

### 3 Structures - Neurotic, Psychosis, perversion

#### Four discourses

Agent = Upper left. This is the speaker of the discourse

Other = Upper right. This is what the discourse is addressed to

Product = Lower right. This is what the discourse has created

Truth = Lower left. This is what the discourse attempted to express

The four variables which occupy these positions are :

S1 = master signifier of a discourse as it is received by the group, community or culture.

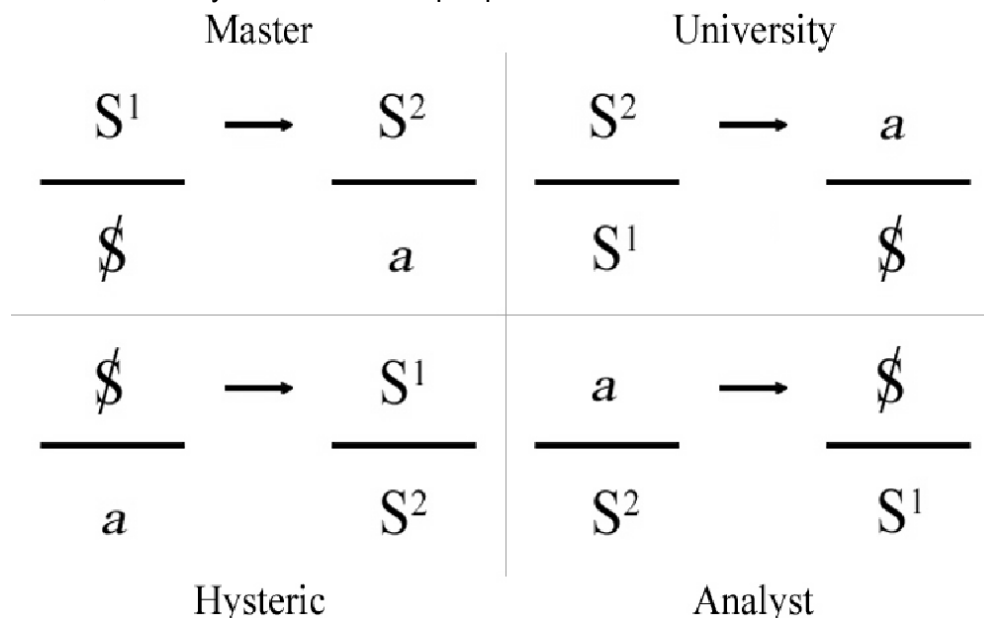
S2 = This is what is ordered by or set in motion by S1. It is knowledge, the existing body of knowledge, the knowledge of the time.

\$ = The subject, or person, for Lacan is always barred in the sense that it is incomplete, divided. Just as we can never know the world around us except in the partial refractions of language and the domination of identification, so too we can never know ourselves.

a = the objet petit a or surplus-jouissance. In Lacan's psychoanalytic theory, objet petit a stands for the unattainable object-cause of desire.

Lacan generates the notion of four possible discourses shaping social relations by different arrangements of these four elements (S1, S2, (a), and \$) on a grid. Every possible discourse involves:

- (1) a 'place' of agency, from whence the defining message of the discourse is enunciated;
- (2) an addressee, who or which receives or is affected by this message;
- (3) some product or by-product, which is produced by the exchange; and
- (4) most enigmatically, a 'place' of Truth, whereat what implicitly shapes the discourse is located, in a way often hidden to people involved in it.



#### Signifying chain

In itself the signifier is devoid of meaning, but the signifying chain is how meaning is produced, although no meaning produced can ever define the subject.

For example the slip of the tongue affects the subject because it produces signification in accordance with the unconscious web of signifiers

## **Lacan and math**

Lacan uses topographical illustration to map out the movements of desire in the subject. It's simply extended by Hegelian dialectics and Saussurian linguistics

## **Maternal object is the underlying true reality of things?**

Yes, metaphorically and literally. Lacan will then basically identify the mother with the Real (this veiled absolute reality), and will identify the father with the Symbolic (culture). So for Lacan the Real is the mother that never was and nonetheless drives human desire.

