

Psychoanalysis and Ecology at the Edge of Chaos: Complexity Theory, Deleuze,Guattari and Psychoanalysis for a Climate in Crisis

By Joseph Dodds

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Psychoanalysis and Ecology at the Edge of Chaos: Complexity Theory, Deleuze,Guattari and Psychoanalysis for a Climate in Crisis By Joseph Dodds

This book argues that psychoanalysis has a unique role to play in the climate change debate through its placing emphasis on the unconscious dimensions of our mental and social lives. Exploring contributions from Freudian, Kleinian, Object Relations, Self Psychology, Jungian, and Lacanian traditions, the book discusses how psychoanalysis can help to unmask the anxieties, deficits, conflicts, phantasies and defences crucial in understanding the human dimension of the ecological crisis.

Yet despite being essential to studying environmentalism and its discontents, psychoanalysis still remains largely a 'psychology without ecology.' The philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, combined with new developments in the sciences of complexity, help us to build upon the best of these perspectives, providing a framework able to integrate Guattari's 'three ecologies' of mind, nature and society. This book thus constitutes a timely attempt to contribute towards a critical dialogue between psychoanalysis and ecology.

Further topics of discussion include:

- ecopsychology and the greening of psychotherapy
- our ambivalent relationship to nature and the non-human
- complexity theory in psychoanalysis and ecology
- defence mechanisms against eco-anxiety and eco-grief
- Deleuze|Guattari and the three ecologies
- becoming-animal in horror and eco-apocalypse in science fiction films
- nonlinear ecopsychoanalysis.

In our era of anxiety, denial, paranoia, apathy, guilt, hope, and despair in the face of climate change, this book offers a fresh and insightful psychoanalytic perspective on the ecological crisis. As such this book will be of great interest to all those in the fields of psychoanalysis, psychology, philosophy, and ecology, as well as all who are concerned with the global environmental challenges affecting

our planet's future.

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Psychoanalysis and Ecology at the Edge of Chaos: Complexity Theory, Deleuze,Guattari and Psychoanalysis for a Climate in Crisis By Joseph Dodds Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1246149 in Books
- Published on: 2011-09-15
- Released on: 2011-07-25
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1

- Dimensions: 9.21" h x .58" w x 6.14" l, .80 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 256 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"A brilliant integration of psychoanalytic theory with modern mathematics to explain the greatest challenge mankind has ever faced: its capacity to destroy the environment that sustains it. I cannot imagine psychoanalytic ideas to have a better application. The integration is truly original and scholarly, and provides an excellent background for further exploration." **- Peter Fonagy, University College London, UK**

"Once in a while, a book enters the field of psychoanalysis that is so revolutionary that it turns everything upside down, causing us to question the very framework under which we operate... a seminal book that introduces a new area of focus that should be read by any psychoanalyst interested in preserving the world for their children and grandchildren." **- Terry Marks-Tarlow, *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self-Psychology***

"This book is a real tour de force *and an important addition to a currently relatively small body of writings on climate change from a psychoanalytic perspective. It is comprehensive and encyclopaedic, covering enormous ground between related and complex disciplines. Dodds navigates these ideas with clarity and conviction. Overall, he demonstrates the need to link the various different approaches in order to address the ecological crisis that we face. I think, the book is essential reading for all and will add specifically to their understanding for those studying psychoanalysis, psychotherapy and systemic thinking."* **- Jan Baker *Psychodynamic Practice,* 2013**

"Dodds shows us the interconnectedness between the ecology of mind, the ecology of society and the ecology of nature; each, worlds of in?nite complexity, and locates psychoanalysis as part of a mind–society–nature continuum... He shows that complexity theory both illuminates psychoanalysis and helps to understand the crisis of man-made climate change… These ways of understanding the world are potentially revolutionary... Dodds' enthusiasm for them is infectious, which encourages the reader to get to grips with this complicated but essential way of thinking." **- Robert Tollemache *Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy* 2013 Vol.27, No.2**

"A tour de force of ecological, psychoanalytic and poststructural thought... essential reading for any scholar of ecopsychology who wishes to extend his or her thinking into new lines of flight and take some risks along the way." **- Renee Lertzman, *Ecopsychology***

"Occasionally a book is produced which meets the entirety of the mission of this journal... the known but little discussed nexus between psychology, the life sciences, and nonlinear dynamics... Mature students in fields ranging from psychology to ecology to complexity sciences will find this book of value." **- Douglas Kiel, *Nonlinear Dynamics, Psychology, and Life Sciences***

"Psychoanalysis and ecology at the edge of chaos makes a significant contribution to current discussions around the ecological crisis by suggesting that psychoanalysis offers important insights in the problem of climate change and its effects... This is a very useful and interesting book, carefully researched, well organized and clearly written, a very good case of truly interdisciplinary scholarship." **- Maria Tamboukou, *Psychology in Society***

"Showing himself to be a 'nomadic scholar' of the highest order Dodds both draws on relevant psychoanalytic ideas to explore the ecological terrain, and points out its limitations in remaining, in spite of all its advantages, fundamentally a psychology without ecology." **- Martin Jordan, From the Foreword**

"Dodds' particular contribution is to show that psychoanalysis is not separate, but rooted in the natural world. He shows that complexity theory both illuminates psychoanalysis and helps to understand the crisis of man-made climate change. ... All in all, these ways of understanding the world are potentially revolutionary and can shed greater light on psychoanalytic thinking: Dodds' enthusiasm for them is infectious, which encourages the reader to get to grips with this complicated but essential way of thinking." **- Robert Tollemache, *Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy* - Vol. 27, No. 2**

About the Author

Joseph Dodds, PhD, lectures in various courses in psychology and psychoanalysis at the University of New York in Prague, Charles University's CIEE Study Center, and the Anglo-American University. He is a Chartered Psychologist and Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society, a candidate member of the Czech Psychoanalytical Society, and a psychotherapist in private practice.

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