



Volume 23, Number 1, February, 2010
E-Newsletter Edition

The INTERNATIONAL CONNECTION

IFTA World Family Therapy Congress in Argentina: Beautiful Buenos Aires, March 17-20, 2010



Returning to South America for a highly anticipated meeting will be the International Family Therapy Association's XVIII World Family Therapy Congress March 17-20, 2010. "Argentina, with its rich heritage of family therapy and its contribution of many leaders around the globe, is a wonderful place for such a congress," said IFTA President William Nichols.

An outstanding lineup of plenary presenters includes Kenneth V. Hardy (USA), Cecile Rausch Herscovici (Argentina), Marie-Luise Conen (Germany), Jaakko Seikkula (Finland), Sandra Stith (USA), and Sergio Bernales (Chile). Ruth Casabianca (Argentina), Scientific Committee Coordinator, reported that the abstracts from around the world have been reviewed and are slotted to fill openings in workshops and other types of program slots with important and relevant contents.

This year's congress theme is "Family Therapy 2010: Sharing in Challenging Times." The focus will be on sharing findings, approaches to problems and ways of coping with them, and helping to heal hurting families, couples, and children in various cultures, and fostering mental health and growth in challenging times. Communicating and networking among therapists, researchers, teachers, and mental health administrators both during the time in Buenos Aires and after

returning to home and community will be a significant part of the congress process. The congress is expected to enhance participant's awareness of how the development of family therapy is rapidly becoming a mutual back-and-forth process in which new ways can and are found from all parts of the world.

Hundreds of participants from scores of countries will gather to learn about old, familiar problems and needs and novel, unfamiliar challenges they have not faced previously. Therapy, education, training, supervision, and personal growth and development emphases will be offered for the enrichment of clinicians, academicians, and administrators and managers, as well as for students, in mental health fields.

The Hosting Committee, coordinated by Adela Garcia (Argentina), has a variety of activities planned both at the headquarters of the congress—the Panamericano Buenos Aires Hotel—and in the community and region.

"A beautiful setting, comfortable, temperate weather, a nation rich in family therapy tradition as the host country, and a stimulating program—what more can you want?" asked a veteran of many IFTA congresses.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE SEEKS SUGGESTIONS FOR IFTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The entire class of 2007-2010 completes its term on June 30 of this year and three are eligible to run for reelection. The fourth, Madhu Kasirian (South Africa) is not eligible for reelection, since she will be completing two three-year terms, the maximum for consecutive service.

The other three: Charlotte Englebrect (South Africa), Snezana Mijalkovic (New Zealand), and Maire Steadman (United Kingdom) are fulfilling one year vacancies. Each of them will be eligible to be nominated for a three year term and, if elected, to serve that term and to be nominated for a second three year term.

The Nominating Committee is open to member nominations. Suggestions may be forwarded to the Secretariat to be forwarded to the Committee.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY RANKED AS ONE OF THE 50 BEST CAREERS

U.S. News & World Report ranked marriage and family therapist as one of the best of 50 careers for 2010. The article explained that there is an expected 14% growth between 2008 and 2018, fueled by an increased acceptance of marriage and family therapy. The field of marriage and family therapy is gaining both in recognition and growth in the United States and around the world. There are two very positive aspects to this report. First, even during these tough economic times, the field of marriage and family therapy is projected to get stronger. Second, this demonstrates that marriage and family therapy is also gaining in market recognition. Getting the attention of such a major publication certainly reflects the dedication and hard work of so many marriage and family therapists.

<http://www.usnews.com/money/careers/articles/2009/12/28/marriage-and-family-therapist.html>

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INTRODUCTION TO BEAUTIFUL BUENOS AIRES



Buenos Aires is the capital city of the Republic of Argentina and one of the most important cities in Latin America. It houses the National Government Offices, the Legislative Chambers and Judicial Powers, the forces of defense and security, and the diplomatic missions that maintain relations with the country.

One of the most interesting attractions of Buenos Aires is its architecture. Its style reflects the influence of the Spaniards, French and Italians in its building and in its parks. The city has wide avenues, mansions, extensive green spaces, hundreds of sculptures and a large quantity of churches; all integrated among houses, office buildings, apartment buildings and modern skyscrapers.

