

Division 32 Presidential Talk: The History and Future of Humanistic Psychology

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Dear friends,

Here I sit, in the Trinity Alps, thinking of you. With one hand, I'm holding a book on peak experiences by Abraham Maslow, with the other, I'm tracing small circles in the cool "crick" below me. In a setting like this, it is easy to philosophize on humanistic psychology and beauty. Having just meditated on the need for nature and listening to, as John Muir says, "the stories the trees tell us", I painted these three pictures. Noticing how the acts of observation and creation put me into the state of absorption described by Abe Maslow as a peak experience and by Rollo May as the creative act, I opened Rollo's *My Quest for Beauty* to the beginning place in which he talks about his own need to paint. He says that his "...firm belief is that one paints, as one writes, not out of a theory but out of the vividness of an experience... There is a surprisingly close parallel between art and psychotherapy, and in my life they both came out of the same source. In each a new form is born not out of ideas but out of the intensity of experiences (p. ix)." Since Rollo May's and Abe Maslow's work is so embodied, and they so embody the humanistic quality of personal, subjective and passionate discourse, I took it as encouragement to actually write this talk as a letter to you, especially since I am actually thinking of you as I read and incubate the talk.

So I'd like to start with a meditation on nature, beauty, art and the psyche and see where it leads.

I'd like to invite you to try an experiment. Imagine yourself in an alpine meadow in mid-July, a meadow filled with blue lupine, scarlet gilia, and tall white yarrow flowers. (play music?) You have been chopping rocks all week as you learn to build a causeway for the Sierra Club service trip. You have been learning how to work with the natural fissures in the rock, building a trail to save the meadow, wet from this spring's abundant rains, from human steps. You have been experiencing the peculiar bonding that comes from working rhythmically and cooperatively in nature with others. You have been sleeping on the earth, rubbing with dust, and taking magical walks under a full moon. As you hike beyond your meadow, you suddenly notice this tree leaning at a crazy angle beside the path. As you get closer, you see that, while the upper third is flowering green, the bottom half is gutted. You get even closer, and see that there is almost no live tree to conduct water from the roots to the branches, yet somehow this tree finds resources and keeps growing. You explore the tree from as many angles as you can, then stand inside the burned-out middle, staring up at the enormous trunk, awed by the power of this tree.

And so you begin a meditation on impermanence, on resiliency and how some sentient beings can thrive despite huge odds. As you meditate on resiliency, you think how little study is devoted to this question in the field of psychology, and you remember how this observation was made by humanistic psychologists over forty years ago.

As President of Division 32 this year, I have been honored and humbled to participate in the impressive lineage of such humanistic psychologists as Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, Carl Rogers, James Bugental, Carmi Harari, Mike Arons, Stanley Krippner, Amedeo Giorgi, Tom Greening, Eleanor Criswell, and others who are here with us today to celebrate the founding of the Division of Humanistic Psychology of the American Psychological Association. (Please stand). These people were heroes and heroines, daring to forge a new vision of psychology and human nature. Since this year is the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of APA's divisions, it seems important to review the history of this division, and to discuss its relevance to the field of psychology and the world today. The following, therefore, is my meditation on "The History and Future of Humanistic Psychology."

Like many baby-boomers, I got involved in humanistic psychology in the 1960's, through encounter groups in Ann Arbor, and from attending the first Association for Humanistic Psychology in Washington DC. Then, still like many in my generation, my interests spread to Buddhism, Jungian analysis, and the healing arts. I thought that humanistic psychology was passe, if not already incorporated into various disciplines within the mainstream. 10 years ago, I accepted a teaching position at Saybrook Graduate School, because I felt drawn back to Rollo May's vision of a psychology rooted in the humanities, and existential/humanistic psychology's emphasis on the whole person who acts with free will and intentionality, in spite of the givens in life. I had studied phenomenology at the University of Dallas, and was drawn to Amedeo Giorgi's phenomenological method as a very necessary alternative to traditional quantitative methodology. Finally, I had of course known of Stanley Krippner's pioneering work in consciousness studies, and Dennis Jaffe's effort to bring humanistic values to the workplace. The more immersed I became in Saybrook, the more I appreciated its unique struggle to reclaim a psychology and an educational process which valued creativity, philosophical rigor, and student self-determination. I valued the strenuous efforts of Rudy Melone, Clark Moustakas and the Consortium for Diversified Education to preserve an intellectually diverse psychological education against a growing trend toward standardized, technical psychology training programs. Through Saybrook, I became involved in Division 32, and found dear colleagues-in-arms in the struggle to maintain a philosophical, experiential, spiritual, socially conscious psychology.

