If we are to solve the multiple crises facing human service delivery we need a different way of understanding human nature and human dysfunction, one that incorporates 150 years of accumulated scientific knowledge and clinical wisdom. To understand what we are going to “diagnose” and “prescribe” for our troubled social service and mental health organizations, people need to have a working knowledge about the psychobiology of trauma and adversity, what it does to individuals, particularly when trauma is repetitive, occurs in early development, and is a result of interpersonal violence. Using a computer metaphor, this chapter discusses how attachment is the “operating system” for people, the master program that allows other human functions to work. Trauma disrupts attachment and like a computer virus, wrecks havoc in unpredictable ways, with the total life experience of the person involved. Creating trauma-informed cultures requires radical change in thinking, behavior, and attitudes.

The Experience of the 2003 SARS outbreak as a traumatic stress among frontline health-care workers in Toronto: lessons learned

Robert Maunder, William J. Lancee, Sean B. Rourke, Jonathan Hunter, David S. Goldbloom, Ken Balderson, Patricia M. Petryshen, Molyn Leszcz, Rosalie Steinberg, Donald Wasylenki, David Koh, and Calvin S. L. Fones

in SARS: A case study in emerging infections
The outbreak of SARS in 2003 caused system-wide stress upon healthcare workers in the Toronto region. This chapter presents quantitative data on the psychological trauma experienced by healthcare workers at three Toronto hospitals. Over 35% of survey respondents reported stress response symptoms of clinical significance. Poor sleep, anxiety, and preoccupation with signs of illness were common among healthcare workers. This experience shows that there is a psychological price that accompanies the infection control benefit of decreased interpersonal contact, which should be considered when planning public health response. Psychological support may be a valuable preventive measure early in an outbreak of this type.

The Roles of Love, Attachment, and Altruism in the Adjustment to Military Trauma

Bita Ghafoori and Robert Hierholzer

in Altruism and Health: Perspectives from Empirical Research

Published in print: 2007 Published Online: September 2007
Item type: chapter

This chapter summarizes research on the associations among love in the form of a secure adult attachment, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and altruism. The chapter is organized into five sections. The first section briefly reviews PTSD and its symptom clusters. The second section provides an overview of attachment theory and explores evidence that early childhood attachment patterns endure as adult attachment styles. The third section efforts to link attachment theory to the concept of adult love. The fourth section explores the relationship between attachment styles and the development of PTSD in those exposed to trauma, suggesting that love and secure attachment may protect against PTSD or ameliorate its course. The final section introduces altruistic intent into the adult attachment equation and examines the relationships among altruism, loving attachments, and PTSD.

Introduction

Carol Acton and Jane Potter

in Working in a world of hurt: Trauma and resilience in the narratives of medical personnel in warzones

Published in print: 2015 Published Online: January 2016
Item type: chapter
In the history of war, and especially in discussions of the psychological trauma that can result from constant exposure to war induced injury and death, the experience of medical personnel is strikingly absent. Historically, the focus on combatant trauma has obscured the trauma of those who care for the injured and dying. The introduction examines the historiography of trauma and resilience, of wartime medical care, and theories of life-writing in order to contextualise the chapters which follow. An analysis of memoirs by medical personnel from the Second Anglo Boer War (1899-1902) is also included here.

Temporality and Trauma in American Sci-Fi Television

Aris Mousoutzanis

in Time in Television Narrative: Exploring Temporality in Twenty-First-Century Programming

Published in print: 2012 Published Online: March 2014 Publisher: University Press of Mississippi


This chapter approaches the experimentation of temporality in recent American Sci-Fi TV shows, such as Lost, FlashForward, Fringe, and The Event, in terms of their preoccupation with the topic of psychological trauma. It argues that trauma sci-fi television should be seen as a very self-conscious, “metatextual” television genre that reflects on certain aspects of the nature, function, and history of the medium of television itself. These shows illustrate three aspects of the relationship between television, temporality, and trauma: first, the structural equivalences between trauma and the new media, whose ability to challenge conventional perceptions of time and space has been seen as similar to the structure of traumatic temporality; second, the history of the medium of television itself, which is often theorized in terms conceptually similar to that of trauma, such as “discontinuity,” “rupture,” and “conflict” between older and new media; and third, the fact that television serves by now as the major site where collective tragedy and historical trauma are witnessed, experienced, or even registered as traumatic in the first place.

Change of Paradigm

Ana Antić

in Therapeutic Fascism: Experiencing the Violence of the Nazi New Order

Published in print: 2016 Published Online: December 2016 Publisher: Oxford University Press

This chapter traces the transformation of definitions of mental illness, normality, and human psychology, which occurred during World War II. The extreme and random anti-civilian violence of World War II influenced the relationship between psychiatrists and their patients to an enormous extent. The occupation pushed the psychiatric profession toward accepting a more psychoanalytically informed, dynamic therapeutic framework. Wartime files testify that the significance of psychological trauma radically increased after 1941, and that psychiatrists began to redefine the mechanisms and structure of “human nature”. While the pre-war biomedical framework focused on notions of constitutional predilection, degeneration, and incurability of mental illness, the sheer enormity of wartime psychological suffering brought attention to patients’ life experiences, internal psychological developments, and emotional worlds. Psychiatrists gradually proposed that external traumatic experiences may cause mental deterioration, whose origins need not always be organic, and that therapies, consequently, should not rely exclusively on somatic treatments.

