

President's Report and Address – May 14, 2011
SMP Annual Meeting T.Laquercia, President

Welcome to the annual meeting of the Society of Modern Psychoanalysts. It has been three years since I stood here and accepted the presidency of our association and so much has happened in these years. The world seems to be changing in a way that is unheard of in history. The Internet and social media have created upheavals in unparalleled ways. I mention this, because the sweep of the pursuit of freedom has been generated by such open communication borne from the Internet, and this communication cannot be stopped as more and more become aware of a common pursuit of freedom. Our profession occupies but, a small period in this scope of change, yet there are some commonalities that I want to point out.

Freud changed the free world when he discovered his science and it is indisputable that the concepts he put forth established a fundamental way of perceiving human development and a way of working with emotional disturbance that had not existed before.

Yet, in his time and in the period in which he lived and worked, he had not yet discovered the full power of his system. It wasn't until the middle of the last century that others including Hyman Spotnitz began to apply his work to the broadest range of pathologies. Modern Psychoanalysis was born then and its principle of inclusion and freedom to treat and train anyone would become a foundation of a philosophical approach to psychoanalysis that remains to this day, and lives at the heart of SMP. The struggle to maintain this position has been with us ever since. And like the sweep of any historical process change is inevitable. In 1988, for instance, a suit brought by two psychologists, opened training for non-medical individuals that enabled them to attend orthodox institutes in this country. Prior to that significant shift there was already a movement to open training to non-medical persons. NPAP was founded in 1948 and individuals trained there became the founders of the modern psychoanalytic training and professional efforts. In 1971, only forty years ago CMPS began accepting students from all walks of life and the patients that they saw in their training were drawn from every level of pathological disturbance. Two years later Phyllis Meadow and other founders with other analysts of different schools, created NAAP, the first psychoanalytic professional association that

embraced the broadest acceptance policies for training in the field. Then in 1991 SMP was founded to represent solely the theoretical and technical fundamentals of modern psychoanalysis.

The first president of NPAP and a founder of NAAP and CMPS was Ethel Clevans, she was my supervisor. I asked her why it was that she devoted herself to only seeing patients. She told me very simply that she wanted to change the world one person at a time and you never know how the ripple effect would take hold.

These past several weeks have brought home that message to me very personally. Because of the Internet a former student of mine when I was the principal of a high school in Brooklyn in the 1960s and early 70s, posted a message on Facebook asking if any of his Facebook friends remembered a Mr. Laquercia. He wrote, "Mr. Laquercia was the principal of BHA when the had the oddest assortment of both the most dangerous elements and bizarre students ever to grace a high school." He went on to say: " If it wasn't for Mr. Laquercia I would have never made it through high school. I would have never considered college. His tough, radical teaching techniques and taking us 'problem students' - and individually teaching and counseling us under his guidance

was the only hope many of us ever experienced...by the way, I never knew he had a first name.

He described his experience he had in a class I taught that I wrote about and was published in the 1977 issue of Modern Psychoanalysis. It was my very first paper, in it I described my "experiment" utilizing what I had learned as a student at CMPS, to teach that class. This application had a profound effect on this boy and as I think about it now I realize how true it is that the process of psychoanalysis has such power. I am affirmed in the belief that the principles of psychoanalysis should be open to all who could benefit from it as this student did and how our patients do. And because of this affirmation I do know that our society, SMP, has a responsibility to maintain what began when Dr Spotnitz opened doors to an expanded vista of potential and the founders walked through them to begin building institutions and centers that continue to this day.

In these forty years our SMP institutes alone, ACAP, BGSP and CMPS have graduated 400 to 500 people as psychoanalysts with CMPS having at least 215 graduates since its first graduation in 1976. The Kentucky Institute has four candidates ready for completion and their first candidate will be graduating this semester.

SMP institute programs have expanded to degree granting status at the masters and doctorate level and in Boston alone over 100 students have taken a masters degree in psychoanalysis since it first awarded them in 1999. Thirty-four have taken the Masters in NYGSP since it's beginning in 2005. And this will continue. BGSP has awarded 5 doctorates in clinical psychoanalysis and 8 doctorates in Culture and Psychoanalysis and it is likely that there will be another 5 or 6 this semester. Beyond all that there is, because of the Internet, an influx of students that are coming to our schools from all over the world. 18 countries are represented in CMPS from southern hemisphere, Europe, the Middle East and the Far East and I believe that number is greater in Boston.

SMP as an association has the responsibility to continue this mission of expansion and representation of inclusion in training and treatment. It has added responsibility to represent the efforts of its institutes to promote their programs and keep the momentum of their efforts in degree granting, legislative efforts and expansion to more and more individuals from the widest backgrounds so that the freedom that psychoanalysis can provide for an individual

can benefit them, those in their families, community and country.

I want to tell you that since the last annual meeting we have continued to upgrade our web site; we now have pay pal and we are working to make the site more and more utilizable to our members. Plans are in works for a referral component to be part of the site and efforts to have some its features more useful to the members. In this past year we have realigned our board officers to include an institute committee that will oversee standards in modern psychoanalytic institutes.

Finally, when we think of our “movement” SMP and our institutes are now in position to make inroads into the broader scope of the psychoanalytic profession. Some recent individual efforts need to be noted that depicts the incursion into the broader analytic field. A graduate of BGSP, Robin Gomolin, presented a prize winning paper at the last American Psychoanalytic Associations annual meeting and Tracy Morgan, an advanced candidate of CMPS has created an interview site called New Books in Psychoanalysis that has her interviewing authors of recently published books. Her podcast and site is now linked to the Division 39 of the

APA, The Michigan Psychoanalytic Institute and the NYU Post-Doc Listserv, Barbara D'Amato a graduate and faculty member of CMPS has been invited to present a paper in the Netherlands next month based on her doctoral studies done at BGSP. It is this kind of experience that needs to continue so our modern analytic work can be recognized in the wider field. After the election today our new board will meet and there will be an assignment of Officers to take on more and more effort to expand our membership. We have, in this past year gone above 300 but it is only the beginning of an enhanced effort to enroll more individuals. I have been meeting with the president of NAAP, Pamela Armstrong Manchester, a graduate of CMPS, to discuss ways in which we can work together to enrich our membership rolls and cooperate in common pursuits, not the least of which are our celebrations marking our anniversaries. CMPS is celebrating its 40th anniversary this October at Pier 60 in Chelsea Piers and NAAP will be having theirs next year or the following year when they determine the exact year that they officially began.

So, in ending I want to say that food is waiting and the officers of the board will make their reports forthwith; Thank you all for coming today and take heart in the work

that you do because as Mrs. Cleavans said, we change the world one person at a time and that's a good thing.