



# 1<sup>st</sup> Jean Piaget Conferences

## Theories of Development

June 26 – 27, 2014

Uni Mail – Geneva

**Friday morning, June 27, 2014**

8h30

**David F. Bjorklund**, Florida Atlantic University

*Evolutionary Developmental Psychology: Developing Human Nature*

**Abstract:**

*Evolutionary developmental psychology* involves the study of the genetic and environmental mechanisms that underlie the universal development of social and cognitive competencies and how these processes adapt to local conditions. I present some of the central issues and concepts of evolutionary developmental psychology: (1) natural selection operates at all stages of the lifespan, but especially early in life; (2) an extended childhood is needed in which to learn the complexities of human social communities; (3) the application of a developmental contextual (epigenetic) approach to explain how evolved and inherited dispositions become expressed as adaptive behaviors in the phenotypes of adults; (4) development is constrained by both genetic and environmental factors; and (5) children show substantial plasticity of cognition and behavior, and adaptive sensitivity to context early in life.