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"Guard your Soul" Mental Health among Women in Israel

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**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON IMMIGRATION, GENDER AND MENTAL HEALTH:
A GLANCE INTO A MULTI-CULTURAL SOCIETY**

Rakefet Zalashik & Nadav Davidovitch

Jewish psychiatrists' attitude towards mentally ill women in Palestine and Israel was characterized by complexity from the beginning of their professional activity. The aim of the article is to examine the psychiatric profession approach in 'Eretz Israel' to mentally ill women from a historical perspective. The article focuses on three periods and three therapeutic practices. The first period deals with schizophrenic women who belonged to the so called pioneer (Halutzim) newcomers who were treated by the psychiatrist Herrmann Heinz, the director of 'Ezrat Nashim' psychiatric asylum, at the end of the 1930s. The second period relates to mentally ill women who were hospitalized in private institutions, and treated with electro-convulsive-therapy in the mid 1940s. The last part examines mentally ill women who were treated by the psychiatrist David Bental (Blumental) and were lobotomized at the beginning of the 1950s.

The paper presents the psychiatrists' attitude towards their female patients, and analyzes it in relation to concepts of body and gender as expressed in the unique medical, social and cultural context in Palestine and Israel. In addition to the gender axis, another central theme in our discussion is the fact that both patients and psychiatrists were immigrants. The immigration is a known "stressogenic" component in the field of mental health, and indeed, some outbreaks of the cases presented were a reaction to immigration to Palestine/Israel. The issue of immigration is also related to the cultural construction of disease and the treatment of mental illnesses. We aim to present the values and norms by which the psychiatrists treated pioneer women, immigrant women from Germany and Baghdad, and the cultural construction of mental disease and mental health.

The state of Israel has continued to absorb waves of immigration, while dealing also with problems of mental health. A historical examination of the development of psychiatric treatment, through a gender-oriented perspective, together with the fact that Israel is an immigration society, will contribute, in our view, to the development of a multi-cultural approach, orientated toward women's needs - especially toward immigrant women, in the field of mental health.

**THE DEMONIC WOMAN - HYBRID IMAGERY AS WOMANHOOD:
PRESENTATION IN LITERATURE AND ART**

Anat Moberman

In the last decade of the 19th century the appearance of demonic images in art, combining a woman's head and an animal creature, came to symbolize a new type of a woman, the "Femme Fatale"; the one who is sexually liberated and hence, deadly and seductive. The writers and poets of this time had an important role in changing the presentation of Woman and the result was a change of her appearance, its context and its meaning in the visual arts. Scholars adopted the Sphinx, the Vampire and the Medusa as images for the New Woman. The image of a woman presented as animal-like, vampiric, dangerous and blood thirsty was designed to warn the people of that time against any contact with such a woman. The predatory animal appearance became an indication of the murderous potential hidden in this woman.

AN ISRAELI SEX THERAPIST CONSIDERS A NEW VIEW OF WOMEN'S SEXUAL PROBLEMS

Marilyn Safir

By focusing on the inequalities that exist between men and women as a result of culture, ethnicity, religion, legislation, etc., *the New View of Women's Sexual Problems* brings to the forefront the social inequalities that may produce sexual dysfunction in women in Israel. In addition, the rights to sexual information, comprehensive sexual education and appropriate sexual health care have not been recognized in Israel. The field of sexology in Israel is also relatively young and underdeveloped. Therefore, *the New View of Women's Sexual Problems* focus is extremely relevant for sexologists and sex therapists working in Israel.

SHAME, GUILT AND GENDER

Yoram Ben-Ya'akov

The article reviews the theoretical development of shame and guilt in relation to the similarities and differences of these two emotions, including the relation between interpersonal relationship and proneness to shame and guilt. In addition, the differences between men and women experiencing shame and guilt and how these impact on their psychological well being are presented.

THE MOTIVATION AND MENTAL HEALTH OF SEX WORKERS

Bella Chudakov, R. H. Belmaker & Julie Cwikel

Objective: Commercial sex work presents specific mental health concerns. We aimed to study motivation for sex work and mental health issues in a sample of such women.

Methods: Fifty-five consenting women contacted through organized brothels were interviewed using a validated questionnaire and screening items for PTSD and depression.

Results: Eighty-two percent of the women had arrived illegally and had been “trafficked”. All but two were engaged voluntarily in sex work. Seventeen percent met criteria for PTSD and 19% were likely to be clinically depressed. Representative case histories are presented.

