

## **Child Development and the quality of child care**

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### **Abstract**

Research in child care indicates that the characteristics of care may influence child development. These characteristics of child care are often referred to as the quality of child care. The characteristics of child care which seem to be associated with child development may be structural variables, e.g. adult-child ratio or process variables, e.g. adult-child communication. From a theoretical perspective the relationships between process variables and child outcome would appear to be interesting with structural variables only being important through their influence on process variables. The relationships between early child care characteristics and child development in middle childhood are discussed, with reference to available data from a British study. The longitudinal study followed 250 two-parent families having their first child. The families were chosen so that there were three groups of dual-earner families using relatives, family day care or centre day care, and one group of single-earner families not using non-parental care. The children have been studied from birth to six years of age and data have been collected on cognitive, language and socio-emotional development. Data derive from direct observation, standardised assessments, parental questionnaires and, at six years of age, from teacher questionnaires and child interview. Data was also collected on the characteristics of the child care received at eighteen months and three years of age. These data allow the influence of characteristics of care to be considered. Regression analyses were used to investigate the impact of different child care variables e.g., amount and type of care, aspects of quality of care. The results indicate that the relationships between child care experience and child development undergo change as the child develops and as different environmental influences come to prominence. The effects of quality of care seem most important, in differentiating effects both within and between types of care.

## **Psychic links - somatic bindings**

**A. Potamianou**

### **Abstract**

This paper deals with some points pertaining to the economic approach in psychic functioning and psychic work, as related to nowadays psychopathology which has mainly to do with the so-called character disorders, with narcissistic fragility, and with Ego frailties. The paper considers fundamental differences in modes of elaboration of excitations between patients using mainly mental defensive systems and those oriented towards overt behaviour manifestations with discharges that maintain poor links with reflexive thinking, with judgement, doubting, self-questioning. Somatic dysfunction, or the onset of somatic illness, can emerge as the result of the disqualification of psychic linking and as an attempt to bind brutal, unelaborated, excitation charges on the soma. The example of a research project on rheumatic arthritis, is used to illustrate this point. The author acknowledges that modes of somatic and psychic discharge of energy thrusts may coexist throughout the course of life. She presents the argument that somatic symptomatology by binding unelaborated energy on the organic level can stop further disorganization processes in the soma. Thus, it can also become the starting point for reorganization on the organic, as well as the mental level.

## **Greek students' ideas regarding the shape of the earth: a study of conceptual change in childhood**

**St. Vosniadou, A. Archodidou, A. Kalogiannidou and Chr. Ioannides**

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### **Abstract**

This article presents the results of a cross-cultural study of conceptual change in the subject-matter of astronomy. The present research investigates changes in Greek students' concepts of the earth. 109 nursery and elementary school students participated in this study. The results showed that Greek children are similar to children from the USA, India and the Samoan islands, in forming an initial concept of a flat earth which is supported by ground of water, considering that the earth is a physical object and attributing to it all the characteristics that belong to physical objects in general. In the process of conceptual change the Greek students constructed one of a small number of relatively well-defined «synthetic» models of the earth. As in the previous studies these models could be explained as the result of children's effort to reconcile the information they receive from school regarding the shape of the earth, with certain entrenched presuppositions regarding the behavior of physical objects (such as, for example, the presuppositions that unsupported objects fall «down»). The results of this study agree with the results of previous crosscultural research which shows that children form certain entrenched presuppositions about the earth which are universal and are independent of cultural influences. Nevertheless, there are cultural influences which operate at the level of the specific «synthetic» mental models children construct, which differ in details from one country to another.

## **A programme for social skills training with Greek elementary school students**

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### **Abstract**

Social skills training is used to improve peer relations and thus reduce the risk of later social and behaviour problems among youngsters who are not well-accepted by their peers. In this initial attempt to study school-based social skills training in Greece, we assessed behavioural and cognitive effects of social skills training of 8 to 10-years-old boys and girls. The skills training program used a cognitive-social learning approach, with (a) direct instruction, (b) behavioural rehearsal with modeling and feedback, and (c) workbook and small group interactive activities. Pre- and post- program measures indicated that children taking part showed increases in prosocial behaviour, but little or no change in aggressive-antisocial behaviors (based on peer assessments), and substantial prosocial changes in attitudes on topics related to getting along with others. Behaviour and attitude changes were, in general, similar for boys and girls and for accepted and non-accepted children. Further research is needed on this potentially valuable topic.

## **The impossible mourning of the relatives of the missing Cypriots; psychic and social dimensions**

**I. Georgiades and M. Petrou**

### **Abstract**

1619 people are missing since Turkey invaded Cyprus during the summer of 1974. The impossibility for their families to mourn their loss is due to the fact that the missing person carries the paradoxical characteristic of a living-dead, which bars the redeeming process of mourning. By this article we try to show: (a) the nature and extend of the traumatic violence the relatives suffer because of the loss of their beloved, without the discovery of their bodies, (b) the absence of social acts and discourses that usually support the personal elaboration of the mourning, and (c) the tacit reinforcement by the society of the belief in the return of the missing. This violence seems to have destroyed the psychic processes and spaces of the relatives as well as of the Cypriot society, at least as far as it concerns its ability to accept and support the elaboration of the trauma. So this violence incurs the psychic destruction of the relatives as well as their need for the psychic and social support from the part of the Cypriot society, the social recognition of the definitive loss and the creation of supporting structures for the completion of the mourning, the search for the causes and the restoration of symbolic order, thought and History.

## **Trauma and abandonment**

**S. Manolopoulos**

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to prompt the study of the dilemma «seduction or abandonment» which weighs heavily in certain cases. It concerns patients who are organised in the neighbourhood of splittings and denials of the somatic roots of psychic life. These patients tend to excorporate their libidinal bodies and also to inflict on themselves somatic pain in an effort: (a) to protect their body image, (b) to establish a focus of somatopsychic reality, (c) to tolerate psychic suffering which accompanies the work of mourning and (d) to establish a focus of somatopsychic reality.

## **Psychological maturity and the elderly: a case study**

**A. Ioannides Johnson-Tourna, D.S.W.**

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### **Abstract**

Even though the literature concerning psychodynamic treatment with the elderly is limited, clinical experience shows that psychodynamic treatment with this population could be effective. More specifically, in this article it is shown, through a case example, that the elderly can benefit from psychodynamic treatment which helps the person deal with unfinished maturational issues. Through the presentation of a case, the author shows that there is a relationship between the client's functional maturational level and the way the client handles stress. It is argued that the issues of advanced age are extensions of issues faced earlier on. These do not necessarily change with the passing of time. Consequently the choice of therapy must be based on the person's psychological maturational level, rather than on chronological maturity. The choice of treatment should be based on the type of the presenting problem, rather than age *per se*. In the clinical example, the therapeutic approach takes into account psychological theories of the «Self» and certain other parameters that have to do with the patient's current age and life circumstances.

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