

International Congress

Violence and Dialogue

Experiences of dialogue on violence: cultures, institutions, gender and generations

Friday 24 and Saturday 25 November 2017

Conference Center FAST

Piazzale Morandi, 2 - Milano

Abstracts of interventions

24 November

FRAMEWORKS

Phenomenology of violence and intervention strategies.

Donata Bianchi – Firenze (ITA)

The presentation will outline the main socio - cultural approaches and the prevailing areas of thought related to violence in Italy; it will analyze the major vulnerabilities of the Italian system from the phenomenological data and describe the current institutional interventions that guide the national and decentralized intervention policies.

What kind of social representations and cultural prejudices, are reflected in institutional and individual responses to violence?

The phenomenology of violence has changed over the last decades?

In addition, there are many actors that are acting on the public scene of interventions and policies, and this dimension will be analyzed to better illustrate the specifics of our country.

Approaches and work practices are not neutral. They are victim - centered or justice - centered or trauma - centered practices. Is it possible to distinguish between them?

A challenge that constantly questions the operators is the necessary and inevitable intersection, sometimes contrasting, between all the operators involved (each one bearer of specific professional cultures, service goals and functional goals).

The quality, timing and orientation of the system response, both the next and the broadest of institutions, determine the same intensity of the short and long term effects of violence on the victims.

The institution confronted with families' competence: obstacles and opportunities.

Christian Defays – Aubel (BEL)

More and more administrative directives and legislations aim to support educational, psychological, medical, and social practices based on collaboration with families, work on parenting skills, and families' and users' competences. Yet today as never before families feel “threatened” when dealing with professionals. While help and emancipation were until recently the founding paradigms of social intervention, now they seem to have been replaced by protection and control.

This change brings deep transformations in the relationship between professionals and users. More and more often, parents, adolescents, children, elder and disabled people, etc., see professionals intervening in their lives without being asked. It's under the request, the “command” of a third party (administrative, medical or judicial authority) that they have to accept the help!

This situation of suggested, ordered, mandatory help, deeply questions our ways and strategies of intervention. Many concepts, which were useful as a reference to build and evaluate our own actions, in this context reveal to be completely inappropriate: demand analysis, secrecy, confidentiality, collaboration... Social professionals need to figure out new, more useful and fitting concepts, so that users can be again the actors in their own change.

From mistreatment to a “treatment” relationship.

Thierry Darnaud – Toulouse (FRA)

Violence exists and always existed in the affective constellations in which humans live. The emergence of the concept of mistreatment in France, at the end of 1980's, reinforced the idea of protection, and kept from thinking about a dialogue between the protagonists. If reality is co-constructed, then violence necessarily orients it. The concept of “treatment” that we propose allows us to question our professional positioning, problematizing the situation with which we are confronted. When emotions and protectionist protocols push us to action, the idea of “treatment” allows us to face the challenge of trying to open the field of possibilities without taking away responsibilities nor victimizing.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS

Five systems on a child.

Renzo Marinello – Milano (ITA)

The presentation will tell Carlo's adventure, 6 years, from his left home to his return.

Around him, in this interplay of history, take life interacting systems that come together and collide. Each system is inscribed in a horizon of sense and has its own vision of the world, and every system imagines to take care of Carlo. Carlo's disappearance, lived by parents as a form of violence, is the answer to an episode of violence in the extended family between Marco, his father and his closest family members. From that moment, as violence can not make a dialogue, it will be a continuous succession of events that increasingly turn Carlo away from his parents (inserting into secret foster house and suspending visits between parents and their child).

The presentation will describe the evolution of the encounter between a clinical system, a Family Therapy Center operating in the public domain, the latest in order of time to appear on the scene, and the family system, following the path from the initial and motivated distrust, that is able to make dialogue in the supervising room up to the mirror, until the return of responsibility for the design of homecoming to parents and Carlo.

TSO and psychiatric containment: can you avoid them?