So, is humanistic psychology relevant today?

When I think about the problems of today's world, it seems to me that humanistic psychology is more relevant than ever, even though cries are being heard that it is now obsolete. For sure, managed care and the changing health system are eroding the heroism of the individual psychological journey. Yet in the world of increasingly impersonal technology, disconnection and disembodiment, a psychology that stresses connection and

embodied experience is needed more than ever. In a world of meaningless work and random violence, a psychology that stresses meaning and ethics is needed more than ever. In a world of increasingly sanitized conformity, a psychology that stresses creativity and dreams is needed more than ever. And, in a world in which children no longer hear bedtime stories of universal myths, a psychology that bases itself in the arts and culture, as well as in science, is needed more than ever. We hear that the computer revolution of the last 25 years has not brought about the expected miracles of increased productivity or quality of life (*New York Times Magazine*, December 8, 1996), that downsizing has brought about job insecurity and lack of benefits, that kids watch fewer foreign films, college courses in Shakespeare are being cut, the rain forest is eroding, and children are growing up without morality. The crisis in psychology is its vast inability to even address, much less solve these critical problems as the 21st century comes closer. Finally, like David Brinkley's criticism of President Clinton, one of psychology's worst sins is that it is plain boring. Psychology is no longer imaginative, soulful, or beautiful, but instead produces mechanical, technical, uniform training and procedures.

Reading these signs of illness in the culture as a diagnosis, we might look for the signs which point where people are moving today to restore their wholeness.

We see the enormous popularity of books exhorting us to put the soul back into our relationships, into our daily lives, into our work. We find that one-third of all Americans are seeking help with alternative medicine, and that Baby Boomers are downsizing and returning to religion. We read that physicists are talking about the interconnectedness of all things in a world in flux, as are ecologists, and theologians. Philosophers, post-modernists and cognitive scientists are calling for a new model of the human being, one who is complex, adaptable, and multiple. Most of the paradigm shifts are happening outside of psychology.

Except that, it seems to me, humanistic psychologists were calling for these paradigm shifts a long time ago.

For example, Abraham Maslow, who was President of APA from 1967-1968, described what he called "the sicknessness of the soul" , or "metapathologies", which result from a deprivation of "metaneeds" such as a need for beauty, meaning, or joy. The task of a psychologist would be to function as a "metacounselor", or "older brother", who would remind people of their metaneeds and of their interconnectedness.(p. 43). People who fulfill these needs are called "self-actualizers", and experience life fully with total absorption, make growth choices in an ongoing process, have a self, take responsibility, are as good as they can be, experience peak moments, and are willing to give up their defenses (pp. 44-47).

Maslow noticed how the self-actualized individual is similar to what he called the "creative" individual. He called for, in 1971, a new kind of individual who could meet the challenges of the post-war era: "To put it bluntly, we need a different kind of human being...who is comfortable with change, who enjoys change, who is able to improvise, who is able to face with confidence, strength, and courage a situation with which he has

absolutely no forewarning (p. 56)." Characteristic of this creative person is that he or she is able to be fascinated and absorbed in the present, yet somehow be timeless, selfless, outside of society and history, have a kind of innocence, a disappearance of fear, a lessening of defenses and inhibitions, strength and courage, an accepting and non-judgmental attitude, an ability to trust rather than control, receptivity, an ability to improvise, an ability to access primary process, perception which is aesthetic rather than abstract, spontaneity, expressiveness, and harmony with the world (pp. 59-68). Interestingly enough, these characteristics are a more secular version of those which characterize, according to Maslow, the mystic. Since creativity is the opposite of dissociation, it also connects us to ourselves, to others, and to the world around us. Connectedness is, for Maslow, "individuality freed of isolation (xvii)." He tells us that the most powerful way to encourage such self-actualization and creativity is through art education, since art makes better people, not better products. Art education can be a paradigm for all other forms of education, and can help us today as we search for new ways to bring psychological awareness into the mainstream.

