THE DRIVE AND SEXUALITY IN THE WORK OF FREUD AND LACAN

Part A: Theory of the drive

This course shall study a number of developments in the conceptualization of the drive and sexuality in the work of Freud and Lacan:

• Freud's initial distinction between the sexual drives (translated as “instinct” in the Standard Edition) and the drives of self-preservation.
• Freud’s realisation that the life, or ego, drives are also sexual leads him to define a new duality, that between the life drives and the death drives. Lacan accepts the notion of duality, but for him while every drive is sexual it is also a death drive, as it is always excessive and seeks only its own satisfaction in circling around the object.
• The components of the drive operate as a montage according to Lacan. The drives are characterised by different grammatical voices: active, passive and reflexive. Lacan’s distinctions between need, demand and desire elaborate the Freudian notion of the drive.
• Lacan rejects the idea of a genital drive in the sense of a unified drive and adds the invocatory drive, of which the object is the voice, and the scopic drive, with its object being the gaze. In this sense, the drives are always partial in the way they represent the sexual enjoyment of the subject, an enjoyment that Lacan names jouissance and locates in the Real. For Lacan, the reality of the unconscious is a sexual reality. At the end of an analysis, it is the drive that reveals the truth of the speaking being.

Part B: Theory of the Object - Desire and its cause

In this course we will consider the central role given to the object relation in Post-Freudian psychoanalysis and how Lacan’s theory of the object, although taken from Freud, radically alters the theory of the drive and its aim. We examine Lacan’s theory of the lost object and its subjective manifestations in the forms of frustration, castration and privation. The horizon of the lost object is fundamental to Lacan’s revision of the Freudian field of Lust and presents desire as a will to jouissance. This object, which can only ever be refound, acts as the mainspring of desire in man. It causes desire. Lacan names it objet a, and it is marked by its “non-specular” nature. It is re-found in various semblants, which characterise the choice of an object for the subject. We will explore the transformation of the Freudian drive which results from Lacan’s invention of objet a, and the implications for psychoanalytic practice and the function of the analyst born from this Lacanian invention.
PART C: Theory of Sexual Identity

How does psychoanalysis account for sexual difference? If it is a given that sexual difference is not innate, that we are not born as either a woman or a man, how then does the subject become a sexed subject? What indeed does it even mean to talk of subjects as sexed? And why even is there sexual difference? We will see as we track through some of the essential papers of Freud and Lacan, as well as those of a few other analysts, that the idea of the phallus is fundamental but is not the limit point of the evolving psychoanalytic theories, which take in notions of identification, desire, and jouissance, and sexual difference. We will also see how the question of femininity, the paradigmatic question of sexual difference for both Freud and Lacan, is also a foundational question for psychoanalysis.

GENERAL READING GUIDE

SIGMUND FREUD

(1905d) Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality. SE 7: PART III
(1910) A Special Type of Object Choice Made by Men (Contributions to the Psychology of Love, I). SE 11
(1912) On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love (Contributions to the Psychology of Love, II). SE 11
(1915c) Instincts and their Vicissitudes. SE 14:111-140
(1919 [1917]) The Taboo of Virginity (Contributions to the Psychology of Love, III). SE XI.
(1916-17) Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, Lecture XX: The Sexual Life
of Human Beings. SE XVI: 303
(1920g) Beyond the Pleasure Principle. SE 18: 3-66.
(1921c) Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego. SE 18: Chap. VII
(1923b) The Ego and the Id. SE 19: ESP. PART III
(1923e) The Infantile Genital Organisation: An Interpolation into the Theory of Sexuality. SE 19: 141
(1924d) The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex. SE 19: 173
(1925j) Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction between the Sexes. SE 19: 243
(1931b) Female Sexuality. SE 21: 223
(1930) Civilization and its Discontents. S.E.21: 59 -14
JACQUES LACAN


PAPERS OF FREUD’S CONTEMPORARIES


Balint, Alice (1939 [1952]) Love For The Mother And Mother Love, in M. Balint, Primary Love and Psychoanalytic Technique, Hogarth Press and Institute for Psychoanalysis, London UK.


**FURTHER READING**


