

President's Address  
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Welcome everyone to Philadelphia! We're happy that so many have turned out to educate ourselves about psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychology. This is our first conference with our new name, the **Society for Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Psychology**. Thanks to all members who participated in the voting last year and for your openness to consider new possibilities! While we remain Division 39, we hope that the name change helps illustrate the breadth of our investment in the psychoanalytic enterprise. I will try to use the word "Society" but will probably slip into the use of "Division" from time to time. Of course, if we think of those words out of context, namely "Division" and "Society" we can hear the difference between separateness or parts and community.

As we convene in celebration of the wonderful achievements of these members to the excitement of seeing familiar colleagues and getting to know new ones, I'd like to take some time to recognize and thank a number people, remember some important contributors to the Division, introduce myself to those of you who might not know much about me, and to give the attendees an overview of what is happening within the division and to consider tackling challenges moving forward.

It may not be visible to members of the Society just how invested the members of the Board of Directors are to the integrity and continuity of our organization. We are a complex and multifaceted organization with lots of moving parts. I think it's important for attendees to know a little about how well coordinated the Board is, even when engaging in disagreement. I won't be able to acknowledge everyone who does valuable work for the Society, but I wanted to publicly call attention to how well the transition process has been for me and how well the generations of officers work together. Although only the office of the presidency technically has an official position acknowledging the past, i.e., past president, all of the officer positions have essentially functioned this way. I believe it is because our Society has nurtured the values of working with each other and giving to each other.

Our society is a generous bunch and it is reflected in the folks who dedicate their time, expense and their thinking to serve the society and its members.

I am very grateful to our past president and previous past president for their generosity and investment in continuity; Although **Marilyn Charles** completed her term on the Board in December, she has been immensely helpful in sharing her perspective and in her continuing dedication to creating meaningful spaces for the folks emerging in their careers. I asked Marilyn if she could assist with breathing life into our candidates committee and she said yes without blinking, telling me "anything to help the young folks."

**Dennis Debiak** is an extremely giving and wise past president. Dennis has shown an incredible devotion to the Society over many years of service, tackling the tough issues with grace and aplomb. He is a great colleague and a real treasure to the Society. To whatever degree the current iteration of the Board can achieve success, it will owe a huge debt of gratitude to Dennis' hard work and his investment in the psychoanalytic enterprise.

Our current secretary **Lara Sheehi** has made a very difficult and complicated job appear effortless. It is a tough job to jump into and requires attention to all the details of the society. The Board will not run well without the secretary's persistence and presence throughout. Yet Lara's transition was made smooth by our prior secretary **Dana Charatan**, Dana devoted a great deal of

time, energy and intellectual capital past the end of her term to help make sure that the Board would function well. She has gone above and beyond the call of duty, because that's who she is.

Our current treasurer **Jill Bellinson** takes the financial planning of the Division to heart and safeguards the process to help us remain realistic about what can be accomplished. She is spearheading a long term discussion on the Board about our financial priorities so that we can work with our resources well. She keeps this on point and helps the Board through the seemingly endless lines in the budget. And this transition has been accomplished in no small part because our past treasurer **Lu Steinberg** has been willing to work so closely with Jill and the Board to identify long term trends, to clarify the byzantine ways of APA accounting and to lend her experience while appreciating everyone's roles. Lu has dedicated much time and energy to help Jill and the BoD keep our bearings, and we benefit extraordinarily from her calm perspective.

I also want to recognize the contributions of a few past presidents and longtime stewards of the division for their tremendous help in orienting me to the presidency, for their advice and wisdom and for their confidence in me, namely **Bill MacGillivray**, **Laurie Wagner**, and **Jaine Darwin**. The Society is incredibly fortunate to have their institutional memory, their humor, and their commitment to take on a variety of tasks on behalf of the society well after the time of their presidencies.

Although this is a time for us to celebrate the good work of the Society and renew our friendships and professional connections as well as to start new ones, I do want to take a moment for us to remember some important losses. Our conference co-chairs, **Joe Scahler** and **Matt Whitehead** have done a wonderful job creating a poster of a number of our colleagues who passed away since the last conference. Unfortunately, time precludes me from speaking of each member we've lost, but I felt it important that the president mark the passing of two members who had a tremendous impact on the division and on psychoanalysis and were past presidents of Division 39.

**Nathan "Nat" Stockhamer** was deeply committed to the interpersonal tradition in psychoanalysis. He played a seminal role in the founding of Division 39 as well as the antitrust lawsuit against the American. As Bryant Welch noted, "More than anyone, Nat embodied the best of our Division that evolved over a lengthy era defined at one end by Nat's supervisor, Erich Fromm, to today's Division with its commitment to diversity, love, and compassion."

