

Corruption and Perversion in the Psychoanalytic Profession

24] Posting Number Twenty-Four

Thursday, September 26, 2013

South Pasadena, California

330p

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This will be my final posting before the historic meeting at the New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) this Sunday at 930a. The attendees will be discussing a proposed Bylaws amendment that, if passed, would enable NCP to select its TAs solely through its own TA Committee.

BEAUTY: Of the five psychoanalytic institutes in the Los Angeles area, NCP has the most beautiful campus, the most extensive library, and the longest and richest history. It also has brilliant faculty, clinical associates, and staff. It offers a wide array of programs providing persons ranging from interested individuals to licensed mental health professionals exposure to psychoanalytic ideas.

TRUTH: NCP is slowly dying — literally and figuratively. Numbers of members and CAs are not opinions; they are facts. Although NCP has a sizable treasury, membership is declining along with interested clinical associates. Most young mental health professionals in the Los Angeles area who are interested in psychoanalysis seek training elsewhere.

JUSTICE: No other single recognized profession in the globe — not medicine, not clinical psychology, not accounting, not law, not professional management, not veterinary medicine — has a system in which professional competency is measured by its respective professional membership organization. Why? Because it is an unequivocal conflict of interest, and completely unethical, to do so.

I hope to see our small NCP community take a stand for ONLY THIS

The beautiful, the true, and the just.

With kind regards,

Alan

23] Posting Number Twenty-Three

Friday, Sept 20, 2013, 145p

Seattle, Washington

In precisely nine days, the New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) will discuss a proposed Bylaws amendment that would allow NCP to select its own TAs.

One of my beloved friends and colleagues recently suggested that I post “nicer things” about NCP.

I am hoping that she, like so many of my colleagues and friends, have found my postings too long and, at times, ranting, but not negative about our NCP community. I quite literally love the institution. My training there was exceptional; the faculty and clinical associates are amazing; the facilities are beautiful; the spirit is welcoming, and; NCP has been a part of psychoanalytic history.

The proposed Bylaws amendment would allow NCP to quite literally make psychoanalytic history.

It will transform NCP into an even more wonderful institution.

FINAL POINT ON FACTS:

During 2004-5, NCP had 141 active members.

During 2012-13, NCP had 128 active members.

Of course many factors account for our dropping membership, but how can our limited pool of TAs, with their average age of 74, chosen by an unethical and unscientific system, NOT be a significant factor?

Sent with affection,

Alan

22] Posting Number Twenty-Two

Sunday afternoon, September 15, 2013

Glendale, California

In this posting, I respond to four questions regarding the proposed NCP Bylaws amendment:

1. Will the Bylaws change separate NCP from The American?

By relying on its own methods for selecting TAs, NCP would be technically out of compliance with The American that accredits it. So, yes it could. However, “decertifying” NCP would require a majority vote of the entire membership of The American. Given its current internal and even legal turmoil, this outcome is extremely unlikely. On a positive note, if several institutes initiated such a Bylaws change — and this has been proposed by several members of The American — it could “force” The American to quickly reform the Certification and/or the TA selection process.

2. Doesn't this Bylaws amendment foment splitting?

Perhaps, but only initially. Apparently some private meetings have been held and some NCP members feel upset. However, in the long run, the Bylaws change could have precisely the opposite effect. It could create re-integration and re-invigoration. Former NCP members who have left NCP to ICP or other Institutes might return. The entirety of PCC and LAISPS — should they and NCP wish to do so — could merge with NCP. Psychotherapists throughout the Los Angeles area who are already in analyses could well have those processes transformed into approved training analyses if they wished to train at NCP.

The many younger psychoanalytic students who avoid NCP because the average age of a TA remains 74 may well seek training here because there will quickly be newer, younger TAs.

3. How would the Bylaws amendment change the Expedited Pathway and other non-Certification processes?

It would eliminate them because no involvement by BOPS or any organ of The American would be required to achieve TA status at NCP. Separation from BOPS is crucial because of unethical conflicts of interest and even illegalities that I've explained previously

4. Will the Bylaws change affect our standing with the IPA?

Not at all. NCP is accredited by the IPA as well as The American. The IPA allows institutes to follow their own TA selection processes as long as they conform with IPA requirements, which ours does.

