

IFPE Statement on Charlottesville and Psychoanalytic Protest

A kind-hearted paralegal from Charlottesville, who was killed while protesting white supremacists and hate-mongering, wrote in her last Facebook post:

If you're not outraged, you're not paying attention.

My mentor and training analyst would always put Battle of the Bulge at the beginning of his résumé, even after fifty continuous years of being a psychoanalyst. When I asked him about this, he stated, I joined the army “to fight Hitler and fascism.” Back in the “greatest generation” during WWII, it was considered a sign of patriotism, moral fortitude and humanitarianism to fight the Nazis.

When Heather Heyer lost her life fighting the neo-Nazis last Saturday, her sacrifice was not spoken about as patriotism and humanitarianism.

In psychoanalysis, we pride ourselves on our analytic “neutrality” in most things, and on being able to understand the point of view of “many sides.” However, when hatred, projection, and targeting the “other” are being promoted, we must speak out. We must speak out early enough to prevent the ravages that have led to genocide in the past. IFPE, with our particularly egalitarian and humanitarian psychoanalytic ethos, is standing with the spirit of Heather Heyer, and others who sacrificed their lives for humanity in non-violent resistance.

“Silence is the real crime against humanity” (Nadezhda Mandelstam in *Hope Against Hope*).

We must speak up, and to do so with clarity. We must leave our psychoanalytic neutrality behind. We must do so to be true to the values of psychoanalysis, and because humanity requires it of us to use our knowledge to warn.

IFPE President, Farrell Silverberg, and Board of Directors of IFPE

August 14, 2017