

Psychological Applications and Trends

2019

Edited by:

Clara Pracana

&

Michael Wang

Edited by:

- Prof. Clara Pracana, Full and Training Member of the Portuguese Association of Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, Portugal,

- Prof. Michael Wang, Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Leicester, United Kingdom

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FOREWORD

This book contains a compilation of papers presented at the International Psychological Applications Conference and Trends (InPACT) 2019, organized by the World Institute for Advanced Research and Science (W.I.A.R.S.).

Modern psychology offers a large range of scientific fields where it can be applied. The goal of understanding individuals and groups (mental functions and behavioral standpoints), from this academic and practical scientific discipline, aims ultimately to benefit society. The International Conference seeks to provide some answers and explore the several areas within the Psychology field, new developments in studies and proposals for future scientific projects. The goal is to offer a worldwide connection between psychologists, researchers and lecturers, from a wide range of academic fields, interested in exploring and giving their contribution in psychological issues. We take pride in having been able to connect and bring together academics, scholars, practitioners and others interested in a field that is fertile in new perspectives, ideas and knowledge.

We counted on an extensive variety of contributors and presenters, which can supplement the view of the human essence and behavior, showing the impact of their different personal, academic and cultural experiences. This is, certainly, one of the reasons there are nationalities and cultures represented, inspiring multi-disciplinary collaborative links, fomenting intellectual encounter and development.

InPACT 2019 received 322 submissions, from more than 35 different countries from all over the world, reviewed by a double-blind process. Submissions were prepared to take form of Oral Presentations, Posters, Virtual Presentations and Workshops. 107 submissions (overall, 33% acceptance rate) were accepted for presentation in the conference.

The conference also included:

- One keynote presentations by Prof. Dr. Glenys Parry (PhD, CPsychol, FBPsS, Emeritus Professor, School of Health & Related Research, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom).
- Two Special Talks, one by Prof. Dr. Michael Wang (Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Leicester, United Kingdom), and the other by Prof. Dr. Luís Delgado (Applied Psychology Research Center Capabilities and Inclusion (APPsyCI) – University Institute, Portugal).

We would like to express our gratitude to all our invitees.

The Conference addresses different categories inside Applied Psychology area and papers fit broadly into one of the named themes and sub-themes. The conference program includes six main broad-ranging categories that cover diversified interest areas:

- **CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Emotions and related psychological processes; Assessment; Psychotherapy and counseling; Addictive behaviors; Eating disorders; Personality disorders; Quality of life and mental health; Communication within relationships; Services of mental health; and Psychopathology.
- **EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Language and cognitive processes; School environment and childhood disorders; Parenting and parenting related processes; Learning and technology; Psychology in schools; Intelligence and creativity; Motivation in classroom; Perspectives on teaching; Assessment and evaluation; and Individual differences in learning.
- **SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Cross-cultural dimensions of mental disorders; Employment issues and training; Organizational psychology; Psychology in politics and international issues; Social factors in adolescence and its development; Social anxiety and self-esteem; Immigration and social policy; Self-efficacy and identity development; Parenting and social support; Addiction and stigmatization; and Psychological and social impact of virtual networks.

- **LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Violence and trauma; Mass-media and aggression; Intra-familial violence; Juvenile delinquency; Aggressive behavior in childhood; Internet offending; Working with crime perpetrators; Forensic psychology; Violent risk assessment; and Law enforcement and stress.
- **COGNITIVE AND EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Perception, memory and attention; Decision making and problem-solving; Concept formation, reasoning and judgment; Language processing; Learning skills and education; Cognitive Neuroscience; Computer analogies and information processing (Artificial Intelligence and computer simulations); Social and cultural factors in the cognitive approach; Experimental methods, research and statistics; and Biopsychology.
- **PSYCHOANALYSIS AND PSYCHOANALYTICAL PSYCHOTHERAPY:** Psychoanalysis and psychology; The unconscious; The Oedipus complex; Psychoanalysis of children; Pathological mourning; Addictive personalities; Borderline organizations; Narcissistic personalities; Anxiety and phobias; Psychosis; Neuropsychoanalysis.

This book contains the results of the different researches conducted by authors who focused on what they are passionate about: to study and develop research in areas related to Psychology and its applications. It includes an extensive variety of contributors and presenters that are hereby sharing with us their different personal, academic and cultural experiences.

