

[“Ordinary Psychosis” Note #1: Paris English Seminar : 26th March 2008 : Thomas Svolos](#) : See [here](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11948) <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11948>

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Texts on Ordinary Psychosis see [here](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=649) <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=649>

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PARIS ENGLISH SEMINAR
July 7-12, 2008

Paris English Seminar : “Ordinary Psychosis”

Note #1

At the time of the invention of psychoanalysis, Freud and the first generations of psychoanalysts adopted diagnoses from psychiatric practice into their work. These psychiatric diagnoses were reformulated by Jacques Lacan into concepts of psychic structure that psychoanalysts of the Lacanian orientation have continued to use in their work, in contrast to the work of many other psychoanalysts, who have abandoned the psychoanalytic concepts and adopted the terms of the *DSM* in their clinical work, or who have abandoned the notion of structure or diagnosis altogether.

In recent years, however, Lacanian analysts have noted that there are an increasing number of subjects who present for analysis for whom the psychoanalytic concepts no longer seemed as useful. There were people presenting for analysis with problems of addictions, or eating disorders, and other unusual types of symptoms difficult to classify or categorize within the usual framework of neurosis or psychosis. In a series of meetings held in Angers, Arcachon, and Antibes, the psychoanalysts of the École de la Cause freudienne (School of the Freudian Cause) reviewed many of these cases and discussed and debated their conceptualization. Out of those meetings, in 1998, Jacques-Alain Miller created the concept of “Ordinary Psychosis” as a way for analysts to think about many of these cases. For the last ten years, there has been significant debate in the Lacanian orientation about this concept and how we might use it in clinical work. We

have also explored how this change in presentation of the psyche may be linked to changes in the forms of social bonds we see today, as evidenced in social structure and also in the cultural productions of today's world.

Of course, other mental health clinicians have confronted the same situation. The reaction in other realms of the mental health field has been the creation of a whole new set of so-called diagnoses. For every new problem, a new diagnosis: eating disorders, addictions, cutting, pathological gambling, attention deficit disorder, and so forth—the single-symptom diagnoses. But, we have also seen a dramatic expansion in the diagnosis of the classic psychiatric diagnosis of manic-depression, or bipolar disorder, and even autism, sparking significant controversy about the degradation of psychiatric diagnoses and a very heterogeneous use of diagnoses in mental health that leads to significant confusion, especially with regard to the use of medications in such cases. In the clinical field, the contrast between these responses and that of Ordinary Psychosis is striking.

These are the issues that will be taken up in an extraordinary weeklong Seminar on “Ordinary Psychosis.” We will examine the creation of this concept, its use in clinical work, and we will also debate its relevance in our cultural and daily life.

Thomas Svolos

Some Program Information

The Seminar will be held July 7-12, 2008, in Paris, France. The Seminar is cosponsored by the University of Paris VIII and the Institute of the Freudian Field. The Seminar will be conducted in English and is open to anyone from any country interested in attending.

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Related texts

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