## **Register summary**

Basically the Other is in Lacan's register of the Symbolic. So he has three registers: Imaginary, Symbolic & Real. The former two try to approximate the Real and the Real evades them. But Lacan tells us the Symbolic is the mature register. So the successful resolution of the Oedipus complex moves you from the Imaginary to the Symbolic.

## **Lacan hegelian**

He will say there is only subject-object mediation, and thus the Real is only the post hoc constructed jouissance we believe it was in the mother-child dyad, but it actually wasn't--nonetheless we spend our life trying to move back into this state.

## **Lacan & Oedipus**

Namely the child does not desire the mother qua mother. But he desires the desire of the mother. This is Hegelian par excellence, bc he will say what matters is recognition as such. So what the child wants is that the mother wants the child--essentially love rather than mere possession.

Basically you move from Imaginary to Symbolic by being castrated by the law of the father, i.e. the Other

## **Subject**

Firstly, there is the impersonal subject, independent of the other, the pure grammatical subject, the noetic subject, the "it" of "it is known that."

Secondly, there is the anonymous reciprocal subject who is completely equal to and substitutable for any other, and who recognises himself in equivalence with the other.

Thirdly, there is the personal subject, whose uniqueness is constituted by an act of self-affirmation.

the term "subject" seems to mean no more than "human being."

the subject of a proposition is that about which something is predicated

Whereas the [ego](#) is part of the [imaginary order](#), the subject is part of the [symbolic](#).

## **Ego**

That the ego is "an illusory unity" which must be abdicated in favor of the "castrated subject" (i.e. the negation of its power is its real condition, which is why Lacan writes the subject S then as \$, the "barred subject")

The go is fluid, autonomous subject, and also, in its very origins, a repository for the projected desires and fantasies of larger others

The ego ultimately is an alienating foreign introject through which I am seduced and subjected by others' conscious and unconscious wants and machinations.

The subject, responsible for its formations of the unconscious, links with Freud's first topography, while the ego links to Freud's second topography, and to \*narcissism

Two axes are thus set up: an Imaginary axis that links the ego to the ego-image, and a Symbolic axis that connects the subject to the Other. The ego is the seat of resistance: only the desire of the analyst can bring about the crossing of the Imaginary axis, and thereby gain access to the subject of the unconscious.

### **Other**

the Other is the elevation of an other to the status of legislator. More formally however any Other is the legislator of discourse, be it an individual (the father, the mother, a guru etc.) or a field (science, religion) or a perennial signified (God).

So the Other is that which legislates the discourse.

Small other = a [reflection](#) or [projection](#) of the [ego](#)

the overarching "objective spirit" of trans-individual socio-linguistic structures configuring the fields of inter-subjective interactions.

Lacan equates the big Other with language and the law

### **Demand**

The articulation of biological needs in vocal form (demands)

### **Object**

object' is defined as that which allows a drive to achieve its aim

Lost object

The loss of the object is a two-step process whereby the subject is constituted. First, the earliest partial object, the breast, is lost. Then the primary love object, the mother, is likewise lost.

### **Ego ideal and ideal ego**

the ideal ego is the image you assume and the ego ideal is the symbolic point which gives you a place and supplies the point from which you are looked at.

### **Objet a**

Objet a is in the imaginary order and it's situated at the small other which is generally speaking the fact that there is lack at all which then frames everything else; so in one place it's said objet a is the framing for desire, like a frame to a painting?

objet a is "the object cause of desire" in that it could be any object that is substitutable in the chain to motivate desire.

I referred to object a as the residue of symbolization - the Real that remains, insists and ex-cysts after or despite symbolization.

Object a as a last remainder of the hypothetical mother-child unity to which the subject clings in fantasy to achieve a sense of wholeness, as the Other's desire, as the jouissance object.