The Society recently was rocked by the loss of **Lew Aron**. Lew was the beloved program director of the NYU Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis. Lew was a prolific author, a gifted clinician, mentor, teacher and an inspiring lecturer. He led numerous study groups in various areas of psychoanalysis and furthered the education of many clinicians and academics around the world. Lew received many honors during his distinguished career. In addition to serving as president of Division (39), he was president of the New York State Psychological Association, Division of Psychologist- Psychoanalysts; and the International Association for Relational Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy. He earned fellow status with the American Board of Psychoanalysis, the American Board and Academy of Psychoanalysis, the American Psychological Association, and the New York State Psychological Association, as well as being an honorary member of the William Alanson White Psychoanalytic Society. Our conference co-chairs have organized a simple gathering on Saturday, 7:15-8:15am in the Lescaze room on the 33rd floor. This will be a time for sharing memories of Lew, or to simply be together with those who are mourning his passing.

Although I'm well into this address and this might seem like an unusual time to introduce myself to you, I really wanted to acknowledge our officers and note important losses for our

Society first. Although I'm the president, that doesn't automatically make me a well known person to the membership and attendees. So I thought I would briefly say a few things about myself so you're a little better acquainted with me.

I began my connection to Division 39 after graduate school when I submitted an abstract for a presentation to a spring conference back in the early 90s. I was happy that it was accepted, and I went to the conference not knowing a soul. But my experience inspired me to join my Division 39 local chapter, the Michigan Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology. I benefitted greatly from my relationships there, especially that with Division 39 past president **Marv Hyman** and longtime MSPP and Division 39 stalwart **Etta Saxe**. I became the newsletter editor and then Local chapter president. After that I became our chapter's representative to Section IV and assumed various roles in that section, including treasurer, president, and representative to the BoD. I joined Section V and then became treasure, president and representative to the board. Although I realized that the Society has more sections, I understood that if I weren't careful, I might slowly dissolve into the movie *Groundhog Day* and keep doing that for each one. Hopefully, I've learned whatever lessons those repetitions tried to teach me.

I pursued a somewhat different path toward psychoanalytic education, namely that of self directed education. I decided not to pursue institute training, notwithstanding its benefits and safeguards. Instead, I directed my education in consultation with a number of Division 39 members. I pursued a personal analysis, extensive supervision/consultation, organizational involvement, courses, professional writing, etc. without doing so because of the guidelines of a bureaucracy. It had its advantages and its disadvantages, of course. I did not forsake legitimacy entirely though, as I got my ABPP in Psychoanalysis. I urge others to do that as well.

Although I practice, I'm a full time academic, the training director of a psychoanalytically oriented APA accredited PhD program at the University of Detroit Mercy. It's a scientist practitioner program that does empirical research (what was once known as a Boulder Model program). In this day and age, we are very much an outlier – kind of like being on the endangered species list, although there are no government agencies tasked with protecting our existence. We went through our re-accreditation process with APA this academic year and will get the results in a few weeks. It becomes more and more of a challenge to maintain our psychoanalytic focus, as the accreditation standards seek to create the conditions of uniformity across places, sort of like the restrooms @ MacDonald's. In other words, the essential aim is to have one program indistinguishable from another teaching evidence based practice within a narrowing scope of what counts as evidence. I'm aware of how little psychoanalytic preparation most students have coming in, because it is barely taught at the undergraduate level. The Society needs to continue to reach out to those coming up in the field, such as through our Scholars program, but also to be engaged in all levels of education.

This is the 39<sup>th</sup> year of Division 39---39 @39—. I wanted to let members and attendees know about some of the initiatives and tasks that are underway. I'd like to focus on our forward moving in a fast changing world and maintaining the relevance of psychoanalysis for working with human suffering and offering subversive understandings for our profession and our culture. Our journal continues to go like gangbusters, it is highly esteemed and well cited—with great thanks to our current editor **Chris Christian** and to **Elliot Jurist** preceding him. We have also re-affirmed our commitment to Division/Review, we express great appreciation for the job that **David Lichenstein** has done is creating an admirable and creative space for psychoanalysis and helping us in the search for its next editor.

We have a task force on the Mission and Goals of the Society. Perhaps it is a partly mid life crisis or maybe Life Begins @ 40, but we are examining the original objectives of the Society, as there was no mission statement per se as one might understand it today. It's important for any organization to take stock, from time to time, of what it's doing, why it's doing that, and whether it should do others things and hopefully do what it does better. We're wanting to ensure that the Society attends to the concerns of the members while fulfilling our objectives of enhancing the development of psychoanalysis for public good. The task force is developing a process of seeking more extensive input from the membership and others who may have a stake in the development of psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic work toward public good.