Hope you can ALL come to the Sunday, September 29th meeting, at 930a, at which this Bylaws amendment will be discussed .

Sending my best wishes as we witness the summer pass into fall,

Alan

21] Posting Number Twenty-One

Saturday, September 7, 2013

Glendale, California

PASSION, CONFLICT, AND A POSSIBLE REQUIEM-IN-ADVANCE

My dear local, national, and international friends and colleagues, I write today in response to a dear colleague who expressed anger at me for threatening to quit NCP in one of these posts.

CONTEXT: Kierkegaard wrote, "ours is a paltry age for it lacks passion."

ONE PART OF ME SAYS: On an ethical level, the pending NCP Bylaws amendment concerns nothing less than social justice. The TA system lies at the core of NCP and all psychoanalytic training schools. The training analysis is one of three foundational components of psychoanalytic training, with a second component requiring supervision by a TA. Therefore, TAs comprise a full 2/3 of psychoanalytic training. The Certification component of the TA selection process is a highly subjective, unscientific process. Worse, it lacks reliability and validity, is prone to bias, and is therefore unethical and potentially even illegal. The recent legal judgement in the intra-American lawsuit makes reforming the Certification process more unlikely than ever. How can I contribute in any way — by teaching, paying dues, going to meetings — to even my beloved local institution, NCP, if it has a profound ethical flaw at its absolute center? If I do so, I am enabling a corrupt system harmful to my much-loved, three-decade long profession.

VERSUS

ANOTHER PART OF ME THAT SAYS: I have had consistently positive experiences at SCPI and then at NCP. I have, and continue to, learn from my involvement there. I grew up there. NCP helps others in many ways. I count many NCP members as life long friends including but not limited to Diane, Peter, Bob, Anne, Matt, Jill, Carol, Ken, Frank, Franklin, Gabrielle, Cecilia, Pat, Glen, Walter, Joe, Raquel, Elena, Alex, Kate, Bart, Lisa, Susan, Helen, Harry, Van, Perrin, Jimmy, Rina, Ray, Bruce, Mike, Peter, Jim, James, Irene, Christine, Nannette, Ronnie, Debbie, Joel, Maimon, Mark, Deborah, Arsalan, Art, Don, Tom, Chris, Marv, Myra, Pauline, Jeff, Josh, Margaret, Dahlia, Elyn, Jeff, Ed, Sherry, Gitelle, Scott, Shirah, Chao-Ying, Sherwyn, Loren and Lisa. I love learning and teaching. I have received awards for same locally and nationally. (Out of fairness, however, one member of the last class I taught wrote two full pages advising the Dean of how awful I am as a teacher). I, quite literally, experience feelings of love for NCP.

WHAT A WORLD CLASS CONFLICT, WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?

So, now, to my dear colleague I write this

I doubt I will ever quit NCP but I hope you can appreciate the conflict.

I am definitively resigning from The American and the IPA at the end of 2013.

Passing the pending Bylaws amendment would resolve my conflict, one that must be shared by many of my colleagues and friends.

I hope that you will vote for it.

With affection, and some trepidation,

Alan

20] Posting Number Twenty

Sunday, September 1, 2013, 10a

Big Sur, California

Dear Psychoanalytic Colleagues and Friends,

On August 29, 2013, the Board of Directors of the New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) announced that a "special meeting" will occur on Sunday, September 30, 2013, at 930a, to allow for discussion of the proposed addition of this one sentence to section 10.2.(b) of its Bylaws:

"Until it is presented with, and chooses to adhere to, a reliable and valid assessment of advanced psychoanalytic competency provided by a corporation separate from any national or international psychoanalytic membership organization, the Training Analyst committee of NCP will rely on its own Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM) in selecting TAs."

Former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan once proclaimed that "people are entitled to their own opinions, but not to their own facts."

Here are the facts:

FACT: Because it has two competing ruling bodies, namely BOPS and the Executive Council, The American violates New York state law governing nonprofit membership organizations.

FACT: The judge's recent decision in the internal litigation within The American — costing in excess of \$300,000 — failed to resolve this conflict. It leaves BOPS free to determine training standards as it sees fit, free from oversight by the Executive Council.

FACT: The Certification process, and all of its derivatives in the Expedited Pathway and similar efforts at "reform," fails to comport with contemporary, scientific methods for assessing competency.

