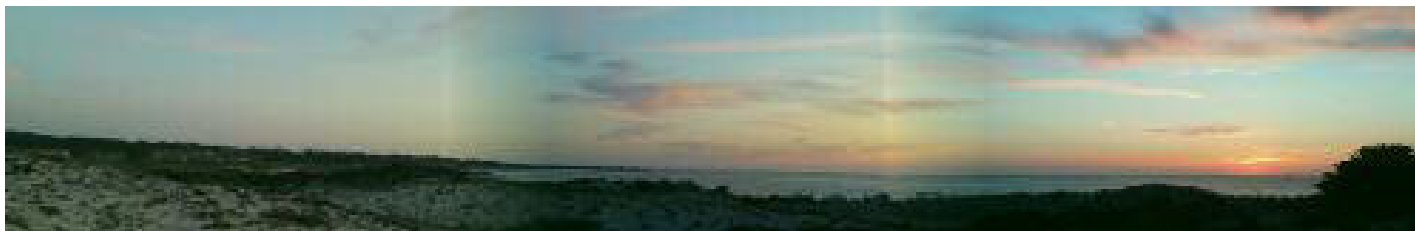


The APPPAH Newsletter

News From the First Frontier: Conception To Birth

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Impressions of APPPAH's 2009 Congress



Talking to friends and colleagues in Germany about the experience I had at APPPAH's 2009 conference, my enthusiasm is still breathtaking, even two month later. It was really stunning to me, as I never before experienced such a genuine fabric of important new information, a respectful and heartfelt dealing with this knowledge. and the encouragement to spread the news into the world. The congress topic melted perfectly into the nature of Asilomar Conference Grounds. Gary Malkin created a lively and touching ambiance opening heart and mind for the important presentations of so many pioneers and visionaries like Thomas Verny, Valerie Hunt, David Chamberlain, Barbara Findeisen, Gladys McCarey, William Emerson, Marshall Klaus and many others. The congress felt very authentic and convincing, like the beaming aura of a pregnant woman. I'm very sure that I can keep my promise to bring at least 3 new members from our European Community to APPPAH!

Dr. Gerhard Schroth, psychoanalyst, Speyer, Germany

My confidence was boosted hugely by the Congress and it was wonderful to meet people I have been following for years like Michel Odent, Dr Verny, Marshall Klaus. I watched slides on their work 27yrs ago when pregnant with my first son. It changed my life and attitudes about birth and parenting and informed my decision to become a midwife. I am determined to stay in touch with the international community and at the same time make a difference here at home. I am once again teaching the 3rd year University of Cape Town med students, introducing them to obstetrics, and am able to use what I learnt at the congress to inform them and keep them interested. I enjoyed the rustic atmosphere of Asilomar, the space. The lunchtime discussions added interest to the gastronomic spread. Most of all I was inspired greatly and felt as if I had come home to my community: the large group of APPPAH members all working together towards creating a better future for our families and our children. Thank you for this amazing gift. I will treasure the memories and new friendships. *Marianne Littlejohn, midwife, South Africa*

I am still moved by the occurrences at the 14th International Congress of APPPAH. It was, as always, an impressive occasion with 60 speakers, lots of workshops and many parallel meetings. A considerable number of ISPPM members took an active part. The atmosphere at the congress was so full of cordiality and friendliness that it was a balm for our concerns and also inspiration for our future.

Dr. Rupert Linder, Germany, ISPPM President

What a Congress! Americans, you are marvellous; you are so warm and enthusiastic. You cotton on so quickly and receptively. And with organizers like yours there is plenty to enthuse about. My hopes rose that APPPAH and ISPPM (our international PPN society based in lovely Heidelberg, Germany) can unite for extra power in bringing children into the world healthy and happy. My experience is that it is as much the personal dynamic—the spirit of these occasions, and the waves from them—that change life, as the thoughts, pictures and words generated. It's happening.

Simon House, U.K. [Ed.: See page 7 for how to keep informed on ISPPM's work.]

