



20th IFTA World Family Therapy Congress in Vancouver, Canada

Former Olympic City to Host IFTA's 25th Anniversary



The place to be for family therapists March 21-24? What about Vancouver, British Columbia in Western Canada? That's where hundreds of family therapists and other interested persons from around the globe will be attending a highly significant meeting of the International Family Therapy Association, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the founding of the association. IFTA's 20th World Family Therapy Congress will feature a rich blending of context and content. Vancouver, a city with a rich heritage of family therapy, links East and West, and offers many fascinating cultural and historical activities in addition to its magnificent natural beauty, as well as providing a gateway between East and West.

Couples Therapy: Advancing the Profession

Responding to the perennial concern with marriage and problems in couple relationships in nations around the world, the program is focused on "Couples Therapy: Advancing the Profession" and offers up-to-date information and guidance to current therapeutic practices with a star-studded cast of presenters.

The Opening Keynote presenter is Florence Kaslow, who will open the congress and set the stage for celebrating IFTA's 25th anniversary. A founder and first president of IFTA, she served on the board of directors for 16 years. In a distinguished career, she has been the president



of several family therapy organizations and conducted workshops in more than 50 countries. Currently, she is president of a consulting firm, director of the Florida Couples and Family Institute, and a Distinguished Visiting Professor of Psychology at the Florida Institute of Technology, as well as the author /editor of a larger number of books relating to family therapy.



Other keynotes are John Gottman and Julie Gottman, Susan Johnson, and John Banmen. John Gottman is world renowned for his work on marital stability and divorce prediction; his 30 years of breakthrough research on marriage and research has been recognized with many major awards. Author or co-author of 40 books, he is the co-founder of the Gottman Institute, where he currently teaches weekend workshops for couples and training workshops for clinicians.

Julie Schwartz Gottman, co-founder and clinical director of the Gottman Institute, designer of Loving Couples Loving Children, a curriculum for couples suffering from the effects of

poverty. She specializes in working with distressed couples, abuse and trauma survivors, those with substance abuse problems and their partners, and cancer patients and their families. As a private practitioner she conducts weekly or intensive marathon therapy



Susan Johnson, a clinical psychologist, researcher, professor, author, and one of the leading innovators in the field of couple therapy, is one of the founders of

Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy (EFT), and will be speaking at the Friday. EFT is a powerful, tested intervention to help repair and build strong loving bonds. In addition to texts on couples therapy, she wrote a 2008 book for the general public, *Hold Me Tight, Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love*. She has received an Outstanding Contribution to the Field of Couple and Family Therapy from the AAMFT and a Research in Family Therapy Award from AFTA, among other honors.

John Banmen, the Director of Training for the Satir Institute of the Pacific, is an internationally recognized therapist, educator, and author, has conducted training programs in a dozen countries in Asia,



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IFTA Announces Family Therapy Training Standards to Qualify for Recognized Status

Guidelines for Family Therapy Education and Training Programs around the world were announced today by the International Family Therapy Association (IFTA). The Guidelines, IFTA Recognized Family Therapy Preparation, were approved by the Board of Directors and were developed in order to provide a structure for education and training programs and to provide a process for family therapy education and training programs to qualify for "Recognized Status."

The Guidelines outline minimum standards for education and training including the components of the education and training provided by training programs and qualifications for supervisors.

Six components comprise basic knowledge and skills necessary to become a marriage and family therapist: Theoretical Foundations; Research; Ethics and Related Professional Issues, Personal Development and Continuing Development. The Guidelines also include minimum standards for Clinical Skill Development including clinical practice and supervision.

This Guideline calls for a minimum of 230 contact hours of theory and substance-based coursework; 250 hours of clinical practice in practica or clinical internship, at least 125 of which should be with relational cases—couple or families; and for a minimum of 100 hours of supervision (individual and group), 25 of which must be directly observed (live or videotaped).

