



Centre for Lacanian Analysis

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## 2 0 1 6   C o n f e r e n c e

Auckland, Friday 18 – Saturday 19 November

WG609 AUT City Campus

# Lacanian Psychoanalysis in the 21st Century

Psychoanalysis, New Technologies and Social Media

“...it runs too fast, it consumes, it consumes so well that it consumes itself ...”

Lacan, *On the Psychoanalytic Discourse*

## PROGRAMME

### Friday 18<sup>th</sup>

17.30 to 18.30

**CLA AGM** (CLA Members only)

19.00 to 20.00

**The decline of the Paternal Function,**

**the Hokikomore Phenomenon.** Dr. Gustavo Restivo

20.00 to 21.00

**The Essence of Power.** Dr Mark Jackson

### Saturday 19<sup>th</sup>

9.30 to 10.30

**The (inter)Play of the Capitalist: From the ‘free market’ to ‘market order’ (and back again).** Andrew Dickson

Morning tea

10.45 to 11.45

**Nights at Cube Pizzeria; - Lacan and the hyper-civilised child.**

Dr Kaye Cederman

11.45 to 12.45	<b>This that, here, now.</b> Ross Kendall
Lunch	
14.00 to 15.00	<b>Ghost stories.</b> Gonzalo Prado
Afternoon tea	
15.00 to 16.00	<b>Death to Videodrome: Cronenberg, Zizek and the Ontology of the Real,</b> Scott Willson
16.00 to 17.00	<b>Final remarks, round table</b>

## ABSTRACTS AND SPEAKERS PROFILE

### Dr Gustavo Restivo

Dr Gustavo Restivo is a Clinical Psychologist and Psychoanalyst with a Lacanian orientation. Dr Restivo is a Member of New Zealand Forum of the School of Psychoanalysis of the Forums of the Lacanian Field, current NZIPP Chairperson, and founding member and current director of the Centre for Lacanian Analysis.



Dr Restivo trained in Clinical Psychology and in Psychoanalysis in Buenos Aires, Argentina and completed a PhD in the field of psychoanalysis at Auckland University of Technology in 2013. Dr Restivo is author of numerous articles on psychoanalytic theory and practice.

### **The decline of the paternal function, the Hokikomore Phenomena**

This paper explores the idea that we live in a time in which the father function and ideals, are in decline while jouissance is on the upswing. Where Freud will write of primal identification with the father, Lacan will rather say that the term ‘father’ is just the name we have given to this operation of the first cut, castration, between the signifier and the object, the cut which separates the subject from the real of the body of the mother, from the real of her and the child’s jouissance. Others come to occupy this place of ‘father’ in view of the decline of the paternal function in modern societies. This decline has resulted in a loss rather than a gain of freedom for the subject, binding them to the superegoic command of capitalism to enjoy shamelessly to the death. As an example the Hikikomori phenomena insist on an autistic isolated jouissance of everyone to enjoy, in which the imaginary illusion that enjoyment is being shared prevails, but with no possible link through love.

## Dr Mark Jackson

Dr Mark Jackson is Associate Professor of Design in the School of Art & Design, Faculty of Design & Creative Technologies, Auckland University of Technology. He received his PhD from the University of Sydney in the discipline of architecture in the early 1990s and has taught at the University of Sydney, the University of Adelaide and then at AUT. He has also held posts as Visiting Scholar at M.I.T. (Boston) and Visiting Professor at the University of Karlsruhe, Germany.



His research engages the tradition of Continental Philosophy, especially the works of Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida and Agamben. He has published in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, design cultures, film-philosophy, and the visual arts and has produced a number of film and video works. He is currently developing a monograph publication on aspects of the work of Heidegger, as well as a series of digital films on capital and empire.

## The Essence of Power

*When I came here this evening I saw on the little neon sign the motto "Enjoy Coca-Cola."  
J. Lacan*