Conclusions: Availability of mental health treatment for workers in the sex industry could improve compliance with HIV prevention programs and enlarge options for women to leave the sex industry. Stereotypes of sex workers as always having abused childhoods, or on the contrary, as being always “happy hookers”, are shown to be incorrect.

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS SYMPTOMS AND DEPRESSION AFTER CHILDBIRTH

Ronit Arzi-Sharabani

Literature review on the field of emotional distress after childbirth focused mainly on depression and anxiety disorder. The objective of the present paper is to address the issue of post traumatic distress after childbirth, and to describe the uniqueness of this phenomenon. Based on the frequency of depression symptoms after childbirth and the comorbidity between post traumatic stress disorder and depression, the author suggests that post traumatic distress is distinct and a different construct from the post partum depression.

INTERPERSONAL-RELATEDNESS AND SELF-DEFINITION: A MODEL OF MOOD-SHIFTS VULNERABILITY IN THE TRANSITION TO MOTHERHOOD

Avi Besser

Investigators from different theoretical positions have discussed two major types of experiences that lead to depression: (a) disruptions of gratifying interpersonal relationships, and (b) disruptions of an effective, essentially positive, sense of self. Blatt and colleagues integrated psychoanalytic psychology with developmental-cognitive theory to define a theory of personality vulnerability to depression based on the “anaclitic/dependent” and “introjective/self-critical” dimensions. According to this model, normal development is characterized by a dialectical interweaving of other- and

self-directedness that leads to a flexible balancing of the capacities involved in these two processes. Moreover, adequate coordination between interpersonal relatedness and self-definition is thought to reduce stress and promote psychological well-being. This model assumes that individual differences in the relative emphasis on each of these processes delineate two personality styles - *self-criticism* and *dependency* - each with preferred modes of cognition and coping strategies. An overemphasis on either self-critical or dependency motives results in dysfunctional attitudes and constitutes a vulnerability to depression. The current chapter summarizes a series of longitudinal studies in the context of personality vulnerability in the transition to motherhood, and represents the first attempt at suggesting a psychological model of personality vulnerability and postpartum depression which is consistent with Blatt and colleagues' theoretical framework for personality vulnerability to depression.

**EARLY BONDING OF THE GENETIC MOTHER AFTER A SURROGATE PREGNANCY:
HOSPITALIZATION AT BIRTH USING A ROOMING-IN SYSTEM**

Haviva Sharan, Jacob Yahav, Dan Peleg & Paul Merlob

In surrogate pregnancies the genetic parents have little opportunity for early bonding to their infant, either prenatally (in utero) or in the immediate postnatal period. The purpose of this article is to describe a new method for encouraging early parent-infant bonding after surrogate pregnancy by hospitalizing the genetic mother in the maternity ward immediately after the delivery.

Methods: Two genetic mothers were hospitalized in the maternity ward (rooming-in system) at the Rabin Medical Center in Israel immediately after delivery of their infants by surrogate arrangement. The first birth was a singleton pregnancy with vaginal delivery and the second, a twin pregnancy with delivery by cesarean section. The genetic parents were counseled by a social worker from the adoption agency, starting 3 months before the estimated date of delivery. The parents were referred to the hospital social worker before the delivery. To assess attachment, we observed the parent's behavior toward their children during two daily 15-minute periods of free, unstructured interaction.

Results: The parents showed good primary care-giving functions and established affective verbal and physical contact with the infants. They began to recognize the infants' need and temperament, and exhibited an aura of self-confidence during their interactions. All expressed satisfaction with the method at discharge and reported on reduction of their fears about returning home with the infants.

Conclusions: We believe that early hospitalization of the genetic mother in surrogate delivery may be desirable to establish good and safe early mother-infant bonding, and that it should be considered for adoption as regular hospital policy. Further randomized studies with larger samples over a long term are warranted.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POLYGAMOUS AND MONOGAMOUS MARRIAGES AS THEY AFFECT BEDOUIN-ARAB WOMEN

Alean Al-Krenawi & Vered Slonim-Nevo

A sample of 315 Bedouin-Arab women participated in the study, of them 156 were from polygamous and 159 from monogamous families. All women from polygamous families were "senior wives" - that is, their husband's first wives. The respondents completed The Self-Esteem Scale (SE) (Rosenberg, 1979), The Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) (Derogatis & Spencer, 1982), The McMaster Family Assessment Device (FAD) (Epstein, Baldwin & Bishop, 1983), and The Enrich Questionnaire (Olson, Fournier & Druckman, 1982). The findings revealed that women in polygamous marriages reported lower self esteem and higher levels of somatization, depression, anxiety, hostility, and paranoid ideation than women in monogamous marriages. In addition, they reported more problematic family functioning and less marital satisfaction. The polygamous family structure, along with the economic difficulties that accompany it in our sample, apparently makes a substantial contribution to the impairment of the family functioning of the polygamous household. The implications for intervention are discussed.