We would like to thank all the authors and participants, the members of the academic scientific committee, and of course, to the organizing and administration team for making and putting this conference together.

Looking forward to continuing our collaboration in the future,

Respectfully,

Prof. Clara Pracana
Full and Training Member of the Portuguese Association of Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, Portugal
Conference and Program Co-Chair

Prof. Michael Wang
Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Leicester, United Kingdom
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KEYNOTE LECTURE

HOW DO PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES CAUSE HARM – AND WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT IT?

Prof. Dr. Glenys Parry

PhD, CPsychol, FBPsS

Emeritus Professor, School of Health & Related Research, University of Sheffield (United Kingdom)

Abstract

There is no doubt that psychological therapies are generally effective in helping people with a range of mental health difficulties find relief from distress and improve their quality of life. Both from practice-based evidence and well-controlled clinical trials, we see that those who engage in a bona fide therapy with a qualified practitioner are, on average, better off than those who do not. The effect sizes are, compared with many medical interventions, quite impressive.

Yet that phrase ‘on average’ hides a genuine problem; some people who undertake therapy have a bad experience, feel worse afterwards than when they started, and may experience lasting bad effects. Even a cursory internet search will reveal many blogs, websites, books and articles from people who say they have been harmed. Psychotherapy research has a history of neglecting the subject, but is now starting to take this problem seriously. Recent developments include psychometric measures of negative effects of treatment, qualitative and survey investigations and meta-analysis of negative outcomes. Understanding therapeutic harm is vital in taking steps to prevent it, and I shall give an overview of some key issues in appraising the evidence of whether therapy is harmful, what makes it harmful and what can be done to reduce the risk of harm.

We know a good deal about how successful therapy works, in terms of therapist competence, therapist characteristics, client characteristics, trajectories of change, therapeutic alliance rupture and repair, specific techniques and ‘non-specific’ factors. We know less about bad therapy or harmful therapy. For a start, these are not necessarily the same things. There is an important distinction between process and outcome; bad experience and poor outcome. Bad therapy, therapy which does not meet minimum standards of competent practice, is not necessarily harmful, and well-conducted therapy can have unwanted negative effects.

Unwanted negative effects are sometimes termed ‘side’ effects, although I reject this terminology and shall explain why. Much psychological research in therapy uses a medical framework, characterised by terms such as matching treatment to diagnosis, dose-response, side effects, and treatment compliance and so on. Whilst this metaphor has utility, to address the potential for harm, I advocate a dialogic understanding of the co-constructed therapeutic frame; two subjectivities meeting in the consulting room, each with their own histories and patterns of managing self in relation to others. I find a cognitive analytic approach the most useful in this regard.

Most therapists are neither excellent nor harmful, but have a mix of outcomes. Only a minority are psychotoxic, with fake qualifications, lack of training, narcissism, psychopathy, sexual abuse, financial abuse, emotional abuse, rigidity, lack of emotional intelligence or mentalisation capacity, and gross boundary violations.

However, I shall argue that the toxic few are not the main issue. I draw on evidence about clients’ common experiences of harmful therapy, differences between therapists, therapist errors, inappropriate therapy choice, misdiagnosis, unresolved alliance ruptures, and what is known about the people most vulnerable to the risk of harm from therapy. From the therapist’s perspective, I shall argue that there are clear limitations of therapist training and skill, and errors are inevitable. It is a natural defence to minimise and avoid discussion of our errors rather than accept them as a normal part of professional practice. A risk-averse, punitive system is not going to help, indeed it encourages defensive, secretive practice. Understanding the common causes of harm, creating a compassionate narrative and putting systems in place to mitigate risk is more useful. Therapy is undertaken within a systemic context – a private practice, a professional ethics framework, a public sector mental health service. These systems are powerful influences on the extent to which potentially harmful practice can be detected and prevented. I make five recommendations for safer practice at the individual, professional and organisational levels.

Biography

Glenys Parry is a clinical psychologist and Emeritus Professor at the University of Sheffield. She practises cognitive analytic therapy in a not-for-profit group practice in Sheffield.