Sequencing Trauma Recovery and Reconciliation Interventions in Post-Conflict Settings

Laurie Anne Pearlman and Ervin Staub

in Building Sustainable Peace: Timing and Sequencing of Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Peacebuilding

Published in print: 2016 Published Online: August 2016

This chapter offers six general principles for trauma-related interventions and reconciliation and their sequencing following group violence: (1) communities must be active partners; (2) victimization, violence, and trauma frustrate basic, universal psychological needs; (3) perpetrators are also wounded; (4) healing helps individuals and groups to engage, which promotes further healing; (5) community recovery is at the heart of individual recovery; and (6) the essence of reconciliation is connections between people and mutual acceptance. Specific proposed interventions are organized by their recommended, sometimes overlapping, sequence. First-wave interventions focus on coexistence, information, and preliminary healing practices. Second-wave interventions focus on further trauma recovery, understanding the roots of genocide and reconciliation, acknowledgement, justice, and deep contact. Third-wave interventions focus on further acknowledgement, meaning and hope, commemorations, helping others, and altruism.
The chapter concludes with a call for attention to staff wellbeing.

The Culture of Hostage-Taking
Valery Tishkov
in Chechnya: Life in a War-Torn Society

Published in print: 2004 Published Online: May 2012
Item type: chapter

This chapter highlights the culture of hostage-taking in Chechnya. The lucrative business of holding hostages for ransom developed among Chechens during the first war, and after the peace agreement, escalated into a full-fledged crisis by 1999. Submitting the subject of hostage-taking to social and cultural analysis has proved difficult, for a number of reasons. First, it was necessary to sweep aside certain popular myths that had been generated around this theme during the Chechen war. Second, the perpetrators of such deeds were not accessible for direct interviews. Third, their victims were often far from ideal sources of accurate information, owing to the intense physical and psychological traumas they had suffered. Finally, the people who liberated the hostages were so biased, both politically and personally, that they were also not very helpful in illuminating the character of the phenomenon.

Casualties
Jonathan Shay
in The Modern American Military

Published in print: 2013 Published Online: February 2015
Item type: chapter

Privation and disease have mainly killed soldiers until very recently. Now that enemy action predominates, faster and better control of bleeding and infection before and during evacuation spares ever more lives today. This chapter focuses on psychological war wounds, placing them in the context of military casualties. The surgeon’s concepts of primary wounds in war, and of wound complications and contamination, serve as models for psychological and moral injury in war. “Psychological injury” is explained and preferred to “post-traumatic stress disorder,” being less stigmatizing and more faithful to the phenomenon. Primary psychological injury equates to the direct damage done by a bullet or shell; the
complications—alcohol abuse, for example—equate to hemorrhage and infection. Two current senses of “moral injury” equate to wound contamination. As with physical wounds, it is the complications and contamination of mental wounds that most often kill service members and veterans, or blight their lives.

The September 11 Syndrome
Guy Westwell

in Parallel Lines: Post-9/11 American Cinema
Published in print: 2014 Published Online: November 2015
doi: 10.7312/columbia/9780231172035.003.0007
Item type: chapter

This chapter studies the treatment of 9/11 as a psychologically traumatic event. A cycle of post-9/11 films, including The Guys and Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close, places the experience of 9/11 in a liberal therapeutic framework. The Guys seeks to show how loss affects not only the rescue services that were given privileged status in much mass media coverage, but also a widely varied New York community. The film offers an early working through of the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)/therapy paradigm, and forms part of the outpouring of therapeutic patriotism. In Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close, the main protagonist's quest to find the meaning of a key that belonged to his father who died in the World Trade Center reveals itself to be a therapeutic journey that enables him to alleviate the symptoms of PTSD, and thereby subject the wider event to the logic of therapeutic nationalism.

Therapeutic Fascism
Ana Antic

Published in print: 2016 Published Online: December 2016
doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198784586.001.0001
Item type: book

In World War II, death and violence permeated all aspects of everyday lives of ordinary people in Eastern Europe. Throughout the region, the realities of mass murder and incarceration meant that people learnt to live with daily public hangings of civilian hostages and stumbled on corpses of their neighbors. Moreover, almost entire populations were drawn into fierce and uncompromising political and ideological conflicts, and many ended up being more than mere victims or observers: they themselves became perpetrators or facilitators of violence, often to
protect their own lives but also to gain various benefits. Yugoslavia in particular saw a gradual culmination of a complex and brutal civil war, which ultimately killed more civilians than did the foreign occupying armies. This book tells the story of the tremendous impact of such pervasive and multi-layered political violence, and looks at ordinary citizens’ attempts to negotiate these extraordinary wartime political pressures. In doing so, it examines Yugoslav psychiatric documents as unique windows into this harrowing history. It provides an original perspective on the effects of wartime violence and occupation through the history of psychiatry, mental illness, and personal experience. Using previously untapped patients’ case files, state and institutional archives, and the professional medical literature of the time, this book explores the socio-cultural history of wartime through the eyes of (mostly lower-class) psychiatric patients. Furthermore, it examines how the experiences of observing, suffering, and committing political violence affected the understanding of human psychology, pathology, and normality in World War II and post-war Balkans and Europe.

Conclusion
Ana Antić

in Therapeutic Fascism: Experiencing the Violence of the Nazi New Order

Published in print: 2016 Published Online: December 2016
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198784586.003.0008
Item type: chapter

This chapter examines the social and cultural consequences of World War II violence and dislocation, and reflects on the long-term transformations which resulted from the experiences of the 1940s. It places the Yugoslav case study in a broader regional and European context, and proposes to look at the 1940s as a whole, bridging the divide that exists in European history before and after 1945. At the same time, it discusses the role of psychiatrists and psychiatric and psychoanalytic arguments during the 1990s wars of Yugoslav succession, and places these recent political uses of psychiatry in a broader context of violence, professionalization, and state-building.