The Guidelines also contain standards for teachers and supervisors and for how an educational and training institution can qualify for "Recognized Status."

and Therapy Factors." Ogden is research director at the Norwegian Center for Child Behavioral Development, Unirand and professor at the Institute of Psychology, University of Oslo, Norway. The aim of the Center is to integrate research and practice in order to increase multi-disciplinary knowledge and enhance clinical competence in the prevention of serious behavior problems among children and youth. He has been director of the research program on the national implementation and evaluation of empirically supported programs for the prevention and treatment of serious behavior problems in children and youth in Norway, a school-wide intervention program based on the Positive Behavior Support model, and is the project leader of a longitudinal prospective study of the social development of children.

Valentin Escudero's topic is "Studying the Process of Building Therapeutic Alliances: Putting Practice Into Research and Research Into Practice." Professor of Psychology and director of the Family Research Unity (a family therapy research and training center) at the University of La Coruna (Spain), he has been an invited professor and visiting scholar at universities in Belgium, the USA, and the United Kingdom. Among other scholarly contributions, he has co-authored *Interactional Perspective to the Study of Process and Form* (2004), *Therapeutic Alliances in Couple and*

Family Therapy (2006), and *System for Observing Family Therapy Alliances* (an observational instrument to assess the quality of the therapy alliance in conjoint couple and family therapy). A credentialed psychotherapist and family therapist, his practice and research interests focus on the study of family therapy process as well as on applying family therapy in the context of social services and child protective services.

See you in Vancouver!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Europe, South America, and North America, and provides extensive supervision for family therapists, psychotherapists, and counselors. He has authored, co-authored, or edited six books, primarily related to the work of Virginia Satir; served on the board of directors of IFTA, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, the British Columbia Psychological Association; and was the founding president of the BC Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. His plenary presentation on the last day of the congress will involve a live interview with volunteers from the audience.

The 2012 congress program offers several novel and significant features in addition to the lineup of plenary speakers. Leading these are four Super Saturday Workshops and a Pre-Congress Research Forum.

The International Connection is an e-newsletter of the International Family Therapy Association (IFTA) and is published twice yearly. The IFTA office is at IFTA, 1800 3rd Avenue, STE 512, Rock Island, IL 61201-8000 USA. Telephone: +309-786-4491; Fax +309-786-0205. William J. Hiebert, Editor and General Secretary, wjhiebert@aol.com Web site: www.ifta-familytherapy.org

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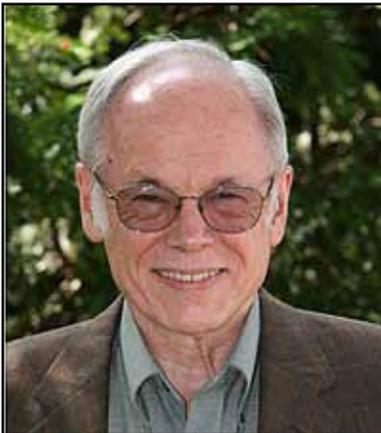
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Research Forum: A Featured Pre-Congress Workshop at Vancouver

"Research in Family Therapy Forum" will be a new event at the International Family Therapy Association's 20th World Family Therapy Congress in Vancouver, Canada, on Wednesday, March 21, 2012, from 9AM to 4 PM. Major presentations dealing with transitions between research and practice and topics focusing on empirical validation of a given approach to practice, predicting outcomes of parent management training, and studying the process of building therapeutic alliances will be made by experts in the field, followed by questions and answers and opportunities for broad discussion.

Douglas Sprenkle (USA) will moderate the forum on "Research in Couple and Family Therapy Based on Randomized Clinical Trials: An Overview of What We



Know and Need to Know," which will feature presentations by Susan Johnson (Canada), Terge Ogden (Norway), and Valentin Escudero (Spain).

