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## Fake interviews on Lacan: “Matt Wolf” Affair

During the evening of February 2, 2020, as I was laboring over a text, I receive an email directed to my private psychoanalytic practice account with the following missive:

*Dear Dr. Fernando,*

*Let me introduce myself*

*I am Matt Wolf, Drama and literature critic at the Guardian U.K. We are celebrating this month Introducing Lacan: Key Concepts.*

*May I ask you for an online interview?*

*I would be grateful if you accept my invitation.*

*Thanks in advance.*

Already suspicious of the grammar, the lack of grace and formal style, on the part of no less an entity than the Drama and Literature Critic at the Guardian, I respond:

*Greetings Mr. Wolf:*

*Yes, I would be interested in this.*

“Matt Wolf” responds swiftly with the following:

*Hi Fernando (if I may),*

*Thanks for accepting my invitation. Here is the first set of questions*

*1- What generated your interest in psychoanalysis and Lacan in particular?*

2- Why does Lacan name the analyst “a subject supposedly knows”?

Please feel free to comment. We will edit all your comments.

Thanks in advance..

Again, I am witness to an appalling lack of grace and formality. Perhaps it is my baroque, South American expectations, but I would hope for more finesse from a Brit. A doubt is born, and I look up this “Matt Wolf” on the Guardian UK website, only to find the article by Chris Elliot that Sergio Benvenuto mentions in his introduction to this assemblage of ripostes.

I consider what “he” is asking for. While I could give him a detailed answer that might seemingly work for a publication (as if we needed yet *another* introductory exposition on what Lacan was referring to with his idea of “a subject supposed to know”!), as an analyst, I assume he is asking for something else, a demonstration, let’s say. So, I oblige, with the following response:

*The answer is 47*

Why this reply? In the moment I was reaching for something. In the now classic, comic science fiction novel *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, a group of hyper-intelligent pan-dimensional beings demand to learn the Answer to the Ultimate Question of Life, The Universe, and Everything from a supercomputer named Deep Thought, that was specifically built for this purpose. It takes Deep Thought 7.5 million years to compute and check the answer, which turns out to be 42. The computer also points out that the answer seems meaningless because the beings who instructed it never actually knew what the question was.

At the end of the last novel in the same series, *The Restaurant at the End of the Universe*, one of the characters, Arthur Dent, attempts to discover The Ultimate Question by pulling random letters from a bag, but only gets the sentence “What do you get if you multiply six by nine?”

“Six by nine. Forty two.”

“That’s it. That’s all there is.”

“I always thought something was fundamentally wrong with the universe.”

I won’t bore you with an insipid commentary on the lack-in-being hinted at by this last phrase. I think we get it.

However, I didn’t write 42 to our friend “Matt Wolf”. I replied with 47. I was off by 5. Why? That part I keep for myself.

As for “Matt Wolf”, needless to say, I never heard from “him” again. I just hope he got what he was asking for.

## **Bio:**

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