

The New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis

#F102 - Psychoanalytic Theory of Early Development

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course emphasizes the psychoanalytic understanding of the structure and psychic development of the mind of the infant and young child. We will begin with an introduction to the traditional conceptualization of the developing child, using as a point of departure Freud, Anna Freud, and Spitz. We will proceed with an exploration of Klein's and Winnicott's ideas followed by Margaret Mahler's Symbiosis and Separation-Individuation Process. The contributions of Bowlby's attachment theory will provide the background to address the infant and mother dyad and the theoretical and clinical practices that have evolved from it. We will address the input of Erikson and Piaget on psychoanalytical developmental theory and will touch upon some infant and child research, as exemplified by the work of Beebe, Stern, and Fonagy.

At the conclusion of the course candidates should have developed a framework in which to conceptualize the trajectory of infant and early child development.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:

Wilda Mesias, PhD is a psychologist and a psychoanalyst practicing in Morris County, NJ. Her practice consists of infants, children, adolescents, adults and couples. Dr. Mesias obtained a PhD in Clinical Psychology from Long Island University in 1995 and graduated as a psychoanalyst from The New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis (NJI) in 1996. She also holds an MA in Forensic Psychology from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice and a certificate in group analytic psychotherapy from the Institute of Group Analysis, London, UK in conjunction with the School of Psychotherapy at St. Vincent's University Hospital in Dublin, Ireland. Dr. Mesias is the Chair of the Training Board at NJI and a member of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Board. She also is the editor of *Viewpoints in Psychoanalysis*, an NJI publication. In addition, Dr. Mesias is a faculty member and control/supervisor at NJI and at the Center for Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis of New Jersey (CPPNJ). Dr. Mesias is fluent in Spanish and proficient in Italian and French. Her interests include transference and countertransference in character disorders, developmental psychoanalytic theory, Freudian-Lacanian theory and psychoanalysis and the arts.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Examine and recognize classical psychoanalytic contributions to infant and child development.
- 2) To acquire a working understanding of psychosexual stages, developmental lines, intra-psychic conflict, defense, compromise formation, separation-individuation, object relations, gender and gender fluidity in the context of development, and attachment styles.
- 3) To explore the contributions of infant and child research to the field of psychoanalysis, with particular focus on empathic attunement, validation, and recognition.
- 4) To demonstrate and integrate how developmental issues manifest in the treatment of children and adults.

Target audience: Suitable for social workers, licensed professional counselors and other mental health professionals

