

Genesee Valley Psychiatric Association
A District Branch of the American Psychiatric Association

Newsletter

August 2005

President's Column...

Robert B. Young, M.D.

It was a happy discovery for me to find that our Association wanted me to serve again as President. I am grateful to all of you for that confidence. It was especially rewarding to experience the first actually contested election in our history, so far as I know. My friend and colleague, Margot Fass, cared enough about the GVPA to seek this office as well. The time and passion she gives continues to mean a great deal. The service of our Immediate Past-President, Bill Lewek was impressive. He represented us and conducted our meetings with sincerity and vigor, and extended himself to bring people in and together. I hope to carry on all these qualities.

I learned that one of the expected duties of the GVPA President is now to contribute a column to each newsletter. Thanks even more to Tom Gift, our Newsletter Editor, for creating this periodical with some regularity, with a fascinating combination of topics, current and historical. All in the GVPA are welcome to use this as an outlet for their need to publish. It may not produce grants, but it is a great way to share thoughts across our professional community.

Our professional association stands at the heart of our relationships with colleagues and to the world at large. Through it, I believe, we have our best opportunity to represent accurately our identity as physicians and psychiatrists, psychotherapists and psychopharmacologists. I intentionally phrase our singular identity in plural terms, because that combination of expertise is what we do better than any other discipline can, within or outside of medicine. Our science improves rapidly, teaching us, as fast as we can keep up, more and more to do for our patients, letting us grow in the art of helping those with mental illness and emotional distress.

Our Assembly Representative, Aaron Satloff, has been working on a revision of the GVPA Constitution and By-Laws, which I hope we will review and adopt during the fall, with input from all who are interested. This revision is basically technical, to ensure that our foundation is consistent with that of the APA. I think it is especially noteworthy that, for the first time, the GVPA's aims and objectives are to begin with this: "to promote the common professional interests of its members." We still are to look after the welfare of our patients, the mentally ill in general, advance psychiatric research, and pursue all the things we've always done, but I find it remarkable that our interests were not until now stated front and center in this way. That is, above all, what a professional association is for and the only reason for its particular existence. There is no conflict with any other of the altruistic goals that we continue to share among ourselves and along with many other organizations. What makes APA/GVPA unique is the primary obligation to look after the interests of

psychiatry. We should support that mission with our energy and involvement, and thereby each other.

The easiest way to do this is simply to show up at GVPA Council meetings and enjoy the fellowship of other colleagues. Meetings are currently held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Academy of Medicine building at 1441 East Avenue. The Council is the decision-making group for the GVPA, and is the easiest circle of influence you'll ever find. Just show up -- that's all it takes. We'll be sponsoring other events targeted for general membership through the year, and we will review again how to encourage more participation across the Association. All ideas are welcome.

For now, I want to thank those who are already contributing their time and energy by serving as officers, councilors, and committee chairs. Our President-Elect is Sarah Atkinson; our Secretary, Steve Dvorin; our Representative to the APA Assembly, Aaron Satloff; our Deputy Representative to the APA Assembly and our immediate Past-President is Bill Lewek. Councilors include Lee Canapary, Rich Ciccone, and Jack McIntyre (along with Bill and Aaron). Each of the above folks also chairs one of our standing committees, which Xingjia Cui, Margot Fass, Mary Marrocco, Izhar Mustafa, Telva Olivares, Stan Rodic, Mike Scharf, and R.P. Singh also do. Most central to all that we do, a huge thank you to our Executive Director, Sue Diesel, without whom could not be effective.

I hope you'll let us know how we are meeting your needs for our Association.

Newsletter Editor.....Thomas E. Gift, M.D.

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This edition contains mostly material by two of our members, Margot Fass and Robb Young, As both an editor and a GVPA member, I'm grateful for their contributions. Margot's report reflects her activity as chair of our Religion and Psychiatry committee. In including a piece on how the APA PAC works, I'm bending the rule that this publication features topics not covered in state and national psychiatric publications; I justify this on the basis of the issues involved having been discussed, with little sense of closure, at a recent Council meeting.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

The Nineteenth Charles E. Steinberg Lecture in Psychiatry and the Law will be held Tuesday September 27th at Mario's Via Abruzzi on Monroe Avenue. The reception is at 7:00 PM and dinner at 7:30 PM.

- More information on last page -

August 2005

"This was a Spiritual Experience" Margot Fass, M.D.

