



### **The female presence in the funeral industry: gender perceptions**

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Introduction. Gender stereotypes in societies can strongly influence female or male presence in professional contexts. The female presence in "non-traditional" roles has long been a topic of interest for the scientific community (Irvine & Vermilya, 2010; Miller, 2004; Silva, 2008; Wolkomir, 2012); despite this, the funeral sector is a research area that is currently little studied, even though it involves a clear male majority in terms of gender distribution. Objective. The study aims to explore the scarce, even though growing, female presence in a sector strongly dominated by men, such as the funeral industry, through a qualitative research. Method. The research involved 13 women employed in the funeral services of north-western Italy. The interviews and focus groups, conducted with a semi-structured track, were audio-recorded – subject to the signing of the informed consent form – and transcribed in full. The data collected were analyzed using textual content analysis techniques (Template Analysis). Results. From the analysis of the data it emerged how gender stereotypes are still rooted in the funeral sector. In particular, the characteristics of care work have been recognized to the female figure, while the male figure has characteristics linked to physical performance. Limits. The identified sample is not particularly large and is limited to the north-western area of the country. Innovative aspects. The present study highlights the characteristics of a particular work context, and provides new knowledge of the growing presence of women in a typical male sector.

### **The performance of postmodern therapeutic stance: A critical discursive social psychology approach**

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During the last few years, there has been an increasing interest by constructivist psychotherapies in the postmodern therapeutic stance, which is often referred to as non-interventive stance. Non-intervention, although associated with collaboration and equality between the therapist and the client, is usually viewed as a psychological characteristic of the therapist. Recent discourse analytic studies have investigated how this particular stance is being performed in therapeutic interaction. However most of them approach it through a one-dimensional lens focusing either on the micro-level of interaction, considering the therapist's non-interventionism as a given, or undertaking a macro-level analytic perspective, considering the therapist's power as indisputable. The present study, using data from twenty-nine transcribed sessions, presentations, and interviews with postmodern therapists, attempted to approach non-interventionism through a multilayered perspective utilizing critical discursive social psychology. Analysis highlighted the dilemmatic way by which therapists and clients manage power asymmetry in their relationship which seems interrelated with the generic ideological dilemma between expertise and equality. In this presentation this interrelation is highlighted through the analysis of an extract in which on the one hand the postmodern therapist tries to downgrade his