FACT: It is unethical, and a clear conflict of interest, for professional membership organizations to evaluate the competency of their members.

FACT: During June 2013, the chair of the COI subcommittee of BOPS proclaimed that 1/3 of American affiliated institutes "could potentially fail in the next several years on account of their having too few training analysts to function."

FACT: No other major profession, i.e. medicine, law, dentistry, etc., assesses the competency of its practitioners using the subjective process characteristic of Certification because such methods are prone to political, social, theoretical, and other biases

FACT: Some members of The American consider this proposed Bylaws change a useful tool for individual institutes to achieve reform in The American.

Here are the OPINIONS:

1. No need exists for such a Bylaws change because reforms, such as the Expedited Pathway, render the issue moot.
2. Using a locally based TA selection process will result in a lowering of professional standards.
3. Such a local TA selection process is just as problematic as the one used by The American.
4. NCP will lose its accreditation by The American if this proposed Bylaws revision passes.
5. NCP will enjoy greater vibrancy, and attract more Clinical Associates and Members, if this proposed bylaws change passes.

NO AMOUNT OF DISCUSSION CHANGES FACTS.

With kind regards, submitted with the sound of crashing ocean waves symbolizing how all things change and evolve,

Alan

19] Posting Number Nineteen

Saturday, August 24, 2013

Glendale, California

Dear Local, National, and International Colleagues and Friends,

Earlier this week, the co-administrator at NCP received the 15 petitions calling for the following, one-sentence to be added to Bylaws:

“Until it is presented with, and chooses to adhere to, a reliable and valid assessment of competency provided by a corporation separate from any national or international psychoanalytic membership organization, the Training Analyst Committee of NCP will rely on its own policies and procedures manual (PPM) in selecting Training Analysts.”

Those 15 petitions trigger the Board to call for a “special meeting” at which the proposed bylaws change will be discussed. I have already discussed the positive implications of this change at great length. The special meeting will likely be held at the end of September, probably on a Sunday so that those members who live far away, such as me, can attend.

For now, I ask ONLY, and with kindness and respect, that you reflect on what the historian Arnold Toynbee meant when he wrote:

“A FATUOUS PASSIVITY TOWARDS THE PRESENT SPRINGS FROM AN INFATUATION WITH THE PAST”

I now await news of the date of the special meeting and of an updated count of our members (because we have lost at least two or three since I last posted).

I shall keep you informed

Thanks for your interest and, hopefully, for your support.

With great warmth,

Alan

18] Posting Number Eighteen

Sunday, August 18, 2013, 6pm

Las Vegas, Nevada

90 degrees Fahrenheit; Active Electrical Storm

Dear Local, National and International Colleagues and Friends,

SYNCHRONICITY:

(Shhhh... that's a Jungian concept... don't tell anyone).

On Monday of last week, the judge in the Apsa's internal lawsuit issued a ruling in favor of BOPS. Hopefully, you've all read and understood it. Briefly, the judge acknowledged that APsa's having two competing ruling bodies conflicts with NY State non-profit law, but she concluded that setting the standards for TAs is a “management function,” not an executive one. The judge wrote, in part, “the Court finds that various provisions in the [APsaA] bylaws delegate to BOPS the authority to set educational and professional standards...”

And so continues the many decade-long history of exclusionary ideology, bureaucratic paralysis, and unethical assessments of competency.

On Friday, the administrator of the New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) received the 15th petition calling for this one line to be added to our bylaws:

“Until it is presented with, and chooses to adhere to, a reliable and valid assessment of competency provided by a corporation separate from any national or international psychoanalytic membership organization, the Training Analyst Committee of NCP will rely on its own policies and procedures manual (PPM) in selecting TAs.”

Please remember that this bylaws change does NOT separate us from APsaA. It only allows us — our lovely little community of 235 members, losing a few members each month — to stand up for ONLY what is unequivocally just. No other profession on the planet has a membership organization assess the competencies of its members — this is a clear conflict of interest; no other profession utilizes an assessment of competency method that lacks reliability and validity; no other professional organization, at least that I've heard of, is embroiled in internal litigation costing in excess of \$300,000.

The French language has two words for the future: FUTUR stands for future as the continuation of the present; AVENIR points towards a more radical break, a discontinuity with the present. Avenir describes what is to come.

