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Contents & abstracts

Theory and Technique

B. Micanzi Ravagli. **Therapeutic Consultations during Infancy and the Age of Development: The Assessment Model.** *Richard e Piggie*, 25, 4, 2017, 329-343.

The article proposes to study consultations during infancy through the lens of the Assessment model that has put AIPPI training into practice since the moment, during the 1980s, when it was introduced into our country. The Assessment model must not be confused with long-term psychoanalytical work even if it uses the latter's external and internal setting; its therapeutic valence makes it particularly suited to working within institutions. In its first formulation, it was applied to adolescents before being subsequently extended to families with very young children. In the latter sector, it avails itself of the irreplaceable contribution made by Infant Observation experience. Clinical work with families having very young children is described here at the point where the Assessment model and work with parents intersect. The clinical case presented offers an example of the Assessment model's application with a couple of parents and their daughter aged 2 years and 8 months.

Focus

Points of Interest in Psychoanalytical Observation during Training and in Psychotherapy

G.M. Mazzoncini. **Introduction.** *Richard & Piggie*, 25, 4, 2017, 344-352.

J.C. Guillaume. **Observation and Negative Capacity.** *Richard & Piggie*, 25, 4, 2017, 353-366.

If scientific observation considers the observed object to be distinct from the observer, the analytic situation, centred as it is on the unconscious - an invisible object - necessarily involves both the analyst and the patient, or the observer and the observed, in the context of the transference process. Study of this situation engages the unconscious of the persons present, in the quest for openings and emerging elements, without preconceived ideas, whilst listening to the elements of inner turbulence in each.

S. Maiello. **Learning from Infant Observation. Exploring the Observer's Dual Function: Containment and Differentiation.** *Richard & Piggie*, 25, 4, 2017, 367-378.

The article examines certain aspects of the observer's learning experience and what are described, respectively, as the maternal function and the paternal function, in particular. The former refers to the development of the observer's ability to contain projections of primitive mental states, whereas the latter is linked to his/her growing ability to distinguish the source of such projections. A central aspect of the personal maturation process that gets going thanks to the experience of infant observation derives from the observer's partly unconscious encounter with his/her own inner child i.e. with the quality of his/her own earliest experiences. The growing ability to differentiate inner emotional content from projections arriving from the outside reinforces the observer's ability to remain anchored in the position of a third party.



P. Gatti and M. Santarone. **Infant Observation as a Transformative Experience: Emotional Turbulence, Defences and Learning.** *Richard & Piggie*, 25, 4, 2017, 379-389.

This work seeks to demonstrate the tangle of strong emotions permeating the observation environment. Observers themselves cannot escape this tangle and it reactivates deep-seated, unconscious infantile experiences within them. The authors' reflections stem from the long-standing experience they each acquired during their teaching of Infant Observation. The article seeks to highlight what defences are activated and how the observation setting, seminars and the group can serve as containers capable of helping observers to separate/distinguish what belongs to their own history and their own personal experience from what belongs to the neonatal life of that specific child, to his/her mother and to the figures caring for him/her.

M. Monticelli. **The Infant Observation Experience in Difficult Situations: Maintaining the Ability to Observe.** *Richard & Piggie*, 25, 4, 2017, 390-406.

When undertaking Infant Observation and learning its skills, students sometimes find themselves working in difficult family contexts. The presentation of recorded observations at the discussion seminar can result in a particular dynamic that carries the emotional charge created by the material, evoking emotional states, phantasies and infantile desires that are shared within the students' "group mind". A particular experience is used to demonstrate the fundamental importance of the Seminar Leader, particularly in situations of this sort: if he/she can maintain an analytic position in his/her own mind (i.e. an "analytic function of the mind"), he/she will be able to understand what is happening in the group mind. This makes it possible to contain the emotional states and thereby effect a transformation that returns the group to its function as the vehicle for learning from the observation experience.

Clinical Reflections

C. Guerriera and D. Cantone. **The Shadow of Siblings.** *Richard e Piggie*, 25, 4, 2017, 407-418

What forms do unconscious phantasies take in a child whose conceived sibling is never born or sees the light of day but develops a serious illness? What forms do the phantasies characteristic of the fraternal complex assume in such cases? Giovanni is a child born of IVF, an assisted fertilization procedure that, in the parents' phantasy, had included a second fertilized egg that had "dried up". Giovanni is afraid of choking to death on food or any other object that he could ingest. Luisa refuses to talk to anyone, with the result that her start at primary school is creating numerous problems. Luisa has a younger sister who developed a facial neoplasia at the age of one month. The authors take the clinical material relating to the two consultations as their starting point for discussing the subject of unconscious phantasies in the sibling relationship. This in the light of references to it in the psychoanalytical literature.

Clinical Diary

L. Cocumelli. **Listening to Migrant Voices.** *Richard e Piggie*, 25, 4, 2017, 419-434.

The article presents the complexity of the adolescent malaise existing in every ethnic group as the malaise of that particular civilization. Psychoanalytical listening to migrant adolescents and young adults, when compared with that relating to Italian adolescents, raises questions about the universality of adolescent processes, the expansive aggressiveness capable of overcoming a traumatic environment and the risk of a splitting of the affects in situations of extreme danger. The author uses excerpts from therapies with migrants (sometimes broken off by intervening external events) to show how the hybridization process already under way amongst the school desks and on the social networks - a process that gets past every boundary wall - is calling for increasingly anthropological and ethno-psychoanalytical realignments amongst therapists.