POST-TRAUMATIC SYMPTOMS, EMOTIONAL DISTRESS AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN LONG-TERM SURVIVORS OF BREAST CANCER: PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

Marianne Amir, Alona Ramati & Ronit Arzi-Sharabani

The present study assessed the long-term psychological effects in survivors of breast cancer. Thirty-nine long-term female survivors of breast cancer were compared with 39 matched women who had not been exposed to any chronic disease regarding post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), quality of life (QoL), emotional distress and coping styles. Survivors revealed significantly higher rates of full and partial PTSD, scored significantly higher emotional distress, scored significantly lower on physical and psychological QoL, and exhibited coping styles significantly different from those of the control group. PTSD was associated with the coping style of suppression. Multiple regression analyses showed that receiving chemotherapy and diseased stage as well as the interaction between chemotherapy and diseased stage were significant predictors of hyperarousal. The findings show that post-traumatic symptoms are a common sequel after recovery from cancer. Furthermore, findings suggest a conceptual distinction between PTSD symptoms and QoL in the study of long-term effects of cancer.

ACADEMIC STRESS, COPING STYLES AND HUMORAL REACTION

Orly Sarid, Ofra Anson, Arie Yaari & Miriam Margalith

The aim of the present study was to explore the relationships between coping styles and the changes in Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) and human cytomegalovirus (HCMV) specific salivary antibodies caused by academic stress. Fifty-four, first year, female students of nursing and physiotherapy completed pencil and paper questionnaires and concurrently donated saliva samples. The procedures included the Ways of Coping Questionnaire, and scales of physical and psychological well-being. Data and saliva samples were collected one month after the beginning of the first semester (t1), during term examinations (t2-t3), and a month into the second semester (t4). Statistically significant changes in the level of EBV IgG, EBV IgA, HCMV IgG, HCMV IgA antibodies were observed between the first study point (t1) and the first examination (t2) and between t2 and the last study point (t4). The elevation in the antibody levels indicated a compromised immuno-reaction, while a decline in the antibody levels indicated an enhance immno-reaction. Denial coping style seemed to moderate the modulation of HCMV IgG salivary antibodies; while emotion-focused coping was less effective and problem-focused coping was unrelated to changes in specific salivary antibodies.

ANOREXIA NERVOSA AS A CULTURE-BOUND SYNDROME IN THE PERIOD OF GLOBALIZATION - ISRAELI PERSPECTIVES

Eliezer Witztum, Daniel Stein & Yael Latzer

Socio-cultural parameters are currently considered to interact with other biopsychosocial factors in the development of anorexia nervosa (AN). The historical review in the 1st part of this chapter shows that although the first reports of AN appeared in 1873, descriptions of intentional starvation were present throughout history, but were differently interpreted according to the beliefs of the specific era. The current socio-cultural model of AN, described in the 2nd part of this chapter, suggests that societal norms related to the thin body ideal and the importance of physical appearance for success and self-esteem may contribute to the development of AN. We further describe factors supporting the relevance of these socio cultural norms, including the influence of the media, and attitudes of family, and peers. In the 3rd part of this chapter we describe specific AN-related Israeli socio-cultural influences, including the reasons for the elevated rate of AN in the Kibbutz, the decreased rate of AN in Jewish religious populations, and the patterns of AN among Arabs.

THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER UPON MENTAL DISEASES AND THEIR TREATMENT

Anat Shalev & Doron Todder

Gender affects the development of different mental illnesses, as well as their manifestation and treatment. This chapter will present an overview of gender differences and their influence upon mental disorders. We will begin by describing PMS and thereafter will depict the impact of gender on other disorders such as schizophrenia, depression and general anxiety disorder. A discussion of the influence of gender on mental health services follows. We conclude with a discussion where we present our recommendations for further action in various domains, i.e. the scientific community, therapists and the community of female patients.