Finally, Maslow's self-actualized person would not just be a self-absorbed navel-gazer, a stereotype which is so often levelled against humanistic psychologists, but would, as a result of the process of self-actualization, become interested in improving the world. In this image, the self-actualized person would integrate the intrapersonal, interpersonal, social, spiritual and aesthetic levels of experience. The self-actualized person would CREATE, create meaningful experiences, create and discover beauty, and live with grace and courage in a constant confrontation with the anxiety of non-being. For Maslow, who taught at Brandeis and was Jewish, self-transcendent spirituality meant living as a "mensch", with integrity and devotion to "tikkun olam", or repairing this world. For example, Harvey Fields' commentary on Genesis teaches us that human beings have choice and exercise freedom, can choose between good and evil, and "...are partners with God in preserving and advancing the precious gift of life (p. 23)." Also, the word for soul, "nefesh", originally meant "body and soul", or the whole person (Rabbi Miriam Sentura, August 5, 1997, personal communication). The ideal of a whole human being, not just a "psyche" or "mind" or "behavior", who takes responsibility for co-creating the world with God is what it meant, for Maslow, to be fully human.

Maslow's prescription for a future humanistic psychology is also relevant for us today. He advised that psychology "should be more humanistic...more concerned with problems of humanity, and less with the problems of the guild" (1965, p. 20), and "turn more frequently to the study of philosophy, of science, of aesthetics, and especially of ethics and values" (p. 22). Academic psychology is "too exclusively Western...needs to draw on Eastern sources...turns too much to the objective, the public, the outer, and behavioral and should learn more about the subjective, the private, the meditative" (p. 30). Finally, he called for an integration of Gestalt and organismic theory into psychology, and the creation of a "health fostering culture" (pp. 32-33.)

Rollo May also saw the soul sickness of his day as an emptiness, despair, anxiety, inauthenticity, and stressed the role of art in the creation of a meaningful life. Rollo defined creativity as "the process of bringing something new into being (p. 37)."

Creativity is an "encounter with the world that undercuts the subject-object split, an encounter of the intensively conscious human being with his or her world (p. 56)." Art is defined not primarily as a product, like a painting, but as the emergence of form from chaos. Art is necessary for the elegance of a theory, the harmony of internal form, and even as a foundation for the science (p. 73) and scientific creativity which creates meaning out of experience (p. 150).

What is the importance of the creative individual? For Rollo, it is the artist who expresses "...the underlying spiritual meaning of the period...directly in symbols (p. 53)." An artist is not removed from the trials of everyday life, but in fact contributes an important voice to the social/political dialogue of the times. Rollo May says: "Thus the artists--in which term I hereafter include the poets, musicians, dramatists, plastic artists, as well as saints--are a 'dew line', to use McLuhan's phrase; they give us a 'distinct early warning' of what is happening to our culture (p. 17)." A "true artist" is one who gives "...birth to some new reality" (pp. 37-38), whose creativity is the most basic manifestation of a man or woman fulfilling his or her own being in the world (p. 38)." The creative person is one who is able to live with heightened awareness, ecstasy and joy.

Art shares with dreams the use of symbolic expression, long the province of the psychoanalyst and the poet. A symbol bridges the rational and the emotional, the past and the present, the conscious and the unconscious, and the personal and the collective. Its tension arises from its ability to both disguise and reveal at the same time, to participate in the thing it symbolizes, to point beyond itself, and to encourage our need to will and to act. As language, the symbol gives us a way of grasping reality directly. Psychology's language, however, derives from the scientific revolution, and so is analytical and discursive. It doesn't adequately express the symbolic complexities of psychological reality. Needed is a psychology whose language is evocative, symbolic, and touched with beauty.