We at NCP have a chance, a rare, unique, and paradigm-shifting chance, to take a stand for what is only just, right, ethical and legal. We can make a “radical break.”

The NCP Board of Directors meets this Tuesday night, and next they set a “special meeting” to discuss this bylaws amendment. I have asked that the date be set in Sept or Oct, preferably on a Sunday morning so that more members can attend

I will keep you apprised, and meanwhile so appreciate your interest and support.

With kind regards, and a bit of anxiety regarding flying into a thunderstorm,

Alan

17] Posting Number Seventeen

Monday, August 5, 2013, 11pm

Prague, Czech Republic

Dear Local, National, and International Colleagues and Friends:

IN THIS POST I OFFER AN APOLOGY AND A PLEA

THE APOLOGY:

I have heard that my posts have been too angry in tone, that I've shared information about others without their permission, that I've failed to build a coalition, that I've misstated some facts, and that I

have espoused an anti-APsaA attitude. These errors have apparently alienated some New Center (NCP) members.

I unequivocally apologize for these mistakes, for any other errors that I made, and for any feelings that I hurt.

THE PLEA:

I am reminded of a famous line from Yeat's poem "Second Coming" that reads:

"The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity."

I fear that many of you have viewed me as being one of the "worst" because I write with "passionate intensity."

But what of you who are not honoring your convictions?

The theme of this IPA meeting was "Facing the Pain." At one of the workshops, participants discussed feeling hurt and angered because they were excluded from certain "confidential" meetings because they were not IPA members.

Can you see the absurdity of this? Essentially all attendees of the IPA meeting are licensed mental health professionals. They paid nearly \$800 to attend the conference. When I resign from The American later this year, I will similarly no longer be an IPA member, despite my having achieved TA status, and so will not be able to attend "confidential" meetings. How can this be? How can you support this?

This immediate issue — literally only a day old — relates directly to the tribalism, the splits, and the rivalries that have haunted psychoanalysis since its inception. One of the active controversies concerns The American's Certification process and its most recent offshoots such as the Expedited Pathway. These "solutions" fail to address the actual problem:

No one believes — not even you read this right now — that a competent assessment of competency for psychoanalysis exists. The wounds ooze with bizarre alternatives, such as the Expedited Pathway, all of which fail to address the underlying disease.

My plea is simple.

We cannot afford to wait for The American or the IPA to change. As you read this, the two governing bodies of the APsaA — The Executive Council and BOPS — await a judge's deciding who really runs our membership organization. Since I write from Prague, can you see how perfectly Kafkaesque this is?

At NCP, we have a wonderfully vibrant local organization. Doesn't it pain you to see so many young professionals interested in psychoanalysis, in Los Angeles and elsewhere, avoid training in an American affiliated institutions? Why? Because they know of the controversies with Certification, they know of the history of its exclusionary ideology, and they know of the lawsuit.

Soon Cecilia will receive the the 15 signed petitions required to call for another "special meeting" in which we will discuss changing the Bylaws in a fashion that allows our own NCP's TA committee — unless or

until it is presented with a “reliable and valid assessment of competency” method — to utilize its own policy and procedure manual in selecting our TAs.

No, we need not “split” from The American. We can all be proud and active participants in that national institution, legally incorporated as a “membership organization.” We can advocate for it to change. But, in the meantime, our small group at NCP can pass this one Bylaws change that is only this:

Rational, just, ethical, legal

And I can assure you that The American will look towards our action as a sign that it must change.

With kind regards from hot and humid Eastern Europe,

Alan

16] Posting Number Sixteen

Sunday morning, July 21, 2013

Glendale, California

Dear Local, National, and International Colleagues and Friends,

ON FENDING OFF APATHY AND RESISTANCE TO CHANGE:

Last night I hosted a gathering honoring supervisors at Rose City Center, a psychodynamic-psychotherapy clinic in Pasadena. The perhaps 30 psychoanalyst-supervisors there came from all corners, representing all five institutes now operating in the Los Angeles Area. Kleinians talked with Jungians who talked with Relationalists who talked with Ego Psychologists.

I have long heralded the import of The American and The International in offering first-rate psychoanalytic journals and conferences.