She worked in the NHS from 1974 to 2011, where her roles included Consultant Psychologist and Psychotherapist, Director of Psychology Services, and Director of R&D. She has also been responsible for psychology and psychotherapy policy at the Department of Health (1992-1996) and has contributed to clinical guideline development at NICE. Professionally she is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society, MB Shapiro award holder, founder member of the Association for Cognitive Analytic Therapy and past Vice-President of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. As Professor of Psychological Therapies at the University of Sheffield (School of Health & Related Research 2002-2016), she conducted randomised trials, systematic reviews, qualitative research and service evaluations in a range of topics including the impact of life events and social support on depression, cognitive behaviour therapy for panic fear in asthma, health status of Gypsies and Travellers, therapist competence in cognitive analytic therapy, IAPT services, computerised CBT, care pathways in persistent depression and borderline personality disorder. Her project 'Understanding and Preventing Adverse Effects of Psychological Therapies' was funded by the UK NIHR Research for Patient Benefit programme.

SPECIAL TALKS

BION AND THE POPES OF HORROR

Prof. Dr. Luís Delgado

*Applied Psychology Research Center Capabilities and Inclusion (APPsyCI) –
ISPA – University Institute (Portugal)*

Abstract

In this communication of psychoanalysis (extra-therapeutic) applied to artistic productions the author focuses on the (in)ability to think of horror through two of the, roughly, forty interpretations made by the painter Francis Bacon – *The Screaming Pope* (1953) and *Figure with Meat* (1954) – of the portrait of Pope Innocent X (1650) by Diego Velázquez, which can be understood in the light of Wilfred Bion's *Theory of Transformations* (1965), in which each interpretation/transformation leads the painter to the intensification of an unnamed terror, viscerally felt, without any capacity for mentalization, for naming, for a dream and the diffusion of the feeling of identity. For this, he created a technique capable of reproducing the deep psychic reality instead of the appearance of people. His aim was not to paint the horror that gave rise to "scream", but to paint the very "scream" of terror, so as to make the inaudible audible.

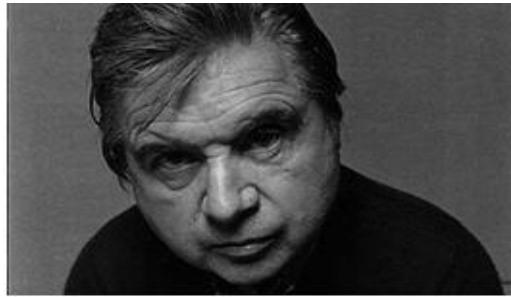
Keywords: *Velázquez, Bacon, Bion, Horror, Transformations theory.*

Figure 1. Pope Innocent X (Velázquez, 1650).



Diego Velázquez's painting, *Pope Innocent X* (1650), can be found in Rome, in the Doria Pamphilj Gallery. It is a realistic painting depicting a Pope who is brilliant, radiant, magnificent, and secure. In short, a Pope symbolizing the robustness of one of the fundamental pillars of western culture and civilization. When the Pope saw Velázquez's painting for the first time, he exclaimed "Troppo vero!". Three hundred years later, Francis Bacon saw a reproduction of the painting and assembled a vast collection of reproductions, through which he came to study and know the painting deeply. Between 1951 and 1965, Bacon painted 45 studies, variations, reactions to Velázquez's painting, always feeling a strong obsession for it.

Figure 2. Francis Bacon (1909-1992).



Before we go on to describe Bacon's first study of the painting, I propose that we first listen to the painter himself about the meaning and technique of his painting in general, as well as the historical and cultural circumstances of the time:

. "Art is a method of opening up areas of sensitivity, rather than the mere illustration of an object" (Bacon cited by Sinclair, 1995, p. 232).

. "I paint forces, not figures" (interview with Sylvester, 2007).

. "A big part of a painting is always a convention, the appearance, and that's what I try to eliminate from my paintings. I look for the essential, that the painting takes on, in the most direct way possible, the material identity of what it is I'm representing. My way of distorting images brings me far closer to human beings than if I just sat down and did their portrait (...) I tried to find a technique capable of reproducing the profound reality and not the appearance of people" (interview with Ramón Chao, 1982).

In short, what Bacon attempts to capture is the emotional and sensitive state of a subject in any given moment, his objective is to capture an identity.

