

Reading Plan Version 1

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Introduction

Psychoanalysis has been an interesting topic in many different fields, including philosophy and film theories. In the Reading Psychoanalysis on Love series of events, we are going to explore the essential ideas of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan (by Slavoj Žižek and Bruce Fink) and Alain Badiou on the topic of Love.

How this series is organized

This series is co-hosted by Siqi Zheng (Tim) and Sara Wu, presented by *Humanities and Social Sciences Sanctuary* club.

This is a fully online synchronous event. Content will be released before the week starts. You are expected to complete the readings and encouraged to complete suggested readings before our required synchronous meetings (except for the first week).

Time-zones: All times are in **local Toronto time**.

Important Dates

TBD

Objectives

1. Increase engagement in *Humanities and Social Sciences Sanctuary*.
2. Evaluate and critique analyses in case study—both your own and those of others.
3. Conduct and communicate psychoanalytic concepts in relation to love in the theories of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan.
4. Understand and communicate basic psychoanalytic ideas and findings effectively in a relatively accessible manner.
5. Connect students' specific questions in their daily life through distilling essential features of the problem and share their analyses from a Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective.
6. Collaborate in a team to share your what you learnt from readings and provide insights into your own questions.
7. Reflect effectively on one's own development.

Office Hours

Weekly Office hours will be held online using Zoom. Please check WeChat for the latest schedule and links. You're welcome to stop by even if you don't have questions. You can learn from the questions, make connections with other people, etc.

Technology

You should have the minimum technology for online learning required by the UofT listed in the website below. Please also read the recommended accessories and internet connectivity sections. at <https://www.vicprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/covid-19/tech-requirements-online-learning/>

In particular, it is better to have:

- Access to a laptop or desktop computer with a working microphone and webcam. A phone is an acceptable substitute.
- Access to stable, high-speed internet and reliable electricity.
- The technology and knowledge to scan or photograph your handwritten work and convert it into small PDF, JPG or PNG files.

Events Overview

What is Psychoanalysis?

The primary definition of psychoanalysis is given by Sigmund Freud ([Freud et al., 2016](#)): psychoanalysis is a method of treating nervous patients medically. In the further development by French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, he innovated philosophical ideas into clinical psychoanalysis. For philosopher Slavoj Žižek, psychoanalysis is more than clinical treatments: it is also a way to read texts and decipher ideology in critical theories ([Žižek et al., 2007](#)).

What is psychoanalysis in critical theories? *Critical Theory: The Key Concepts* gives the following definition ([Felluga, 2015](#)):

Psychoanalytical Criticism aims to show that a literary or cultural work is always structured by complex and often contradictory human desires. Whereas New Historicism and Marx-inspired Cultural Materialism analyze public power structures in terms of the culture as a whole, psychoanalysis analyzes microstructures of power within the individual and within small-scale domestic environments. That is, it analyzes the interiority of the self as well as the self's kinship systems. By analyzing the formation of the individual, psychoanalysis also helps us to understand the formation of ideology at large—and can therefore be extended to the analysis of various cultural and societal phenomena. Indeed, for this reason, psychoanalysis has been especially influential over the last three decades in cultural studies, film studies, and Marxist criticism.

Why Love?

Love is a central theme in many people's life, insofar as I know from past experience as a lover or a beloved. The notion of lover and beloved can be found in Plato's famous text *Symposium* ([Plato et al., 2003](#)). The reading and the re-reading of this text always shed light on love in today's society, which already becomes rather obscene, as I may say so. The interactions of this idea from Plato with the psychoanalytic theories create space for us to rethink and even re-invent love, to put it in Alain Badiou's term ([Badiou et al., 2012](#)).

There is another reason to introduce love from a psychoanalytic perspective. In the clinical setting (possibly even in political theory) of Lacanian psychoanalysis, love is an indispensable concept in (Lacanian) psychoanalysis. Lacan once claimed ([Lacan et al., 1999](#)), "the only thing that we do in the analytic discourse is speak about love." Thus we hope we will have an opportunity to glimpse this important notion of love and the elaboration of love from a psychoanalytic perspective, so that we can be motivated to at least think about love again.

Delivery Method

The series of event will be **online**, except possibly for Q&A sessions and small seminars (if feasible and needed).

Zoom will be used for the meeting. Google Docs may be used to share scripts and notes. Learning resources may be found on Baidu Netdisk. For more information, one may be able to find it in the WeChat group.