I have long critiqued them for abjectly failing to promote psychoanalysis as a profession. Instead, both institutions quite literally display corruption and perversion in this regard. They contribute to the tribalism, the splits, and the diffusion that characterizes our profession internationally.

As but one example of the corruption, the “deal” that only allows psychoanalysts affiliated with an American accredited institute to become a member ONLY via The American remains in effect.

As but one example of the perversion, it is frankly unethical and even illegal for a professional membership organization like The American to elevate its own members through its Certification process, and even more so when it uses methods that fail contemporary standards for the assessment of competency utilized in all of the other major professions.

ON MOVING FORWARD:

Hopefully caused by the season rather than by apathy, my proposal to add this ONE sentence to our Bylaws has not yet achieved the 15 supporting petitions that will lead for the calling of a special meeting.

That one sentence reads as follows: "Until it is presented with, and chooses to adhere to, a reliable and valid assessment of competency provided by a corporation separate from any national or international psychoanalytic membership organization, the Training Analyst Committee of NCP will rely on its own policies and procedures manual (PPM) in selecting Training Analysts." I am certain enough petitions will be submitted, probably by the end of this week.

But time is running out.

As recently as last night, I heard talk of our own dear New Center (NCP) as too conservative, too old, too white, too tied to The American, too rigid, to fearful of forward movement. One of my dear NCP colleagues wrote just last week that my efforts represent "a one man parade." That person adds, "if there were more of a groundswell, I might feel differently" [but] you've been blowing this trumpet in the wilderness a long time."

Now that the Affordable Health Care Act is law, psychoanalysis needs to emerge as a distinct profession more than ever before. Our methods for doing so have abjectly failed.

Let's do this.

Let's make this one Bylaw change that will liberate so many of our current members — now down to only 235 because of another death since I last posted — to become TAs without having to go through an unnecessarily arduous, unreliable, and invalid hazing process.

Meanwhile, I will follow my colleague's wise advice and cease "blowing my trumpet" at the end of this year. Unless change has occurred in the TA system — which even last night was validated as a key problem at NCP and other American affiliated institutes — I plan to resign from The American and The International at the end of this year. I will continue to subscribe to their journals and perhaps attend their conferences. But I will no longer pay dues to membership organizations that are harming my profession. Sadly, I may even re-think my devotion to NCP because it pains me so to watch our little organization, bravely navigating in Los Angeles for nearly a full century, take on water and begin to sink, while watching other institutes in Los Angeles powerfully sail forward.

Please keep hope alive, and stay tuned.

With fading optimism and kindest regards,

Alan

15] Posting Number Fifteen

Sunday, June 30, 2013

Glendale, California

Dear Local, National, and International Psychoanalytic Colleagues,

REVIEW THE POSTINGS IN THE LAST WEEK TO LEARN WHY PSYCHOANALYSIS REMAINS PARALYZED AS A PROFESSION:

You will see continuing discussion by many well-meaning people. These psychoanalysts express their concerns about Certification. They offer up ideas about perhaps separating supervisors from TAs. They ask for clarification regarding what has happened in the history of psychoanalytic governance.

We psychoanalysts excel at listening and discussing, and of course we should. These are all well-worn points, representing literally years of similar postings.

BUT NOW THE TIME HAS COME FOR ACTION:

Last week, I sent out petitions to perhaps 50 of our local members of the New Center for Psychoanalysis. I offered more details in my posting last week, but, in essence, the petitions calls for the addition of this simple, one sentence to the section of the Bylaws that concerns selection of TAs.

It reads:

UNTIL IT IS PRESENTED WITH, AND CHOOSES TO ADHERE TO, A RELIABLE AND VALID ASSESSMENT OF ADVANCED PSYCHOANALYTIC COMPETENCY PROVIDED BY A CORPORATION SEPARATE FROM ANY NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL PSYCHOANALYTIC MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION, THE TRAINING ANALYST COMMITTEE OF NCP WILL RELY ON ITS OWN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL (PPM) IN SELECTING TRAINING ANALYSTS.

Please note that this wording now fails to deride any professional organization; instead, it states, as simply as possible, as a small organization of 236 members, we can move forward towards a fair and competent way to choose TAs.