You will find hidden herein an opportunity to earn a redeemable coupon for dinner with a GVPA Council member of your choice, and articles regarding the 2005 APA Annual Meeting on the following:

The meeting of the Corresponding Committee on Religion, Spirituality and Psychiatry (News We Hope You Can Use p. 2),
A Component Workshop, The Conflicting Worldviews of Sigmund Freud and Oskar Pfister (Bridging the Deep Chasms, p. 3),
The fourth annual "Conversations" event, with HIV positive Olympic Champion Greg Louganis, hosted by the American Psychiatric Foundation (A Possible Stumbling Block, p. 4)
Symposium on Toxic Love: Cinema on Romantic Love and Its Pathologies (Teetering on the Brink of Death: Love as an Antidote – Usually, p. 4)
Personal Reflections (Epilogue, p. 6)
Note on the Italian film *La Stanza del Figlio* (We Are Not Alone, p. 6) and on PBS television series "The Question of God: Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis". Frederick S. Lee, M.D., Ph.D. and Ryan Taliaferro.

I will report on the Oskar Pfister Lecture itself in the next issue of this newsletter. As always, it has been a pleasure to report on this subject.

News We Hope You Can Use

Meeting of The Corresponding Committee on Religion, Spirituality and Psychiatry (CCRSP)

Committee Status: The Committee voted to apply to become a full, rather than a Corresponding Committee.

There are several reasons why we may qualify for this.

- We have demonstrated ongoing need for more than three years and a track record of work production over the last several years, requiring face to face meetings, as outlined in General Principles for Establishing an APA Committee
- We are part of the APA's outreach to the Muslim community (Navid Rashid reported for Managing Editor Hamada Hamid, D.O. on the planned publication in 2006 of the new *Journal of Muslim Mental Health*)
- We have worldwide influence, as indicated by the fact that our chair, Dr. Peteet, has been invited by Dr. Gerrit Glas to participate with the Holland, U.K. and W.P.A Committees on Religion, Spirituality and Psychiatry in an international conference focusing on religious psychopathology, currently being planned for 2006.
- The current administration is underwriting Faith Based Initiatives, (Ed. and the Templeton Advanced Research Program is calling for proposals for grants of \$4.6 million in research funds.
- e importance of our mission is underscored by the many publications on this subject in the past decade or so.)

Drafts for the APA: John Peteet, M.D., Corresponding Committee Chair, presented drafts of a proposed white paper for use in the development of DSM V, and a response to the APA's proposed guidelines for the psychiatric evaluation of adults, which the Committee reviewed and approved in concept.

Regarding the DSM V, the day after this meeting, Francis Lu, Chair of the Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities, to which this Committee reports, recommended preparing abstracts for a symposium for the APA 2006 meeting in Toronto.

August 2005

Gay Marriage: Dr. Greenberg suggested that the term civil union rather than marriage should be used for the APA recently passed endorsements regarding gay rights, because of the considerable risk at this time of alienating both APA members and the public, (particularly given the suspicion with which many individuals in need of psychiatric care view our profession). There was consensus in the committee on that recommendation.

At the council meeting the next day, the Committee on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues (CGLBI) Chair Jack Dresher explained that his committee members are in the process of trying to provide education to those who have threatened to leave the APA if the recommendation is finally passed. Since religious concerns are often central for such individuals, Dr. Peteet proposed that a workshop be co-hosted by the CCRSP and CGLBI, which could lead to greater mutual understanding between those with opposed views.

Oskar Pfister Award

Clark Aist, member pastoral representative, and liaison to the Association of Professional Chaplains, created a brochure describing the Oskar Pfister Award Lecture. This includes its purpose, history, biography, criteria for selection, and list of previous recipients, and was distributed at this year's lecture. Members and guests agreed to help finance the copying of this.

This year's lecture by Armand Nicholi, Jr. entitled "The Conflicting Worldviews of Sigmund Freud and Oskar Pfister: Keys to Understanding Patients," was well received.

George Harding, M.D., guest, has continued to edit a VHS version of the videotape of last year's lecture by Elizabeth Bowman, M.D. "Dialogue From the Rims of the Grand Canyon: On Bridging the Post-Freudian Chasm Between Religion and Psychiatry," which hopefully will be put out as a DVD with a study guide, to make it available as an educational tool to the widest possible audience.

Gerald May, M.D. unfortunately died at the age of 85 a month ago, or would have been the proposed nominee for the next Award Lecture, to be given in September of 2006. Ned Cassem, M.D. will be presented to APA leadership as another possible candidate.

There was consensus that the collection and publication of previous Pfister award lectures would be a worthwhile future project.