### **Fantasy**

Fantasy is an imagined scene in which the subject is a protagonist, and always represents the fulfilment of a wish

### **The Imaginary**

Lacan tends to associate (albeit not exclusively) the Imaginary with the restricted spheres of consciousness and self-awareness (what you experience daily). Who and what one "imagines" other persons to be etc

the Imaginary points to core analytic ideas like transference, fantasy, and the ego. In particular, the Imaginary is central to Lacan's account(s) of ego-formation (as per the mirror stage

the Imaginary and the Symbolic, when taken together as mutually integrated, constitute the field of "reality," itself contrasted with the Real)

With his choice of the word "imaginary," Lacan indeed intends to designate that which is fictional, simulated, virtual, and the like

### **The Symbolic**

this register also refers to the customs, institutions, laws, mores, norms, practices, rituals, rules, traditions, and so on of cultures and societies

Lacan's phrase "symbolic order," which encompasses all of the preceding, can be understood as roughly equivalent to what Hegel designates as "objective spirit."

This non-natural universe is an elaborate set of inter-subjective and trans-subjective contexts into which individual human beings are thrown at birth

First, he uses it to designate a structure whose discrete elements operate as signifiers (linguistic model) or, more generally, the order to which such structures belong (the symbolic order). Secondly, he uses it to refer to the law on which this order is based

### **The Real**

This reality is the realm containing conscious apprehension, communicable significance

Early Lacan used it to mean things in themselves

the real is 'the domain of whatever subsists outside symbolisation' and undifferentiated

The real is that which resists symbolization and is an ontological absolute, a true being-in-itself".

The real is thus associated with the death drive and jouissance as the ultimate, unspeakable, limit of human existence. Jouissance is opposed to desire – it is the dissatisfaction that we experience with the failure of our desire – and it is through fantasy and the objet petit a that the subject sustains themselves in this impossible scenario

### **Desire**

Desire is essentially "desire of the Other's desire", which means both desire to be the object of another's desire, and desire for recognition by another.

Desire is unconscious and its object is metonymical, it will never appear where you name it "my desire is x".

### **Name of the Father**

Paternity has a symbolic side to it, and Lacan called this agency of paternity the name of the father. It is not a real person but a symbolic function.

### **Signifier/ Signified**

According to a well-known definition, a signifier is an acoustic image (like a word), a signified is a concept.

### **The Letter**

### **Foreclosure**

Lacan took a term from Freud's text to name this mechanism: foreclosure (Verwerfung), designating a radical rejection of the element in question.

Difference between repression and foreclosure is that repressed elements can be retrieved whereas foreclosed elements never existed in the symbolic, banished.

### **Lack**

Lacan took a term from Freud's text to name this mechanism: foreclosure (Verwerfung), designating a radical rejection of the element in question.

Lack of unity

## Jouissance

Although jouissance can be translated as 'enjoyment', translators of Lacan often leave it in French in order to render palpable its excessive, properly traumatic character: we are not dealing with simple pleasures, but with a violent intrusion that brings more pain than pleasure. This is how we usually perceive the Freudian superego, the cruel and sadistic ethical agency that bombards us with impossible demands and then gleefully observes our failure to meet them.

## Das Ding

What Levinas obfuscates is the monstrosity of the neighbour, a monstrosity on account of which Lacan applies to the neighbour the term Thing (das Ding), used by Freud to designate the ultimate object of our desires in its unbearable intensity and impenetrability.