Spotlight on a Particularly Popular Congress Session



This was, for this loyal member, one of the best APPPAH congresses ever, from both a content and a venue perspective. But one concurrent session stood out for me: Gerhard Schroth's presentation on Saturday morning, "Trans-Generational Impacts of Prenatal Violence: A Case Study in Bonding Analysis." My reserved Scot heritage—and, perhaps, my own analytic training in the rich heydays of that world at the University of Michigan—probably played a part in my appreciating so much this German psychoanalyst's reserve, his clarity, and the modesty of his claims. But not for a second did his passion fail to reveal itself as he taught us about the work of Jenő Raffai in Hungary, and his own in Speyer, Germany. In Dr. Schroth's elegant case presentation, we learned how a mother becomes able to negotiate the incredibly complex path to profound intimacy with the child inside her, while preparing for a differentiated relationship with the child who will soon be outside of her. Perhaps most compelling of all is the *awareness* of each other that grows between mother and baby, and the *respect* implied as they each learn about the other. Simply grand. In the 20- to 30-session procedure of Bonding Analysis, an expectant mother comes to honour her uterus, contact her unborn baby, experience her baby's responses, clear away the nearly-inevitable unconscious conflicts, and accomplish a preparatory separation from baby. The core concepts of the approach can be found in the 2006 book by Raffai and Hidas (*Nabelschnur der Seele*—translated, *The Soul's Umbilical Cord*), which also acknowledges the profound reach of intergenerational legacy: "In our experience... the life of a human being begins *at least* two generations earlier: in the house of the maternal and paternal grandparents. We inherit not only our genetic predisposition and our chromosomes but also the epigenetic, social and cultural framework, our psychosocial legacy" (p. 17). Plans are afoot to bring Schroth's training in Bonding Analysis to the USA. Stay tuned. *Michael Trout*, www.infant-parent.com

Ein Schlaglicht auf eine besonders bedeutsame Kongressveranstaltung

Dies war, für einen regelmäßigen Teilnehmer, einer der besten APPPAH Kongresse überhaupt, sowohl vom Inhaltlichen als auch vom Veranstaltungsort. Aber eine Veranstaltung war für mich dabei besonders herausragend: Gerhard Schroths Vorlesung am Samstagmorgen: „Transgenerationale Auswirkungen von vorgeburtlicher Gewalt. Eine Fallstudie zur Bindungs-Analyse.“ – Sowohl meine zurückhaltende schottische Art - als auch wahrscheinlich mein eigenes analytisches Training in der großen Blütezeit dieser Weltanschauung an der Universität von Michigan - spielten in meiner tiefen Wertschätzung diesem deutschen Analytiker gegenüber eine große Rolle: seine Zurückhaltung, seine Klarheit, die Vorsicht in seinen Thesen. Im selben Atemzug ließ er keinen Zweifel an seiner Leidenschaft, mit der er von der Arbeit von Jenoe Raffai aus Ungarn und von seiner eigenen in Speyer berichtete. In Dr. Schroths vortrefflicher Fallvorstellung erfuhren wir, wie es einer Mutter gelingt, sich mit dem unglaublich komplexen Weg zur inneren Nähe zu einem Kind in ihr auseinanderzusetzen, während sie sich auf eine andersartige Beziehung zu dem Kind vorbereitet, das bald außerhalb von ihr leben wird. Am überzeugendsten von Allem ist das *Bewusstsein* voneinander und der damit verbundene *Respekt*, der sich zwischen beiden, Mutter und Baby entwickelt, während sie von einander erfahren. Einfach großartig! In dem 20 bis 30 Sitzungen umfassenden Prozess der Bindungsanalyse lernt die Mutter ihre Gebärmutter wert zu schätzen, mit ihrem Baby in Kontakt zu kommen, seine Antworten zu erfahren und den Weg freizumachen von den nahezu unvermeidlichen unbewußten Konflikten und erreicht eine Vorbereitung der Ablösung vom Baby (bereits vor der physischen Geburt). Die Kernkonzepte des Vorgehens finden sich 2006 in dem Buch von **Raffai und Hidas „Nabelschnur der Seele“**, das zugleich die umfassende Reichweite des Vermächtnisses zwischen den Generationen würdigt: „*Nach unseren Erfahrungen beginnt das Leben des Menschen jedoch mindestens um zwei Generationen vorher: im Haus der Groß-Eltern väterlicher- und mütterlicherseits. Wir erben nicht nur unsere genetischen Veranlagungen und unsere Chromosomen, sondern auch die epigenetischen, gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Rahmenbedingungen, unser psycho-soziales Erbe.*“ (S. 17). Es gibt bei Schroth Überlegungen die Bindungsanalyse in die USA zu tragen. Bleibt dran! *Michael Trout*. www.infant-parent.com