Giulio De Nicola – Mantova (ITA)

In this presentation, I'll try to address the thorny issue of TSO and the mechanical and pharmacological restraint in psychiatry. Regular conversations among (fortunately less and less) proponents of restraint and TSO as imaginative devices to respond to "social danger" and those who oppose it, often do not dwell sufficiently to reflect on how it is possible to avoid such extremes. In this case, we must carefully consider the foundations of the organization of the Services, the training of the operators, the involvement in

therapeutic paths as well as those affected by such forms of human suffering, including social and institutional family contexts, the interpretation that is given of insanity and so-called mental illness.

PROFESSIONALS' TRAINING

Violent Behaviors in System Families who suffer: a Systemic Approach.

Valeria Pomini, Vlassis Tomaras – Athens (GRC)

The theme of violent relationships among members of a family has been widely addressed within the systemic community, with positions often conflicting with the applicability and effectiveness of family therapy on this serious problem. In clinical practice, it is common to meet families with psychiatric and/or relational problems for which a request for help is expressed, which presents violent behavior of one or more members of the family who are often silenced, suffered and underestimated. The presentation intends to highlight how the therapist's position in front of these behaviors should be clear and responsible, avoiding the ambiguities often dictated by the difficulty of addressing the violent sides of family life. Attention to the symptoms and the system that suffers can not ignore the clarity of violence and its resolution.

Rebuilding the emotional ties to get out of intra-family violence.

Francesco Bruni – Torino (ITA)

Families seeking help in conflicting situations between parents or problems involving children, express a state of affliction worsening in cases of abuse and violence. It is therefore necessary to protect the victims and to work on trauma, while at the same time promoting the reorganization of family relationships and the repair of injured affective bonds. It's not an easy task that puts young psychotherapists to the test. Reflections refer to the activity of a clinical and psychotherapeutic center dedicated to helping families in difficulty in reorganizing relationships and in treating traumatic events.

Invisibles: the impact of violence on professionals in protected depositions.

Jimmy Ciliberto – Milano (ITA)

The work with violence can be declined in many ways: one of these involves police officers and psychologists working together in protected depositions with minors allegedly victims of abuse, in the wider meaning of the term. In the practise of this task, violence does somehow replicates in many other ways as well, one of which is the one that involves the professionals, who are constantly immersed in anguishing narrations, between expectations of empathy, reassurance and strength. There are also grief, rage and many other emotions, that seldom find a context where they can express themselves, or that mainly find space within professionals' informal relations.

In the present contribution, starting from a nearly decennial work experience, we will try to let the complexity of this situation emerge, as well as the necessity of spaces where these professionals might feel listened.

DIALOGIC PRACTICES WITH VIOLENCE

Analyzing dialogical practices in interventions for intimate partner violence.

Juha Holma – Jyväskylä (FIN)

The Jyväskylä model of working with intimate partner violence (IPV) started twenty years ago as a multi-professional collaborative project in Jyväskylä, Finland. The two main collaborating agencies, the local Crisis Centre Mobile and Jyväskylä University Psychotherapy Training and Research Centre, serve both victims and perpetrators of IPV, and co-operate with various social and welfare agencies and the police. Perpetrators are offered group treatment preceded by individual treatment. This treatment program combines a feminist perspective and psychotherapeutic approaches to violence-specific interventions. These aspects have also been a focus of research. Dialogical and discursive approaches have been applied in analyzing interaction at both the group and individual levels in the Jyväskylä perpetrator program. Recently, language-based analyses have focused on the identity construction of male perpetrators as well as on the discursive processes and therapeutic strategies used in the treatment group.

Offering couples treatment for IPV is a much debated issue. Yet recent research illustrates that carefully conceptualized and delivered couples treatment appears to be at least as effective as traditional individual treatment for IPV. The research project reported here explores how intimate partner violence is addressed in couple therapy meetings. Also the use of different conversational practices, and analyse their effects on both partners' experiences of treatment for IPV is examined.

Emotional Dialogues in Traumatized Families for Violence.

Felipe Gutiérrez Gutiérrez – Puebla (MEX)

During the last three decades, Mexico has lived and lives in fear of multiple killing, kidnapping, disappearance, physical and emotional violence, sexual abuse, etc. The impact of this reality has affected all society, families, couples and individuals. Everywhere, there are popular protest voices in order to defeat violence. In this situation, levels of stress, despair and fear increase from day to day.

