

**THE BOSTON PSYCHOANALYTIC SOCIETY AND INSTITUTE, INC.**

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**Developmental Theory in the 21st Century: How it Challenges Basic Psychoanalytic  
Concepts and Changes How We Work with Analysands of All Ages**

**Spring 2017**

**Instructor: Rona Knight, Ph.D.**

**Dates: Mondays, March 20, 27; April 3, 10, 24; May 1, 15, 22**      **Time: 7:30 – 9:00 pm**

**Course Description:**

This seminar will focus on a Nonlinear Dynamic Systems Theory of Development. Candidates will read and discuss how this current theory is used to describe development. Both theoretical and research papers demonstrating this theory will be read and critically analyzed. Lastly, how this theory can be applied to psychoanalytic work with patients will be demonstrated by a case presentation, analyzing cases in the literature, and the candidates discussing their own work with patients.

**Week 1: March 20, 2017**

**Developmental Psychology's Conceptualization of Nonlinear Dynamic Systems Theory:** 1) The contribution Thelen and Smith's research made to our understanding of a nonlinear dynamic systems theory of development; 2) the expansion of this theory over the last 20 years.

**Learning Objective:** At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to describe the essential elements of dynamic systems theory

1. Thelen, E., & Smith, L.B. (1994). *A Dynamic Systems Approach to the Development of Cognition and Action*. Cambridge: MIT Press. Introduction, pp. xiii-xxiii; Chapter 3, pp. 45-69. [Available upon [Request from the Library](#)]

Suggested reading not required:

1. Shoner, G. (2009) Development as change of system dynamics: stability, instability, and emergence. In *Toward a Unified Theory of Development*, Eds. Spencer, J.; Thomas, M.; McClelland, J. Oxford Press: London. Chapter 2. [Available upon [Request from the Library](#)]

2. Corbetta, D. (2009) Brain, body, and mind: lessons from infant motor development. In *Toward a Unified Theory of Development*, Eds. Spencer, J.; Thomas, M.; McClelland, J. Oxford Press: London. Chapter 3. [Available upon [Request from the Library](#)]
3. Smith, L. (2009) Dynamic systems, sensorimotor processes, and the origins of stability and flexibility. . In *Toward a Unified Theory of Development*, Eds. Spencer, J.; Thomas, M.; McClelland, J. Oxford Press: London. Chapter 4. [Available upon [Request from the Library](#)]

## **Week 2: March 27, 2017**

### **Psychoanalytic Understanding of Development Through the Lens of Nonlinear Dynamic Systems Theory I**

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will identify an analytic understanding of dynamic systems theory to explain development

1. Mayes, L.C. (2001). The twin poles of order and chaos: development as a dynamic, self-ordering system. *Psychoanal. St. Child*, 56:137-170. [PEP Web Link](#)
2. Tyson, P. (2002). The challenges of psychoanalytic developmental theory. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 50:19–52. [PEP Web Link](#)

Suggested reading not required:

1. Mayes, L.C. (1999). Clocks, engines, and quarks — love, dreams, and genes: what makes development happen? *Psychoanal. St. Child*, 54:169-192. [PEP Web Link](#)

## **Week 3: April 3, 2017**

### **Psychoanalytic Understanding of Development Through the Lens of Nonlinear Dynamic Systems Theory II**

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to differentiate and compare the nuances of different analytic understandings of dynamic systems theory.

1. Galatzer-Levy, R.M. (2004). Chaotic possibilities: toward a new model of development. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 85:419-441. [PEP Web Link](#)
2. Abrams, S. (2008). “Transformation: identifying a specific mode of change— descriptive and conceptual considerations.” In: *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 64:312-320. [PEP Web Link](#)
1. Knight, R. (2014). A hundred years of latency: from Freudian psychosexual theory to dynamic systems nonlinear development in middle childhood. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 62:203-235, read pp. 225-228. [Available upon [Request from the Library](#)]

## **Week 4: April 10, 2017**

## **Psychoanalytic Research in Nonlinear Dynamic Systems Theory**

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to describe research methods and results in dynamic systems research in development.

1. Knight, R. (2005). The process of attachment and autonomy in latency: a longitudinal study of ten children. *Psychoanal. St. Child*, 60:178-210. [PEP Web Link](#)
2. Knight, R. (2011). Fragmentation, fluidity, and transformation: nonlinear development in middle childhood. *Psychoanal. St. Child*, 65:19-47. [PEP Web Link](#)

### **Week 5: April 24, 2017**

#### **Comparing Psycho-Sexual Developmental Theory and Mother-Infant Based Theories with Dynamic Systems Theory: The genetic fallacy, the concept of regression, and how we view developmental phases in light of a new developmental theory.**

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to critique classical developmental concepts using dynamic systems theory.

1. Cohler, B.J. (1989). A prospective constructionist view of development. *Ann. Psychoanal.*, 17:324-342. [PEP Web Link](#)
2. Abrams, S. (1999). How child and adult analysis inform and misinform one another. *Annual of Psychoanal.*, 26:3-20. [PEP Web Link](#)

Suggested reading not required:

1. Abrams, S. (1977). The genetic point of view: antecedents and transformations. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 25:417-425. [PEP Web Link](#)
2. Spence, D. (1982) *Narrative Truth and Historical Truth*. Norton: New York
3. Bornstein, B. (1935). Phobia in a two-and-a-half year old child. *Psychoanal Q.*, 4:93-119. [PEP Web Link](#)
4. Galatzer-Levy, R.M. (2014). A nonlinear lens on Berta Bornstein's "Frankie". *Psychoanal. St. Child*, 68:177-190. [Available upon [Request from the Library](#)]

### **Week 6: May 1, 2017**

#### **How Nonlinear Dynamic Systems Theory Enhances the Way We Think About and Work with Our Patients.**

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to discuss the impact that dynamic systems theory has on the way we think about and practice psychoanalysis.

2. Harrison, A.M. (2013). The sandwich model: the ‘music and dance’ of therapeutic action. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 95:313-340. [Available upon [Request from the Library](#)]
3. Harrison, A.M., Tronick, E.Z. (2007). Contributions to understanding therapeutic change: now we have a playground. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 55:853-874. [PEP Web Link](#)

### **Week 7: May 15, 2017**

#### **Case Presentation**

Invited Presenter: Morris Stambler

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to describe how dynamic systems theory is used in the treatment of patients.

### **Week 8: May 22, 2017**

#### **Thinking About the Way We Work with Our Patients: Case examples from the candidates.**

1. Lament, C. (2011). Transformational processes and therapeutic action: what David knew. *Psychoanal. St. Child*, 65:5-18. [PEP Web Link](#)
2. Knight, R. (2009) Discussion of Claudia Lament’s paper: what David knew. Beata Rank Lecture, The Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute. [Available upon [Request from the Library](#)]