a registered practitioner member of APPI and is organisationally on the APPI Executive Committee and the editorial board of Lacunae, the Irish Journal of Psychoanalysis. She is published in the areas of psychoanalysis, critical psychology, sexuality studies, poetics and social/critical theory.
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