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AND HIGH USERS OF PRIMARY CARE: EXPLORING GENDER DIFFERENCES

Nelly Zilber, Marjorie Feinson & Julie Cwikel

In order to examine the relationship between mental health problems and utilization of primary care services, we interviewed 976 primary care patients, age 25-74, in 8 clinics throughout Israel, using validated psychiatric instruments. One third of the interviewees (31%) received psychiatric diagnoses. Significantly more women than men had diagnoses (34% vs. 25%, $p=.003$). It is noteworthy that this gender difference is smaller than in the general population and among users of mental health services.

Regarding the relationship between mental health problems and utilization patterns, more diagnoses were found among high than average users: 36% vs. 27% ($p=.005$). Concerning gender, this significant pattern was found among males: 33% vs. 19% ($p=.003$). Findings for the women revealed a trend in the same direction, but it was not significant (37% vs. 32%).

Primary care providers need to be aware of these different gender patterns in order to provide the most effective treatment responses.

FEAR OF RAPE AMONG FEMALE ISRAELI COLLEGE STUDENTS

Rachel Lev-Wiesel, Marianne Amir & Liora Ochaion-Rozenberg

This study is an attempt to examine to what extent the fear of rape exists among women and what role do previous traumatic events play, especially regarding prior experience of sexual assault. The study also examines the anxiety trait as a predictor of the level of fear of rape among young women in Israel. A random sample of 100 female college students, ages 21-27, filled out the following questionnaires: fear of rape questionnaire,

traumatic life experience questionnaire, sexual assaults categorization questionnaire and anxiety trait questionnaire.

The results indicate that most women do perceive that the threat and danger of rape exists and thus take various precautions, especially in situations when they are alone, outside their homes, in the night hours and among unfamiliar men. In addition, there is no difference between women who experienced sexual assault and others who did not undergo these experiences, in terms of their fear of rape. However, there was a significant, positive association between the accumulated effect of traumatic events as well as the quantity of sexual assaults, and the women's level of fear of rape. In addition, the anxiety trait foretold the level of fear and served as a mediating variable between the traumatic life experiences, the sexual assaults, and the level of fear of rape. A psycho-social model was suggested to explore the phenomenon of fear of rape.

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH AMONGST BATTERED WOMEN IN THE NEGEV: BEDOUIN VS. JEWISH

Shir Daphna-Tekoha, Rachel Lev-Wiesel & Julie Cwikel

The study aimed to examine the relationship between personal resources and psychological symptoms of distress among battered women, Bedouin vs. Jewish. A sample of 612 Jewish (n = 432) and Arab-Bedouin women (n = 180) in the Negev were administered self-report questionnaires regarding domestic violence, mental and physical health and personal resources. Of the sample 38 Jewish and 91 Bedouin women suffered spousal violence. The results indicated that Bedouin battered women suffered higher levels of depression, anxiety and sleeping disorders than Jewish battered women. The results were discussed in light of the ethnic-cultural context.

TO BE A MOTHER TO A "BATTERING HUSBAND"

Hamotal Gome-Doitshman & Rachel Lev-Wiesel

The study examined mothers of battering husbands' perceptions of their sons. Six women were qualitatively interviewed. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed. Each interview was analyzed individually, holistically, then divided into subject categories and examined with the "grounded theory" system. Three major themes were found, *"The Pendulum Effect"*, *the degree of separateness*, and *the mothers' response to their sons' violence towards their wives*. The findings suggested an intergenerational transmission of violence between spouses.

INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION OF SEXUAL ABUSE? MOTHERHOOD IN THE SHADOW OF INCEST

Rachel Lev-Wiesel

The aim of the study was to examine the psychological dynamics underlying the intergenerational transmission of sexual abuse, and understand why the dynamic of sexual abuse is perpetuated across successive generations. A qualitative analysis was conducted on therapy session transcripts and diaries written during the therapy of 24 mothers who were survivors of incest, and whose children were the victims of incest. The written material was analyzed according to principles of narrative and story analysis proposed by Coffey and Atkinson (1988). Four types of mothers were defined: The Unaware mother characterized by a complete lack of cognitive knowledge of the sexual abuse occurring in her home; the Covert Accomplice characterized by latent cooperation with the sexual abuse perpetrated by her husband; the Instigator characterized by overtly or covertly encouraging her spouse in the raping of her daughter; and the Common Fate mother characterized by sharing a common fate with her daughters. The types of mothers are discussed according to Bowen and Minuchin's intergenerational transmission views, and according to Loquet and Hendrix's spouse selection and marital relationship perspective.