Buenos Aires surprises its visitors with its contrasts; with a mixture of different styles that distinguishes the big cities of the world: elegant, noisy, cultural, lover

of the tango, of endless coffee chats, of nightlife and of course: of football.

GEOGRAPHY

The city of Buenos Aires is located in front of the Río de la Plata, it occupies a surface of 200km² and it is made up of 47 neighborhoods.

The majority of the "Porteños" are identified with the neighborhood where they lived almost all their life. It is not common that tourists visit all these neighborhoods since there aren't specific attractions; but nine of them concentrate most of the tourist attractions: La Boca, San Telmo, Monserrat, Puerto Madero, San Nicolás, Retiro, Recoleta, Palermo and Belgrano.

It is easy to move around the city since it is distributed in blocks of 100 meters long and wide (10,000 square meters surface). There are avenues and streets identified with names of personalities of the cultural, military and political history of the country and of the world as well as places and dates. The financial district, commonly referred to as "La City" or "Microcentro" is located between Avenida Cordoba and Avenida de Mayo and between Avenida 9 de Julio and Avenida Paseo Colón; while the tourist areas of the city are found in the neighborhoods near the "centro" or downtown, and they are: Recoleta, Palermo, la Boca, San Telmo and Puerto Madero.

Check out the "Plano de Buenos Aires" website at www.planodebuenosaires.com for detailed information on streets and attractions.



Susan H. Horwitz (1947-2009)



Susan H. Horwitz, PhD, described as the “heartbeat” of the Family Therapy Training Program at the University of Rochester Medical Center, master teacher, family therapy clinician, and advocate for families, who was particularly devoted to preventing

domestic violence died September 24, 2009 of brain cancer.

Also described as “passionate about helping prevent and treat family violence through research, clinical work, and professional education” by Susan H. McDaniel, PhD, director of the Institute for the Family at the University of Rochester, Dr. Horwitz, an associate professor of psychiatry had been a member of the faculty since 1988. Eric Cain, MD, chair of Rochester’s Department of Psychiatry, not only praised her personal qualities of warmth, intelligence, and self-direction, but also acclaimed her bravery in “illuminating what others would not see” regarding family violence. She developed an effective couples approach for mild to moderate domestic violence. She was widely acclaimed by students and colleagues for her compassion as well as her commitment.

In addition to her clinical, educational, and research work at Rochester, where she taught marital and family therapists, physicians, and other professionals, and work as a family therapist, consultant to school districts and courts in the area, Dr. Horwitz also instructed mental health providers in Finland, Hungary, New Zealand, and the former Yugoslavia.

Dr. Horwitz is survived by her husband, Richard Horwitz, Penfield, NY, two children, Rebecca Horwitz, of Rochester, and Jason Horwitz, Boston, Massachusetts, and other relatives.

“Susan was above all an advocate for the family, her students and her colleagues. In the many years that she served as a faculty member at the University of Rochester, she was always available with love and compassion to those who needed her. No cause was too minor, and all in need received the same intense attention until their needs were met. Susan was a loving and selfless friend, a highly intelligent and endlessly curious and compassionate colleague, and a stimulating and inspiring teacher. She will be sorely missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.”
Judith Landau, M.D., former colleague of Susan Horwitz and IFTA Past-President

Family Therapy in India: An overview

Mudita Rastogi, Ph.D.

The Indian Association for Family Therapy (IAFT) is based in New Delhi, India with an approximate membership of a 110 (V.K. Parsai, September 3, 2009, personal communication). Although I live and work in the Chicago area as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, I maintain a special interest in the IAFT because I was one of its founding members.

According to Bhatti (2003), family therapy has been practiced in India for about 55 years.

While working with patients in a hospital in Amritsar (in north India) Vidya Sagar set up an “outpatient” family therapy unit in 1954. Identified Patients (IPs) and their families were housed in tents as he got families involved with the care of the IP and also disseminated psychoeducation. Despite this promising start the only university level MFT training available in India today is medically focused and is located at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bangalore. (For a detailed discussion of the state of MFT in India please see Rastogi, Natrajan & Thomas, 2005).