Sprenkle, a highly recognized scholarly and professional contributor to the field of family therapy, is reknowned as a co-developer of the Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems, and in recent years has been involved in studying common factors in marriage and family therapy interventions, being first author of a book, *Common Factors in Couple and Family Therapy* (2009). He served 33 years at Purdue University as a professor as well as director of the Marriage and Family Therapy program and director of the Individual, Couple, and Family Therapy Clinic, and authored more than 130 refereed journal articles and book chapters and 10 books. His career honors include the AAMFT Cumulative Career Contribution to Marriage and

Family Therapy Research Award, the AAMFT Significant Contribution to Family Therapy Award, and the American Family Therapy Academy Award for Distinguished Contribution to Family Therapy Research and Practice.

Susan Johnson's presentation is titled "The Empirical Validation of EFT: Twenty years of Findings and Their Clinical Significance. A clinical psychologist,



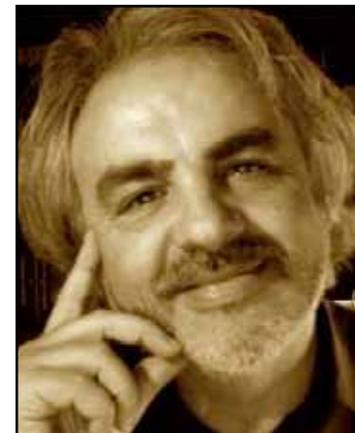
researcher, professor, author, and one of the leading innovators in the field of couple therapy, she is one of the founders of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy, a powerful, tested intervention to help repair and build strong loving bonds. In addition to texts on couples therapy, she wrote a 2008 book for the general public, *Hold Me Tight, Seven Conversations for A lifetime of Love*. She has received an Outstanding Contribution to the Field of Couple and Family Therapy from the AAMFT and a Research in Family Therapy Award from AFTA, among other honors.

Terge Ogden will present "Predicting Outcomes of Parent Management of Training (PTMO): Child, Parenting, Context, and Therapy Factors." Ogden is research



director at the Norwegian Center for Child Behavioral Development, Unirand and professor at the Institute of Psychology, University of Oslo, Norway. The aim of the Center is to integrate research and practice in order to increase multi-disciplinary knowledge and enhance clinical competence in the prevention of serious behavior problems among children and youth. He has been director of the research program on the national implementation and evaluation of empirically supported programs for the prevention and treatment of serious behavior problems in children and youth in Norway, a school-wide intervention program based on the Positive Behavior Support model, and is the project leader of a longitudinal prospective study of the social development of children.

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VANCOUVER CONGRESS HEADQUARTERS A UNIQUE SETTING: DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER



The Sheraton Wall Conference Centre
The conference centre features
excellent meeting space and many
bright open spaces and features:

- 8 Restaurants
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at the conference centre

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To MAKE A RESERVATION for the special IFTA rate at the Sheraton Wall Centre go to <http://www.ifta-congress.org/venue.html>

For general information about the hotel you can visit the hotel web site.

Go to <http://www.ifta-congress.org/venue.html>

CONGRESS GALA

This year we have the fortune of an excellent banquet facility in the hotel and a venue that allows the Congress to hold this event.

If you are staying at the Sheraton Wall Centre, the Gala is \$45. Non-Sheraton guests, \$85. Please join us by registering on the web site. All Congress participants MUST register for the Gala before arriving at the Congress. Reserve your place here.

2012 World Congress Gala Friday, March 23

Join your colleagues on Friday evening at the IFTA World Congress Gala. Price: Sheraton guests, \$45 per person; others, \$85. The price is inclusive of service & taxes.

TRANSPORTATION

The Sheraton Wall Centre can be reached from the airport by subway, taxis, limo or a shuttle service. More information on the hotel location directions and costs can be found on our web site.

