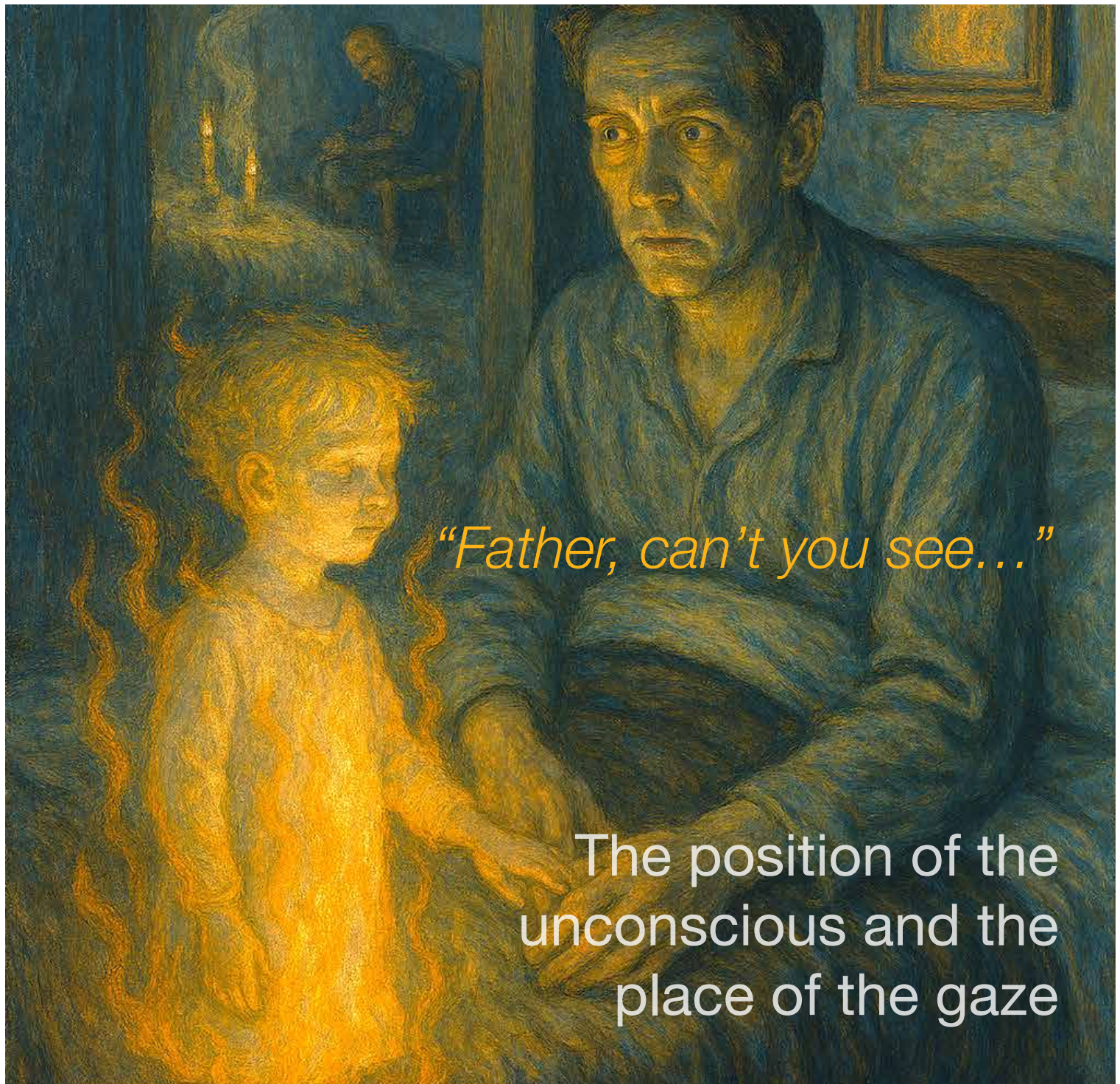


The Seminar for Contemporary Studies
of Freud and Lacan
Sydney Symposium II

November 29th 2025, 9:00am - 2:45pm



Argument

This year, we commenced a two-year course entitled The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis and the Real (*Réel*) Unconscious, grounded in a close reading of Lacan's Seminar XI. In Chapter VI of the Seminar, Lacan refers to a split in the subject:

'Last time, I wanted to point out where the split in the subject lay. This split, after awakening, persists - between the return to the real, the representation of the world that has at last fallen back on its feet, arms raised, *what a terrible thing, what has happened, how horrible, how stupid, what an idiot he was to fall asleep* — and the consciousness re-weaving itself, which knows it is living through all this as through a nightmare, but which, all the same, keeps a grip on itself, *it is I who am living through all this, I have no need to pinch myself to know that I am not dreaming*. The fact remains that this split is still there only as representing the more profound split, which is situated between that which refers to the subject in the machinery of the dream, the image of the approaching child, his face full of reproach and, on the other hand, that which causes it and into which he sinks, the invocation, the voice of the child, the solicitation of the gaze — *Father can't you see...*'

Seminar XI, ed. J.-A. Miller, p.70

Lacan reformulates the split in the subject in an unexpected way. While he clearly recognizes that the child in the dream appears as speaking, he takes this observation further by grounding the child's appeal in the father's gaze. What emerges as most striking here is the *profound split*—between what, precisely? Between the subject and the *object a*, mediated by the gaze.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP)
NSW Branch, 761 Darling Street, Rozelle 2039

or by Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84870096988?pwd=TjbbAGoFZ6Cz5ZphMI2SXgZxw9cWbh.1>

8.50 **In-person registration / Zoom open room**

9.00 **Symposium opening and argument: The Place of the Gaze | *Rostik Bershadsky***

In *Seminar XI*, Lacan reformulates the split in the subject in an unexpected way. While he clearly acknowledges that the child in the dream “The burning child” appears as speaking, he takes this observation further by grounding the child’s appeal in the father’s gaze. What emerges as most striking here is the profound split—between what, precisely? Between the subject and the object *a*, mediated by the gaze. But how are we to locate its place as something that might accommodate object *a* in an insurmountably invasive way? Perhaps the lines of separation—via the splits Lacan presents in relation to the unconscious, the organ of the eye, and the screen of vision—offer an initial lead into the domain of the *invisible* where gaze nevertheless remains in full effect.