Other District Branch (DB) Committees on Religion and Spirituality

Elizabeth Bowman, M.D., who has retired as a member of this committee, had initiated a project to identify chairs of DB Committees on Religion and Spirituality. One result of this effort was that another chair of the Connecticut DB Religion and Spirituality Committee, a psychiatrist who is enrolled in the Yale Divinity School, visited our May 24th meeting. Member William Greenberg, M.D. and Margot Fass, M.D. will continue to develop and maintain a list serve by which these local committees could be kept abreast of activities, opportunities and resources of common interest, such as samples of content and formats for their activities.

Website: Zev Shuman has begun his residency training, and therefore has put his efforts to develop a webpage for the Committee on hold. The committee has been encouraged by the APA to continue putting information together to include our charge, membership, work projects, lecture awards and links so that it will be ready when the final revised website is available

August 2005

The committee will meet again at its own expense at the Components Meeting on September 10th, 2005 in Washington, D.C.

Bridging the Deep Chasms

Oskar Pfister was a prominent Swiss Protestant minister in Zurich and a good friend of Carl Jung. Through Jung, he met Sigmund Freud, and became one of the first lay analysts initiated into Freud's inner circle. While the two men differed considerably in their views regarding the meaning and value of religion, they were clear and direct regarding their differences, remaining warm and affectionate friends where they agreed. Their correspondence, published several years ago, continued for nearly 30 years.

After a long period in psychiatry in which we were our own gods, a renewed interest in religion and spirituality in psychiatry started nationally 20 or so years ago. Jerome Frank presented the first Oskar Pfister Award Lecture "An Unprecedented Challenge to Psychiatry and Religion" in 1983.

The award is co-sponsored by the Committee on Religion, Spirituality and Psychiatry of the APA and the Association of Professional Chaplains. Its purpose is to explore the impact of religious and spiritual influences among persons seeking psychiatric treatment and how both fields can contribute to human health and wellbeing.

On Wednesday, May 25th, Armand M. Nicholi, Jr., M.D., Harvard Medical School, delivered the 23rd annual Oskar Pfister Award entitled: "The Conflicting World Views of Sigmund Freud and Oskar Pfister: Keys to Understanding Patients."

Dr. Nicholi is the author of the book The Question of God: C.S. Lewis and Sigmund Freud Debate God, Love, Sex, and the Meaning of Life. PBS put out a 4 hour television series, entitled "The Question of God: Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis". Frederick S. Lee, M.D., Ph.D. and Ryan Taliaferro, A.B. have developed a study guide, with the intention that small groups of clerical and psychiatric students use these materials to better understand one another's worldview, which they do not necessarily embrace.

Dr. Nicholi and Dan Blazer II, M.D., Duke University, were panelists in, and John Peteet, M.D., Brigham and Women's Hospital Dept. of Psychiatry (and also Chair of the APA Corresponding Committee of Religion, Spirituality and Psychiatry) was moderator of, the lively Component Workshop called "The Conflicting World Views of Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis", which followed the lecture.

Dr. Blazer is author of Freud vs. God: How Psychiatry Lost Its Soul and Christianity Lost Its Mind, a book recommended by George E. Valliant, M.D. for devout molecular biologists, neuroscientists, and Kleinians with hearts; devout Buddhists, Moslems, and Jews with minds; and as required reading for psychiatric residents and pastoral trainees.

Dr. Peteet is author of Doing the Right Thing: An Approach to Moral Issues in Mental Health Treatment and co-editor of Handbook of Spirituality and Worldview in Clinical Practice with Allan M. Josephson, M.D. including chapters on Protestant Christians, Catholic Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Atheists and Agnostics.

Dr. Blazer opened the Workshop by saying that the burgeoning interest in the interface between neuroscience and spirituality has been called the 3rd Great Awakening. He pointed out some problem areas, however, including the fact that just taking a spiritual history

August 2005

does not necessarily engage the patient, and that we do not yet have the language for a proper dialogue between persons of faith and those without it.

The biggest problem is our inability to define "spirituality," including vague referrals to ideas that "all beliefs are equal" or as Dr. Peteet put it, "whatever floats your boat" and, as an audience member later pointed out, remarks such as Madonna made when she got an award for her performance in Evita. Madonna was quoted as saying "this was a spiritual experience." But, as someone in the group put it, "Spirituality has to be more than a vague feeling behind the pancreas."

Dr. Blazer defines spirituality as our attempts to understand ourselves in our worlds in terms of our relationships with others and with God.

Dr. Blazer said that another problem for dialogue between spiritual and psychiatric communities is that while scientific facts tend to trump beliefs, providing facts about better health outcomes (for example, cardiac ejection fractions) among persons in "the community of the faithful" will not necessarily convert those who are entrenched in the "culture of disbelief" (as described by law professor Stephen Carter in his book by that title).

