



Academy of Family Psychology Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 1

December, 2003

President's Message

All of the work and preparation that the board members and presenters did for the ABPP Exam Preparation Workshop was influenced by the SARS situation in Toronto. Consequently, the response to the Workshop was poor, resulting in its cancellation. The Academy of Family Psychology, however, did sponsor a social hour in the Division 43 hospitality suite. This was a success and gave us an opportunity to share ideas on promoting board certification in family psychology. Future workshops will not be planned in conjunction with the APA Convention. We will

man, Ph.D.; Mark Stanton, Ph.D.; A. Melton Strozier, Jr., Ph.D.; David Lawrence Terrell, Ph.D.; and Lenore E. Walker, Ed.D. Congratulations to the new board certified psychologists in family psychology.

Board certification is becoming increasingly more valuable. The Council of Presidents of Psychology Specialty Academies has been working on a relationship with the American Association of Medical Colleges, and the American Board of Medical Specialists. Collaborative discussions have been positive and the CPPSA will begin looking into membership in these organizations. Much of this

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explore more regional activities, and once again I call upon the members of the Academy to plan workshops in their specialty areas and incorporate the process of board certification in family psychology in the subject matter of your workshop.

The Fifty-sixth ABPP Annual Convocation on August 9, 2003 welcomed the following psychologists as board certified in family psychology: Mary-Joan Gerson, Ph.D.; Irene Goldberg, Ed.D.; Michele Harway, Ph.D.; Claudia J. Hoff-

work has been spearheaded by Joe Talley (Counseling Psychology), and Bernie Brucker (Rehabilitation Psychology).

On the political action front; Senate Bill 953 will give special pay increases to board certified psychologists who are federal employees. I encourage every Academy member to write their Senator and urge them to co-sponsor Senate Bill 953. Again, Joe Talley has been instrumental in being a liaison for us.

Finally, this is an election

year. In this issue of the Newsletter you will find Nomination Ballots for President Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary for 2005-2007. I encourage you to nominate a colleague, for these offices. Self-Nominations are also encouraged. Kindly send your nomination to Frank R. Ezzo, Ph.D., ABPP.

I wish all Academy members a joyous holiday season celebrating their own families. During 2004, my final year as President, I would like to hear from Academy members. Send me your ideas on recruiting and marketing, and let me know how the Academy can help you in these areas. Don't forget to visit the Academy of

Editor's Notes

By John Thoburn, Ph.D., ABPP

I took a group of clinical psychology students to India in August for a multi-cultural immersion experience sponsored by the Christian Counselling Centre in Vellore, which is in the Tamil Nadu province of India. The Director of the Centre, Dr. B. J. Prashantham, introduced us to a gem of a program that truly epitomizes family psychology. The program is inpatient through the Department of Psychiatry, Christian Medical College, in the town of Vellore. The Centre was started in 1957 and has championed the concept of family participation in the care of mental illness and disability. Patients are admitted into the hospital only if accompanied by a close relative. The program reflects the importance of family in the life of Indians. Clinical

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work is organized through two adult psychiatry units, one child and adolescent psychiatry unit and an independent project for the rehabilitation of the mentally retarded.

The chief of Staff was Dr. Prathap Thariyan, MD, MRC Psych, a very warm and erudite man, who showed us around a campus where even the architecture reflects a recognition of the importance the family plays in the treatment process. The wards are small suites with attached kitch-

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ens and sleeping space for multiple family members. Rather than being isolated from the family, the patient is cared for by family members who participate in the rehabilitation process daily, facilitating the eventual transfer of care back home.

While inpatient programs in the United States tend to be organized around psychoeducation, individual and family therapy and medication management, the CMC program, while incorporating these aspects of treatment, is structured around multiple family dialogues. Multiple families engage in conversations where the stigma of mental illness or disability is diluted, resources and positive coping strategies are shared, and empathy is doled out in large measure. MHC is currently studying outcome efficacy in relation to traditional forms of treatment. Preliminary findings

indicate that family dialogue based treatment is as effective as psychoeducation in reducing patient symptoms.

Multiculturalism and Family Psychology: It's in all of us!

By Terence Patterson, Ph.D.,
ABPP

Every major context in which I have been involved in family psychology has defined multiculturalism in its broadest contextual manner, to include: race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, spirituality, geography, immigration status, socioeconomic level, and any other key factor that includes tradition, ritual, and values, and defines who we are. This is not to de-emphasize the priority that needs to be placed on those who have been traditionally oppressed and whose basic rights are being denied, but to accentuate the value of every person's awareness of his or her own cultural context and to respect, develop, or perhaps modify it throughout the life cycle. Culture is as basic to understanding family structure and dynamics as individual and family life cycle development.

This appreciation and emphasis on culture is particularly relevant in work with couples and families. Differences in individual cultural values can become points of dissonance and conflict, resulting in interpersonal distance at the same time as families attempt to celebrate and pass on traditions through the generations. Bowen (Kerr & Bowen, 1988) highlighted *individuation* as being one aspect of this attempt to negotiate between personal and shared values, and Boszormenyi-Nagy

(Boszormenyi-Nagy & Spark, 1973) spoke of the *family ledger* as a means of passing on assets and debts through the generations, partly based on cultural values.