Rostik Bershadsky, PhD, is a Lacanian psychoanalyst, forensic clinician and criminologist. He is a registered practicing analyst of the ACP and the member the School and the Forum of Melbourne of the International of Forums of the Lacanian Field. He is the co-convenor of the Seminar for Contemporary Studies of Freud and Lacan.

9.15 **On the position of the unconscious | *Leonardo S. Rodríguez***

The paper examines some of the principal links between *Seminar XI* and ‘Position of the Unconscious’ (in *Écrits*), rewritten at the time of *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* and covering a good part of its theses. It discusses in particular the conceptual position of the unconscious in psychoanalysis and the places occupied by the objects that (re)present the cause of desire.

Leonardo S. Rodríguez, PhD, is a psychoanalyst and a founding member of the Australian Centre for Psychoanalysis, of the Forum of Melbourne and of the International School of Psychoanalysis of the Forums of the Lacanian Field. He has published Psychoanalysis with Children (London and New York, Free Association Books, 1999) and numerous book chapters and articles in different languages.

9.45 **Discussion**

10.00 **Key note speaker | *Antonio Quinet***

The delusion of being observed and the scopic society



We live in a scopic society where the gaze is prevalent. It is the conjunction of the "society of the spectacle" (Guy Debord) and the disciplinary society (Michel Foucault). It induces a widespread paranoia similar to what can be found in observational delirium in psychosis.

- **Antonio Quinet**

Antonio Quinet, MD, PhD, is a psychoanalyst, psychiatrist, and playwright. He is a Member of the School of Psychoanalysis of the Forums of the Lacanian Field, and Professor of the Graduate Program in Psychoanalysis, Health and Society (Universidade Veiga de Almeida, Rio de Janeiro), where he has developed the research project 'Theatre and Psychoanalysis'. He is director-founder of the Unconscious on Stage Company, and author of ten books (two translated into French and one into Spanish) as well as numerous articles published in Brazil and abroad. Dr Quinet's plays have been staged in major Brazilian capitals as well as London, Rome, and Paris.

11.00 **Discussion**

11.30 **Lunch break**

12.30 **Listening to the Real | *Danny Bryant***

In The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, Lacan discusses the dream of the burning child, which was recounted by Freud in The Interpretation of Dreams. He highlights the solicitation of the father's gaze via the child's invocation. Was this traumatic missed encounter with the real, which continues to plague the father, a lapsus of listening or a lapsus of seeing? And how is this to be understood in relation to what Lacan says later when he says that "in the field of the unconscious the ears are the only orifice that cannot be closed"? This paper aims to build on some work presented earlier this year on listening.

Danny Bryant is a registered practicing analyst and member of the ACP and a member of the Forum of Melbourne. He is the convenor of the Seminar on the Formation of the Psychoanalyst and is a participant in the working group on Desire in the works of Jacques Lacan. He works as an analyst and clinical psychologist in private practice.

13.00 **What can't the Other see and discourage seeing? | *Ofelia Brozky***

The question posed by a child soliciting his father's gaze invites us to think not only of the distinction between the visible and the invisible, but also, on how the gaze enables the subject to occupy a place in the desire of the Other, thus its inscription in the symbolic order. This paper aims to explore: *the function of the gaze pointing at the real; *the dynamics constellated when an omnipresent/omnivouyer Other blinds the subject, directing its look into the opacity of jouissance, and *society's appeal to the gaze, in the discontents of our times, to veil castration.

Ofelia Brozky is a registered psychoanalyst in private practice in Sydney, a member of the Australian Centre for Psychoanalysis, the Forum of Melbourne and the International Forums of the Lacanian Field. She is the Co-convenor of the Sydney Seminar of Contemporary studies in Freud and Lacan.

13.30 **Addicted to the gaze: presidential jouissance and the Polis | *Simon Westcott***

In late August, US President Trump held a livestreamed cabinet meeting; at three hours, 17 minutes, it was his longest ever televised appearance, and largely monologic. Eventually, the horizontal collective of the US government also reflected on the superlative achievements of their commander-in-chief.

This paper asks three rhetorical questions (understanding, of course, that Trump is not a clinical subject): What can we say about the US President's addiction to the gaze as petit object *a*, a phantasmagorical inversion, perhaps, of the 'burning child's' 'Father, can't you see'. How does it extend the Debordian concept of the Society of the Spectacle and the supremacy of the scopic in our digital age? And what are the current implications for Law and Speech (both of which, in the US political realm, are being increasingly bent to the President's desire), in their relation to Seminar XI's ethics of 'absolute difference'?

Simon Westcott is a Candidate Practising Analyst working with patients in Castlemaine and Melbourne and online in Hong Kong. He was born in the UK, and educated at Oxford, Indiana, Sussex and Monash Universities. He is currently the plus one for a cartel on Sexuality, and is interested in ethical and practical questions of psychoanalysis in extension.

14.00 **Final Discussion**

14.45 **End**