CONGRESS TOURS AND

SITE SEEING

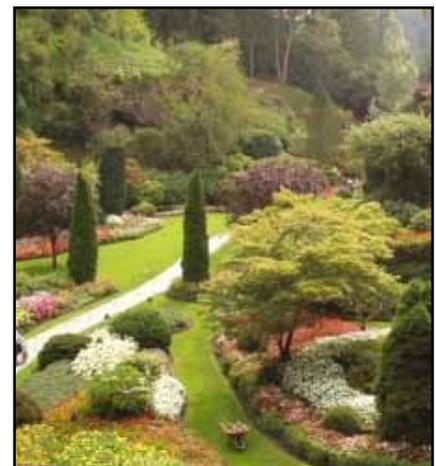
Discounts for Congress attendees has been arranged with two tour companies in Vancouver. A variety of tours are available prior to the Congress and during the Congress. The Congress Web Site lists a variety of tours.

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 (Facebook) 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 (LinkedIn) 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.



Report of the Office of the Secretariat

General Secretary: William Hiebert, DMin



IFTA's Journal of Family Psychotherapy Online Only in 2012

Beginning in January, the Journal of Family Psychotherapy will be available online only to IFTA members. This will solve the problems of mailing the JFP around the world and assure all members of access to the Journal. This is a great member benefit!

You will receive login information from Taylor and Francis in the beginning of the year. Since we do not always have accurate email information from all of our members, 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.

World Congress Registration

Over 300 people had already registered for the World Congress in Vancouver by January 1. If you haven't registered yet, you may still register at: <http://www.ifta-congress.org/>

You can find the 2012 World Congress website at: <http://www.ifta-congress.org/>. The website contains all of the information necessary for registration, abstract submission, and other details for Congress planning.

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 if 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)





TRAINING MATTERS

Phoebe Prosky, Coordinator/Secretariat

The Training Division continues to expand its resources. We have added three new trainers – Mary-Joan Gerson, David Keith, and Lin Shi, all from the United States. They join our current Traveling Trainers Faculty: Shlomo Ariel – Israel, Brigitta Beghella – Austria, Linda Bell – USA, Laurie Charles – Cameroon, Cecile Dillon – USA, Maureen Duffy – USA, Judith Kellner – USA, Teresa McDowell – USA, Phoebe Prosky – USA, and Rick Whiteside – New Zealand. These are all seasoned international trainers who have agreed to volunteer their time and talents to train therapists in areas of the world in need of family therapy resources. You can learn more about their backgrounds and areas of expertise on the Training Division page of the IFTA website.

The Traveling Trainers program continues in its second year of a three-year training program in Kosova, where clinicians are being trained to become family therapists, found a family therapy organization, and become the trainers of others in their country, where no family therapy is currently practiced.

The Traveling Trainers program expands to China in the spring of 2012 where we will deliver a workshop to students at the Women's University in Beijing and other groups there. This program was developed in conjunction with the Chinese Healing Arts Center in the United States.

And we are working with a person in Ghana who is gathering professionals there to form a base for a family therapy training in that country. We are also working to expand our financial base and have drafted a fund-raising letter, endorsed by IFTA, to send to organizations that might be interested in providing funds for an international program like ours. We are asking the IFTA membership if they can make suggestions as to organizations that might be making grants for these purposes. If you have suggestions, please contact Phoebe Prosky, Secretariat of the Division, at pprosky1@comcast.net.

We are also expanding our fund-raising raffle at the upcoming Vancouver Congress. We asked the invited presenters if they would be willing to donate one of their books or CD's to the raffle, and they have responded affirmatively. So we will be able to offer several training materials in that form at the Congress.

And speaking of training materials at the congress, we continue to try to disseminate training materials, new or used, to congress attendees who are in need of them. So if you have any materials – either your own productions or things you are no longer using - please, please bring them to the Training Division table at the Congress. In the last few years it has been almost impossible to ship materials from our clearinghouse in the USA to congress sites, and the only way to gather a selection at the congresses is for people to bring materials to donate with them in their luggage. So please give some thought to what you may have that you can donate to this worthy effort.

USED TRAINING MATERIALS NEEDED

Please bring any gently used training materials that you want to donate to the division to the Vancouver 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 address below.

Again at this year's Congress, the Division will host a workshop on training in which a few trainers from around the world present creative aspects of their training. We are working to have one of the students of the Kosova program present her reflections on the training program we are offering there.