Thus, I believe that it is absolutely critical for family psycholo-

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ABPP Report

By Florence Kaslow, Ph.D., ABPP

ABPP moved its offices from Missouri to Savannah, Georgia in September 2003. New computer and other operating systems are in place, and it is intended that everything will run more efficiently. The 800 phone number (1-800-255-7792) is the same, and Dr. Russell Bent continues as our Executive Officer.

We will be meeting in Philadelphia, December 4th to 7th. Issues of prime import at this time are:

1. Acquiring more diplomates in all specialties;
2. Emphasizing our diversity in recruiting new diplomates;
3. Getting fuller recognition by APA Council that ABPP is the Certifying Board, and that this should be heralded so that Vanity Boards will cease to appeal to psychologists;
4. Possible acceptance of new specialty boards

The Family Psychology Board has extended its Senior Track application period. This has proven fruitful to date, and we have had a steady stream of new candidates and new diplomates. Welcome to all of you, and we hope you will become active in the Academy. These are heady times in the arena of specialization, and we believe ABPP is the best qualified organization to be in charge of this.

Hope to see many of you in

The Good News, the Bad News, and the REAL News about International Adoption!

By Florence Kaslow, Ph.D., ABPP

Binghamton, NY, November 2003 – The Haworth Press, in keeping with its focus on vital contemporary issues, announces the publication of a practical resource on the international, multi-cultural, and nontraditional adoption process that will save prospective parents time, trouble, and tears. **Welcome Home! An International and Nontraditional Adoption Reader** is a much-needed guide through what *U.S. News & World Report* has called “The Adoption Maze”. Parents, grandparents, siblings and adoptees themselves share candid firsthand accounts about the risks and realities of international adoption in this breakthrough book.

As United States citizens reach out more than ever to adopt children from foreign lands—more than 20,000 each year, from more than 100 different countries—prospective parents need real answers to the real problems they face in dealing with the cultural, psychological, financial, emotional, and legal aspects of international and nontraditional adoptions. This timely book offers fresh insights into the special problems of high costs, red tape, and long waiting periods, and the special needs of children from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Welcome Home! An International and Nontraditional Adoption Reader, edited by Dr. Lita Linzer Schwartz and Dr. Florence W. Kaslow, captures the challenges and rewards of international and nontraditional adoption like no other book before. In the foreword, U.S. Representative

Ted Strickland (D-Ohio), a psychologist and former childcare administrator, praised the book’s unique insights: “The editors are to be commended for helping us keep the focus where it should be, on making every effort possible to ensure that children at risk live instead in a safe environment and with someone who truly wants and loves them”.

Welcome Home! takes an honest look at the highs and lows of international adoption from several personal perspectives, covering everything from individual state laws and practices, tax benefits, legal and medical costs, to choosing the right agency, biracial adoption, and how to handle an adopted child’s questions in later years. **Welcome Home!** is required reading for anyone considering international and nontraditional adoption, and for anyone who has already been through the process and wants to validate his or her experiences. The book is also invaluable for professionals who help adoptive parents in law, pediatrics, psychology, and social work and the other mental health fields, as well as in adoption services and child welfare.

Both authors are board certified by ABPP; Dr. Schwartz in Forensic Psychology, and Dr. Kaslow in Clinical, Family and Forensic Psychology. Dr. Kaslow is Past President of the American Board of Family Psychology and of the Division of Family Psychology.

Welcome Home! is available for \$24.95 in soft cover (ISBN:

0-7890-1774-1), or \$39.95 in hard cover (ISBN: 0-7890-1773-3). (U.S. Prices). The book is also available in bookstores, or order directly from: The Haworth Press, Inc., 10 Alice Street, Binghamton, NY 13904-1580. Telephone in US/Canada: (800) HAWORTH; Fax: (800) 895-0582; E-mail: orders@haworthpress.com.

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gists to evaluate and work with cultural issues explicitly in their research, teaching, therapy, supervision and consultation. The following are brief guidelines for integrating multiculturalism and for being “culturally competent” in the broadest sense:

- Be familiar with the impact of cultural values on individuals, couples, and families in general; study and immerse yourself more intensely regarding those groups you work with frequently;
- Keeping your learning in mind, *listen* and ask respectfully about the particular experiences and current values of students, clients, supervisees, consultees, and potential research subjects (for example, do not assume that a first-generation immigrant from a particular culture thinks or acts in a specific manner);
- Within the framework of your general knowledge and individual data, develop a flexible plan for the working with a specific individual or group, and remain alert for new information (verbal and non-verbal) as it emerges; inquire about your hypotheses in an appropriate fashion;
- Be aware of your own cultural values and biases. If you haven’t ever done so, attend a workshop or write down your own cultural traditions based

**NOMINATION BALLOT FOR ACADEMY OFFICERS:
2005-2007**

(self nominations are encouraged)

PRESIDENT ELECT: _____

TREASURER: _____

SECRETARY: _____

Mail Nominations to: Frank R. Ezzo, Ph.D., ABPP
35110 Euclid Avenue
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or Email at: frezzo@ix.netcom.com

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on the nine factors listed in the opening sentence above;

- Check frequently for the impact of your own cultural background and views (positively and negatively) on the work you are doing; consult with others if your values and beliefs appear to be interfering.

Basically, multiculturalism applies to all of us—let's understand it, work with it, and enjoy it!

References

- Boszormenyi-Nagy I. & Spark, G.M. (1973). *Invisible loyalties: Reciprocity in intergenerational family therapy*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Bowen, M. (1978). *Family therapy in clinical practice*. New York: Aronson.

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