Like many other post-World War II artists, he tried to reproduce the climate of absolute terror and disbelief in the culture, expressing what happened to humanity after the War and the Nazi Holocaust. Bacon never paints the figuration of horror, there is never any narration or illustration of a horror scene. What he paints is the scream as a capture of an invisible force. His objective is to express the torturous reality of the contemporary man, traumatized by the impossibility to eradicate Evil, worse yet, by the complete disbelief in civilizational and cultural progress, by the maddening paradox of the association between progress and barbarism. What Bacon intends to metaphorize is the afflictive and rabid helplessness of the disaster in culture, the disenchantment of the world. I remember the lucid words of Primo Levi in, and the title is accurate, *If This Is A Man*: "The offense made to the human being (...) the insurmountable nature of the offense that spreads like a disease, which is an inexhaustible source of evil" (*The Truce*, 1963/2010, p. 9). What Bacon lets us see is a metaphor of the internal feeling towards the total bankruptcy of culture, as Freud conceived in the beginning of his essay, *The Future of an Illusion* (1927/1981). Why choose the figure of the Pope? Precisely because he represents one of the major foundations of our western civilization.

Figure 3. *The Screaming Pope* (Bacon, 1953).



Francis Bacon's painting, *Study After Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X* (1953), better known as *The Screaming Pope*, presents us with a vociferous and desperate papal figure in free fall, enclosed in a chair and a cube, with his upper body blurred between the curtains in the background and a

tassel on top of the place that should be occupied by the brain. Beyond the feeling of a downward movement of the figure, when Bacon paints the pope who screams, there is nothing that provokes horror, and the curtain before him is not only a way to isolate him - to subtract him from view - it is also to show that he sees nothing, he screams before the invisible.

In addition to the fierce criticism of "organized religion" in the form of screams and sneers of a king of the Catholic Church and monarch of the world, Bacon put his deepest fears and angers on the canvas, expelled them, and attained a new intensity. Let us not forget that Bacon brings with him a childhood marked by death (of two sisters), a youth disturbed by the extreme incomprehension of his father (he expelled him from home for his homosexual manifestations), the suicide of two of his lovers, as of all the horror of Ireland's civil war, both World Wars, and the beginning of the Cold War. The figure vertiginously falling and screaming, solitary and caged, without any possibility of escape, is an endless mask of suffering, anger, anguish, of helplessness and terror, of decrepitude and death.

Despite all the realism of his painting, Bacon believed that there were "inner realities", even admitting that Freud's works had modified his own sense of realism, "because we became more aware of how realism can be fed by the subconscious. (...) We live almost all the time covered by veils... It is a veiled existence." Indeed, Bacon's picture is a lifting of the veil of the appearances of Velázquez's representation, confronting himself and the spectator with "the brutality of the facts", with the spasmodic and convulsive cry, in order to directly and violently hit the nervous system. First sit down and then think. According to Paul Klee's famous formula, "instead of giving the visible, make it visible", in art it is not a matter of reproducing or inventing forms, but of grasping forces (Klee, cited by Deleuze, 1984). Bacon told a journalist that his studies of Velázquez were "an intention to turn a certain type of sensation into something visible".

Wilfred Bion states in his book *Transformations* (1965/1982), now a classic: "The theory of transformations and its development do not belong to the central corpus of psychoanalytic theory, but to the practice of psychoanalytic observation. Psychoanalytic theories, as well as the statements of the patient or the analyst, are representations of an emotional experience. Understanding the process of representation will help us to understand representation and what is represented" (pp. 43-44). The painter, through his artistic talent, managed to transform a person, a landscape ("the realization") into a painting ("representation"), thanks to the invariants. "I will call 'invariant' the elements that account for the unchanged aspect of transformation" (p.7). And, further on: "The analysis, in its pre-catastrophic state, is distinguished from the post-catastrophic state by the following characteristics: it is not emotional, theoretical, and devoid of any noticeable exterior modification... In the post-catastrophic state, on the contrary, violence is obvious, but its ideological content, hitherto evident, seems to be lacking. The emotion is evident and reaches the analyst" (p.15) - in our case it reaches the viewer. Bion proposes that the psychic transformations are processed by three different modalities, that he denominates "transformations of rigid movement", "projective transformations" and "transformations in hallucinosis".