My personal interest in MFT resulted from being supervised by a family therapist while completing my master’s in Psychology at Bombay University in the late 80’s. At around that time a group of mental health professionals in New Delhi organized family therapy training workshops taught by a visiting instructor from England. These trainings evolved into a study group comprised of social workers, child development professionals, counselors, and psychologists, and in May 1991 they decided to formally launch the Indian Association for Family Therapy (IAFT).

The IAFT holds workshops, trainings and an annual conference each year. Some recent workshops have included the work of Gottman, Susan Johnson’s Emotionally Focused Therapy, gender issues, child abuse and a culturally sensitive look at adolescence. IAFT members work with issues such as the impact of globalization on families and sex roles (Rastogi, 2009), and the influx of technology and its effect on family relationships. Since Indian clients constantly deal with in-law issues and extended family members MFT models needs to be sensitively modified to be applied to Indian families.

Today, faculty interested in MFT are located in Chennai (Rastogi, et al, 2005), the University of Delhi, Tata Institute of Social Science in Mumbai (formerly Bombay), MS University in Baroda, Christ University in Bangalore, and Berhampur University in Orissa (Carson & Chowdhury, 2000). Despite this, there is not a single department at a university in India that offers a social science degree in MFT. This is partly because the field of mental health in India is dominated by social workers, counselors, and psychologists. These practitioners graduated from individually oriented programs and their family therapy training was often informal. Also, creating new areas of study can be a very complex process (Renu Malaviya, March 11, 2005, personal communication). Further, many Indian MFTs either accept academic positions abroad or do private practice in India. This lack of a university based curriculum in family therapy continues to hurt the field but hopefully this will change soon.

Mudita Rastogi, Ph.D., is a clinical member and Approved Supervisor of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and a licensed marriage and family therapists in the Chicago, IL area.

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Attending the IFTA World Family Therapy Congress?

If so, you're in for a rare treat: You can experience in the plenary sessions contributions of major family therapists who are at the top of their professional careers. You can expect to find some extensive and thought provoking connections and practical guidance among the plenary presentations who come from quite different but somewhat common backgrounds.

Ourselves And Our Practice

That will be the title of the first plenary session of the XVIIIth International Family Therapy Association World Family Therapy Congress in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The first two internationally known presenters—Kenneth V. Hardy, PhD, USA, and Cecile Rausch Herscovici, PhD, Argentina, will deal with different but overlapping areas of concern and life for all family therapists.



Ken Hardy

“While it is difficult to name or comprehend, many of us find ourselves grappling with a nagging sense of emptiness, a void, a perpetual yearning for something else,” says Hardy. He notes, “While many of us experience little difficulty staying in contact with friends and loved ones, establishing meaningful sustaining connections remains more difficult than ever.” His keynote address will describe both the phenomenon and the effect of psychological homelessness, giving special attention to how clinicians

can deal with it both in their own lives and in the lives of those whom they serve.



Cecile Rausch Herscovici

Herscovici's presentation will focus on where we are with regard to evidence based practice and where we need to go. She describes family therapy as “a field which is a science of context, of narrative, and of relationship. Noting that there is a “robust crop of outcome research that shows family therapy works” she acknowledges that the nature of the practice, which is language based and focused on relational processes rather than on clearly defined operational procedures tends to remain marginal to the mental health field. She proposes a systemic practitioner model of therapy that “is informed by quantitative and qualitative research and should ultimately result in the wisdom necessary to decide what to do with whom and when.”



Marie-Luise Conen

Major Contextual Issues and Ethical Dilemmas
The context in which we live, including political upheavals and changes, have such impact on the lives of family members, even after two or three generations, that family therapists have the task of finding ways to work on secrets, taboos, guilt, and victimization around how much the political system influenced the family, says Marie-Luise Conen, PhD, Germany. “Our personal history is much connected to the meaning we

give to this history and the loyalties to our family. The interpretation of the family's past influences our views of the present and the future,” she points out. Her plenary address at the congress will present ideas regarding how family therapists can connect the past to the present concerning issues of political and historical change/upheaval in society and therefore in families.