The answer in our professional field, emerges with a priority need. Family therapy is an alternative paradigm that offers a systemic vision of a concrete response to help the family.

Faced with this widespread violence derives chaos, silence and secrets; People are afraid to talk, cry and report, and have done so for a long time.

The "Emotional Dialogues" methodology offers an opportunity to promote research, exploration and management of repressed emotions through healing conversations that stimulate the recovery of primary and secondary emotions.

This model, through the questions of the "Milan approach", generates conversations that allow constantly, through dialogues, to outsource the problem and emotions that can be heard by each member of the family. Thus, it is stimulated by the break of the barrier of silence that has blocked them for fear of expressing their sorrow and continuing to be repressed and abused as in the case of families where there is sexual or physical abuse. Promoting this openness, allows to generate emotional awareness in each member of the family and in the system, generating emotional regulation. This intervention method allows to recapture the presence of each member as a family member, thereby generating compassion, solidarity and love that heal the wounds that had left the fear of violence. Constraints with emotional meaning are created that retrieve the human essence of the family.

25 November

MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN IN VIOLENT FAMILY RELATIONS

Men beyond violence. How to counteract domestic violence by working with the masculine.

Giacomo Grifoni – Firenze (ITA)

Who are the violent men within family relationships? How to try to engage them in a reflection and changing path? Based on the experience gained as the founding member of the Center for Listening Neglecting Men, the spokesman will describe some typical phenomena of maltreatment. Subsequently, highlighting the differences from the traditional approaches to action, he'll highlights the features of a work focused on violence with violent behaviour perpetrators, aimed at ensuring an adequate context of protection for women and children involved.

Working with victims of violence.

Mitia Rendiniello , Maria Cristina Frassanito – Milano (ITA)

The "My Opportunity" Anti-Violence Desk, run by the CTA - Adolescent Therapy Center - operates since 2012 in the territory of Legnano and, since 2015, within the Ticino Olona Network of Antiviolence.

The Service has been for years a reference for the reception and psychosocial support of women victims as well as for legal advice with the aim of encouraging exit from the cycle of violence.

The present contribution aims to describe the experience of the Antiviolence Counselor and to share the intervention model with particular attention to cases where violence involves multiproblematic women and any difficulties encountered in taking this type of user .

Finally, attention will be given to aspects related to the assessment of the victim's risk factors and aspects of short- and medium-term treatment strategies.

The adoption of children raised in violent contexts. Family therapy paths.

Francesco Vadilonga, Gloriana Rangone – Milano (ITA)

Children and young people who come from growing environments characterized by forms of violence are increasingly being adopted.

Violent families but also, especially in the case of international adoption, violent institutional contexts, are the places where the children have learned to put in place behaviors aimed at survival. With a caregiver's representation as unreliable, hostile, and ill-treated, children come to adoptive families and inevitably put new parents to the test. Their behavioral strategies (escape, attack, freezing) that fit in the old contexts, turn out to be dysfunctional in new ones. Difficulties arise in relation to the working patterns of adoptive parents and more generally in the presence of relational patterns in the new family system that do not help the child develop of new representations and new strategies, but tend to reconfirm him in the need to always stay in alert, flee, attack, or close in an impenetrable retreat.

The objective of the presentation is to present, through clinical exemplifications, the manual family therapy model developed by CTA (Therapy Center for Adolescence) - and IRIS (Systems and Individual Teaching, Research and Psychotherapy School) in collaboration with Mario Negri Institute, aimed at taking care of adoptive crises with children from 3 to 12 years of age.

YOUTH AND VIOLENCE

The phenomenon of cyberbullying and hate speech in social networks: the web violence as an opportunity to promote and educate to new forms of dialogue.

Nicola Iannaccone – Milano (ITA)

Based on the experience gained in the direct management of bullying and cyberbullying, the author suggests a correlation between this phenomenon and hate speech in social networks and how, through education practices to digital media, through the peer education, they can promote prosocial behaviors in the network.

An innovative approach will also be introduced to launch these programs from early childhood.

During the presentation, the most recent data on the spread of the bullying phenomenon, will be discussed and a review of national and regional laws on cyberbullying will be discussed.