As always, if you are not a Training Division member, please consider joining us and helping to support our efforts to disseminate family therapy training world-wide. You can join the Division when you pay your dues or by contacting William Hiebert, wjhiebert@aol.com

If you have any questions about the Division, please contact Phoebe Prosky at pprosky1@comcast.net.



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.

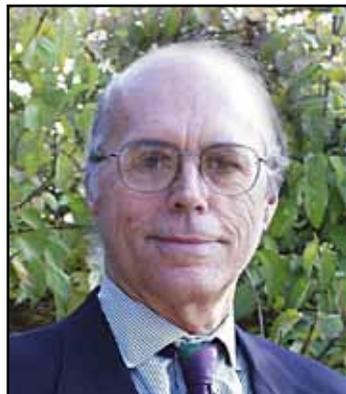
Either go to the IFTA website at: www.ifta-familytherapy.org and then click on the link "Photo Gallery" on the left side of the page, or go directly to the conference photo site at: smugmug

Enjoy seeing images from the past conferences in Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands (2011); Buenos Aires, Argentina (2010), Portoroz, Slovenia (2009); Porto, Portugal (2008); Iceland (2006); Washington, D.C. (2005); Istanbul, Turkey (2004); Bled, Slovenia (2003); Porto Alegre, Brazil (2001). Copies of many of the images are available through our IFTA photographer, Pamela R. L. Lessing (e-mail: Pam Lessing)

TRAVELING TRAINERS FACULTY PROFILE

Traveling Trainer Profile: Thomas Todd

In each issue of The International Connection, the Training Division is profiling one of its Traveling Trainers. These are IFTA Training Division members who have experience in



family therapy training internationally and are willing to volunteer their time to train in areas of the world that lack family therapy resources. For a complete listing of faculty members, go to the Training Division Website.

1. Where did you get your family therapy training?

I was bitten by the family therapy bug while a graduate student in

clinical psychology at New York University. Richard Rabkin, M.D. conducted a workshop based on a case of Milton Erickson's, "The Identification of a Secure Reality," where he had a mother sit on an out of control child. Then I found a psychology internship where I received supervision in MFT from someone trained by Minuchin, so when I next went to the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic, Sal said I was the first "third generation" trainee of his. I was at Child Guidance from 1970-75 during the golden age where I had the opportunity to work closely with Minuchin, Jay Haley, Harry Aponte, and Cloe Madanes. I was careful to enter the system as a clinician but later worked with Minuchin on the Psychosomatic Project and developed a major research project on family therapy and substance abuse with M. Duncan Stanton. Our work was well-received internationally, and we gave workshops together in the Netherlands and Belgium. It was an exciting time where we joked about "Structural/strategic therapy cures everything," and professionals from all over the world came for training. Videotaping and one-way mirrors were the norm and were great resources for supervision and training.

2. How has your own work developed?

After leaving Child Guidance in 1975 I continued to consult to various research projects on family systems approaches to substance abuse. I continued to present nationally and internationally with Duke Stanton after the publication of our book, *The Family Therapy of Drug Abuse and Addiction*. I developed a family-systems oriented agency in Putnam County, NY and started a psychology internship with an emphasis on MFT. I was very excited when the original Milan team came to the U.S. I had been well-versed in paradoxical techniques in my work with Haley and Madanes, but I recognized that they had taken it to a new level in prescribing the behavior of the whole system. Both in New York and in Bristol, CT, I developed strategic teams that developed "paradoxical prescriptions" for some of the most treatment resistant cases. In the current climate of cautious risk management, it is hard to imagine doing such seemingly outrageous work, even though it was based on a deep understanding of family dynamics. I married another psychologist and family therapist, Tracy Lewis-Todd, who had received integrative training with Bill Pinsof in Chicago. We moved there and brought a family

therapy focus to an adolescent inpatient unit and later developed a family focused intensive outpatient program for substance abusing teens and their parents. I worked closely with Matthew Selekman, collaborated on *Family Therapy Approaches with Adolescent Substance Abusers*, and presented widely, particularly in Scandinavia. Matthew had a strong background in solution focused therapy, but we were both interested in incorporating and integrating new ideas, such as the work of Michael White and Goolishian and Anderson. It seems clear now that such integration was much easier for next-generation family therapists who were less committed to particular models than the earlier developers of family therapy "schools."