Furthermore, Dr. Blazer pointed out, people of faith will not necessarily be swayed by scientific evidence. In fact, I have often heard persons in my own faith community absolutely renounce various pronouncements based on diagnostic tests from their doctors and turn out to be correct!

Dr. Nicholi reiterated his definition of spirituality as one's own personal interaction with a sensed creator and his view of religions as springing out of a need for community to nurture and foster our spirituality.

He reminded us that the public view of religion, (which would include some psychiatrists), is often made up of images of sexual abusing priests, wife-murdering rabbis, and jailed tele-evangelists.

Other points brought up in the discussion included that there is perhaps a realistic concern regarding the arrogance of the religious majority, and an equal tendency among both religious and secular groups to voice considerable fear and denigrating remarks of the other. What ought to be a constructive dialogue and conversation between two sides have deteriorated in congress to a polarized deadlock over end of life issues and stem cell research. In fact, if one were to believe Dan Brown in his book Angels and Demons, we are involved in a war, not a conversation.

Can psychiatrists bring any sanity to this national dysfunction?

A Possible Stumbling Block

Starting to walk back to the hotel on Tuesday evening, after the 4th annual "Conversations" event hosted by the American Psychiatric Foundation (APF), I saw a tall, slender, tanned young man coming out of the Omni Hotel with a Jack Russell Terrier on a leash. I recognized him immediately as the speaker I had just heard, Greg Louganis, Olympic diving champion.

Being the owner of two miniature dogs myself, whom I have taken with only moderate success to agility classes, I had been particularly interested in hearing Mr. Louganis mention that he

August 2005

enjoys training his half dozen or so dogs in agility, especially as he intentionally communicates with them only nonviolently.

One of his life goals is to write a book about training dogs. (He already has published a book with Eric Marcus about his life and career called [Breaking the Surface: The Greg Louganis Story](#), which has been made into a movie starring Mario Lopez.) His canine mini stars have been in films and also have qualified in the American Kennel Club Nationals.

Dogs tend to draw people together, and so I had no qualms about speaking to this star, especially as he had had the courage to be interviewed in front of thousands of people and to speak transparently and vulnerably to us. He had told a story of meeting a sweet lady on an airplane who wanted to talk, when he at first did not, and concluded through this conversation that it is important to allow people to get to know us, because this frees us up to know ourselves.

He allowed us to get to know him by describing a period of using cocaine, of being depressed and suicidal from childhood, and speaking openly about being gay and HIV positive.

For the last six months of his father's life, Mr. Louganis took care of him, with whom his struggles with intimacy had begun. Today he recognizes this trial as representative of his struggles with intimacy with himself. Before his father died, he was to hear words of thanks: "You did for me what I couldn't do for you."

When I expressed surprise that his dog was staying at the Omni, Mr. Louganis said that the hotel had given him no problem about having her (Nipper) in his room. She was the one dog out of the six who got to come along, because she is the most needy, and doesn't get along with any of the other dogs.

Nipper, paying no attention to the conversation, nonchalantly hopped up to the raised grassy area and squatted, peeing into one of the larger puddles in the wet grass. Then they both went into the center of the area and Mr. Louganis signaled her to show off their team skills.

Nipper could come, sit, lie down, and roll over with the most minimal of hand gestures. She was exuberant, bounding like a gazelle when her owner sent her "away". (He said she isn't really supposed to run like that, but she does love her paces.) And when he walked away from her, she didn't stay as she was supposed to, but trotted behind him expectantly. When she came back to heel, she would bark happily and jump up and down by his side. The most impressive trick was facing him, leaping into his welcoming arms, and then slathering his face with kisses. It was just plain love.

Well, the APA is asking its members to show a little more love towards gays and lesbians by endorsing their right to the civil union of marriage. There was a touching spiritual moment in a discussion following the Armand Nicholi lecture. An older gentleman came to the microphone, and with tears in his eyes, said he was gay, and mentioned briefly about how much it meant to him to learn that he was finally being accepted as "one of us."

On the other hand, there are more religiously fundamentalist members of the APA who are threatened by a position of acceptance, and even have threatened to "secede" from the organization. Certainly in terms of the public, gay rights was a major issue in the past national presidential election.