A concern with beauty also characterizes James Bugental's search for the authentic human life. He says: "It sees beauty and wonder in the common birthright of all human beings: the will to actualize what is latent (Bugental, 1976, p. xiii)." The human trait which enables us to create a meaningful life is what Rollo May describes as the artist in us. That which characterizes an artist, as well as a psychologically mature person, is a quality of disinterestedness, or the capacity to connect to something larger than one's personal ego. This something is symbolic, timeless as well as historical, and reflective of the great shifting patterns in a changing universe. This view of universal patterns is echoed by physicist Lee Smolin, who explains in his radical new theory of cosmological natural selection, that our universe is only one of an endless chain of self-reproducing universes whose physical laws are constantly evolving (New York Times Magazine, July 13, 1997), and where humans confront each other "...as the makers of our shared world (p. 26)."

The idea of the artist as barometer of his or her society, and as connecting us to larger patterns of creation is not new; in fact, it reached its peak during the Renaissance, when the ideals of humanism were forged. Jacques Maritain, in *The Responsibility of the*

Artist, tells us that the artists of the Renaissance were not role models as people, but "...at least they were interested in great causes and ideals, they had great human aspirations, and even their pride and their vice throve on a generous blood (p. 53)." Last summer, when I was already thinking about this talk and the foundations of humanism and humanistic psychology, I revisited Italy, and steeped myself in the culture of Florence and Renaissance art. Reading Mary McCarthy's *The Stones of Florence*, I was shocked and amused to read her delightfully wicked portrait of the great Michaelangelo. While I contemplated and sketched his noble sculptures, I was simultaneously reading about his nasty temper and habits such as going to bed with his boots on each night I was thus persuaded that the artists were, indeed, interested in ideals larger than their personal selves. The connection between humanistic psychology and the art of the Renaissance is extremely important, not only to ground humanistic psychology in culture and the humanities, as advocated by Rollo May, but also to renew humanistic psychology's origins in something larger than human anthropocentrism. The trenchant critique that humanistic psychology encourages a myopic humanism, comparable to racism, has been levelled at humanistic psychology by ecological psychologist Ralph Metzner (talk at APA Division 32 Hospitality Suite, 1993?), while archetypal psychologist James Hillman critiques humanistic psychology for being interested in the "person" rather than the psyche, or the concrete and literal levels of experience rather than the symbolic and universal (personal communication, Dallas, 1978). While humanistic psychology does, in fact, concern itself with concrete phenomenological experience and real persons, it does, and must, also concern itself with the symbolic, the ecological, the spiritual and the aesthetic. Affirming the importance of meaning-making, non-reductive art in psychology, James Bugental explains "I do so because I believe that psychotherapy is more an art than a science (1976, p. xvi)."

The gift of the artist for psychological wellbeing is a theme which is also found in the analytic psychology of Carl Jung. In *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*, he notes "I am assuming that the work of art we propose to analyse as well as being symbolic, has its source not in the personal unconscious of the poet, but in a sphere of unconscious mythology whose primordial images are the common heritage of mankind. I have called this sphere the collective unconscious, to distinguish it from the personal unconscious (1966, p. 80)." The healing power of the artist comes because he "...transmutes our personal destiny into the destiny of mankind, and evokes in us all those beneficial forces that ever and anon have enabled humanity to find a refuge from every peril and to outlive the longest night...That is the secret of great art, and of its effect upon us (p. 82)."

Not only poets, but other artists were making similar observations. In the 1920's, for example, Isadora Duncan wrote: "How beautiful these movements are that we see in animals, plants, waves and winds. All things in nature have forms of motion corresponding to their innermost being. Primitive man still has such movements and, starting from that point, we must try to create beautiful movements significant of cultured man--a movement which, without spurning the laws of gravitation, sets itself in harmony with the motion of the universe (1981, p. 33)." She writes about her own purpose in creation: "[In my dance] the artifices of dancing are thrown aside, the great Rhythms of Life are enabled to play through the physical instrument, the profundities of

consciousness are given a channel to the light of our social day. These profundities of consciousness are in us all (p. 51)."

The concern with a meaningful life which would counter the psychic determinism of the Freudian psychoanalysts and the environmental determinism of the behaviorists propelled the first generation of humanistic psychologists to meet and draw up manifestos in the late 1950's and early 1960's. How is this movement related to the birth of humanistic psychology within APA?