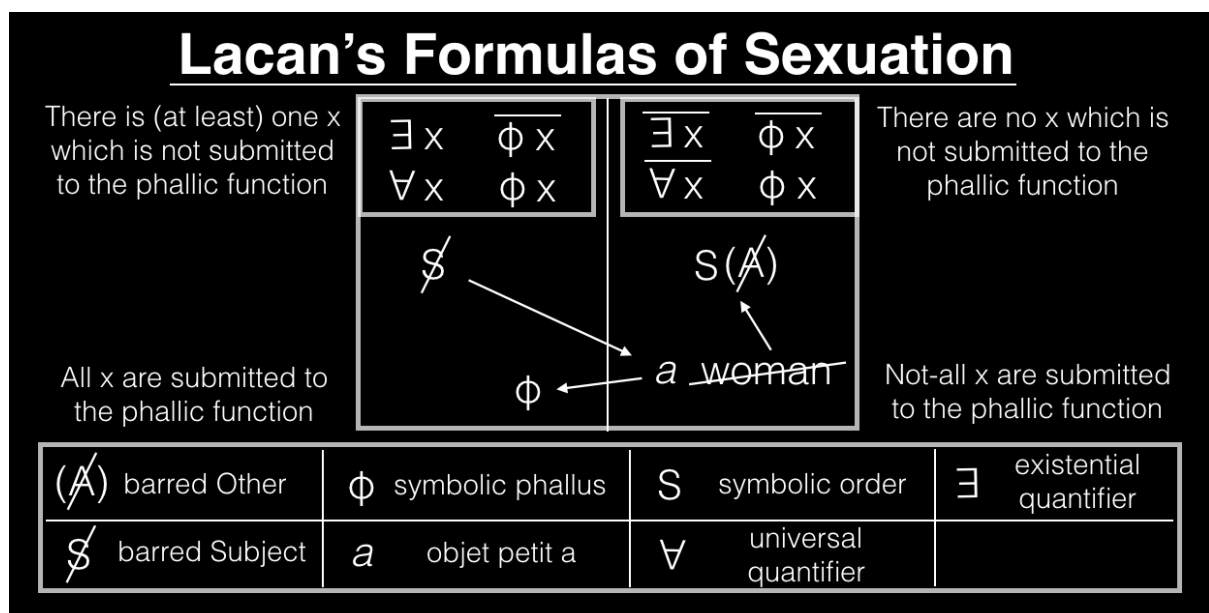
## The gaze

## Sinthome

One of the many neologisms in late Lacan is the notion of le sinthome. In contrast to symptoms, sinthoms are a kind of atom of enjoyment, the minimal synthesis of language and enjoyment, units of signs permeated with enjoyment. For example a tic

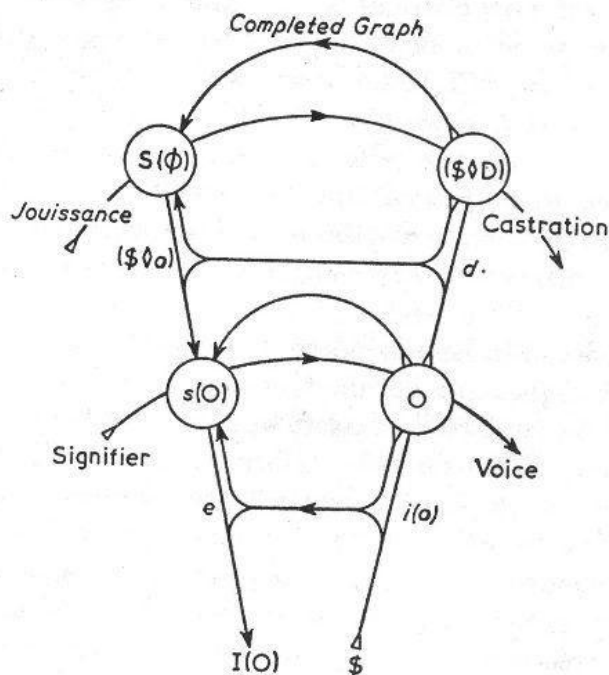
The idea of the knotting function of this element introduces new research problems since it addresses directly the old psychoanalytic and psychiatric question of non-triggered psychosis. For example hallucinations

