



Seminar Year II, Spring 2019

Object Relations

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Our aim in this seminar is to introduce you to the origins of a psychoanalytic approach emphasizing the phenomena of object relations, as articulated in the work of six of its prime originators: Melanie Klein, Joan Riviere, Michael Balint, Donald Winnicott, W.R.D. Fairbairn, and John Bowlby. We will show how this approach to early childhood development and personality organization began in the 1920's and 1930's, how its creators influenced each other, and how major changes ensued over the next forty years. We intend to study the lives and work of these thinkers, and in particular to demonstrate how their clinical and naturalistic observations of young children led them to propose novel theories of mental structure. A central theme will be the various theorists' views of the relationship between internal and external reality. At the conclusion of the course we expect students to assess these theories critically, and to use them more clearly and effectively in clinical work with patients.

Seminar dates: 4-11-19, 4-18-19, 4-25-19, 5-2-19, 5-9-19, 5-16-19, 2-23-19, 5-30-19.

Week 1

Klein, M. (1927). The psychological principles of infant analysis. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 8, 25-37. [PEP Web Link](#)

Klein, M. (1928). Early stages of the Oedipus conflict. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 9, 167-180. [PEP Web Link](#)

Supplemental reading: Ogden, T. (2001). A new reading of the origins of object-relations theory. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(4), 767-782. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning objective: Students will be able to describe the novel play techniques Melanie Klein developed for the psychoanalytic treatment of very young children, and the two most important and surprising of her findings about the onset and content of their anxieties.

Week 2

Klein, M. (1929). Personification in the play of children. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 10, 193-204. [PEP Web Link](#)

Klein, M. (1929). Infantile anxiety-situations reflected in a work of art and in the creative impulse. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 10, 436-443. [PEP Web Link](#)

Supplemental reading: Klein, M. (1930). The importance of symbol-formation in the development of the ego. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 11, 24-39. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning objective: Students will be able to describe two of Mrs. Klein's observations of children's play, daydreams, and spontaneous stories, in which their wishes and fears are personified as 'objects'.

Week 3

Riviere, J. (1936). On the genesis of psychological conflict in earliest infancy. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 17, 395-422. [PEP Web Link](#)

Riviere, J. (1952). The unconscious phantasy of an inner world reflected in examples from English literature. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 33, 160-172. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning objective: Students will be able to explain two key, controversial aspects of Klein's theory, as they were presented in Riviere's 1936 lecture to Viennese followers of Anna Freud.

Week 4

Balint, M. (1949). Early developmental states of the ego. Primary object love. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 30, 265-273. [PEP Web Link](#)

Balint, A. (1949). Love for the mother and mother-love. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 30, 251-259. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning objective: From the reports of Michael Balint, a contemporary participant and observer of the psychoanalytic scene in the 1930's, students will be able to identify and discuss a central difference of opinion regarding the typical mental contents of infants and very young children.

Week 5

Winnicott, D.W. (1935). The manic defense. In D.W. Winnicott (1975), *Through paediatrics to psycho-analysis* (Ch. XI, pp. 129-144). London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis. [PEP Web Link](#)

Winnicott, D.W. (1945). Primitive emotional development. In D.W. Winnicott (1975), *Through paediatrics to psycho-analysis* (Ch. XII, pp. 145-156). London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis. [PEP Web Link](#)

Supplemental reading: Ogden, T.H. (2001). Reading Winnicott. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 70(2), 299-323. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: Students will be able to describe how Donald Winnicott, a practicing pediatrician as well as psychoanalyst, initially made use of Melanie Klein's work on early child development suggesting an 'inner world' of objects.

Week 6

Winnicott, D.W. (1948). Paediatrics and psychiatry. In D.W. Winnicott (1975), *Through paediatrics to psycho-analysis* (Ch. XIII, pp. 157-173). London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis. [PEP Web Link](#)

Winnicott, D.W. (1951) Transitional objects and transitional phenomena. In D.W. Winnicott (1975), *Through paediatrics to psycho-analysis* (Ch. XVIII, pp. 229-242). London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis. [PEP Web Link](#)

Supplemental reading: Winnicott, D.W. (1954). Metapsychological and clinical aspects of regression within the psycho-analytical set-up. In D.W. Winnicott (1975), *Through paediatrics to psycho-analysis* (Ch. XXII, pp. 278-294). London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning objective: Students will be able to outline one of Winnicott's most original contributions to psychoanalysis, the idea of transitional objects and transitional phenomena—neither inner reality nor outer reality, but “a whole intermediate territory between ‘inner psychic reality’ and ‘the external world as perceived by two persons in common’...”

Week 7

Fairbairn, W.R.D. (1949). Steps in the development of an object-relations theory of the personality. In Fairbairn, W.D. (1952), *Psychoanalytic studies of the personality* (Ch. VI, pp. 152-161). London: Tavistock Publications Limited. [PEP Web Link](#)

Ogden, T.H. (2010). Why read Fairbairn? *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 91(1), 101-118. [PEP Web Link](#)

Supplemental reading: M.N. Eagle (2017). Inner conflict in Fairbairn's theory of endopsychic structure. In C. Christian, M.N. Eagle, and D.L. Wolitsky (Eds.), *Psychoanalytic perspectives on conflict*. New York: Routledge. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]

Learning objective: Students will be able to describe and critically evaluate W.R.D. Fairbairn's account of the clinical observations and theoretical reasoning which led him to make major revisions to Freud's theory of motivation and psychic structure, which he then called an 'object relations theory of personality'.

Week 8

Bowlby, J. (1958). The nature of the child's tie to his mother. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 39, 350-373. [PEP Web Link](#)

Bowlby, J. (1960). Separation anxiety. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 41, 89-113. [PEP Web Link](#)

Supplemental reading: Bowlby, J., Figlio, K., and Young, R.M. (1986). An interview with John Bowlby on the origins and reception of his work. *Free Associations*, 1(6), 36-64. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning objective: Students will be able to describe the direct observations of children and the theoretical arguments marshalled by John Bowlby in his critical review of previous psychoanalytic views regarding the nature of early attachment to mother and the consequences of disruption of that attachment.