In a letter to John Levy, Executive Director of the Association of Humanistic Psychology, dated January 12, 1971, Don Gibbons, Associate Professor of Psychology at West Georgia College, invited close collaboration between AHP and a new division of humanistic psychology in APA. He wrote: "We feel that the humanistic movement in psychology is growing at such a rate that the eventual formation of such a division of the APA is inevitable." In order to form this new division, 275 members, or approximately 1% of APA's total members, were needed to sign a petition. John Levy's worried memo to the Board of AHP, dated January 15, shows his concern that a second organization devoted to humanistic psychology would cause confusion and a subsequent weakening of AHP. Even though the issue was resolved by AHP's being interdisciplinary and Division 32's focusing on psychologists, and even though AHP and Division 32 collaborated on a hospitality suite for Division 32's first program in APA; the tension of collaboration and competition between AHP and Division 32 remained.

The first newsletter of Division 32 was published on November 1, 1971, by Acting President Carmi Harari. Excerpts from this newsletter read: "On Saturday, September 4, 1971 an organizing meeting was held for the Division of Humanistic Psychology of APA during the recent APA meetings held in Washington, D.C. Fifty-seven persons attended the organizing meeting and together with original petitioners for the formation of the new Division, as well as other interested APA members and fellows, became the charter members of the new Division. The APA Council of Representatives, after hearing from the existing Divisions of APA and receiving affirmation, confirmed and made official the existence of the new Division." In the absence of the originally scheduled chairperson Don Gibbons, Albert Ellis was named Chairman of the meeting, and Carmi Harari was Recording Secretary. Presiding Officers were Albert Ellis, Stanley Graham, Carmi Harari, Fred Massarik, Denis O'Donovan, and Everett Shostrom.

Immediately after the organizing meeting, the first official meeting of the Acting Executive Board took place. Carmi Harari was elected as Acting President, Stanley Graham as Acting Treasurer, and Gloria Gottsegen as Acting Secretary. Albert Ellis was the nominee for Acting Representative to APA's Council of Representatives, and Everett Shostrom and Fred Massarik were co-chairs for the first program in Hawaii, 1972. Division dues were set at \$3.00, and it was decided that there would be no classes or differences among membership categories. The purpose of the division was to introduce Humanistic Psychology into APA joint programs, and to develop liaisons with other organizations outside APA. Suggestions were made to focus on the introduction of Humanistic Psychology into university training at the graduate level, and to provide

encouragement for research testing of humanistic hypotheses of learning and therapy. It is startling to see how similar these goals are to those of Division 32 today, and makes me wonder how many of these objectives have been achieved and how we might go about either continuing them, or changing them to meet today's realities.

In the President's report, dated September 1, 1972, Carmi Harari wrote: "Aloha! Greetings! On behalf of our new and flourishing Division." "From an ambivalent idea, our Division came into being and is actively carrying out the purposes stated in our By-Laws: 'to apply the concepts, theories and philosophy of Humanistic Psychology to research, education and professional applications' (of scientific psychology). We are this year speaking directly to our colleagues in other Divisions of APA about Humanistic Psychology and are prepared also to speak to the public at large. Just returned from an Around the World Trip numerous meetings and visits with colleagues suggests to me a growing wave of interest in Humanistic Psychology and changing images of humankind and their potential." By then, Carmi reported, membership had increased almost 70% in the first year, and the loyalty of the members had led to gaining two seats on Council."

From the Newsletter dated May 30, 1972, we learn that the 1972 program included such familiar themes and names as "Humanistic Psychology and Body Therapy", with Maisie Feldenkrais and Stanley Keleman, and "Humanistic Psychology and Graduate Education" with Mike Arons and Eleanor Criswell.

The first official APA Bulletin from Division 32 (note logo) came out in the spring of 1973. In the President's Column, Carmi Harari noted: "Presidentially speaking I feel sort of tickled at the notion of addressing you on behalf of an APA Division of Humanistic Psychology. In many ways it tells me that psychology in the U.S. is coming of age and that we are recognizing as a profession the profound shift to a re-defined subjective scientific orientation in contrast to our strained efforts to mimick objective science in the study of subjective human beings. Your response to our new Division has been most encouraging. At this writing we can add some 300 of you as new members starting January 1, 1973 to our 374 charter members of our first organizational year 1972."