In 1971 Jacques Lacan presented at a rather celebrated conference in Baltimore, *The Structuralist Controversy*, with a paper, notable for its delivery in English—with French interludes—"Of Structure as an Inmixing of an Otherness Prerequisite to Any Subject Whatever." Of particular relevance for my paper are two notions from a presentation extremely rich and provocative. With the first, Lacan affirms Freud: "... the unconscious has nothing to do with instinct or primitive knowledge or preparation of thought in some underground. It is a thinking with words, with thoughts that escape your vigilance, your state of watchfulness." With the second, Lacan discusses a question of the dyad that introduces the notion of zero as the one. This notion of the 'nothing' constituting the 'fake' one enters Lacanian engagements concerning Seminar XXIII—as in Thurston (Ed.) *Reinventing the Symptom—Essays on the Final Lacan*. In his presentation, Lacan notes: "... the class which is characterized by no elements is the first class; you have one at the place of the zero and afterward it is easy to understand how the place of the one becomes the second place which is the place for two, three, and so on." *The Essence of Power* asks whether psychoanalysis is essentially a technology in the sense that Lacan eschews a 'nature'—*physis*— that would characterise the unconscious. If the unconscious is essentially 'thinking with words', what is 'thinking' for Lacan in such a context, and what is the 'word'? Is language essentially a *tekhne* with respect to being a prerequisite for any subject whatever? What, then, of *physis*, of the bare life of an existent? This paper takes up a series of themes indebted to the philosopher, Dennis J. Schmidt, especially Heideggerian in their concern, addressing technology, the word and power. If in its emergence and development as a 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomenon, psychoanalysis has been fundamentally geared as a technology of power, at once instrumental and normalizing, would its 'saving power' be its acute attunement to the word as that which escapes all conceptuality, or would it be the diagnostician *par excellence*—and thereby entirely complicit with—*tekhne's* producing of *physis*?

## Dr Andrew Dickson

Dr Andrew Dickson is Organisational Sociologist and Senior Lecturer at Massey University, New Zealand. He is a graduate of biochemistry and business. His research expertise is in critical health studies, autoethnography, and Lacanian psychoanalysis. His research focuses mainly on the wider weight-loss industry, but also applies a psycho-sociological lens to other 'health' industry topics including: the impact of managerial ideology, gender relations, embodied alienation and eating disorders.



### The (inter)Play of the Capitalist: From the 'free market' to 'market order' (and back again)

In this paper I investigate a loop between the anorexic and the capitalist, it could be thought of like the loop between the master and the hysteric, though I enjoy making a strangely intriguing connection to loop quantum gravity in theoretical physics – the idea that the universe, and everything in it is made up of tiny finite loops, that together provide an infinite universe. Though I also imagine this loop with Joan Copjec's sexual compact, the binary loop between masculine and feminine against the multiples in gender theory.

My aim is to interrogate the play of the capitalist between discourses in an attempt to endlessly appropriate surplus. The argument rests on the relationship between the Real and the Symbolic, which I equate to 'free market' and 'market order'. To appropriate maximum surplus the capitalist is required to walk a specific line between the Real and the Symbolic, without spending too long in either. To explore this relationship I will use a particular innovation from Lacanian discourse theory introduced through clinical work by the Italian psychoanalyst Gabriella Ripa di Meana in her book *Figures of Lightness* published in English in 1999. In this text Ripa di Meana introduces what she calls the discourse of Anorexia:

$$\frac{a \rightarrow S_2}{\$ // S_1}$$

What is the specter of the anorexic if not Real? Displaying their desire for nothing corporeally, the Other is horrified by the anorexic's intrusion into their Symbolic normalcy. But our specular preoccupation with the frail body of the anorexic masks something more exceptional, that is the discursive structure of the anorexic, a discursive structure that I argue is not at all frail, but speaks from the position of desire. I will argue how inhabiting the discourse of anorexia is, perplexingly, necessary for business. In this era of hypercapitalism (Salecl, 2004) consumptive behaviour is necessary for profiteering. Business practice revolves around the various hooks and tricks that will lead to multiple transactions, multiple moments of consumption, each laden with an excess (profits obviously, but also other excesses). I will interrogate Lacan's infamous fifth discourse (that of the capitalist) and read this alongside di Meana's intervention to demonstrate how business, is 'in business' with the Real, producing and consuming 'the bulimic' (one with "ox-like hunger" (see Occhiogrosso, 2008, p. 265)) in servitude of their egregious profit goal.

## **Dr Kaye Cederman**

Dr Kaye Cederman is a Registered Practitioner member of the Association of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy in Ireland (APPI). She practices psychoanalysis and psychotherapy in private practice working with children, adults, and teenagers. Research Associate and Lecturer, M.Phil. Programme, Gender & Women's Studies, Trinity College, Dublin. Member Centre for Lacanian Analysis (CLA), and Member of New Zealand Forum of the School of Psychoanalysis of the Forums of the Lacanian Field.