The narrative of violence suffered as a therapeutic opportunity for the re-narration of one's life.

Letizia Marazzi – Milano (ITA)

The presentation is intended as a reflection on the delicate issue of speaking with children of the violence they themselves suffered. Operators may be in this situation in many contexts: in psychotherapy, in communities, in schools, in gyms, wherever they come into contact with a child and more often than can be thought. Then there are different contexts related to justice, such as police, courts and prisons where the operator is called upon to intervene in fortune setting, with very quick interview times and with an objective of investigation beyond the child's well-being.

As a psychotherapist, one may feel the need to reflect on the most functional ways to deal with these issues with the child, such as a sufficiently secure reporting setting and effective verbal and nonverbal communication. Other issues that require a more elaborate reflection, concern the prejudices of operators and victims, the potential psychological risks of the child that speaks and the duties the operator has, once he has listened to the story, depending on the context in which he operates; a 360-degree reflection and confrontation, so that talking about the violence suffered may represent for the child a therapeutic opportunity for re-narrating their own life story.

INTERGENERATIONAL VIOLENCE

Three clinical cases: Jack the dealer, Frankenstein Junior and the Little Lombard Pyromaniac.

Pietro Barbetta – Bergamo (ITA)

Three cases of adolescents will be presented, “beaters” and “rapid and cruel destroyers”, “without limits or compassion”. I will speak about adults asking for help, about the institutional interventions that act in an “aggressive and undramatising” way, like males borderline: first they undramatise, then they attack. I will speak about medications that “help” to sedate them, “without or with too much success”, they knock them out, imposing an “exhausted survival” with side effects and intensify the violence in the moments of “life”.

I will speak about family vicissitudes amongst social services and institutions, of the arrival of the parents to the Milan Centre of Family Therapy, described by the referral, often him/herself exhausted, as the last chance before the catastrophe.

How to speak straight to these guys? How to invite them to therapy sessions, , after an iron curtain has been erected between them and their parents. To invite them, but not coercively, for every coercive act is for the Milan Approach anti-ecological, anti-therapeutic (do you remember Bateson's conscious purpose?). How did we invite Jack, that had been closing himself at home for a while, with a hammer, without wanting to see anyone? How did he come to talk to us, to tell? The letter.

How the 16 year old pyromaniac decided to stop, at least temporarily, to beat up his after and set churches on fire? The coup de theatre.

Frankenstein is the toughest case, how did he started again to beat up his mother, after a period of improvement? The paternal function, introduced and abandoned.

What new processes of hypotisation, what new systemic practices, in what cases? How do we create a borderline adolescent with the contribution of the judiciary and health institutions? How do we set him free from the cage of his violence? Can we? Or do we have to give up?

Crimes and dialogue – Network family therapy with children witness of parent committed crimes.

Martine Nisse – Paris (FRA)

Torture, barbarity, sexual assaults, murders, kidnappings, humiliations, threats: the cruelties inflicted to victims are accompanied by paradoxes, lies, and silencing addressed to children who witness them. These transactions shape the relational ground of families characterized by blood or sex crimes. How to start, create and maintain a dialogue with the social professionals in the frame of a network family therapy in favor of children witness of parent committed crimes?

We will illustrate through clinical examples the Mistreatment Systemanalytic Approach, developed thirty years ago at Buttes-Chaumont Center.

Child-parent violence: a pathology of love.

Roberto Pereira – Bilbao (ESP)

Child-to-Parent Violence (CPV) has always been. Actually, however, only in the twenty-first century has come to light as an important problem of western societies. This interest is due to a marked increase in aggression towards parents, or other adults who play this role, by children, adolescents and young people who do not necessarily come from families with violent behavioral precedents. On the contrary, we find many cases in which an explicit intention was made not to use physical correction in child education and a close relationship, almost of loving intimacy, between the aggressor and the aggression before the appearance of violence. The intervention method in these cases will seek to facilitate separation between parent and child so that they can mature a real emotional release without resorting to the use of violence. Families coming to the consultation ask to solve the problem, not to break the relationship. We will present the intervention protocol we use to Euskarri, our CPV treatment center, through a videotaped case.