August 2005

The night before, Dr. Stephen Scharfstein, the new president of the APA, mentioned at least three current threats to our scientific integrity:

- Administration officials have demanded the removal of the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender from a research study about the suicidality of persons in these groups.
- In Individuals on the fringes of the political spectrum, who are surprisingly close to the political centers of power, want to shut down mental health as a field, possibly because it involves vulnerable groups in our society.
- An administration spokesperson complained about protests from the APA as coming from "these people," a phrase which Dr. Scharfstein characterized as an insult to science and human rights.

Dr. Scharfstein's proposed a message to anyone who attempts to put ideological shackles on scientific progress in mental health, saying loudly and clearly, "We are 'these people.'"

Teetering on the Brink of Death: Love as an Antidote (usually)

What could be more compelling in psychiatry and religion (or spirituality) than the subjects of love and death? And what more powerful media for expressing feelings and needs around these subjects, facing our own core instincts and reactions, and reminding us that none of us are so different from one another, than film?

So, on Friday, with some time before my evening flight home, I took myself to the Symposium on Toxic Love: Cinema on Romantic Love and Its Pathologies, presented by Robert J. Boland, M.D., Brown University and Anton C. Trinidad, M.D., Washington Hospital Center, D.C.

To begin the session, Dr. Trinidad presented the portion on "Toxic Love in Film," to illustrate and discuss obsessive love and the loss of the self, and the spectrum of love from normality to pathology.

At worst, he explained that love can be dark and brooding, associated with death, as masterfully portrayed by Luchino Visconti's *Death in Venice* (1971), and based on Thomas Mann's novel of the same title. In this film, Aschenbach (Dirk Bogarde) is portrayed as an artistically barren composer (a la Mahler), whose child had died. Aschenbach becomes unexpectedly obsessed with the youth and beauty of a 14-year-old boy. The last scene shown, of Aschenbach's lonely death on the beach, reflects Mann's notion that nothing, not even death, matters in the pursuit of his art.

Dr. Trinidad expressed as well that at best, romantic love is the most influential shaper of lives. This pursuit of perfect beauty, in the form of romantic love, or in fact, any passion, prevents literal or figurative suicide. On the one hand, as Albert Camus pointed out in his essay "The Myth of Sisyphus," it is our very passions that condemn us to the underworld of death, to futile repetitions of actions leading to absurd nothingness. Yet, there is also joy in this fate: as Camus concluded, "The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy."

To illustrate the worst side of pathological love, Dr. Trinidad showed excerpts from director Adrian Lyne's *Fatal Attraction* (1987), with Glen Close as Alex Forrest and Michael Douglas as Dan Gallagher, a man who for whatever reason, decided to stray from his perfectly

August 2005

serene life with a law practice, a wife, and daughter, and pursue a fiction of intoxicating fusion masquerading for love. While love may start with lust, Dr. Trinidad pointed out, to arrive at a healthy partnership, one must renounce lust, or remain trapped in the persona of Don Juan and sexual addiction. Also, without a healthy partnership, there is a tendency to attempt to destroy the very other we claim to love.

At this point, Dr. Trinidad brought in Lacanian psychoanalytic interpretation of desire (Jacques Marie Émile Lacan, M.D., French Psychoanalyst (1901-81), emphasizing Lacan's theory of the mirror stage (ages 2 – 3) when, from innumerable, but fractionated mirrorings from others, an idealistic, imaginary wholeness without insufficiency is conceptualized by the infant, but which will never match our real being. In other words, there is no such thing as an authentic self. And, because this fictionalized image is outside ourselves, it also is the origin of a fundamental sense of alienation. (www.colorado.edu/English/ENGL2012Klages/lacan.html/, www.press.jhu.edu/books/hopkins_guide_to_literary_theory/jacques_lacan.html)

Dr. Trinidad postulated that in the case of Alex, or the person with Borderline Personality Disorder, one is trapped in a system of mirrors (negative projections), that where there are no mirrors at all, there is no self, or where mirrors are lost, homicide may result. One's ability to weather the loss of the love object is essentially dependent on the presence or absence of mirrors in the form of support networks (positive projections). Even love is the creation of a fiction, where we get to direct the "movie" and invent the characters and the narrative, but it is a movie without an end.

Selected scenes from David Cronenberg's *M. Butterfly* (1993), showed the imprisoned diplomat Rene Gallimard (Jeromy Irons) in drag reenacting the story of *Madame Butterfly*, but literally committing the ritualistic suicide. Dr. Trinidad concluded that all three of the movies illustrate reckless gamblers who throw their whole lives on the wheel of their love affair with death, dictated by their childish need to run from their loneliness and nonbeing.