3. How did your interest in supervision develop?

Judith Landau enticed me to serve on the Commission for Supervision of AAMFT. This became an important focus for me over a 10-year period, even though I enjoyed being in the audience asking hard questions more than being responsible for having the answers. I worked closely with Cheryl Storm and ultimately co-edited *The Complete Systemic Supervisor* and *The (Reasonably) Complete Systemic Supervisor's Resource Guide*. We are still proud of those books, especially since I have trained doctoral MFT candidates from many programs, all of whom have used our books as texts for the required supervision course. It was particularly exciting to see the supervision book recently translated into Mandarin, and I have high hopes for Spanish and Portuguese translations. One of my most exciting projects was training a group of supervisors in Londrina, Brazil. When IFTA went to Buenos Aires, we were able to present on the fruits of the training 5 years later.

4. How has the field of family therapy evolved since you have been practicing?

I really miss the fervor and creative ferment of the 1970's and 80's. As licensure of MFT became more widespread, largely through the leadership of AAMFT, the focus has turned to economic and insurance issues for MFT as a profession and the influence of other disciplines such as psychology, psychiatry and social work has waned. The charisma and showmanship of the early days has been replaced by more modest and conservative evidence-based treatment of particular problems. One of the low points for me was a membership survey by AAMFT which found that Cognitive Behavior Therapy was the most commonly cited model. Similarly, many graduates of current MFT programs barely know of the previous "masters" of MFT (although finally the Masters included an increasing number of women) and have little appreciation of the more radical origins of the field. I am sure that this development has fueled my enthusiasm for training in other countries where the excitement of new MFT ideas is much more obvious.

5. What is on the horizon for you now?

I am just entering a phase of comparative retirement from the MFT program at the Adler School of Professional Psychology, which I ran for almost 20 years. Primarily this frees me up for adventures abroad, such as being more involved with the Traveling Trainers. Along with this I hope to emulate colleagues such as Rick Whiteside and Frances Steinberg in investigating ways to utilize the Internet and related media to make training and supervision more accessible. I also hope to use this time to emulate my daughters, both of whom are multi-lingual, to achieve at least rudimentary skill in Spanish and Portuguese. Stay tuned, since I cannot imagine being inactive!

FLORENCE W. KASLOW, PH.D., ABPP

Life and Families in the Enchanting Polynesian Islands

FLORENCE W. KASLOW, PH.D., ABPP

This column is being written while I am sitting at a lovely beachside hotel resort on Moorea – one of the magnificent Society Islands in the South Seas. It is easy to understand why Paul Gauguin, James Michener, Marlon Brando, and scores of others from the western world were captivated by the sheer lush scenic beauty of these gorgeous, fertile islands that arose out of volcanic ash centuries ago. They are a maze of colorful, blooming fruit trees and tropical plants, quite wondrous to behold. The mountains that arise out of the sea on Bora Bora, Tahiti, Moorea, etc., are breathtaking. And so are the soft spoken, gracious, and hospitable Polynesian people.

Each main island community [Fig. 1 – Sunset on Moorea Island...this is a clip from a magazine, don't know if it will reproduce. CAN YOU FIND A PICTURE OF A SUNSET OVER THE SOCIETY ISLANDS?] has the equivalent of a pre-kindergarten (2 ½-5 years of age), and primary school (6-10 years of age). We had the opportunity to observe children playing in the elementary school yard enclaves at recess; it seemed like free and easy childhood play of tag, ball, jump rope, and hide and seek. Sophisticated equipment did not appear to be needed, nor was there much adult supervision. The play seemed to flow peacefully and effortlessly. How refreshing to observe and “sense”.