Sergio Bernales

The relationship between political philosophy and therapy for vulnerable and socially excluded families will be a part of the presentation of Sergio Bernales, MD, Chile. Exploring “Ethical Dilemmas In Psychosocial Interventions From A Contextual Relationship Perspective,” he emphasizes adopting a critical ethical stance and transferring it to the field of family or couple therapy. This includes dealing with the lack of transparency to us of the negative influence of the dominant systems on the socially excluded and the difficulty for those who consult with us to “accept themselves just as they are at that moment and according to the need of change with which they are involved.”

Specific Approaches to Difficult Problems

Dealing with specific difficult problems will be the focus of the final plenary session featuring Jaakko Seikkula, PhD, Finland, and Sandra M. Stith, PhD, USA. Both presenters base their clinical observations and treatment



Jaakko Seikkula



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** enrolment limited to a maximum of 30 participants

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Sandra M. Stith

suggestions on their own research and depth understanding of their respective topics, psychosis in the case of Seikkula and couples violence with Stith.

“pervasive social problem ...has devastating effects on all members of the family as well as the larger society” avers Stith. She and colleagues have developed a treatment program for domestic violence that is offered to single couple and multi-couple groups, which she will discuss and provide evidence of effectiveness for in her presentation. Interesting points are made that violence by the female partner is a strong predictor of violence by the male partner and of increasing levels of injury for the female partner. Although strong reliance has been placed on requiring violent males to secure anger management or therapy, that approach is no panacea for domestic violence. “If the male is the only partner who learns non-violent ways of resolving conflict, the violence in the relationship is not likely to end,” points out Stith.

“Psychotic behavior is the body’s active response to previous experiences at the present moment and [is] not pathological as such,” declares Seikkula. “A lot of evidence exists that most psychotic patients have traumatic experiences in their lives, such as being a victim of accidents, violence, sexual abuse, or poor human relations,” he continues.

These experiences are stored in the body’s memory, often without words. Hallucinations...are very meaningful and should be taken seriously and aimed at mutual dialogue...” The family is involved in the patient’s experiences, sharing the life in which the traumatic experiences have occurred and should always be included in the Need-Adapted approach and Open Dialogue treatment that Seikkula favors. His title succinctly refers to his orientation and work as “Psychosis is response: Dialogue is the best cure for it” as he illustrates with many examples.

Judging from the abstracts presented for consideration for the congress, domestic violence is a concern of therapists across the globe. This

See you in Buenos Aires!




XVIII World IFTA Congress
17-20 March 2010 Buenos Aires, Argentina
www.paragon-conventions.com/ifta2010

Report of the Office of the Secretariat

General Secretary: William Hiebert, DMin



Membership

During December, 14 new members joined and 21 members renewed their memberships for a total of 35. This is an all-time high for one month! The membership now stands at 426.

World Congress Registration

Over 350 people had already registered for the World Congress in Buenos Aires by January 20. If you haven't registered yet, you may still register at: <http://www.paragon-conventions.net/IFTA2010/>

Online Renewal of Memberships Tips

When renewing online, some members have had their credit card declined because of mistakes in entering the information.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

- Be sure that the name on credit card that you place on the bottom of the application is **exactly** the same as the name that is actually on the credit card.
- Be sure that the Billing Address is exactly the same as the address where the bill arrives from the postal service.
- If you are using someone else's credit card, be sure you have the above information accurate, i.e., their complete name and billing address.
- Click the Submit button **ONLY** once. If your card is declined, wait 24 hours and try again.
- If you have difficulty with the application not moving correctly and being able to view it correctly, your browser probably needs to be upgraded.

If you wish to renew both your IFTA membership and your Training Division membership online (which is the fastest and easiest way to do it), simply go to www.ifta-familytherapy.org and click on Application/Renewal and follow the instructions.

Online Renewal of Training Division Membership

Training Division members may renew their Training Division memberships online at the same time as their IFTA membership is renewed. (See above)

2010 Buenos Aires World Congress Website Is Operational

You can find the Buenos Aires World Congress website at: <http://www.paragon-conventions.net/IFTA2010/>. The website contains all of the information necessary for registration, abstract submission, and other details for Congress planning.