Dr. Boland presented the section on "Using Movies to Portray Pathological Interpersonal Styles". Dr. Boland pointed out how difficult it is to diagnose Axis II disorders and the potential pitfalls of arriving too quickly at what could turn out to be an unjust misrepresentation of a complex situation, and the tendency for residents and attendings alike to write the Axis II descriptor "deferred" as a general rule in all psychiatric evaluations. In teaching, it is difficult, if not impossible, to teach from the DSM-IVR, because it is necessary to know over the course of time about the person's interpersonal styles of relating, and to, again over time, differentiate the disorder from other diagnoses with similar presentations.

While directors do not carry around the DSM Handbook, they do have a flair for attending to significant details and involving us emotionally, which makes films ideal for transmitting these concepts to students (hopefully without frightening them to death!).

Dr. Boland also chose clips from *Fatal Attraction* to demonstrate Borderline Personality Disorder, sometimes confused with Bipolar Disorder, with its concomitant longitudinal instability, rapid mood changes, interpersonal shifts in opinions of others, intolerance of being alone, and intolerance of ambiguity. He pointed out that perhaps Alex's (initially self-) destructive behavior was reinforced by the fact that it got results, and that the "real jerk" here was Dan, who had the naivete to expect that he could have easy sex with a woman

August 2005

and she would as easily let him go back to his idyllic life after their passions were satisfied.

For illustrating Narcissistic Personality Disorder, sometimes confused with healthy self esteem or manic grandiosity, characterized by longitudinal aspects of midlife and/or existential crisis and self loathing, and interpersonal emptiness and entitlement, Dr. Boland selected what he called an underrated movie, *Groundhog Day* (1993), written by Danny Rubin and directed by Harold Ramis. Bill Murray stars as Phil, the main character who finally breaks through to his true compassionate, creative and loving self (see www.transparencynow.com/groundhog.htm), illustrating the concept of how we need to "fake it until we make it."

The other movie selected was writer director actor Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* (1941), co-scripted with Herman J. Mankiewicz. (although Welles apparently later took his name off the script) and produced by John Houseman. In it, Jedediah Leland (Joseph Cotten) commented, "That's all he really wanted out of life, was love. That's Charlie's story: how he lost it. You see, he just didn't have any to give."

Kane is tormented by a self-destructive sense of failure in spite of the money and power at his disposal, or as Dr. Boland put it, he was waiting for the inspiration to do something to prove that he himself is worthy of all that he has achieved and owns.

Antisocial Personality Disorder probably is more excessively represented in the movies than it is in most of our own practices, at least for those of us in a private or non forensic setting. Nevertheless, a person who longitudinally demonstrates an initial charm, but interpersonally has a complete disregard for others and an equal willingness to kill or be killed, can hold a certain fascination for us as a truth stranger than fiction.

To illustrate this, Dr. Boland showed selections from *Natural Born Killers* (1994), directed by Oliver Stone, in which two victims of traumatized childhoods (Woody Harrelson as Mickey Knox, who, by the way, killed his father when he was 10, and Juliette Lewis as Mallory Wilson) become lovers and psychopathic serial murderers, irresponsibly glorified by mass media. Dr. Boland raised the question of whether partnerships that have equal psychopathology can have relationships that last, (Ed. or even if such likeness is a necessary condition for longevity. If one didn't take the movie too seriously, or mind its tastelessness, one might, like T. Brendan Leahy, describe it as a "satire of media, public opinion, and the modern attitude toward violence."

The most challenging disorder to teach, according to Dr. Boland, is the Schizoid Personality. And so, for this, we were treated to a number of film clips including *About Schmidt* (2002, Alexander Payne). While the latter is essentially and literally about Schmidt, Dr. Boland used a scene to illustrate the schizoid person's difficulty in differentiating friendliness for sexual interest. It also contained a lesson to those of us who tend to be excessively friendly. The common characteristics of the "heroes" in all of these movies, whether to be somewhat pitied or glorified, are their chronic longitudinal course of being loners, their interpersonal styles of awkwardness, and a willingness to make some small sacrifices for the sake of "easy relationships."

Dr. Trinidad, using the movie "Bella Martha" (or Mostly Martha), 2001, directed by Sandra Nettelbeck, concluded the symposium, by

August 2005

pointing out standard conventions of film portrayals of psychiatry and psychiatrists:

- the psychiatrist is more neurotic than the patient
- the psychiatrist is wealthier (gorgeous office on the water)
- psychiatry doesn't work, but love does.

Who knows? Perhaps one of these mirrors of us and our profession is more accurate than we know!

