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History Beyond Trauma: The Enduring Legacy of Davoine and Gaudilliere

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Learning Goal:

Attendees at this Symposium will learn key concepts developed in *History Beyond Trauma* which explicate the multigenerational transmission of trauma; learn how to implement the clinical approach of Davoine and Gaudilliere; and understand the role of individual and intergenerational trauma within psychotic experience.

Abstract Text:

The purpose of this Symposium is to explicate the profound, original illuminations of trauma and psychosis contained within *History Beyond Trauma* by Francoise Davoine and Jean-Max Gaudilliere. Over the course of this ambitious volume these psychoanalysts integrate 30 years of clinical and theoretical research on psychotic experience. Drawing upon their studies in philosophy and classics and experience as professors of sociology, the authors approach madness not as a symptom, pathology, or diagnosis in a manual, but rather as a Place. This is the Place where the Symbolic Order which guarantees an individual's connection to language, history, and social relations has ruptured, exploded or disappeared. Consequently, one of the most important insights found in this work is that the psychotic is engaged in a research investigation into the nature and history of this Place; he or she is a seeker. The authors radically locate psychosis within a social and historical field. Within psychotherapy the therapist is second in command to the patient – the Principal Investigator – who desperately attempts to articulate an unspeakable dimension of trauma and catastrophe, which has come to be foreclosed in individual or social history. Drawing upon their own memories, as well as their European identities, the authors develop a model of trauma rooted in the paradigm of war; the psychotic patient thus brings a war zone into the consulting room. Ultimately, principles derived from war psychiatry are employed as salient clinical tools in approaching trauma and madness. Each of Davoine's and Gaudilliere's major theoretical concepts will be here illustrated via vivid clinical material. It will be the intention of this Symposium to communicate the propositions of *History Beyond Trauma* with great clarity, and to demonstrate their broad relevance for those engaged in the investigation and treatment of psychosis.

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