The Clinical Relevance of Developmental Theory

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This seminar will survey psychological development from infancy to adolescence from a psychoanalytic perspective. We will begin with an overview of psychoanalytic theories of development from a contemporary vantage point. We will explore Freud’s drive theory and principles of mental functioning and consider multiple viewpoints, including object relations, self-object differentiation, attachment, separation-individuation, and intersubjectivity. We will consider how unresolved or incomplete negotiations of developmental tasks and/or stages may manifest in the course of adult treatment.

Week 1 - September 19: Introduction to Developmental Theory

Reading

Optional Reading

Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to describe three core elements of a contemporary developmental perspective that can be used in the analysis of the various psychoanalytic developmental theories.

Week 2 - September 26: Introduction to Freud’s Model of the Mind

Reading
1. Freud, S. (1911). Formulations of the two principles of mental functioning. *SE, XII* (pp. 213-226). [PEP Web Link]

Optional Reading
Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to outline Freud’s theory of psychosexual stages and how these reflect Freud’s thinking about fundamental human motivations.

Week 3 - October 3: No Such Thing as a Baby
Reading

Optional Reading

Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to describe how Winnicott theorized the role of maternal care in the development of the mind of the infant and articulate Klein alternate ideas.

Week 4 - October 10: The Infant’s Discovery of Self and Object
Reading

Optional Reading

Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to describe the impact of the infant-mother relationship on affect regulation and the organization of the self.

Week 5 - October 24: The Rooting of Attachment in the Body
Reading
Optional Reading

Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to describe attachment theory, the types of attachments that can exist in the dyad, and how these attachments are manifest in the psychic structure of the mind.

**Week 6 - October 31: Separation/Individuation**

Reading
2. Lyons-Ruth, K. (1991). Rapprochement or approachment: Mahler’s theory reconsidered from the vantage point of recent research on early attachment relationships. *Psychoanal. Psychology, 8*(1), 1-23. [PEP Web Link](https://www.psychoanalytic.org/web/online-resources/bibliography/)

Optional Reading

Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to compare and contrast Mahler’s theory of separation/individuation with Lyons-Ruth’s research on attachment and individuation.

**Week 7 - November 7: The Oedipal Complex**

Reading

Optional Reading

Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to outline Loewald’s understanding of the Oedipus Complex and contrast it to Balsam’s.

**Week 8 - November 14: Latency**

Reading

Optional Reading
Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to define the tasks of latency and articulate the role of fantasy in middle childhood.

Week 9 - November 21: Post-Oedipal Transformations
Reading

Optional Reading

Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to list three characteristics of post-oedipal development and give examples of where they find these struggles in their work with patients.

Week 10 - December 5: Adolescent Mourning
Reading

Optional Reading

Learning Objective
At the conclusion of this session students will be able to define three tasks of adolescence and in what ways adolescent development offers a reworking of childhood conflicts.