By the next Bulletin of winter, 1973, Everett Shostrom was President, and David Bakan was President-Elect. Everett Shostrom reported that membership from only two years was already almost 1,000, and that programs had been co-sponsored with divisions 1,2,5,7,8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 24, 27, and 29, with "huge audiences." These figures are sobering to read, as we struggle today to find ways to reach out further and involve more people in humanistic psychology.

So, where is Division 32 today, and where should it go?

The deconstructivists, feminists and others have pointed out the basic flaws in a human science which tries to understand human nature with tools inherited from the natural sciences. They have articulated the need to examine psychology's core assumptions about the self, progress, development, and normalcy. What is needed is not to pit the many voices of psychology against each other in a Tower of Babel, but instead to make new

meaning out of these many voices. Psychology should not be about a monolithic self looking for truth, but instead should be about pluralism, and selves in relation to other selves and in context with both time (history) and timelessness.

In their 1994 article in the *American Psychologist*, Bevan and Kessel call for a psychology which bridges science and the humanities (pp. 505-509), and argue that the last 100 years have seen a confusion of science with technology (p. 506). They recommend what Sigmund Koch called "indigenous methodology", which respects a range of methodologies reflecting the full range of human experiences (Koch 1976, 1980, 1993) or what Oliver Sachs has called "romantic science" (Sachs 1987, 1990, 1992).

The new humanistic psychology must also align itself with paradigm shifts in biology and ecology. Instead of seeing human beings as having "dominion over the earth", humanistic psychology must see humans as only one species living, hopefully respectfully, in an interconnected interdependence with all sentient beings. In *The Lives of a Cell*, Lewis Thomas beautifully describes the importance of rhythm and beauty in this cosmic dance. First, he understands that human beings are destroying the natural orchestra of nature: "As we become more crowded, the sounds we make to each other become more random sounding, and we have trouble selecting meaningful patterns out of the noise."

Second, he recognizes that all elements, no matter how seemingly insignificant, contribute to the cosmic play:

Somewhere, underlying all the other signals, is a continual music. Termites make percussive sounds to each other by beating their heads against the floor in the dark, resonating corridors of their nests...spectrographic analysis of sound records has recently revealed a high degree of organization in the drumming; the beats occur in regular, rhythmic phrases, differing in duration, like notes for a tympani section. (23)

Finally, Lewis, a biologist and not a psychologist, identifies the need to make music as a human trait:

The rhythmic sounds might be the recapitulation of something else--an earliest memory, a score for the transformation of inanimate, random matter in chaos into the improbable ordered dance of living forms. (27)

He acknowledges that "...the biologic science of recent years has been making this a more urgent fact of life. The new, hard problem will be to cope with the dawning, intensifying realization of just how interlocked we are. The old, clung-to notions most of us have held about our special lordship are being deeply undermined (p.2)." For example, we are not self-contained entities, but share our innermost selves with other creatures. In our cells are mitochondria which are "separate little creatures" with their own DNA. Lewis concludes that "...we are shared, rented, occupied (p. 2)."

Inspired by the wilderness around me, I read *The Sierra Club--A Guide*, and discovered that John Muir was saying similar things over 100 years ago:

Nature's object in making animals and plants might possibly be first of all the happiness of each one of them, not the creation of all for the happiness of one. Why ought man to value himself as more than an infinitely small composing unit of the one great unit of creation?...The Universe would be incomplete without man, but it would also be incomplete without the smallest transmicroscopic creature.

A new humanistic psychology must also take into account that we are animals, not because we are ruled by base instincts, but because we share many similar traits. Psychology, from Freud to cognitive psychology, has considered animals to have "lower" functions and held that "higher" functioning, dependent on our cerebral cortexes, brings rational and self-conscious thinking. We try to transcend our animal nature. Yet we might say that rational and self-conscious thinking has brought about the rape of the earth and alienation from our senses (David Abram). We try to "teach" animals "our" language, and think they "have" intelligence if they can use our words. Yet it is only dawning on us that whales might be lonely separated from their herds, and that their cries express their desire for connection. In an image which caught the attention of the world one year ago, a gorilla rescued an injured three year-old boy who had fallen two stories down a concrete cliff into a pit full of gorillas. Reporters described:

In an image shown world-wide, a young gorilla mother named Binti can be seen scooping up the flaxen-haired boy, tucking his limp body under her muscular, hairy arm and calmly, knuckle-walking him to safety.

