

JULIAN KATZ ORATION

One of the major events at the Faculty of Child Psychiatry Meeting annually is the Julian Katz Oration which is usually the first event of the Meeting.

The Oration was instigated over ten years ago to mark the contribution of Julian Katz to Child Psychiatry in Australia. The Oration is an invited paper, and there are no guidelines for its content. Thus the Oration usually reflects the particular interests of the speaker, and topics have included a consideration of the importance of the Therapeutic Frame in Psychotherapy, the diagnostic interview in child assessment, the need for Child Psychiatric Services (a paper given in New Zealand by a New Zealander which was a major political statement) and death and dying in children.

Julian Katz born in 1913 in South Africa, and trained in Medicine in the University of Witwatersrand. Key influences in his early education there included J.S.B. Haldane and Jan Christian Smuts, the politician and philosopher who coined the term 'holism'. Julian's approach to psychiatry shows the effect in particular of this philosophic approach which stresses the importance of a unified theory of 'being'. Like many psychiatrists and who rose to eminence in the post war period he worked as a medical officer in a military psychiatric hospital during the war. He then trained at the Maudsley and then in child psychiatry at the Tavistock Clinic, the Director of which at that time was John Bowlby, who with a what sounds like a who's who of psychoanalysis was another major influence on his life and work. Among his contemporaries were Martin Roth, Michael Shepherd, Anthony Storr and David Stafford-Clark. His teachers included Bowlby, Winnicott, Hannah Segal, Esther Bick and Wilfred Bion.

He returned to Johannesburg in 1951, where he was Director of a child psychiatry outpatient clinic, and then in December 1960, emigrated to Melbourne where he worked for three years before, in 1963 taking up the position of Associate Professor of Child Psychiatry at the University of Sydney, a post he held until his retirement in 1978. His association with the Children's Hospital, as a consultant, continued until 1989. His influence, however, on child psychiatry in Sydney, and indirectly through the migration of child psychiatrists from Sydney to the rest of Australia, continues, and Julian in his eightieth year makes a contribution to our profession which cannot be encapsulated in such a brief introduction.

As the first Director of Training in Child Psychiatry in Sydney, he has been a major formative influence in the training of child psychiatrists. In the thirty years since he arrived in Sydney, no child psychiatrist who has trained in that city has not sat at his feet and learned from him, both in terms of the practical knowledge of children and their families which is the backbone of our discipline, but more importantly perhaps something of the wisdom which he brings to an understanding of people.