## Sexuation



## Graph of desire

a formalization of the dynamics of the unconscious and the drives



$\$$  = barred subject divided by the signifier

S = signifier

S' = Signification

O = other (locus)

s(O) = moment

I(a) = ego ideal

i(a) = ideal-ego

M/e = model

D = demand (for love, appeal to the other)

D = desire

Diamond = (point de capion/Schema L)

a = object a

$\$ \diamond a$  = matheme for fantasy, formula

$\$ \diamond D$  = matheme for drives

*The graph is about the subject being crossed by the signifier twice*

The subject in the bottom right starts a discourse which passes through the two signifying chains

The lower chain is also called chain of enunciating (statement) and the upper one is the chain of enunciation (It's also sometimes said the lower chain is conscious and the upper unconscious)

What the arrows mean is basically how either the subject's formation flows or how the signifying chain flows

Lacan also called the upper chain "discourse of being"

the diamond is "basically the same as Schema L"

Schema L was "that the discourse of the Other passes through the imaginary wall of language"

I like to translate it as "being glued to"

## **The mirror stage:**

Lacan was much taken with an observation by the French psychologist, Henri Wallon, of the different ways that human infants and young chimpanzees react to seeing their reflection in a mirror. According to Wallon, young children are fascinated by their reflections, whereas chimpanzees quickly lose interest. For Lacan, this difference revealed a fundamental human tendency to be mesmerised by visual images, to live in the world of 'the imaginary'. There are interesting parallels between this idea and Marx's concepts of alienation and ideology, Durkheim's anomie, and even Sartre's 'bad faith'.

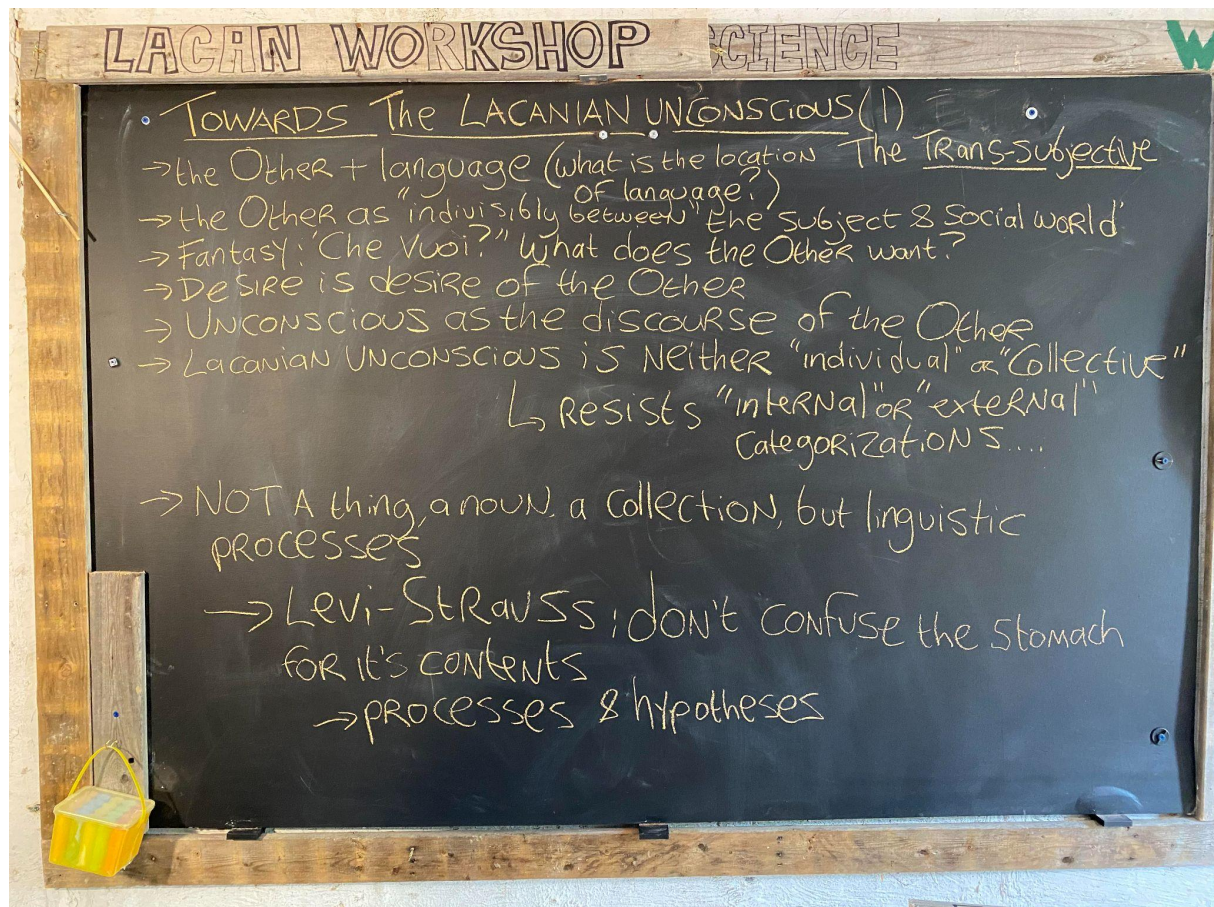
The symbolic order: The only way for people to escape the illusions of the imaginary is to uncover the linguistic symbols that shape those illusions. Just as Marx thought that ideology was a product of, and a cover for, economic forces, so Lacan saw the imaginary world as a product of and a cover for linguistic forces. It was not the stream of pictures passing across the mind's eye that determined human behaviour, but the unconscious web of words and phrases that lay beneath the images.

