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Contents & abstracts

Focus

The Father Figure and its Functions

M.G. Fusacchia. **Introduction.** *Richard & Piggie*, 23, 1, 2015, 1-13.

M. Balsamo. **Father Images in Contemporary Narrative.** *Richard & Piggie*, 23, 1, 2015, 14-22.

What father image do we receive from contemporary literature? A brief study of a few literary texts gives us a highly variegated picture, ranging from the father nostalgia characterising certain forms of Western literature to the fatherly excesses and violence present in some of the texts emerging from Arab culture. The hypothesis advanced in this article is that this differing reality is the result of various factors. These range from a relationship with history, power and change that is either lived or rejected as a threat to identity, to the nexus between the effects of culture and the constructions of an operative “father”, whose imago – expressing either absence or homicidal violence – would represent the lack of a future that every failed working-through forces upon the human subject.

R. Roussillon. **Father Figures: Pleasure in Difference.** *Richard & Piggie*, 23, 1, 2015, 23-36.

The author of this article proposes a formulation of the father function during child and adolescent psychic development that takes the concept of pleasure in difference advanced by D. W. Winnicott as its starting point. In this work, the father figure as signifier of the pleasure taken in difference is referred to a complex meeting-point that unites the residue of the primary homosexual relationship with the mother’s specific sexual attraction towards her partner. The father is “discovered” when he is presented by the mother and by her desire. It is up to the real father to “deal with” this unassimilable remnant that is linked to the impact of feminine sexuality both on the mother and on maternal care. It may be said that the part of the primary relationship with the mother that remains to be integrated will be “transferred” into the relationship with the father, producing – by virtue of its connection with the specific nature of the real father’s responses to the demands of this task – the transference or psychic construction that is called “imaginary” father. This is the father function’s first important challenge: to introduce the pleasure taken in and from difference. This is also the opening to the “capacity to be alone while someone else is present”, which signals the ability to begin to reach beyond the first mirror relationship.

F. Mancuso. **Son and Father: the Story of a Difficult Love.** *Richard & Piggle*, 23, 1, 2015, 37-51.

The author writes about the father figure relating directly with an own son. It is difficult, during a male child's development, to find a space between the dominating figures of the "good enough mother", on the one hand, and the Oedipal parents, on the other: a space in which to insert the figure of the dyadic father and emphasise the dangers but also the importance of this area of experience. If one accepts the figure of the dyadic father or the dimension of "primary fatherliness", it becomes necessary to consider not only a conceptual and theoretical adjustment but also a clinical one. In short, one poses the problem of how to consider the adolescent's expression of a vast range of libidinal and aggressive feelings towards the father and those who represent him either socially or in transference.

B. Carau. **Fatherliness in Couples. Notes for Discussion.** *Richard & Piggle*, 23, 1, 2015, 52-65.

This article explores the possibility of looking more closely at fatherliness or, in any event, the position of the father from the parent couple's point of view. This both at a theoretical level and as it is experienced in clinical practice. It is a jointly lived aspect that finds its expression in that part of the parent couple's relationship with the child where the child builds his/her father image or the father's symbolic function begins to develop in the child. A shared pattern of fatherliness that also includes a shared value system with a boundary-defining function that establishes and structures an original couple "Super-Ego" over time. Such a pattern begins to form when the couple starts to make choices governed by that particular bond and it accompanies the couple in their developmental journey. Through their unconscious alliances (Kaës), the couple establish an inter-subjective psychic structure where "fatherliness" finds its own shared pattern.

D. Lucarelli. **Comments on Bachisio Carau's "Fatherliness in Couples".** *Richard & Piggle*, 23, 1, 2015, 66-71.

In turning his attention to "fatherliness", Carau seeks to investigate it as a jointly lived aspect of a couple's unconscious constellation. Through the presentation of clinical material relating to a couple's psychotherapy and their son's parallel therapy, he shows how the therapy served the necessary purpose of creating a third area and constituting a bridge that could allow access to a father representation.

Readings

G. Regazzoni Goretti. **Journeying through the Chapters of Bion's Sources by Hinshelwood and Torres.** *Richard & Piggle*, 23, 1, 2015, 72-92.

L. Masina. **The new Psiche.** *Richard & Piggle*, 23, 1, 2015, 93-96.

Book reviews