

Reading Group – Lacan Toronto
Jacques Lacan, Seminar XIV/Le Séminaire, livre XIV
The Logic of Fantasy/ La logique du fantasme

In his seminar of 1966-67, Lacan began to explore more systematically his long-held conviction that the discourses of logic and mathematics had much to bring to psychoanalytic inquiry. Already accustomed to hearing references to key figures in structuralist linguistics in Lacan's discourse, the seminar audience of the time, now composed significantly of *normaliens* immersed in the history and philosophy of mathematics, could now discern with increasing frequency names such as Frege, Gödel, Russell and Wittgenstein. Each of these is a major figure of the so-called "analytic" tradition viewed in some quarters as distinct from the "continental" philosophy (Heidegger, Derrida, Foucault) more familiar to the earliest film-theoretical and literary-theoretical generation of interpreters reading Lacan in the English-speaking academic (non-clinical) world.

The aim of this reading group will be to begin to come to terms with the motivation for Lacan's turn to logic in the mid-1960s. In short, what can the work of late 19th and 20th century logicians teach psychoanalysis? And just as importantly, what are the limits of the logical project from the perspective of psychoanalysis? Along the way we will explore the power and limits of the comparison Lacan draws in a variety of complex ways between the logician's work of formalizing the rules of valid inference and the analyst's work of catalyzing the patient's activity of free association: Both effectively lead us towards the difficult but liberating conclusion that *the Other doesn't exist*.

No prior familiarity with logic discourse or mathematics is assumed or required.