Not each community or Island has a high school so the children have to travel to continue their formal education in what is equivalent to our high school (ages 11-16). Their informal education occurs under the aegis of the family as it has traditionally – working with parents mostly in agriculture, fishing, the cultured black pearly industry, or on vanilla bean or pineapple plantations. Since tourism is the Number One industry and source of revenue, many young people seek positions in the hotels, on Air Tahiti Nui, in the boating side of tourism – sometimes using family craft or in commercial fishing.

Being multi-linguistic is important. At home and school the children learn Polynesian – and the different dialects spoken on their own Island. In school they also take French and English and can study

Spanish, German, and Chinese as electives. Thus they are prepared to welcome visitors and help boost the attraction of tourism to their multi-island paradise which like so many other areas of the world, has seen a decline in the number of visitors since the recession of 2008.

One university was built in Papeete, the capital city of Tahiti, in the last two decades. Apparently there are no special entrance exams and students receive scholarships from the French Government, under whose rule Polynesia falls. Education, like health care, is provided for all, if they go on to college and then to a graduate professional school in another country, right after finishing university. If they take a break and decide to resume their education at a later time, then they must pay for it personally. Unless someone has a minimum of a college education and is at least bi-lingual, few good paying jobs are available and life on the islands is expensive even compared to the cost of living in the U.S. We were told no one starves as fruit grows abundantly, seemingly everywhere, and everyone has chickens and roosters, to eat the poisonous insects and supply food, and can catch fish. Nonetheless, there is quite a bit of poverty.

Conscription for all men into the French military ended within the past decade (or so we were informed). However, many of the men join the French Army voluntarily as it provides good discipline, education and skills training, pays a better wage than one can earn in civilian life and offers an opportunity to travel – which many Polynesians covet and could not otherwise afford. The initial enlistment period is five years and can be renewed for two additional ten year terms.

As is true of people serving in the military forces of most countries, a certain percentage of service people marry non-Polynesian women they meet during a tour of duty. In addition, people who visit the languorous, lovely islands “fall in love” with someone beautiful here and with the mesmerizing climate and topography and decide to settle here. Thus, quite a number of the families in the more metropolitan areas have one to several mixed marriages within their extended family. In Tahiti, if the parents disapprove, the young adults move out and set up their own households. Cohabiting, which would have been totally spurned and ostracized until relatively recently, is becoming more frequent in the major metropolitan areas. On the smaller, less inhabited islands and in the more rural areas of the larger islands, the extended family form still predominates. Couples traditionally had six to eight children to insure help on the farm, in the house and enough children to care for

them when they become infirm and/or elderly. Now couples have fewer children, by agreement; the average seems to be four per family. But senior parents now worry about who will provide for them and adult children are concerned about how they will handle the burden. Senior living facilities do not seem to exist here. A new 400 bed hospital recently opened on Tahiti; it does not seem that the other islands in the archipelago have hospitals so in case of emergency people fly in for treatment on the domestic airline.

Singing, dancing, and music is provided by playing instruments like drums, guitars, ukuleles, and violins. This is a major part of the culture for big celebrations [Fig. 1 Typical costumed Polynesian dancers] and the weekly family Friday night get-togethers – mostly at home barbeques with oodles of (local) beer drinking. (Alcoholic spirits are too expensive). Both boys and girls learn the Polynesian dances at home from the time they are very young and then can also take this as an elective at school or pursue it elsewhere. The dance troupes are colorful, exciting, sensuous, rhythmic, and wonderful to watch. At the end of a performance guests are invited to participate and the welcoming communal spirit is contagious.

No wonder Gauguin ultimately settled in this colorful, free spirited world. The Gauguin Museum in Papeete featuring his works is excellent, and that once Brando arrived here to make Mutiny on the Bounty, he never wanted to leave. The legends live on. And strong family ties live on and are celebrated.



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