In the 90's, everybody knows it's a jungle out there. But Binti's cross-species gesture clearly answered a human hunger for a different sort of view.

....Scientists such as Frans B.M. de Waal, who argue that humans are not the only animals with consciences and souls, say their telephones are suddenly ringing at interview requests.

Who is going to create this new humanistic psychology?

Like many of us here, I was deeply saddened and scared by Rollo May's death a few years ago. Scared because one of the last few giants was gone. I felt like one of the kids realizing that, oh my God, now I'm one of the grown-ups. This realization is daunting, especially at this time when the field of psychology, as well as the country, is so desperately in need of inspiring leaders, ones who hold out vision as well as a moral center and clear action plans. So the strong urge is to quit, disappear, find someone else to take the responsibilities.

But I can't do that. For better or worse, I was raised to be a citizen, and to take active part in the "tikkun olam" of my world.

Yet, I must say, there is something exciting in this. First, I have found that being President of this Division has been a lot of fun, and that I'm working with some of the finest people with whom I've ever worked. This is no small matter to me; I find here that these people embody their ideals, that they care for and support each other lovingly. In humanistic psychology it is the whole person who matters, and mind or psyche are empty unless they're embodied in interactions with other people, and in meaningful action in the world. So I'm proud to be here, and to urge all of you to get involved with this outstanding group of people.

Second, it is kind of fun being the generation of slowly growing-up baby-boomers. We discover that we wield quite a lot of clout, if not by virtue of our maturity, then at least by our numbers and consumer dollars. We are not powerless. For example, at a conference on alternative medicine recently, I heard top executives of major insurance companies say that they decided to cover alternative medicine because of the demand by baby-boomers. Baby-boomers, they explained, were sophisticated, impatient with old dichotomies like traditional versus alternative, and simply demanded what worked. This generation has come down off its mountain tops, re-entered the workforce and public institutions, and has helped focus national attention on the need for values, spirituality, and meaning in the workplace and in the home. Even in the psychotherapy arena, we are less interested in dichotomies like short versus long-term, nature versus nurture, but are able to tolerate the ambiguity of complexity and paradox. There is a growing movement toward integrative therapy, therapy in medical settings, therapy at work.

The old enemies have shifted. Humanistic psychology began with a much-needed rebellion against psychoanalysis and behaviorism. Not only is psychoanalysis no longer what it was in the 1950's, but we are now allies with psychoanalysis in such important matters as the template and managed care. A humanistic psychology relevant for the 21st century would recognize new trends growing in psychoanalysis and behaviorism, in biology and religion. While the spirituality from which Rollo May shielded humanistic psychology may have been a 1950's traditional "opiate of the people"; certainly now, the hunger for intrinsic spirituality is impossible to ignore, and I am proud that Division 32 now shelters the Transpersonal Interest group and has a representative of transpersonal psychology on its board. Humanistic psychology does not need to be as defensive anymore, and can continue to grow and explore new edges. In fact, much of this work is actually going on within the division, but has not yet "come out." I believe that it is imperative that it does "come out", so that future humanistic psychologists will not feel obliged to choose between their interests in humanistic psychology and spirituality, or ecology, or chaos theory, or art, or healing. We need to document this fine work, and let others know about it. For instance, our excellent journal, masterminded by Dr. Christopher Aanstoos, our next President, has just published a special edition, guest edited by Dr. Arthur Lyons, our Treasurer, on humanistic psychology and social action. In that journal, I have co-written an article with my student, from Saybrook Institute, Dr. Kenneth Fox, based on his dissertation which used an innovative case study method to document his award-winning work with high-risk adolescents in the school system. Our past-President, Dr. George Howard, gave his presidential talk last year on his new work with, and forthcoming book on, ecology. At Saybrook Institute, we have just launched a

new interest area in conflict resolution, and one is in the works for psychology, creativity and the arts. Division 32 has become a major player in the Template issue, and Drs. Arthur Bohart, Kirk Schneider, Mark Stern and others of us in the division have fought a significant battle to ensure that a humanistic voice would be heard in its development.