SENSE OF CONTROL, MODES OF CONTROL AND THE RELATIONSHIP TO QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG WOMEN WITH BREAST CANCER

Orit Roiz

This review describes the relationships between personal characteristics (such as sense of control and modes of control) that affect the quality of life (QoL) among women after breast cancer diagnosis. The Shapiro theoretical model of control (1994) suggests a number of dimensions of the control variable: these include the sense of control and various modes of control, both positive and negative which are described.

QUALITY OF LIFE OF SINGLE MOTHERS BY CHOICE

Dorit Segal-Engelchin & Yochanan Wozner

Although single motherhood by choice has become prominent in the last three decades, little is known about the influence of this family structure on the quality of life of the mothers. To address this gap, the current study examined the quality of life profile of 61 single mothers by choice in comparison to that of 53 divorced and 60 married mothers in Israel. The findings indicate similarities between the three groups in the psychological, physical, social, and cultural components of quality of life. However, after controlling for economic and paternal involvement variables the quality of life of single mothers by

choice was significantly higher in all four components than that of married mothers. No significant difference was found between the divorced mothers and the single mothers by choice or the married mothers. Implications and conclusions are discussed.

WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH FROM A MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Julie Cwikel & Dorit Segal-Engelchin

Israel is an immigrant society comprised of diverse ethnic groups differentiated by variables such as emigration history, health status, educational level and economic status. The major question addressed in the current study is whether differences in women's mental health status are related to ethnic group origin, per se, or to the associated socio-demographic variables? The impact of ethnic group origin, social support, health status, education and economic status on mental health outcomes was examined in a random sample of 522 women residing in the Negev region of Israel. The findings indicate that social support, economic status, health status and ethnic group origin are important in shaping women's mental health status.

DEMORALIZATION AMONG ELDERLY WOMEN IN ISRAEL

Anat Shemesh Sabatello, Tzvia Blumstein, Ilya Novikov,
Emma Smetannikov & Itzhak Levav

Demoralization is a state of psychological predicament from which the individual sees no exit. It is a measure of emotional distress. The Ministry of Health through the Central Bureau of Statistics conducted a national survey on the population 60 years of age and over. In this study, women were found to have higher demoralization scores than men. Differences were present in all age groups, marital statuses, educational levels, continents of origin, religious affiliations and periods of immigration. Engagement in physical activities, voluntary work, hobbies, and cultural activities was associated with lower demoralizations scores. Demoralization is an efficient indicator of the psychological status of a health service user, thus suggesting where interventions are indicated.

WOMEN'S RETIREMENT FROM WORK

Orit Nuttman-Shwartz

Based on the new trends of women's employment in Western societies, especially in Israel, this chapter focuses on the uniqueness of women's retirement phenomenology. Various theoretical concepts are used to shed light on adjustment factors and on the retirement processes. Among the studied factors are the meaningful effects of the economic status on the retirees, especially those belonging to low socio-economic status.

Research shows that women are considered an "at risk" population at the stage of retirement transition and are most likely to become poor at post retirement. In addition, the chapter stresses the need for comprehensive and updated research on retirement from work for women in Israel.

SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF FEMALE RESIDENTS OF OLD AGE HOMES

Esther Iecovich

Quality of life and subjective well-being of elderly people have been extensively researched in the gerontological literature. A variety of variables were found to affect the subjective well-being of elderly persons such as age, gender, ethnicity, marital and socioeconomic status, health and functional status. Only a paucity of studies examined the impact of environmental factors, such as place of residence, on the subjective well-being of elderly persons. The purpose of the present study is to explore the impact of personal and organizational characteristics on the subjective well-being of female elderly persons residing in old age homes. The study is based on a sample of 464 respondents residing in 48 old age homes. The findings revealed that those residents who were childless, nonreligious, unhealthy, and lived a short time in the old age home reported lower levels of subjective well-being compared to their counterparts. Among the organizational characteristics, the findings showed that old age homes significantly differed in terms of the overall subjective well-being of their residents. Only size of facility, however, was significantly correlated with subjective well-being, suggesting that the smaller the old age home the higher the level of subjective well-being of its residents.