



Jean Piaget Society

Society for the Study of Knowledge and Development

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A hallmark of the Jean Piaget Society (JPS) is its ongoing commitment to deep thinking about big ideas. Our philosophically-rich tradition of conceptual inquiry will be on full display in this year's (2022) upcoming conference devoted to "putting development back into evolution," to be held in Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A. from June 2 until June 4. Evolutionary theory has long informed developmental theorizing, but the reverse hasn't always been the case, especially throughout much of the 20th century when many scientific disciplines demonstrated almost unwavering fealty to the genocentric "modern synthesis" of Darwinian natural selection and Mendelian genetics. Our conference this year is designed to return both the organism and its development to center stage in discussions of the relations between individual development and species evolution – and to invite substantive reappraisal of what an evolutionary theory that takes development seriously should look like. Our plenary addresses for the conference will include: 1) **Anne Sophie Meincke** of the University of Vienna, speaking on how to reconceptualize development and evolution in terms of a process philosophy; 2) **Scott F. Gilbert** of Swarthmore College, speaking on the centrality of developmental process to evolutionary change from the perspective of evolutionary developmental biology; 3) **Denis M. Walsh** of the University of Toronto, speaking on the organism as an adaptive agent of evolutionary change; and 4) **Eva Jablonka** of Tel Aviv University and the London School of Economics and Political Science, speaking on how to reconceptualize the traditional divide between "biological" and "cultural" evolution. Our conference will also feature invited symposium topics on 1) "Rethinking Genetics, Epigenetics and Inheritance," chaired by **David S. Moore** of Pitzer College and Claremont Graduate University; 2) "Developmental Psychobiological Systems Theory," chaired by **Robert Lickliter** of Florida International University; 3) "Historical Links between Developmental and Evolutionary Thought," chaired by **Jeremy Burman** of the University of Groningen; and 4) "Development within Multi-Dimensional Complex Systems: Evolutionary Processes, Individual Development and Participation in Cultural Practices," chaired by **Carol Lee** of Northwestern University.

Too often, given the way we search for individual articles, we don't notice when journals produce multiple articles around a focused theme. If you haven't had the chance to examine Volume 65, No. 5-6 released in December 2021, we highly recommend reading this special issue on *Promoting Social Equity, Fairness, and Racial Justice in Development*, guest edited by Melanie Killen and Martin Ruck, and sponsored by JPS. The issue they put together (which includes an introduction and four articles) offers space for critical reflection on the developmental experiences of children and adolescents with and affected by racial and social injustice. Furthermore, it provides a focused opportunity to consider how we can extend theory and research to create social change. While there have been many calls for social and racial justice frameworks, Killen and Ruck's volume offers readers a better understanding from a

developmental perspective. The introductory article by Killen, Yee, and Ruck entitled “Social and racial justice as fundamental goals for the field of human development” examines theoretical changes in distinct areas of development research and makes the case for the important role that human development research can play in promoting change and why this work is so urgent at this juncture in time.

Both the conference and special issue described here – despite very different topical areas – highlight the value that our Society places on critical inquiry. We welcome new members to JPS and hope that you will consider attending this year’s annual meeting in early June. Our conference venue, the Philadelphia Marriott Old City, is located in the heart of the city’s historical district, not far from the Liberty Bell, Museum of the American revolution and other historical sites. The city’s historical district also has a vibrant arts scene and a wide selection of independent stores, as well as outstanding eating options. We realize that the ongoing pandemic presents challenges for travel and attendance, but we are working with the conference hotel to create an excellent experience that supports our exploration of big ideas and deep thinking in a healthy and safe environment. Further information about the conference, hotel accommodations, and how to register can be found at the [JPS website](#). And if you cannot make it to the meeting, please still consider becoming a member of JPS. A full description of membership benefits (including the benefit of receiving access to JPS’ official journal *Human Development*), can be found at the [JPS membership website](#).