

**Seattle Psychoanalytic Society and Institute**  
**Business Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday February 14, 2024**  
**In-person & via Zoom**  
(Chaired by Faculty Chair Elect M. Bullard)

Attendees: M. Bullard, S. Walker, J. de Mott, C. Keats, D. Fort, J. Wood, K. McKittrick, A. Thomas, R. Kelly, R. Huska, P. Cömert, C. Bassen, S. Radant, J. Markowitz, J. Goyden, R. Gottesman

1. **Call to Order** – Happy Valentine’s Day & big thanks to the Fun Committee!
2. **Approve January Minutes** – Approval deferred to March due to lack of quorum. Correction to be made: change “Fairmont” to “Fairview”.
3. **Director Report** – C. Keats  
Attached below
4. **Board Report** – R. Hushka  
Rock reported that planning and construction of the new space on Fairview is on-track for a May move-in. Rock discussed three upcoming events:  
Saturday, March 9 – Community Retreat at the Fairview space  
Friday, May 17 – Farewell party and fundraising event at the Madison space  
Saturday, June 8 – Graduation party at the Fairview space. This date is after 2YCP classes end. (S. Walker mentioned that June 8 is the weekend of the APsA online spring meeting; Board will review.)
5. **Nominations** - None
6. **Committee Reports**
  - a. Curriculum – K. McKittrick  
Faculty interest survey was sent out last week, along with the updated curriculum chart for years 1 & 3 of the new 9-4-9-9 calendar. The survey includes some description of new or modified courses being offered. Please respond with your teaching interests. If you have not received the survey, contact Zan. If you have any questions, contact Kelly or Kimberly.
  - b. CAAO – A. Thomas  
CAAO is focusing on DEI issues in symposia, and using enactments in their own cases for discussion.
7. **Holmes Commission Report Reading Groups** – J. Wood  
Several of the small reading groups have met to discuss Ch. 7 on enactments. Discussion

about experience in small groups, including experience of “safety” in a group and what that means for each individual; sharing experiences of shame due to earlier acts of racism/sexism/etc.; what is being hidden when group feels too safe or comfortable.

**8. Motions** – Votes postponed until March meeting due to lack of quorum.

**a. Ombuds Program**

M. Bullard presented proposal to enlarge group of ombuds from two to six. Discussion about process in larger group, importance of confidentiality, importance of being able to choose someone without clinical conflicts. P. Cömert asked how open positions are/will be advertised; it’s not always obvious when a position is open.

**b. Infant Observation**

K. McKittrick presented Curriculum Committee’s motion to make infant observation an elective course offered every two years at the same time as case conference. Discussion included concerns about possible effects on case conference groups, and differing opinions about the importance of infant observation in psychoanalytic training.

**9. Announcements**

Congratulations to Sandy Walker, who was elected APsA Director at Large.

The 2YCP Open House/Info Event will be on Sunday, March 3 at the Fairview space. Faculty representation is important; please RSVP and attend.

**Director’s Report**

Happy Valentine’s Day, and welcome, Fun Committee!

At the time of the last Retreat, we were dealing with hard feelings in the organization which led to the departure of several faculty members. We held a meeting to review our history to see what forces might be repeating that cause such problems. This was not explicitly productive, but along with Paul Horton’s facilitation of our last Retreat, with an emphasis on how we talk to each other, it helped make intangible moves in tone. We requested a Diversity and Equity Consultation which exposed significant continuing rifts and we studied racialized enactments as they occurred and doubtless will continue to occur. I hope we have become more forgiving of ourselves as we are steeped in group dynamics which are larger than any of us. There is a new director elect, and a new faculty chair elect, who will take over in June of this year, and are both younger than me and perhaps more in touch with the purposes and needs of the next generation of analysts. We have a new space, which we will occupy in June, which offers new possibilities as it includes a shared venue space, which we plan to use for the upcoming Retreat March 9.

For larger context I recently reviewed an article by Richard Fox in a 2003 issue of JAPA, titled Thoughts on authority and leadership. He discusses Max Weber's requirements for legitimization of power. Weber described three power structures - the traditional, the rational, and the charismatic. The traditional is based on a hierarchy, with higher and lower strata, such as kings and subjects, and in the case of analytic organizations, TAs or regular members who are not TAs. The rational structure is more democratic, based on laws – like the US constitution, with democratic government, or in the case of analytic organizations, policies and procedures, with the membership empowered. Fox said that the traditional is analogous to the early childhood phase of development in which mom and dad loom large, the rational is based on the latency phase, where rules count, while the charismatic form is based on adolescence, a period of idealization of the other. Fox felt, in 2003, that APsA was having a difficult time moving from traditional to rational government. I think that this may be the case here at SPSI, where the TA committee has sunsetted itself as having hegemony, and people may feel we lack the firm direction we had in the past.

Further, he said that running an institution requires action, which we are ill prepared for, as we are more trained to study, to reflect, and not to act. Fox mentioned, but did not expand on the transition which all of analysis underwent from the time in the 1950s and 60s which was a heyday of psychoanalysis, when academic departments of psychiatry were all headed by analysts, to the 70s and 80s up to the present when a plurality of treatments came into vogue. It is a real problem that there is no agreement, nor can there probably ever be, about what constitutes good treatment. This leaves the way open for charismatic people to sell their versions of analysis or other treatments because there is no solid bedrock to refute them. Looking back there is a history of such fads and looking forward there is no reason why this won't continue. And here at SPSI, while we move to Weber's rational form of government, with relative lack of TA input, there is an opening for charisma, with one or another strong personality pushing to influence rational choice.

Another problem for the smooth functioning of an organization which Fox mentions is group dynamics. I had been, years ago, to an AK Rice meeting to study my own role in a group, and I don't think my experience was too different from what I understand others have as well - that there are enormous pulls for regression, people go crazy, etc. - so – AK Rice attendees see what kind of craziness group forces elicit. One can be shaken by this, but it is a useful eye-opener to attend one of these conferences for an experiential feel for what is happening to all of us as we occupy our roles at SPSI. It helps to be aware of the pull of these forces, so that we can be humble in the face of them and not take the resultant outcomes too personally.

So, all these more theoretical ideas aside, in preparation for our Retreat March 9, Rock and I met with our facilitator, Paul Horton, and discussed that:

- We have the mission of educating people who want to become analysts and of providing a place for them to flourish after graduation.
- We need to keep the lights on so this takes income – from dues, tuition, fund raising, and continuing education events.

- Shared values, beliefs, norms, and behavior shape the identity of an organization. We need to check in with ourselves to be sure we share these views.
- Understanding how individuals behave in groups and how group dynamics influence decision making is crucial for organizational effectiveness.

We told Paul that these are some things we have done or are trying to do:

- We have added courses on group dynamics to the psychoanalytic curriculum.
- We would like to continue our effort to identify obstacle to becoming more diverse and equitable, and to clear these obstacles away.
- We would like to re-establish a viable program in child analysis.
- We would like to re-establish a vibrant continuing education component.
- We would like to establish a track towards graduation that includes a community service component as an elective.
- We would like to enlarge our tent, changing where necessary our policies and procedures so that more qualified people can join our faculty.

Paul Horton listened attentively and is working on sharpening the focus for our Retreat on March 9 which we hope you will all attend, to bring your own voices and perspectives to our community and help shape our future here at SPSI.