

WITH DESIRE

The Canadian Network for Psychoanalysis and Culture
Symposium Call For Papers

Saturday May 13, 2017

Jackman Humanities Institute (Room 100A)

University of Toronto

Toronto, Canada

What is the calamitous effect of achieving what we desire? What happens in the aftermath of actually getting what we 'want'? Are we ever satisfied? Is satisfaction what we are after? Or is it the pursuit that we desire? In the process of achieving satisfaction, what are we obliterating? Maybe we don't know what we want, and is that so... terrible? Or is it that we can't get it, and if we do we don't want it anymore. Why is there so much pain in not having... not filling... not naming... dreading?

The animating question of psychoanalysis, and the question that Freud was never able to answer adequately was a question of desire, feminine desire in particular, articulated in the question "What does a woman want?" Notwithstanding Freud's complicated relationship to women and gender in general, Freud's question stages the mysteries of desire - how it confounds us conceptually and perpetually confuses us at a personal level. Even when we think we know what we want, we are often confronted with knowledge that seems to suggest otherwise. Over and over again, Freud was confronted by desire and its discontents in his consulting room. The invention of the talking cure was as a treatment for the impasses and conflicts of desire. And today therapists and analysts are confronted by the same impasses: "I know things aren't working out, maybe it's my relationship, my sex life, my body, my career. But the problem is that if I wasn't doing this, what would I be doing? *What do I really want?*"

Psychoanalysis, as a practice and theory, aims to make a space to think about the conflicts of ego as it negotiates a social world that is hostile and frightened of the pressures of the drives and their mobilizing fantasies. But culture and social reality are also arguably the stabilized resolutions and compromises of desire.

The couch is one way out for desire, one path our desires are complexly expressed or discharged. Desire also finds other routes for expression - politics, art, love, invention. This conference thus asks:

What do we make of desire? What animates it? What makes us express it? Does desire work for or against itself, or both? Do we desire together? Apart? In parts?

With parts?

What do we do with our desire? Do we write it? Do we sing it? Do we put it on stage? On film? On the wall? In bed? On the ground? In the streets? In Standing Rock? Washington, DC? At the club? On the screen?

How do we take responsibility for our desire and its effects on others, ourselves, on culture and the socio-political context? The difficulty of these questions may not lie so much in desire but love, which is to say how desire attaches itself to others. As such we might ask, what are the ethical challenges of desire as it plays out in relations of love of all kinds?

Symposium Format and Information:

- One day of concurrent panels. Speakers are asked to write 10 minute papers in response to our provocation on a topic of their choice.
- Registration is required for speakers and attendees: \$75 for waged and \$40 for underemployed and students.
- Registration includes lunch and a reception at the end of the day.

Submission Details:

We welcome submissions from seasoned academics, graduate students and clinicians. Please submit a 200 word abstract, accompanied by a short bio of 100 words to cnpc.rcpc@gmail.com **Submission Deadline:** January 31, 2017