It is time to move beyond the postmodern deconstruction and critique to reconstruction and action. How does humanistic psychology move into the world?

For one thing, we learn that 60-80% of all medical money is spent on the last two years of life. Humanistic psychology has always understood that the illness model and symptom alleviation is a severely limited approach, and that what is needed is work on prevention and health. Humanistic psychologists have always understood that psychology can help us to live a good life, a rich, meaningful, emotionally and physically healthy life. Ted Roszak, in *The Voice of the Earth*, laments that psychology should, but does not, help us understand why we rape and plunder the earth, help us work with the inner emptiness that leads to runaway consumerism and greed, the denial that lets us hear facts about rainforest destruction and do nothing, and the sense of powerlessness that leads us to think that one person could not make a difference.

To some extent it is a blessing that private practice, which began as a somewhat elitist practice and became bloated with huge fees, insurance coverage, thousands of graduating psychologists yearly and an enormous infrastructure, is deconstructing under managed care. It may well be time for psychologists to get back out into the streets and communities, to learn to collaborate with the doctors, police, the school system and churches, to marry rhetoric with action and "walk our talk." Like the docs, we psychologists have become overspecialized and, just as they need to re-focus on training generalists and family practitioners and just as they need to find innovative ways to refocus the doctors from exclusive urban practices to rural areas where they are truly needed, so we psychologists need to re-think our priorities in training and practice. Ironically, this new agenda is close to one recently passed by APA's Board of Professional Affairs. They call for more community involvement, an emphasis on prevention and effective social policy. While we may continue to do battle with the managed care monster, there is still much we can do in the community and in an educational model. It is time to check our professional and ideological preciousness, and step out into life. Humanistic psychologists have always been fairly comfortable with spontaneity and creativity; it is now time to grasp the opportunity created by old structures crumbling, and be bold about creating new and flexible forms. Flexibility and adaptability will be keys not only for the new "Protean" man or woman (Lifton) who is needed for life in the 21st century, but also for the kind of psychology which will be needed for the 21st century. Psychoanalyst Susan Deri describes "The Good Life" as one lived with a good fit between self and environment, which she calls "viable lifespace". A viable lifespace is one which is not only sustainable, but also beautiful. A good life has beauty through its meaning, patterning, and symbol formation, which is "the specific human way of creating order and connectedness within the person's psychic organization, as well as the means of bridging from the inside to the outside" (p. 5).

In sum, let us not fall into despair or powerlessness ourselves, but rise to action. Each person can find his or her own way to make a difference, and can share these ways with others through our division and division publications. After this talk, you will have the opportunity to join us for our annual business meeting in this room, where you can meet the Board members and learn about the inner workings of the division. Immediately after the Board meeting is the Social Hour (where?), you can mingle with others of like interests and get to know us. We would love to get to know you, and have you join us in this noble, frustrating, joyful, and very meaningful crusade for a better psychology and a better world.

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Semantic Scholar extracted view of "A history of Division 32 (Humanistic Psychology)." by Christopher M. Aanstoos et al. @inproceedings{Aanstoos2000AHO, title={A history of Division 32 (Humanistic Psychology).}, author={Christopher M. Aanstoos and Ilene A. Serlin and Thomas Greening}, year={2000} }. Christopher M. Aanstoos, Ilene A. Serlin, Thomas Greening. Published 2000. Psychology. View via Publisher. Save to Library. Humanistic psychology is a psychological perspective that rose to prominence in the mid-20th century in answer to the limitations of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory and B. F. Skinner's behaviorism. With its roots running from Socrates through the Renaissance, this approach emphasizes the individual's inherent drive toward self-actualization, the process of realizing and expressing one's own capabilities and creativity. Table of contents for Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 60, 4, Jul 01, 2020. Table of contents for Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 60, 4, Jul 01, 2020. Jonathan Raskin shared a post. 18 June at 08:53. With this in mind, The Journal of Constructivist Psychology is seeking submissions for a special issue that will highlight what we have learned about the psychology of narratives since the "narrative turn" that occurred several decades ago. Possible topics might include: The process of constructing and deconstructing narrative identities.