Psychoanalytic treatment was, therefore, principally about speech. Lacan denounced the way that his contemporaries in the psychoanalytic movement had come to neglect the role of speech in psychoanalytic treatment, and argued that the treatment should revolve around the linguistic analysis of the patient's utterances. Hence the emphasis Lacan placed on linguistics.

## **Criticism of psychology**

To the claims that psychology is a mode of human engineering and a false science that is unreceptive to the reality of the unconscious, we must now add three more allegations: 1) that it reduces the category of the subject to an ego, 2) that it studies behaviours so as better to regulate them and 3) that it is mechanistic (behaviourist) in its operations.







## LACAN WORKSHOP - SCIENCE

### • The Lacanian UNCONSCIOUS (2) Logical Time

→ Challenge of thinking beyond both the subjective & inter-subjective  
→ Lacan's 'logical time' essay as a puzzle, points to a way of thinking about the trans-subjective:

- ① Subjective 'instance of the glance'
- ② 'Inter-subjective' 'time of understanding'
- ③ Trans-subjective 'moment of concluding'

→ Prior to "the trans-subjective" we cannot speak of "society".  
This 3-fold structure is required before types of social consensus & "social objectivity" become possible.

A twofold form of mediation: who I am is not simply mediated by a Second, but by what this second hypothesizes about me via a third

→ a second degree of Otherness. Anxiety of groups:

It's not merely what other members of a group think of me, but what group members think other group members think of me.

### • The Lacanian UNCONSCIOUS (2) Logical Time

→ Challenge of thinking beyond both the subjective & inter-subjective  
→ Lacan's 'logical time' essay as a puzzle, points to a way of thinking about the trans-subjective:

- ① Subjective 'instance of the glance'
- ② 'Inter-subjective' 'time of understanding'
- ③ Trans-subjective 'moment of concluding'

→ Prior to "the trans-subjective" we cannot speak of "society".  
This 3-fold structure is required before types of social consensus & "social objectivity" become possible.

A twofold form of mediation: who I am is not simply mediated by a Second, but by what this second hypothesizes about me via a third

→ a second degree of Otherness. Anxiety of group

It's not merely what other members of a group think of me, but what group members think other group members think of me.