At the January Board meeting, the board voted unanimously to create a Task Force to draft a letter of apology to LGBTQ community. This has been the development of numerous conversations, discussions, debate and education over a period of time. I mentioned a moment ago that whatever the current Board accomplished would owe much to **Dennis Debiak**. Although this is the by-product of the work of many people, especially the SGI committee, it is important to acknowledge the vital role Dennis had in bringing this process to fruition.

Because this is the 21<sup>st</sup> century after all, we will be working to improve and extend our presence online. I think if Freud were alive today, he'd find a way to be on YouTube. So should we. We're working to create a YouTube channel that can help educate the professional and public communities about psychoanalysis. Although uploading videos is commonplace and easy to do, we want to create a process that will represent the work of the organization well and provide new ways of reaching people. For example, it is difficult for folks from various countries interested in the work of our division to attend our meeting or come to the States, but it would be great for them to experience something of what we do by being a click away. Soon, we will put up a webinar conducted by **Elliott Jurist** via APA earlier this month. I can't think of anyone better to essentially launch us into the video world. The Society will be applying for home study certification for CE with the aim of having some of our videos being eligible for CE credits.

The co-chairs of the Psychoanalysis and Humanities Committee, **Romy Reading** and **Billie Pivnik**, have created a Podcast series called **Couched**: Couched is a podcast series that lets you in on what leading cultural influencers and psychoanalysts are thinking about society today. Division 39 has provided financial support for their podcast series, worked with Romy & Billie and APA legal counsel around issues of trademark and copyright, and we will be making the podcasts available via our website in the near future. We hope over time that the Division can expand its reach into the podcast space as well.

On another front, we continue to discuss, manage, and sometimes pull our hair out at our...what's the word?...*interesting* relationship with our parent organization, APA. Yes, our *parent* organization. Is it any wonder why we have issues?! We are asserting our positions on behalf of psychoanalytic principles on the APA Council of Representatives and organizing a process to provide responses/comments to the series of clinical practice guidelines that APA is developing. Before addressing that, I would like to thank **Jacques Barber** for his work on the depression guidelines. Jacques is one of the premier therapy researchers in the country, and we are truly fortunate to count him as a member. We hope to recruit other Division 39 members to be appointed to specific guideline groups.

Yet, we are aware that the guideline process itself risks limiting access to psychoanalytic treatments, which can be so helpful in working with various forms of suffering. This guideline process creates dilemmas for psychoanalysts and psychoanalytic therapists or any therapists not wedded to brief manualized treatments in the service of their patients. I don't have the time to

discuss all of my reservations at great length, but I believe that many areas of concern were baked into the earliest decisions, prior to the formation of any specific working groups -- decisions about what kind of evidence to consider, whether the Institute of Medicine standards are really appropriate for psychotherapy guidelines and neglect of the fact that 3<sup>rd</sup> party payers can pressure clinicians to offer only guideline recommended treatments or potentially decline to support any therapeutic process that is not utilizing recognized guidelines resulting in restrictions of care.

The last point is especially relevant in light of the recent court finding against United Behavioral Health and its inappropriately restrictive criteria for medical necessity. It's interesting that the judge noted that UBH ignored the effective treatment of members' underlying conditions, while the APA PTSD Guideline, for example, had no real discussion about what the underlying pathology of PTSD actually is.

My reading suggests that the original rationale for developing any clinical practice guidelines contained hidden, faulty economic assumptions, conflating the decades long rise in overall healthcare costs (which has happened) with mental health care, whose costs have been stable or declining. With respect to the PTSD Guideline, most of the patients in the studies did not achieve remission or sufficient improvement by the limited outcome measures studied. Unfortunately, the guideline process itself is at odds to psychoanalytic process. The guideline presumes a diagnosis is sufficient for a treatment plan, whereas psychoanalytic ways of working consider there to be so much more to it than that. I believe that the PTSD Guideline, at least, appears to contradict APA's own *Resolution on Psychotherapy Effectiveness*, which stated, "These large effects of psychotherapy are quite constant across most diagnostic conditions, with variations being more influenced by general severity than by particular diagnoses—That is, variations in outcome are more heavily influenced by patient characteristics e.g., chronicity, complexity, social support, and intensity—and by clinician and context factors than by particular diagnoses or specific treatment "brands" (Beutler, 2009; Beutler & Malik, 2002a, 2002b; Malik & Beutler, 2002; Wampold, 2001)."

Although the division will craft responses, it is imperative for you to weigh in as individuals too. More comments are better. Going on the record with concerns is preferable and never limits options.

So, I would like to conclude with a request to members for involvement in the Society and involvement in areas affecting our work with patients and the profession. The development and presence of a vital psychoanalysis is in the public interest, and we can't do this without you.

Thank you for your kind attention.