*The Station Agent (2003, Thomas McCarthy), Ghost World (2001, Terry Zwigoff), The Conversation (1974, Francis Ford Coppola), The Good the Bad and the Ugly (1966, Sergio Leone)

Epilogue

Over the years my desire increasingly has been far less for recognition and far more for relationship. This summer I turn 65. So I have been thinking about redefining my life. While not in a financial position to retire, and never particularly successful at anything, I have enjoyed a wide range of interests, and have always wanted to "do it all." Now I would like to focus more intensely on things I really love, like belonging to and participating in my church community, teaching non violence, writing, making art, learning music, gardening, exercising, connecting and linking together people of like interests, getting to know myself and others in a more intimate way, helping others to do the same, and last, but not least, having massages. Still seeing patients, but with even less third party billing than I do now, I would like to be as free as possible of things that can bog us down, such as greed, envy, pride, lust, or for that matter, sin of any sort.

One among many thousands of participants at the 2005 APA Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, for the most part I was happily engaged and interested in what was happening around me. I had for the second year in a row a wonderful roommate from the Christian Medical & Dental Association (CMDA), Psychiatry Section. I met young psychiatrists from East Africa, and other Christian Psychiatrists at the Banquet whom I had never met or seen since the memorable meeting, at my first CMDA Banquet at the APA Meeting in D.C. so many years ago, of the deeply mourned David Larson, M.D.

I attended the Ebenezer Baptist Church service, visited the original Ebenezer Baptist Church where Martin Luther King, Jr. had been associate pastor with his father, and done so much of his Civil Rights work, and the King Center. I went to the huge Janssen gala at the Jimmy Carter Center, where psychiatrist and world renowned pianist Dr. Richard Kogan, spoke to us about Robert Schumann, who quit law school where he was dying a spiritual death, and wrote music to reveal what was happening in his interior, bipolar, world. I schlepped out to the Atlanta History Center Folk Art exhibition and listened to old turn of the century folk songs, folk tales, preaching, and hymns, and looked at early artifacts. Besides the meetings I've reported on, I also attended a Component Workshop on Novel Careers in Psychiatry: Women Who Have Made Their Own Way and an Issues Workshop on Reinventing Careers: Transitions and Later-Life Strategies for Psychiatrists.

Perhaps the intensity of my life has always been a defense against loneliness, and I would like to say that I am less lonely. However, I am beginning to think that perhaps loneliness is not something to avoid, but one of the beautiful and wonderful experiences to savor in life. I was fortunate to have a few while I was away, and be able to use my cell phone to call Martin at home. This was a spiritual experience.

August 2005

We Are Not Alone

For summer watching:

The Son's Room (La Stanza del Figlio), 2001, written, directed and produced by, and starring Nanni Moretti is a film that was shown this year at the APA and very worth watching by every psychiatrist. It is about a psychoanalyst/husband/father's everyday life with and reactions to his patients and family, to which any of us could easily relate, in terms of everyday and more extraordinary painful events. It is a story well balanced with humor, tragedy, and a satisfying conclusion.

"The Question of God: Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis", 2004, PBS television series,
www.pbs.org/wqbh/questionofgod/series_desc.html

Inside APAPAC - - How Contributions Are Spent

John J. Wernert, M.D.
Chair, APAPAC Board of Directors

As APAPAC continues to grow and enjoys more and more success, I wanted to take this opportunity to reach out to our supporters and those of you who have not yet supported the PAC to explain the PAC Board's decision-making process. The PAC Board considers many factors when deciding which candidates receive APAPAC contributions and the PAC Board makes every effort to prioritize our PAC activity to assist candidates who clearly champion APA's priority legislative agenda. Approximately 75% of APAPAC-supported candidates have co-sponsored APA priority issues, including, of course, issues such as enacting non-discriminatory coverage of treatment of mental illness in general health insurance and in Medicare, research funding, and medical records privacy. The PAC Board also believes that it is crucially important for APA to stand with our physician colleagues and the rest of medicine on major issues that affect all physicians. These include issues of concern to APA members as physicians, such as the Medicare physician payment update and medical liability reform. If one factors in these issues, the remaining 25% of APAPAC-supported candidates are supportive. This bears repeating: when assessing candidate patronage (through co-sponsorship or voting records) of APA-priority legislation and/or APA-supported physician priorities, all PAC-endorsed candidates have supported APA in at least one, and often multiple, areas.

Thus, the PAC Board believes it is important to keep in mind APA's overall legislative advocacy objectives and to bolster the work of the APA's advocacy efforts and to foster good working relationships with all Members of Congress who have a direct impact on our overall legislative priorities, including both "APA-specific" issues and issues of more general concern to psychiatrists as physicians. The PAC Board aims to represent all APA members and strongly believes that to properly and thoroughly advocate for our patients and our profession we need to educate, lobby, and support both candidates for Congress who already support our issues as well as those who do not at this time.