Journal of Family Psychotherapy Available Online to IFTA Members

Here is a great member benefit! The *Journal of Family Psychotherapy* is available online to IFTA members. That means you not only will receive a hard-copy issue of the *Journal* each quarter, but you can also get the *Journal* online!

You should have by now received login information from Taylor and Francis. Since we do not always have accurate email information from all of our members, or we may have an error in the database, you may not have received that information.

If you have not received an email with instructions on how to log in to the *Journal's* online access, please contact Julie Ehlers at Taylor and Francis. Her email is: julie.ehlers@taylorandfrancis.com. Just give her your name and address, and tell her that you are an IFTA member who would like information on how to log in to the *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*.

IFTA & Social Networking

The use of social networking sites, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter are sweeping the world and IFTA is becoming a part of the worldwide phenomenon. For IFTA members on Facebook (www.facebook.com) there is an IFTA Group. To join do a search on "International Family Therapy Association." Once to the IFTA group page then click on the link to join. The list is moderated so once you make a request then you will need to be approved by the group moderator.

IFTA also has a LinkedIn (www.Linkedin.com) group. Similarly, search for the "International Family Therapy Association" group and request to become a member. As a member of the IFTA groups you can send messages to other IFTA members and network with people from around the world.

If you have any questions about the site or the program contact William Northey (northey@comcast.net) and he will be glad to answer any questions you may have.



TRAINING MATTERS

*Phoebe Prosky, Coordinator/Secretariat
January, 2010*

This year in Buenos Aires the Training Division will hold its first substantive workshop focused on training. Experiential presentations by several Division members will be followed by a panel discussion. We are excited about this new effort to facilitate exchange among training programs around the world.

Our Traveling Trainers Program has received several requests in recent months to help plan newly developing training programs and participate in conducting them. We have chosen to award travel grants for trainers to go to programs in Kosovo and Romania and are looking forward to working with the organizers in both of these countries. The Traveling Trainers Program enlists volunteer trainers who are members of the Training Division to train without honorarium; the Division funds their travel expenses, and the host country provides room and board. Travel grants are made to developing programs in need of assistance.

Our materials clearinghouse has received a large donation of books from the library of Kitty LaPerriere, formerly Director of Training at the Ackerman Institute in New York. Because shipping them to Argentina and the associated duty fees has proved prohibitively expensive, we are planning to make a list of them for our table in Argentina so Training Division Members can order the ones they want to be sent to them in their own countries. Training Division Members may access these materials for \$1 US per item. Those who are interested in accessing the clearinghouse and are not yet members of the Education and Training Division can join at the membership table at the Congress.

We urge you, as always, to go through your training materials and donate any you are no longer using to the Training Division Clearinghouse for redistribution. These materials are greatly appreciated by developing programs. Either bring them to the Congress or send them to IFTA Training Division Secretariat, 143 Flying Point Road, Freeport, Maine 04032, USA.

For further information on any of the Division programs, please go to the Division page of the IFTA website.

Phoebe Prosky, Secretariat for the Training Division, can be contacted at 143 Flying Point Road, Freeport, Maine 04032, USA. pprosky@suscom-maine.net

USED TRAINING MATERIALS NEEDED

Please bring any gently used training materials that you want to donate to the division to the Argentina congress. They will be made available to division members at our table at the congress. Recycle and disseminate systemic thinking at the same time!

You may also send materials to me at the above address.

SEE YOURSELVES AND YOUR FRIENDS IN ACTION AND AT PLAY AT IFTA CONFERENCES!

Photographs of IFTA International Congresses are available for viewing. There are two ways to access the photographs on the web.

Either go to the IFTA website at: www.ifta-familytherapy.org and then click on the link "Photo Gallery" on the left side of the page, or go directly to the conference photo site at: ifta.smugmug.com

Enjoy seeing images from the past conferences in Slovenia (2009) Porto (2008), Iceland (2006), Washington, D.C. (2005), Istanbul, Turkey (2004); Bled, Slovenia (2003); and Porto Alegre, Brazil (2001). Copies of many of the images are available through our IFTA photographer, Pamela R. Lessing Friedman.



Judith Landau and William Nichols, past-president and president



Participants at the Slovenia World Congress, March 2009