In the present study, and according to Bion's theory, we conceive Velázquez's painting as a representation of Bacon's pre-catastrophic (the mind's neurotic part) state performing a rigid motion transformation, in which it minimally distorts the original fact - *Innocent X* - and allows the viewer to find the invariant element very easily ("Troppo vero!"). The apparent characteristics of the pope are visible: power, serenity, infallibility, protection, trust in the life of the beyond, belief in love...

The Screaming Pope, however, represents the projection of the mind in a post-catastrophic state, in a projective-type transformation, distorting the original fact more intensely due to intense emotions, distorting the notions of space/time and papal posture without, however, completely preventing the viewer from recognizing the invariants that make recognition possible.

Figure 4. *Figure with Meat* (Bacon, 1954).



In another study of *Pope Innocent X*, titled *Figure with Meat* (1954), we see, in lugubrious hues, a body that vanishes and decomposes, escaping through a screaming mouth, behind which two huge carcasses of animals appear hanging. Here we no longer distinguish the man from the animal, the dead from the living. This totally disfigured and mutilated body, at the border of disappearance and confused with the flesh, suggests the loss of basic identity and the presence of death. "I am always aware of my mortal condition. And I hate this condition: I never want to die." Bacon feels touched by the smell of death and by the violence of life, in which "each one lives to eat the other" (Bacon cited by Sinclair, 1993/1995, 47). Bacon exposes in his work something of death and real incompleteness when he states: "There is always a sense of death in people when they see my paintings... I may carry this feeling of death all the time... I always surprise myself when I wake up in the morning" (op. cit., 78). In this artwork, the distortion is of such magnitude that it borders on the transformation into hallucinosis, related to a primitive catastrophe due to an anxiety of primordial annihilation, the subject finding no internal continent capacity, reintroduced in the form of an 'unnamed terror'. This canvas is clearly the representation of a catastrophic emotional experience: terror and pain in its pure state.

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Biography

Luís Delgado studied clinical psychology at the Institute Henry Piéron – Université René Descartes, Paris V and is a professor at Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada – University Institute – Lisboa, where he teaches methodology and projective techniques in clinical and teaches master and doctoral seminars. His greatest interest lies in the study of the psychodynamics of creativity and in psychoanalysis applied to artistic and literary objects. He has published two books on this subject and several articles in national and international journals. Luís Delgado is psychoanalyst and psychotherapist and, in addition to clinical practice, gives training to the students of his association of psychoanalysis – Associação Portuguesa de Psicanálise e Psicoterapia Psicanalítica – and promotes clinical cases supervision groups in a dynamic perspective. He is full member of Applied Psychology Research Center Capabilities & Inclusion – ISPA – University Institute, which provides investigation of psychological and social problems.

WHAT IS A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST? INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Prof. Dr. Michael Wang

Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Leicester (United Kingdom)

Abstract

There are significant variations in the characteristics, role, function, activity and training of the clinical psychologist across the globe. This talk will review these in the context of international cultural and historical factors. Professional clinical psychology in China, Russia, Australia, the UK and the USA will be described and discussed within the context of national healthcare systems, culture and politics. What should be our frame of reference and criteria when comparing these professional profiles? An attempt will be made to summarise commonalities in roles and definitions across nations and cultures and to evaluate whether certain characteristics are more helpful than others.

Keywords: *Clinical psychology, international, profession, healthcare.*

Biography

Michael Wang is Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology and former DCLinPsy Course Director at the University of Leicester. Although he takes a broad bio psychosocial approach to clinical problems, he has particular training and expertise in cognitive behavioural therapy and is a recognised consultant clinical neuropsychologist. He is a former Chair of the Division of Clinical Psychology of the British Psychological Society and has broad knowledge and experience of the profession and of training at national level. He is Chair of the Association of Clinical Psychologists UK.

He holds Visiting Professorships at the Universities of Madras (India), Anamalai (India), Xi'an (China), Ryazan (Russia) and is a Fellow of Madras Medical College.

He has a research interest in psychological aspects of anaesthesia and surgery and in 2015 was awarded the Humphry Davy Medal by the Royal College of Anaesthetists in recognition of this work.

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