

OBSESSIONAL NEUROSIS

Obsessional neurosis, unlike hysteria, does not have the status of an independent clinical structure. Within the theory of neurosis as developed first by Sigmund Freud and then by Jacques Lacan, it is spoken of as a dialect of the hysterical neuroses. In addition, obsessional neurosis can often be, as Lacan pointed out, clinically mistaken for a psychosis. The study of obsessional neurosis in the works of Freud and Lacan will therefore involve:

- assessment of its status as a clinical category;
- the question of its theoretical and clinical differentiation from hysteria on the one hand and the psychoses on the other;
- the specificity of its mechanisms of symptom formation and characteristic modes of defence against the real of the drive; the real of sexual jouissance;
- the distinctive character of the obsessional fantasy and its role in maintaining the obsessional subject's subjective position in the face of the real;
- the aims and ends of the analytic treatment of an obsessional neurosis.

LECTURERS: Dr Peter Ellingsen and Ursula Paton

READING

FREUD, Sigmund:

- (1909*d*) Notes upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis. SE 10: 153
(1912-13) *Totem and Taboo* (Essay II, Sections 2 & 3(c), and Essay III, Sections 3 & 4). SE 13: ix
(1918*b* [1914]) From the History of an Infantile Neurosis (Sections II, VI, VII, IX). SE 17: 3.
(1916-17[1915-1917]) *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (Lectures XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XXII). SE 16:
(1919*e*) 'A Child Is Being Beaten'—A Contribution to the Study of the Origin of the Sexual Perversions. SE 17: 175
(1926*d* [1925]) *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (Chapters 5 & 6). SE 20
(1924*e*) The Loss of Reality in Neurosis and Psychosis. SE 19: 183
(1924*b* [1923]) Neurosis and Psychosis. SE 19:149
(1894*a*) The Neuro-Psychoses of Defence (Section II). SE 3: 43
(1895*c* [1894]) Obsessions and Phobias: Their Psychological Mechanism and their Aetiology. SE 3: 71
(1950*a*) Draft K: The Neuroses of Defence (A Christmas Fairy Tale) (Extracts from the Fliess Papers). SE 1: 220
(1896*b*) Some Further Remarks on the Neuro-Psychoses of Defence (Section II). SE 3: 159
(1907*b*) Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices. SE 9: 117
(1908*b*) Character and Anal Erotism. SE 9:169
The Disposition to Obsessional Neurosis (1913*i*). SE 12:313
(1916*b*) A Mythological Parallel to a Visual Obsession. SE 14: 337
(1916*d*) Some Character-Types Met With in Psycho-Analytic Work. SE 14: 310

(1917c) On Transformations of Instinct as Exemplified in Anal Erotism. SE 17: 127

LACAN, Jacques:

(1979 [1953]) The Neurotic's Individual Myth. *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 48 (3), 405-25

There are numerous discussions of obsessional neurosis throughout Lacan's **SEMINARS**. See especially the Seminars and sessions marked below:

Seminar 1: 7 July 1954;

Seminar 2: 11 May 1955 and 8 June 1955;

Seminar 3: 8 February, 21 March, 31 May, 20 June 1956;

Seminar 4: 28 November, 19 December 1956 & 26 June 1957;

Seminar 5: 7, 14, 21 May, 4, 11, 18, 25 June, & 2 July 1958;

Seminar 6: 26 November 1958, 21 January, 18 March, 8, 15, 22 April, 10, 17 June 1959

Seminar 7: 9 December 1959

Seminar 8: 15 March, 19, 26 April, 14 June 1961

Seminar 10: 28 November, 19 December 1962, 16 January, 12, 19 26, June, 3 July 1963,

Seminar 16: 21 May, 18 June 1969

Seminar 18: 9, 16 June 1971

Seminar 22: 18 February 1975

Further Reading

APARICIO, S. (2009) Le sujet obsessionnel et le maître inconscient. In *La part de l'inconscient dans la Clinique*. Revue Collèges Clinique psychanalytique Champ Lacanien 8: 47

LEADER, D. (1993) Some Notes on Obsessional Neurosis. *J CFAR* 2

LECLAIRE, S. (1980) Jerome, or Death in the Life of the Obsessional; and Philo, or the Obsessional and his Desire. In Ed. & trans., S. Schneiderman *Returning to Freud: Clinical Psychoanalysis in the School of Lacan*. New Haven, Yale University Press.

JONES, E. (1918 [1913]) Hate and Anal Erotism in the Obsessional Neuroses. *Papers on Psycho-Analysis*. 2nd ed. London, Ballière, Tindall and Cox, 540-48

NOBUS, D. (2008) Phallus Dei, or the Sexual Religion of the Obsessional Fantasy, *Analysis* 14

SOLER, C. (1996). Hysteria and Obsession. In R. Feldstein, B. Fink, & M. Jaanus (Eds). *Reading Seminars I & II: Lacan's Return to Freud*. Albany, State University of New York Press

VERHAEGHE, P. (2004). *On Being Normal and Other Disorders*. Trans. Sigi Jottkandt. New York, Other Press

THE LONDON SOCIETY OF THE NEW LACANIAN SCHOOL (2009). *Psychoanalytical Notebooks, Obsessional Neurosis* 18