Synchronous Meeting Structure

The synchronous meeting will be 1-hour long. We will focus on 2 to 3 questions per session.

Table 1: Synchronous meeting (3 questions)

| Event | Duration |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Introduction | 10 mins |
| Breakout room discussion | 7 mins |
| Report back | 8 mins |
| Breakout room discussion | 7 mins |
| Report back | 8 mins |
| Breakout room discussion | 7 mins |
| Report back | 8 mins |
| Summary | 5 mins |

Table 2: Synchronous meeting (2 questions)

| Event | Duration |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Introduction | 10 mins |
| Breakout room discussion | 14 mins |
| Report back | 8 mins |
| Breakout room discussion | 14 mins |
| Report back | 8 mins |
| Summary | 5 mins |

Sharing schedule TBD

Communication

Get in Touch with Organizers

- Please include [Reading Psychoanalysis on Love] in the friend request.
- When sending any communication or participating in discussions, remember that there are real people with feelings on the receiving end. Be kind and treat people the way you would like to be treated.

Academic Questions

Please ask questions during office hours. Questions may not be entertained outside office hours sections.

Privacy

We are all expected to respect individuals' privacy and copyright restrictions in the events.

Online synchronous sessions

Weekly (Bi-weekly during mid-term weeks) online synchronous sessions take place online. Since you are expected to be available, these will not be recorded so people can freely participate. If this changes for any reason during the series of events, participants will be informed.

Participants may not create recordings of weekly synchronous events with the exception of those participants requiring an accommodation for a disability, who should speak to the organizer prior to beginning to record these events.

Case Study and Story Sharing

Case study materials will be prepared before the start of our final synchronous meeting. You are strongly encouraged to share the analysis of personal stories, films, texts and music related to the topic of our events. The sharing can be anonymous and be in different formats (writing, video, audio).

Do not download, copy, or share any materials or texts of the case study and other participants without the explicit permission of the organizers and the sharers. Thanks for your cooperation!

Resources Links

TBD

Schedule

| Week | Readings | Suggested Readings | Synchronous Meeting | Key Concepts |
|------|--|--|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality | | | |
| 2 | Freud on the topic of love (Beyond the Pleasure Principle?) | Eros (No Subject, 2019a) | | Eros |
| 3 | Freud on the topic of love | How to Read Lacan (Žižek et al., 2007) Chapter 5 (Page 79-90) | | Ego and Id |
| 4 | How to Read Lacan (Žižek et al., 2007) Chapter 1 (Page 7-21) | Jacques Lacan: Read your symptoms (Wu, 2021) Chapter 8: The Topology of Three Registers | | Imaginary-Symbolic-Real; Unconscious |
| 5 | What Does Lacan Say About... Jouissance? (Hewitson, 2015) | Jacques Lacan: Read your symptoms (Wu, 2021) Chapter 11: The Ethics of Jouissance | | Jouissance |
| 6 | How to Read Lacan (Žižek et al., 2007) Chapter 3 (Page 40-60); How to Read Lacan (Žižek et al., 2007) Chapter 4 (Page 61-78) | Jacques Lacan: Read your symptoms (Wu, 2021) Chapter 10: The Dialectic of Desire | | Desire; Little Object <i>a</i> |
| 7 | In Praise of Love (Badiou et al., 2012): Chapter 3 and 4 ; What Does Lacan Say About... Love? (Hewitson, 2016) | Love (No Subject, 2019b); Reading Seminar XX (Barnard et al., 2012): Knowledge and Jouissance | | Love |
| 8 | Lacan on Love (Fink, 2015) (Page 49-69; Page 206-211 in pdf) | The Structures of Love (Penney, 2013): Chapter 2 ; Lacan on Love (Fink, 2015) (Page 31-48); Symposium (Plato et al., 2003) | | Love |
| 9 | No Readings(Case Study and Story Sharing) | Reading Seminar XX (Barnard et al., 2012) | | |

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- Penney, J. (2013). *The Structures of Love: Art and Politics beyond the Transference (SUNY series, Insinuations: Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, Literature)*. State University of New York Press.
- Plato, & Gill, C. (2003). *The Symposium (Penguin Classics)* (Revised ed.). Penguin Classics.
- Wu, W. (2021). *Jacques Lacan: Read your symptoms (Set 2 Volumes)(Chinese Edition)*. China Renmin University Press (CRUP).
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