

PSYCHOPEDAGOGIC COUNSELING FOR TWINS AND TWIN FAMILIES

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In the academic year 1973-74, the Mendel Institute, within the specialized services it offers to Italian twins, instituted psychopedagogic counseling for the purpose of assisting twins and their families.

This service is carried out in the intermediate field between neuropsychiatry and social assistance. Cases involving family and social maladjustment were referring for counseling. During the period of time mentioned above, the counseling service exam-

ined 96 cases, of which 58 involved problems of school retardation and 38 involved family maladjustment because of changed parent-twin relationships.

The counseling service aimed at achieving improved family and school relationships by means of various therapeutic interventions. The work of psychopedagogic consultation, besides the immediate therapy, has permitted deeper study of maladjustment by means of analyses of the twins' condition as a possible additional cause of the maladjustment itself. Analysis of the cases in this limited sample would seem to indicate an indirect incidence of the twin situation *per se* (couple effect), somewhat emphasized by the family and social environment.

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3. *Twin Centers, Organization and Records: Better Information, Standardization, and Cooperation*

TWIN INSTITUTES: FROM THE MENDEL INSTITUTE IN ROME TO THE GEDDA INSTITUTE IN JERUSALEM

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The Gregor Mendel Institute of Medical Genetics and Twin Research was established in Rome in 1953 as a private, nonprofit corporation, with a twofold aim.

The first aim was to offer to all twins any possible, general and specialized, medical, psychological, and social assistance. A small polyclinic was therefore developed within the institute, including out-patient departments for most medical specialties, clinical laboratories, and a small in-patient department.

A total of approximately 15,000 twin pairs have so far registered and received free medical care at the Mendel Institute. Any twin pair may register (registration is free) and any registered pair may apply for

medical examination any time during eight months a year. From November 1973 through June 1974 some 3000 twin pairs have undergone medical examination in the various departments of the Mendel Institute.

The second aim was to take advantage from the precious scientific material thus acquired for scientific research in the area of human genetics and the study of twins as such. Research laboratories were therefore also developed.

Research in the various fields has been associated to publishing and promotional activities, as particularly witnessed by the publication of *Acta Geneticae Medicae et Gemellologiae*, the only international journal devoted to twin studies, by the 1969 Symposium on Twin Studies, and by the present Congress.

The Mendel Institute still appears to be the only such center in the world, devoted to twins and to twin studies.

In 1972, however, twenty years after its foundation in Rome, a cotwin to the Mendel Institute was finally conceived when a symbolic but significant ceremony took place in Jerusalem, and the cornerstone of The Luigi Gedda Institute of Medical Genetics and Twin Research was laid on the

Mount of Olives. Since then, final approval has been recently obtained and actual works are now about to start.

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TWIN REGISTERS

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Twin Registers represent the answer to the need for extensive application of twin study methodologies to an ever wider spectrum of biomedical problems.

Twin Registers still tend to be divided in two clones: (1) small Registers, with complete zygosity assessment, personal examination, and medical history, devoted to the study of one or few pathological entities; (2) large Registers, generally including all twins in a definite population, open to a wide variety of twin studies but generally based on public records and mailed questionnaires, without personal contact (medical examinations, etc.).

Some sort of cooperation and standardization in Twin Register activity seems to be highly desirable, and practical proposals are made.

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THE INTERNATIONAL TWINS ASSOCIATION (ITA)

LAVELDA and LAVONA ROWE

International Twins Association, Chicago, Illinois, USA

The International Twins Association, Inc. (ITA) was organized by and for twins in 1932. It became known as such in 1937. At that time officers were elected and by-laws written. The ITA conventions were held in Fort Wayne, Indiana, until 1939 and then moved from city to city throughout the United States, giving more twins

an opportunity to learn about this unique fraternal organization.

The purpose of the ITA is to promote the spiritual, intellectual, and social welfare of twins throughout the world. It is a non-profit organization. There are no age limits for membership. A twin's only requirement is met at birth.

At other times, physicians and scientists have become interested in the ITA. At the 6th annual convention of twins, Dr. D.C. Rife, Professor of Genetics at Ohio State University, enlisted the aid of twins for blood groupings, tastes, palm prints, and other tests. Since then, others have conducted twin testings, including psychological studies, measurements of head shapes, blood tests, fingerprint studies, handwriting analysis, and ESP studies.

We try to help spread the good news of the International Twins Association and "Twindom" through a personal publication called "Twincereely Yours by the Rowe Twins". The latest issue was mailed to 8000 sets of twins within the United States, 150 sets of twins outside of the United States, Canada and Australia. The mailings also went to 450 Mothers of Twins Clubs. The Mothers of Twins Clubs were organized by mothers to emphasize individuality among twins, and to help mothers with problems that they might encounter in raising their twins. The Twin Chapters are organized by twins seeking a better understanding of twins in society, and to give them a chance to be with someone like themselves.

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THE THREEFOLD CORD OF MOTHERS OF TWINS CLUBS

JOYCE E. MAXEY

Iowa Mothers of Twins Club, Marion, Iowa, USA

The threefold cord of Mothers of Twins Clubs, local, State, and national is explained. What the threefold cord is, what it does and how it does its work in the United States of America.