

**Syllabus**  
**CMPS Distance Learning**  
**ZOOM**  
**Ecopsychanalysis and the Psychology of Climate Change**  
**J. Dodds    Spring 2020**

**Wednesday 10 -11:30AM (EST)**

**Course Description**

In our era of anxiety, denial, paranoia, apathy, guilt, hope, and despair in the face of climate change, ecopsychanalysis is a new interdisciplinary approach to thinking about the relationship between psychoanalysis, ecology, 'the natural', and the climate crisis. It draws on a range of fields including, psychoanalysis, psychology, ecology, philosophy, science, complexity and nonlinear dynamical systems theory, aesthetics and the humanities. Climate change is perhaps the single biggest threat to have faced our species, but existing approaches largely constitute an ecology without psychology. Psychoanalysis has a unique role to play with its emphasis on the unconscious dimensions of our mental and social lives, however, despite being essential to studying environmentalism and its discontents, psychoanalysis remains largely a psychology without ecology. This course aims to bridge this gap.

**Course Objectives**

The student will be able to:

- summarize and contrast a range of psychological approaches to climate change and the environmental crisis;
- demonstrate attainment of interpretive ecopsychanalytic perspectives on a range of phenomenon including not only ecology, but also culture, art and society;
- describe foundational concepts in the science of climate change and the Earth system;
- provide examples of how psychoanalytic and psychological models of the mind can include a broader engagement with the nonhuman world; and
- enumerate several of the anxieties and defenses involved in climate change and explain how to engage creatively in new ways with their manifestations in their social and work environment and the wider culture.

**Assignments: Weekly Readings and Logs**

*Each week* students write logs describing their emotional and intellectual experience of the previous class session and readings. Please submit your logs electronically to:

[dodds@psychoanalysis.cz](mailto:dodds@psychoanalysis.cz) Nine weekly logs are required for the semester.

**Required Text:** Joseph Dodds (2011) *Psychoanalysis and Ecology at the Edge of Chaos*. Routledge.

**Class 1 (February 5)**

Science of climate change: Earth as a complex dynamic system,

**Class 2 (February 12)**

Psychology of Climate Change

**Class 3 (February 19)**

Psychoanalysis, ecological anxiety and defense.

**Class 4 (February 26)**

Object relations, ecological relations and clinical practice.

**Class 5 (March 4)**

Deep ecology, ecopsychology and ecotherapy.

**Class 6 (March 11)**

Postmodern ecops psychoanalysis: ecology without nature.

**Class 7 (March 18)**

Animality in the three ecologies.

**Class 8 (March 25)**

Ecops psychoanalysis of film and art.

**Class 9 (April 1)**

Geophilosophy, nonlinear psychoanalysis and complexity.

**Class 10 (April 15)**

Ecops psychoanalysis: bringing it all together.