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Psychiatrist and Attorney To discuss the impact of child abuse and trauma upon individuals, communities and society

Attorney and author **Elliott Epstein, Esq.** and psychiatrist **David M. Reiss, M.D.** will present a seminar on June 7, 2012 at the 35th Annual Convention of the International Psychohistorical Association, co-sponsored by the New York University Silver School of Social Work.

The conference is being held June 6-8, 2012 at the New York University Kimmel Center for University Life, 60 Washington Square South, New York, NY. Mr. Epstein and Dr. Reiss will be presenting Thursday, June 7, 9:00 – 10:20 AM, Kimmel Center Room 900.

The presentation will begin with Mr. Epstein discussing, ***“A High-Profile Child Abuse Cases: A Societal Tsunami”*** the subject of his book, ***“Lucifer’s Child”***, the story of the horrendous murder of a 4-year-old child in Auburn, Maine on October 27, 1984.

***“A High-Profile Child Abuse Cases: A Societal Tsunami”* ELLIOTT EPSTEIN, ESQ.**

***“Trauma, Tragedy, Mental Illness and Psychiatry: Interactions with the Media, Legal System and the Fabric of Society”* - DAVID M. REISS, M.D.**

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Dr. Reiss will follow Mr. Epstein, addressing, ***“Trauma, Tragedy, Mental Illness and Psychiatry: Interactions with the Media, Legal System and the Fabric of Society”***

Below is an outline of Dr. Reiss’ presentation:

- Childhood Trauma and Abuse in the Media
 - Widely publicized horrific events
 - Increased frequency vs. increased media coverage
 - Responsible media coverage vs. sensationalism
 - Increased awareness of issues related to trauma, abuse and bullying
 - Personalized reporting focused upon the individual
 - De-personalized reported focused upon divisive socio-political issues
 - Increased media coverage of local incidents
 - Increased appropriate vigilance and protection
 - Increased disproportionate fear / over-protection
 - Risk of “copy-cat” crimes
 - Increased discussion in the social media
 - Serious acknowledgment vs. trivialization
 - Un-moderated “discussions”
 - Educative vs. divisive

- Childhood Trauma and Abuse and the Law
 - Changing standards regarding what is considered criminal abuse
 - Changing standards regarding civil liability
 - Changing standards of personal behavior and decency

- Impact upon the Individual
 - Awareness of the significance and dangers of abuse/trauma
 - Sensitization vs. Desensitization
 - Action vs. Passivity
 - Re-traumatization of persons with a history of abuse/trauma
 - Working through / seeking help
 - Increased denial / repression / rationalization
 - Regression / decompensation – “Opening Pandora’s Box”

- Impact upon the Community
 - Increased awareness, protection, responsiveness
 - Increased denial, “push back”, acting out / copy-cat behaviors
 - Increased demand on social services
 - Decreased availability of social services

- Socio-Political Impact
 - Constructive responses vs. Anger, rage and vengeance

- Fostering Maturation vs. Inducing Regression
 - Reinforcing protective caring vs. triggering "protective" authoritarianism / identification with the aggressor
- Practical and financial demands on medical and social services
 - Re-ordering of social priorities and responsibilities
 - Compassionate social responses vs. "Social Darwinism"
- Interaction with Psychiatry and the Mental Health System
 - Increased expectations for prevention and treatment
 - Realistic vs. Unrealistic expectations
 - Increased costs of prevention and treatment
 - Increased cost controls
 - Use of superficial and generalized interventions and remedies vs. individualized care and treatment
 - Unsophisticated interventions
 - Over-reliance on medication
- Long-Term Socio-Political Consequences
 - Increase in superficial and cognitive awareness of issues related to abuse and trauma
 - Difficulties communicating the severity and complexity of the problem without triggering defensive reactions
 - Superficial reactions leading interfering with deeper understanding and insight

***“A High-Profile Child Abuse Cases: A Societal Tsunami”* ELLIOTT EPSTEIN, ESQ.**

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- Increasingly “dumbed down”, over-medicated and passive populace
 - Decreased ability for complex problem solving
- Increased reliance on affectively-driven immediate responses vs. integrated logical/rational responses
 - Increased immediate responsiveness, decreased comprehensive / long-term response
 - Increased divisiveness between progressive/compassionate and authoritarian/“Darwinian” forces