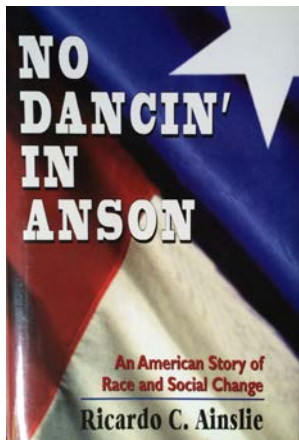


Interventions in Communities

A distinctive feature of my work is that it often involves the conceiving of interventions that attempt to speak to the issues I have explored in different communities. The spirit guiding these interventions draws heavily from psychoanalytic formulations regarding the power of language and symbolization and, more generally, the power of story and narrative as transformative processes. They also draw from an understanding of the importance of giving expression to that which has been disavowed, marginalized, or otherwise excommunicated from public discourse. In many communities, conflicts exist both above and below the surface, a disjuncture that is often an obstacle to better functioning relationships between social groups.



My first understanding of the relevance of these concepts came in Anson, Texas, when I grasped that in a conflict over dancing there lived a powerful undercurrent speaking to the social change that had taken place since the Civil Rights era. While researching the history of school desegregation in Hempstead, Texas, I discovered that all traces of the historically African American school in that community had been erased. In collaboration with educational and religious leaders in Hempstead we developed an intervention to restore the memory of this vital community institution. This work is summarized in my article, "Intervention strategies for addressing collective trauma: Healing communities ravaged by racial strife" (*Journal of Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*,

Vol. 18, 2, 140-152)

I conceive some of these interventions in communities as drawing from the tradition of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions and, in Latin America, *Testimonio*. But they also draw from psychoanalytic ideas about the transformative power of speaking that which has been unspoken. Viewed in this way, documentary film, photographic exhibits, and other forms of representation, become vehicles for activating or facilitating dialogue within communities and become vehicles for representing those issues and conflicts to other audiences and communities. My research team at the University of Texas explores these ideas both conceptually and through the development of projects.

Publications and Talks Related to Communities

Publications

Ainslie, R. (2015) "Trauma, Community, and Contemporary Racial Violence: Reflections on the Architecture of Memory", *The Ethics of Remembering and the Consequences of Forgetting: Essays on Trauma, History and Memory*, O'Loughlin, M. Ed., Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield, pp.309-324

Ainslie, R.C. (2013) "Intervention strategies for addressing collective trauma: Healing communities ravaged by racial strife." *Journal of Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*. Vol. 18, 2, 140-152

Brabeck, K & Ainslie, R.C. (2008) "The Narration of Collective Trauma: The 'True Story' of Jasper, Texas", *Journal of Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*

Ainslie, R.C. (2006) "Psychoanalytic Ethnography, Racist Violence, and Jasper, Texas: An Introduction", *Journal of Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*. Vol 11, pp 97-98.

Ainslie, R.C., & Hall, E. (2004) "Community Resilience and Grassroots Leadership: Serendipity in the Wake of a Race Murder," *Mind and Human Interaction*

Ainslie, R.C. & Brabeck, K. (2003) "Race Murder and Community Trauma: Psychoanalysis and Ethnography in Exploring the Impact of the Killing of James Byrd in Jasper, Texas", *Journal of Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*. Vol 8: 1, pp 42-51

Talks

"Psychoanalysis, Visual Representation, and Documentary Forms of Social Intervention", Association for Psychoanalysis, Culture, and Society, New Brunswick, November, 2013

"Psychoanalytically-Informed Interventions in Communities Marked by Unconscious or Disavowed Collective Processes", Dallas Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology, October, 2013

"Diversity Challenge: What to do about Race and Culture and Violence", Boston College, October, 2012

"Life History and Documentary Forms of Inquiry: On the Use of Psychoanalytic Approaches to Understanding Communities Experiencing Ethnic Conflicts", Annual Meeting of the APA Division of Psychoanalysis, Santa Fe, April 2012

"How Attachment Theory Can Help Us Understand Prejudice, Discussant", Annual Meeting of the Division of Psychoanalysis, New York, April, 2011

"Psychoanalysis and the Art of Community Engagement", Philadelphia Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology, Swarthmore, PA, April 2010

"From Couch to Film to Book: Psychoanalysis and the Art of Method", Annual Meetings of The Division of Psychoanalysis, April, 2009

"Psychoanalytic and Cultural Perspectives on Violence", Annual Meetings of The Division of Psychoanalysis, April, 2009

"Defining 'American' Values: What Jasper, Texas Has to Teach Us", (Keynote Speaker) American Studies Graduate Students' Committee Annual Conference, Austin, Texas October, 2005

"Healing Traumatized Communities: Media and Art", (Featured Speaker), Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, July, 2005

"Forgiveness: Sociopolitical Considerations", (Panel) American Psychoanalytic Association Meetings, Seattle, June, 2005

"Life Histories and Therapeutic Engagement with Communities: Bridging the Gulf between the Consulting Room and Society", (Keynote Speaker), Social Justice Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, March, 2005

"Life History and Documentary Approaches to Inquiry", (Workshop), Social Justice Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, March, 2005

"Psychoanalytic Psychology and the Art of Community Intervention: Illustrations from Three Communities Experiencing Ethnic Conflict", National Multicultural Conference and Symposium, Los Angeles, CA, January, 2005

"Identity and Ideology as Organizing Forces in a Race Murder", George Washington University/APCS/Washington School of Psychiatry/Forum on Psychiatry and the Humanities Conference on Identity, Group Psychology and Violence, Washington, DC, May 2004

"Jasper, Texas: The Healing of a Community in Crisis", Photography exhibit, The Annex Gallery, New York City, NY, January 2004

"Community Healing and Resilience", All day workshop sponsored by the Mind Science Foundation, San Antonio, Texas. November, 2003

"Psychoanalytic Views on the Murder of James Byrd as Community Trauma", Austin Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology, September, 2003

"Jasper, Texas: The Healing of a Community Crisis", Violence Prevention and Resilience Conference, Houston Psychological Association, May, 2003

"The Murder of James Byrd as Community Trauma: Factors That Facilitated Jasper, Texas's Constructive Response." Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction, University of Virginia Medical School, March, 2003

"Race Murder and Community Trauma: The Impact of the Murder of James Byrd on Jasper, Texas", University of Washington – Tacoma, Sponsored by the UW Tacoma Arts and Lecture Series and the UW Tacoma Diversity Taskforce, February, 2003