



Psychoanalysis and Motivational Systems: A New Look: 33 (Psychoanalytic Inquiry Book Series)

Joseph D. Lichtenberg, Frank M. Lachmann, James L. Fosshage

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Introduced in *Psychoanalysis and Motivation* (1989) and further developed in *Self and Motivational Systems* (1992), *The Clinical Exchange* (1996), and *A Spirit of Inquiry* (2002), motivational systems theory aims to identify the components and organization of mental states and the process by which affects, intentions, and goals unfold. Motivation is described as a complex intersubjective process that is cocreated in the developing individual embedded in a matrix of relationships with others.

Opening by placing motivational systems theory within a contemporary dynamic systems theory, Lichtenberg, Lachmann, and Fosshage then respond to critics of motivational systems theory. The authors present revisions to their approach to the original five motivational systems, adding two more: an affiliative and a caregiving motivational system. The authors go on to suggest, using ideas garnered from complexity theory and fractals, that motivational systems theory can help us understand how a continuity of self can be maintained despite near-constant fluctuations in interpersonal relations. They then consider how the making of inferences, explicitly and implicitly, is shaped by motivation, before applying their theory to an actual human experience - love - to demonstrate the interplay of multiple shifting motivations within an individual. Last, they present new looks at the clinical applicability of their research.

Grounded in observational research of infants but relevant to psychoanalysis at any stage of life, motivational systems theory has evolved via the combined experiences of these three analysts for more than 20 years, and remains an important contribution to our understanding of the driving forces behind human experience.

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