There has been some concern that APAPAC dollars are too balanced between Republicans and Democrats, given what is perceived to be a stronger base of support for our issues among Democrats. Over the last few years, we have worked very hard to ensure that APAPAC is more balanced than it has been in the past.

August 2005

It is a fact of Washington life that with one party in control of Congress and the White House, it would do us no good to be perceived as a PAC that is dominated by support for the political party out of power, and we can assure you that party leaders keep close track of this.

Generally, incumbents enjoy a tremendous advantage in the election process and often times run unopposed or virtually unopposed (which is reflected in the PAC's list of support). In the case of open-seat races, the PAC Board works with APA members in that district and state as well as the District Branch to ensure we obtain any and all information possible. The PAC Board also looks to support Members of Congress that are considered our allies, those who are both pro-psychiatry, and pro-physician, regardless of their leadership status or committee assignment. In most cases, APA joins with medical specialty and health industry associations in co-hosting events for these individuals, presenting an important unified face to matters we are concerned with as a physician community.

In addition to these factors, the PAC Board considers requests from APAPAC members and those that come directly from District Branches/State Associations. For all potential contributions: the candidate, opponent, district, position in Congress, legislative record (of both candidates and when applicable), and likelihood of victory are all considered.

He May Be Right

Republican state senator John Bonacic, a sponsor of the bill, also says its "morally wrong" to make physicians treat someone without being compensated.

Democrat and Chronicle Monday August 15, 2005

Preferred Pay

Preferred Care gave CEO John Urban a 7.4 percent raise last year, upping his salary from \$477,897 in 2003 to \$513,486, the HMO said today. Next highest paid last year were Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer Preston Strosnider D.O., whose pay went up 38.8 percent to \$496,552 from \$357,527 in 2003. Excellus Health Plan Inc. president and CEO David Klein saw his pay rise to \$1.5 million in 2004.

Rochester Business Journal March 18, 2005

Residents' Futures Revealed

Sue Diesel has supplied us with some information as to background and next career moves of SMH's psychiatry residents finishing the training program this summer:

Craig Schoenecker--med school at U of Wisconsin, chief resident in SMH program 2005-06, awarded the Jaeneki Award and Romano Award this year; on to fellowship training in Forensic Psychiatry at U of Wisconsin.

Ramona Mazzeo-- SUNY Buffalo med school, chief resident along with Craig this year, awarded the Nanavati Award this year; took a position as an inpatient attending at Cayuga Medical Center at Ithaca, NY.

Nikil Nihalani- Transferred from SUNY Syracuse this year, received the Resident Research Award from SMH department of Psychiatry this year; starting forensic fellowship at SUNY Syracuse.

August 2005

William Schneider--Medical College of Ohio, pursuing psychosomatic medicine fellowship training (program yet to be determined).

Ronald Spurling (med/psych)-Medical University of South Carolina, took a position as an inpatient attending at Strong Memorial Hospital and will be on faculty here.

Jeremy Smith (med/psych)--Mt. Sinai School of Medicine. Also staying on faculty here, inpatient attending on MICA unit and ECT attending.

Steinberg Lecture Slated

The Nineteenth Charles E. Steinberg Lecture in Psychiatry and the Law will be held Tuesday September 27th at Mario's Via Abruzzi on Monroe Avenue. The reception is at 7:00 PM and dinner at 7:30 PM. The lecture will begin at 7:00 as well and is scheduled to end at 9:00. Steven Scharfstein MD, MPH, president of the APA, will give the talk. He is professor and vice chair of the department of psychiatry at the University of Maryland; he is well known for his research and writing on the treatment of the mentally ill, the economics of practice, and public mental health policy.

The Charles E. Steinberg Fellowship in Psychiatry and the Law was established in the Department of Psychiatry in 1988 on his 70th birthday in recognition of his contributions to the field of psychiatry and the law.

Office for rent: There will be a psychotherapy office for rent beginning June 1, 2005 at a cost of \$600 per month including all utilities. This centrally located extra-large office is located in Brighton, across from Monroe Community College. It is on the bus line and minutes from Strong Memorial Hospital. Included are a newly remodeled waiting area, basement storage, and kitchen facilities. Other amenities that are available include access to secretary/billing and a group room with one-way observation. The office was constructed for use as a psychotherapy office and has four layers of soundproofing. For more information call Carole Frank at 427-9230.

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