# LACAN WORKSHOP

SCIENCE

- The Lacanian UNCONSCIOUS 3: "LANGUAGE SPEAKS THROUGH US"
- NOT "a seething cauldron" of "instincts", not biological, not primordial
- LINGUISTIC: Language as "operating system" of the UNCONSCIOUS
- NOT about a "depth psychology" but attention to the SURFACE
  - ↳ an external as opposed to an internal UNCONSCIOUS
  - NOT about ever more "deep diving" interpretations but an attention to the play of the signifier.

2 proclamations: "Scandalous" + "ethical not ontological"

AGENCY → Symbolic agency → insistence/momentum of signifiers

- ↳ A signifier always refers back to another signifier
- ↳ diachronic aspect of language... (keeps us waiting)
- ↳ extensions... predictive text... ["a moving system"]
- ↳ Signifying chain

"Donald, in times of illness, caught"



## LACAN WORKSHOP SCIENCE

- The Lacanian UNCONSCIOUS 4: The Chain
  - NOT "a seething cauldron" of "instincts", not biological, not primordial
  - LINGUISTIC: Language as "operating system" of the UNCONSCIOUS
  - NOT about a "depth psychology" but attention to the SURFACE
    - ↳ an external as opposed to an internal UNCONSCIOUS
    - ↳ NOT about ever more "deep diving" interpretations but an attention to the play of the signifier.

- 2 proclamations: "Scandalous" + "ethical not ontological"
- AGENCY → Symbolic agency → insistence/momentum of signifiers
  - ↳ A signifier always refers back to another signifier
  - ↳ diachronic aspect of language... (keeps us waiting)
  - ↳ extensions... predictive text... ["a moving system"]
  - ↳ Signifying chain

"Donald, in times of illness, caught"

## LACAN WORKSHOP SCIENCE

- The Lacanian UNCONSCIOUS 4: The Chain
  - NOT "a seething cauldron" of "instincts", not biological, not primordial
  - LINGUISTIC: Language as "operating system" of the UNCONSCIOUS
  - NOT about a "depth psychology" but attention to the SURFACE
    - ↳ an external as opposed to an internal UNCONSCIOUS
    - ↳ NOT about ever more "deep diving" interpretations but an attention to the play of the signifier.

- 2 proclamations: "Scandalous" + "ethical not ontological"
- AGENCY → Symbolic agency → insistence/momentum of signifiers
  - ↳ A signifier always refers back to another signifier
  - ↳ diachronic aspect of language... (keeps us waiting)
  - ↳ extensions... predictive text... ["a moving system"]
  - ↳ Signifying chain

"Donald, in times of illness, caught"

## Information dump

Here is an information dump on psychoanalysis more specifically Lacanian psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis has various meanings, two of the most important ones are the systematic study of the unconscious and a type of therapy that seeks to address mental health problems through focusing on the unconscious. If you have had psychology lessons you will probably have learned about Freud who established psychoanalysis as its own discipline. Lacan, who emphasized a return to Freud, viewing the unconscious as being structured like a language, used insights from Hegelian philosophy and structural linguistics to expand on and return to Freud. Lacan's addition to Freudian psychoanalysis is paramount, due to his insight regarding the three registers (imaginary, symbolic and real), the notion of the big and littler Other, his view of desire, fantasy, the three clinical structures, mirror stage and much more. If you have heard of Žižek you will probably have heard of Lacan before, although he is typically more appealing to white liberal academics, his insight can be used by anyone to gain a better understanding of the psyche. Here are some introductory secondary readings and some videos that should help introduce people to Psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysis <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxaFeP9Ls5c>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRlwDJusJ78>(edited)

Lacan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkAXsR5WINc>  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzdZyq2SC9BtMn3fLTknIMQ/playlists>  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/lacanonline/videos> <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/lacan/>  
[https://nosubject.com/Main\\_Page](https://nosubject.com/Main_Page) (essentially wikipedia just about Lacan's thought) If you are interested in books on Lacanian Psychoanalysis, anything by Bruce Fink is good introductory material, if you want to start with reading Lacan, Seminar XI should be the first one to read.