



Volume 31, Number 1, January-March 2023

Contents & abstracts

Focus

Learning processes and difficulties in learning

Iannotta L. **Some notes on learning in psychoanalysis.** *Richard & Piggie*, 31, 1, 2023, 1-11.

Retracing the theme of learning in Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Wilfred R. Bion and certain post-Kleinian psychoanalysts, the author proposes an interpretation of learning difficulties that refers to the psychoanalytic theoretico-clinical model of the mind's functioning: a complex one.

The psychoanalytic approach makes it possible not only to consider the ability to think – and, therefore, to learn – as the result of both cognitive and emotive functions but also to draw a clear distinction between sensations, emotions and thoughts, and to highlight what can insidiously interfere with development and what can foster it.

Ferrigno MP. **From chaos to form. Connections that open the door to life or shut life out?** *Richard & Piggie*, 31, 1, 2023, 12-21.

The author uses an experience of Infant Observation and two clinical excerpts to highlight the emergence from the total chaos of life's beginnings and very early traumatic experiences. An emergence so as to evolve towards that construction of the mental functions that will allow every subject to become the real, human being that he/she will be able to be by opening him/herself to thought and forms of developmental learning.

Bernetti R, Falanga S. **“The person who gets it wrong is not wrongly made”. ADHD and SLD: a challenge for psychoanalysis.** *Richard & Piggie*, 31, 1, 2023, 22-32.

The article presents an excursus on the literature and current perspectives relating to attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, dysorthography, dysgraphia and dyscalculia (SLD). Despite the numerous studies carried out in this area, debatable issues regarding the origin, diagnosis and treatment of A.D.H.D. and S.L.D. still persist. The treatment proposed in the Guidelines published by the Italian Society of Child and Adolescent Neuropsychiatry (SIN-

PIA – *Società Italiana di Neuropsichiatria dell'Infanzia e dell'Adolescenza*) provides for specific forms of intervention based on a conception of these disorders as being genetic, neurobiological and cognitive in origin.

The psychoanalytic approach presented here offers a critical reading of the neurobiological hypotheses and correlates these cognitive disorders to very early alterations in relations that have an impact on emotional regulation, as well as the ability to learn and think.

Paluzzi C. **Learning disorders and transference onto the body.** *Richard & Piggle*, 31, 1, 2023, 33-44.

This article seeks to demonstrate that learning difficulties can be traced back to the problems linked to thinking disorders. The theoretical models formulated by A. B. Ferrari and I. Matte Blanco were the foundations on which R. Lombardi then built the concept of a patient's transference onto his/her own body: this within a model of intervention for tackling the ever more frequent problems caused by Body-Mind dissociation. The clinical vignette presented by the author offers a demonstration of this mode of intervention based on the abovementioned theoretical concepts. It is particularly important to highlight how the work of "coring" that is permitted by this technique allows analysts to shorten the child's recovery time: something extremely important for a growing personality.

Balducci P, Frangipane C. **Learning to read and write: from the specific disability to a more defined representation of self.** *Richard & Piggle*, 31, 1, 2023, 45-54.

This article proposes a treatment model that holds together both the subjective dimension of the difficulties expressed by young patients with learning disabilities and the inter-subjective one. The choice of intervention type was guided by the conviction that the parents and the school and life environment play a fundamental part in the malaise, the recovery and, at the end of the day, the well-being of children.

Going beyond quantitative assessments of deficiency in performance and the remedial work to improve the latter and paying attention, instead, to what the symptom signifies and how it is connected to the complicated interweaving of experiences and relationships will foster a virtuous circle connecting all the levels involved in the thinking processes.

The authors see learning disabilities as something resulting from a missing function that is linked to an incomplete or inadequate integration of various components of inner and outer experience.

De Lorenzis R. **"Help division!": Difficulty with mathematics and separation anxiety.** *Richard & Piggle*, 31, 1, 2023, 55-64.

This article offers a series of reflections on the part that mental functioning can play in school learning, either as a facilitating factor or as an obstructive one. Exploration of the learning processes must not be reduced to a two-dimensional perspective that only involves the cognitive level and school assessments, since the very term 'process' refers to a dynamic sequentiality – marked by complexity and an interconnection of factors – that is now well recognized, partly thanks to the contribution made by the neurosciences.



The psychoanalytic lens made it possible to analyse some educational difficulties in a young female patient as indicators of profoundly knotty emotional problems and to correlate them symbolically to the quality of her first object relations, as well as to the defences activated in response to a profound separation anxiety.

Quintiliani R. **The link between early childhood traumata and learning disabilities.** *Richard & Piggle*, 31, 1, 2023, 65-72.

The author hypothesises that learning disabilities may derive from a syndrome that he calls “hypertrophic mental barrier syndrome”: something through which children who have suffered single or cumulative traumata during their development actively impede the activity of acquiring new knowledge, which is experienced as intrusions into their mind. The teaching adult is experienced transferentially as the parent figure who originally had a relationship with them that upended the container/contained function.

Clinical reflections

Gatti P. **The “knowledge ban” as an inhibition of thought integration in adopted children.** *Richard & Piggle*, 31, 1, 2023, 73-87.

The author presents some significant moments during psychotherapy with adopted children suffering from learning difficulties. This in order to demonstrate how such difficulties are often linked to the impossibility of or the *ban on* knowing about one’s past and one’s own story. What becomes difficult (or impossible, sometimes) is coming into contact with something profound existing in these children’s inner world and referring to a catastrophic anguish that is a residue of experiences belonging to the still *unthinkable* first periods of their lives. Traumatic events suffered, therefore, in relation to which these children have not been able to live that process of meaning-attribution that is the basis of understanding and learning. This veto makes it impossible for them to integrate their own thoughts and thus access the ability to think and to learn. Recovery can occur when a child has the possibility of finding a mind that can welcome and contain the pain and assumes, on his/her behalf, the task of thinking that which is not yet thinkable so as to overcome the state of non-integration and access the marvel of knowing and learning.

Clinical work in Institutions

Bruno D. **Curiosity and fairy stories in support of learning processes.** *Richard & Piggle*, 31, 1, 2023, 88-98.

The fairy tales of the oral tradition can be a useful observational tool in classes with children presenting learning difficulties when the teachers involved want to discover the implicit intrapsychic problems conditioning learning.

Fairy tales satisfy the inexhaustible need to “receive” a story and are the product of the collective unconscious that is formed during phylogenesis in response to the human necessity of having symbolic representations of the processes characterizing life. They name all the emotions and foster the thinkability of conflicts inside a containing relationship: this within the

framework of a structured setting. By virtue of their principal quality of being a transcultural product, they are an appropriate aid to multicultural integration.

The enchanting screen

Gentile A. **Close (2022)**. Directed by **Lukas Dhont**. *Richard & Piggle*, 31, 1, 2023, 99-101.

Cocumelli L. **Mila (2021)**. Directed by **Cinzia Angelini**. *Richard & Piggle*, 31, 1, 2023, 102-103.

Reviews

Recommended reading

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