

EDITORIAL

Carine Minne and Annie Pesskin

We are delighted to welcome you, our readers, to the 2024 IAFP conference issue of our journal. In it, you will find articles focused on the theme of this year's conference, which was *The Perverse Organisation: Turning a Blind Eye to Sexual Violence*. The conference was held in the beautiful city of Montpellier, a magnificent backdrop to counteract the disturbed aspects of human behaviours presented. A summary of the conference is available in this issue.

Since the previous journal issue, in the last six months the world has continued witnessing a troubling ongoing surge in violent eruptions. The geopolitical tensions in places such as the Middle East and Eastern Europe serve as human-made eruptions, reflecting deep-seated anger, fear, and frustration that have been building for years, even decades. These explosive events, caused by human conflict, could be said to echo the internal turmoil many individuals experience—an overwhelming sense of powerlessness followed by bursts of uncontrollable energy. In therapy, we often explore how these moments of eruption are often signals of deeper unresolved trauma and conflict. The global stage, much like the human psyche, shows us that when emotional pressure is left unaddressed, it can inevitably lead to sudden, violent outbursts, requiring collective efforts for both reflection and resolution. In the awful realm of sexual offending there are regular media reports of public figures in positions of power exploiting their positions and offending. At the time of writing, in the UK, the Archbishop of Canterbury has recently had to resign because of not having proactively prevented a known offender from continuing to offend. Even this Archbishop's planned successor, a Bishop, has just been reported as having knowingly allowed another sex offender to continue to work in the Church, leaving more children at risk. We are also all aware of how sexual offending erupts during times of war, in parallel with the other awful violence of war zones.

The horrors of sexual offending, within organisations, certainly demanded and held our attention during the conference. In the first article, Jean-Marc Sauv , Chairman of the Independent Commission on Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church in France, presented an overview of his investigation. The detailed report, over 2,500 pages long, was published in October 2021 and the shocking revelations exposed the following: wherever they operate, sexual predators lock their victims into relationships of submission and control, fuelling a corrosive silence. Anxious to protect its reputation, the Catholic Church has long refused to recognize abuses by their priests or has covered them up. The personal faults of predators thus coexist with institutional fault lines; the result is the Catholic Church failing to protect children. This requires reforms to discourage the sexual abuse of vulnerable people and the work of

the Commission on Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church in France (CIASE) was convened to do just that. This article explores its findings, and Sauv e movingly conveyed his own sense of unravelling shock as the number of victims coming forward reached well over 300,000.

In the second article, Susan Long describes how her interest in perverse organisations developed, examining this from a systemic angle, where larger organisations of course have systemic dynamics, but that these can include perverse dynamics. Her book, entitled *The Perverse Organisation and its Deadly Sins*, examines several high profile cases through the five perverse indicators which she summarises in her article. These five indicators are: narcissism, denial, accomplices, an instrumental culture, and a seductiveness. It is interesting to have these indicators in mind when reading Sauv e's article as they are as applicable to the world of banking as they are to organised religion.

The third and fourth articles are based on the joint presentation by Ray Galloway and Carine Minne on one of the UK's high profile but never convicted sex offenders, a television and DJ celebrity, Jimmy Savile. Galloway offers the reader a brief overview of the investigation he was asked to undertake into Savile's involvement with one particular hospital in England, which included him interviewing over 200 victims that came forward and the subsequent report that was published in 2014. He subsequently directed the NHS (National Health Service) Savile Legacy Unit, responsible for the oversight and quality assurance of all NHS investigations into Savile around the country, given that the period of sex offending extended to over fifty years, much of this occurring within the health service. Minne responded to Galloway's talk by providing a docu-fiction report for the Criminal Court, as if Savile had finally been arrested and was facing trial, which he never was. She provides a suggested psychiatric and psychoanalytic formulation on Savile, with recommendations, based on her fictionalised accounts of assessing him in prison but using actual quotations by Savile from a variety of interviews of him that are available in the public domain.

Anna Motz, in her article based on female violence and perversion, reminds us of the societal resistance to accepting that women can also be violent and perverse, although in different ways to the violent and perverse manifestations by men. She describes this in relation to women acting out violently on their children. Women, just like men who offend in such ways, albeit differently, have usually been offended against and in that sense, encompass the work of forensic psychotherapists in managing victim as well as perpetrator aspects in patients and prisoners.

Next is an article by Katya Orrell outlining how procedures and protocols intended to provide management of risk in organisations such as prisons and hospitals, can become misused or even perverted in defensive ways to avoid actual necessary engagement with powerful negative emotions evoked and provoked at times of crises. Orrell vividly illustrates this with three powerful vignettes, two based on prison staff and one a patient in the community. She

refers to the difficulties in working within “macho” cultures such as in prisons or in the military, where resilience and omnipotence are encouraged to the neglect of overall care, or the more feminine (maternal) aspects required within organisations. Hope, that lies at the bottom of Pandora’s box described at the beginning of the article, is essential to retain no matter how difficult and negating the defensive acting-out manoeuvres are within such settings.

In the final article, Rushi Bhalla offers us a formulation on the anti-hero of J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series, Lord Voldemort, examining his conception under sexual coercion, his act of patricide, and an examination of his resentment against transgenerational organisation within the oedipal situation. Voldemort had little opportunity to work through the oedipal constellation, which predisposed him to a pathological character development and therefore insufficient opportunity for the formation of a superego. Here, we are reminded of the importance of placing the manifest offensive acts carried out by perpetrators in the context of their histories and within their transgenerational epigenetic inheritance.

In this issue, the regular column *A Day in The Life of*, is a reflection by the two editors of producing each issue of the journal. This is intended to provide the reader and the article submitters and writers with a glimpse of the trickiness of coordinating the work and especially the timelines necessary in the production of each issue. We hope the reader takes in the humorous slant but, nevertheless, can appreciate how frustrating it is when, with little systemic support, timelines are not adhered to, emails not responded to, peer reviews not received back, etc., and how we can end up caught between irritated authors plus readers, and understandably concerned publishers. Despite this, we hope to instil some curiosity and desire for interested future editors and editorial board members to make themselves known to us. It is truly a privilege to edit our journal and we have both learnt so much, we recommend you to consider becoming involved.

In our regular features, two books are reviewed. First, *The Criminal Mind* by Dr Duncan Harding is reviewed by Annie Pesskin who praises not only the fascinating, albeit disturbing, content and his writing style but his creative capacity of weaving together his professional and personal life, rendering the book unputdownable. The second book is *Parole* by Rob McKeon, reviewed by Lesley Took, who describes how clear and accessible it is in explaining many aspects of the wider Criminal Justice System (CJS) as well as what it is like to be a parole board member. The author writes about a number of key areas as well as the changes implemented since the Covid pandemic, consequent lockdowns, and parole board hearings via video-link.

As always, on behalf of all our contributors and readers, we would like to thank the patients and prisoners who continue to inspire us and help us towards a better understanding of their plights. It is from them all that we learn the most. We also thank our mentors and colleagues and the support from each other in these ongoing alarming times. We continue to hold onto the hope that the appalling suffering of all those caught up in apparently intractable

conflicts will soon ease and those in leadership positions can find once more the art of listening and of being heard—together. We know that many courageous people are working behind the scenes for this to happen. This, we remain convinced, is the only way for the dehumanised to be rehumanised.