### **Nights at Cube Pizzeria; - Lacan and the hyper-civilised child.**

Child psychoanalysts must now inevitably confront the recent configurations of western societies which have completely reorganised our daily lives. These include the ubiquitous marketing technologies, or psycho-technologies, of consumer capitalism. The paper explores what a child's symptom might tell us about how children are now being civilised; through the new cultural and technological forms, including modes of integrating Symbolic and Imaginary relations. It draws upon Lacan's insights in order to explore some questions raised by contemporary symptoms of childhood, including phobia, depression, anxiety, anger, violence, and loneliness. For example, what are the links between a child's symptom and the digital forces now at work on the minds and bodies of children? Consider the tensions constituted by the demands of capitalist discourse that each consumer (child) is profoundly hyper-socialised. Following Soler (2014) we know that such demands generate each child's most fundamental habits where "the folds of the body ...become identical to the feeling that everyone has of himself"; (p. 176). The paper then considers the role of psychoanalysis in this environment. Is there anything we can do when consumer capitalism is so all-consuming? We clearly cannot change this global phenomenon, but we can explore how, alongside the desire of the analyst, we might reinvigorate the desire for knowledge to inform our clinical work. The paper highlights the potential of Lacan's original theories, and current writing based on these, to inform psychoanalytic work and cultural understanding regarding the hyper-civilised; child in the 21st century.

## Ross Kendall

Ross Kendall researches psychoanalytic themes and issues, particularly the practical application of Lacanian and post-Lacanian analyses to contemporary events and situations. Ross lives in Raglan with his partner and their dog Hexy.



## This that, here, now

Je est un autre (Rimbaud, 1871) implies a curt dismissal of any notion of fixed personality or interpretation of experience that might be elevated to universal application. Is it possible then, to construct a project that offers a definitive outline of human nature? Drawing on Deleuze's concept of subjecthood and Lacan's discourse of the capitalist, this paper outlines a consilience that proposes a way towards an alternative Aufhebung - one that questions the utility of signifier/signified and challenges postmodernist ideas of selfhood while it offers an ethically integrative concept of personal identity.

## Gonzalo Prado

Gonzalo Prado is an Argentinian psychologist. He was board member of the Instituto Oscar Massota, Centro Investigacion Docencia, Mendoza in Argentina and moved recently to Auckland. Gonzalo is a member of the CLA and a Member of New Zealand Forum of the School of Psychoanalysis of the Forums of the Lacanian Field.



## Ghost stories

The paper explores the relationship between fantasme and jouissance in the direction of a cure. Using the proximity of Halloween, and the translation of fantasme in Spanish as "ghosts" as a metaphor, I will talk about repetition in patient's discourse and how that repetition says something about jouissance through fantasmatic constructions. I believe that in every metaphorical construction some knowledge can be produced just by exploring new relationships between modern popular culture and old psychoanalytical concepts.

## **Scott Wilson**

Scott Wilson is a Senior Lecturer with the Department of Performing and Screen Arts at Unitec, Institute of Technology in Auckland. He was the 2013 Fulbright Visiting New Zealand Scholar at Georgetown University, and is the author of *The Politics of Insects: David Cronenberg's Cinema of Confrontation* (2011). He has recently edited a volume on extreme and unpopular music, *Music at the Extremes: Essays on Sounds Outside the Mainstream* (2015).



### **Death to Videodrome: Cronenberg, Zizek and the Ontology of the Real.**

The closing frames of David Cronenberg's *Videodrome* (1983) show us the protagonist, Max Renn, seemingly in the act of suicide, his mutated flesh-hand-pistol pressed firmly against his head. Looking directly at us, Max utters the phrase "long live the new flesh" before the film fades to black. This act ends the film, but the end of the film, despite this seemingly conclusive moment, might not mark the end of Max's experience of the diegesis. In a film concerned with bodily transformation in response to media intervention, a film in which our heterosexual male protagonist develops a vaginal opening which generates and transforms objects subject to its own desires and agency, what are we to make of this film's ending (and other similar moments in Cronenberg's work)? What if the vaginal slit that appears in Max's abdomen during the film opens not into his bodily interior but, instead, into a new ontology – the ontology of the Real? What if *Videodrome* ends not with Max's death but with his movement beyond the Symbolic and into the Real, beyond signification, beyond ontology?

This paper seeks to explore a select number of Cronenberg's mid-period works in relation to what Slavoj Zizek refers to as the pre-ontological, a realm of signification that Zizek elsewhere links to the abject but which, equally, might provide a glimpse of the unsettling Real that so many of Cronenberg's protagonists hurtle powerlessly towards and which lurks just outside the frame of his narratives, hinted at but always escaping our standard ontological practices.

## **Registration Fees**

**Fees: \$120 - Students \$60**

**CLA Members: Free**

Please pay your registration fee via internet banking at 12-3066-0204464-00 and send your details to [info@lacan.org.nz](mailto:info@lacan.org.nz)