

## Section II (Childhood and Adolescence) Report for 2010 - 2011

Section II Overview: Section II welcomes Division 39 members with a special interest in childhood and adolescence. The interest may focus on psychoanalysis, psychoanalytic psychotherapy, or play therapy with children and adolescents; ancillary treatment approaches such as parent consultation, family therapy, or group therapy with children and teens; primary prevention and intervention programs such as therapeutic schools and parent intervention programs; applied psychoanalysis to understand social problems such as youth violence and bullying; psychoanalytic theories of child development and psychopathology; and research regarding child development and treatment efficacy. Membership is open to licensed mental health professionals, professionals in allied fields, and graduate students. The goals of Section II are to provide presentations and create study groups in order to disseminate information about psychoanalytic models of development and treatment, provide networking opportunities, and create a sense of community between likeminded professionals.

### Officers (partial listing):

President: Jill Bellinson, Ph.D.

President-Elect: Norka Malberg, Ph.D.

Past President: Richard Ruth, Ph.D.

Secretary: Susan Fabrick, Ph.D.

Treasurer: Toni Vaughn Heineman, D.M.H.

Membership Chair: Diane Ehrensaft, Ph.D.

Representative to Division: JoAnn Ponder, Ph.D.

### Regional Conference in October 2010: **Where the Wired Things Are: Children and Technology in Therapy—An Exciting Age for Children, A Scary Age for Parents and Therapists**

Section II expanded its activities beyond Division 39 meetings, became involved in regional conferences, and hopes to sponsor more such programs in the future. On October 2, 2010, Section II and the *Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy* cosponsored their second conference in New York City. Approximately 90 attendees listened to presentations and participated in discussions about children and technology in therapy. The conference opened with Techexpo, a technology exposition in which attendees circulated among booths staffed by young people who explained and demonstrated technology such as text messaging, video games, and FaceBook. This was followed by keynote speaker Sherry Turkle presenting “Cyberinimacy/Cybersolitudes.” Her presentation described how self-identity has changed with innovations in technology, and how connections have evolved so that we are now more connected than ever in history, yet more alone.

After a delicious lunch with networking opportunities, attendees saw a live demonstration by a 16-year-old high-school student, Molly Seligman. She showed everyone her FaceBook page, then demonstrated her use of the internet to do her personal and academic work while staying in contact with friends. The afternoon concluded with two panels of presenters. Dan Gensler, Norka Malberg, Brenda Lepisto, and Larry Zelnick

presented clinical examples of their work that included technological uses and dilemmas; Stephen Seligman and Charles Soule served as discussants. The speakers described their use of Instant Messaging, text messaging, MySpace, and eLife games, and talked about how the use of technology both helped and challenged their clinical work. The conference was a fascinating and informative beginning to the ongoing discovery of how technology has drastically changed the world and the inner lives of the children whom we see in treatment. Concurrently, the conference showed the ways that child therapy has remained the same in every epoch.

**Panel at Division 39 Spring Meeting in April 2011: Mentalizing Matters: Reflective Functioning in Unexpected Places**

Section II sponsored an invited panel at the Division 39 Spring Meeting in New York in April 2011. The speakers described innovative programs that offer primary prevention and intervention for traumatized and socioeconomically disadvantaged mothers and their at-risk children. Arietta Slade began with a presentation on “Minding the Baby: Enhancing Mentalization in Traumatized Mothers and their Families.” She described a program that she helped to develop in New York, in which trained professionals makes home visits on a regular basis with a designated mother and her child. The home-based observational model is similar to that described in the seminal paper by Selma Fraiberg and associates, “Ghosts in the Nursery,” which poignantly elucidated the intergenerational transmission of trauma. Dr. Slade presented material from sequential visits with one traumatized mother, who had been both a victim and a perpetrator of violence, and her infant son. By asking questions, sharing observations, making comments, and providing attuned responses, the home visitor was able to increase the mother’s emotional attunement and reflective functions. The mother’s improved mentalization capacities, in turn, mediate the psychosocial risk to the infant.

The next speakers were the husband and wife team of Tony and Hillary Hamburger of Johannesburg, South Africa. With minimal financial resources and little psychoanalytic training available in the area, they nonetheless developed a number of creative programs in a neighborhood ravaged by AIDS, homelessness, malnutrition, and crime. Their presentation, “Bringing Emotional-Mindedness to a Medical Clinic, a Community Nursery School, and a Mother-in-Jail Program,” again focused on the importance of facilitating mentalization capacities to help increase children’s emotional resilience. The panel, which was chaired by Jill Bellinson, was well attended for a Sunday morning. The attendees were emotionally moved and professionally awed by the hard work, dedication, and innovations of all three speakers—our colleagues in the trenches. Currently, planning is underway for the panel to be presented at the next Spring Meeting, which will be in April 2012 in Santa Fe.

**Lifetime Achievement Award: Anni Bergman, Ph.D.**

During the Spring Meeting in New York in 2010, Section II members honored our esteemed colleague, Anni Bergman, with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Her prior autobiographical lectures have disclosed her early experiences of loss and “otherness.” Dr. Bergman left her home in Austria as a young adult following the Nazi invasion in 1939, and immigrated alone to the United States. She eloquently described how finding

the new, and recreating the old, became intertwined themes in her life and work. She is among those child analysts who began their careers as teachers, earning a degree in music and early childhood at UCLA prior to obtaining her doctorate in psychology.

Dr. Bergman moved to New York and began working with Margaret Mahler in 1959 in observational studies of mothers with normal babies and toddlers. This work culminated in the classic object relational text, *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant*, coauthored by Mahler, Bergman, and Fred Pine. In addition to studying typical development in children, Dr. Bergman helped to expand the boundaries of psychoanalytic treatment in a long-term project with autistic and psychotic children. She was involved in the creation of an innovative center in which very disturbed children from Harlem were treated using object relational principles. More recently, she helped Beatrice Beebe, Phyllis Cohen, and others to establish the World Trade Center Project. As a primary prevention and intervention program, it offers support groups and parent-infant bonding consultation for mothers widowed on 9/11/2001.

In addition to authoring numerous publications, Dr. Bergman has been instrumental in teaching and training other clinicians. She is associate professor at the NYU Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, a founder and co-director of the Parent-Infant Training Program at the New York Freudian Society (NYFS), a training and supervising analyst at NYFS, and a fellow at IPTAR. As someone who has continued working, volunteering her time, thinking creatively, and offering professional presentations long after many colleagues have retired, she remains a teacher and source of inspiration to all of us in the field of child development and psychoanalysis.