If this measure passes, NCP could perhaps risk losing its accreditation from The American. However, since as many as 1/3 of accredited institutes could well fail in the next few years due to a lack of TAs (see last week's posting), this hardly seems worrisome. By no longer enabling the unethical and illegal practice of having a membership organization that also accredits members, we will be actually helping the process of psychoanalytic governance nationally and internationally.

LET'S MOVE FORWARD.

LET'S DO WHAT IS SO OBVIOUSLY RIGHT AND JUST.

Stay tuned. There should be no problem getting the required 15 signatures to call for a special meeting to begin the Bylaws change process, and then I will advise you all as to how things proceed from there.

With kind regards

Alan

14] Posting Number Fourteen

Thursday Evening, June 20, 2013

Glendale, California

My Dear Psychoanalytic Colleagues and Friends:

SNIPPETS FROM JUST THE LAST FEW DAYS:

Harvey Schwartz acknowledges that a membership organization that also offers credentialing is “unprofessional, unethical, and indeed illegal...”

Richard Tuch writes that “psychoanalysis in America is in great jeopardy — enough jeopardy to cause us to wonder whether a radical overhaul is needed.”

Arnold Richards notes that, up until the last one to two years, only one of eight applicants for Certification passed the first time.

Sherwyn Woods has witnessed psychiatric residency programs “slide towards probation or non-accreditation” because of poor standards, but he fails to acknowledge that an American Board of Neurology and Psychiatry has existed for years — an externalized, competency-assessing agency that strives to achieve contemporary professional assessment standards. He adds, “... if past predicts future it is highly unlikely that the American will enact any major change this century!”

Last Sunday night, I noted that the New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) had 346 members in 2005. We now have 236 members, and the average age of a TA at New Center is 74. We are losing members at the rate of 14 per year.

ENOUGH MADNESS!!

If even Sherwyn thinks the American will not change, then the time has come for our local group to mobilize and take matters into its own hands. No sign exists of externalization of the Certification process. No sign exists that the type of assessment of competency process used by every single other profession around the globe will be developed in the foreseeable future.

I therefore propose the following NCP Bylaws change:

To our current Bylaws, section 10.2, I suggest we add only one simple sentence, identified in the bracketed section below:

10.2 FACULTY

(b) Training/Supervising Analysts. A determination of whether a faculty member is qualified to be a training/supervising analyst will be made by the Education Committee following the procedures set forth in the PPM [Policies and Procedures Manual].

[[[Until it is presented with, and chooses to adhere to, a reliable and valid assessment of advanced psychoanalytic competency provided by a corporation separate from any national or international psychoanalytic membership organization, the Training Analyst Committee of NCP will rely on its own Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM) in selecting TAs.]]]

When it was last written by Mark Leffert, NCP's Training Analyst Committee's PPM was rather comprehensive, requiring a detailed evaluation of TA candidates' competency and ethical standing, including the successful completion of case presentations to several NCP TAs.

Once passed, this Bylaws change would allow many of our interested members to apply for TA status, thereby quickly increasing the number of younger, enthusiastic TAs. This, in turn, would rapidly enliven our beloved NCP, allowing for disaffected members to return and even members of other IPA-affiliated institutes, such as PCC, to join us here at NCP.

I will be preparing a formal petition next week, and will forward it to our many members who will eagerly sign such a proposal-for-Bylaws-change petition. Once the requisite 15 petitions are received, I will ask for the help of Richard, Jeff, and Bob to make sure to hold the "Special Meeting" on a Sunday morning so that members who live farther away, such as those in Orange County or those in the San Gabriel Valley, will be able to attend. I anticipate that this time the "Special Meeting" will be successful. I predict that the majority of our 236 members will be ready to move forward and help our small local organization to THRIVE.

When the chair of the COI subcommittee of BOPS worries that 1/3 of American affiliated institutes "could potentially fail in the next several years on account of their having too few training analysts to function," we hardly need be concerned that NCP will lose its accreditation with The American. Au contraire, our small community has a chance to lead our national membership organization back into the realm of sanity.

As I have repeatedly proclaimed: We need competent and functional national and international psychoanalytic membership organizations.

We have none.

Finally, now that my former supervisor, mentor, and friend Sherwyn Woods believes it "highly unlikely that the American will enact any major change this century," I encourage you to resign from that organization — as I plan to — at the end of 2013. It is high time we stop enabling a national membership organization that perversely harms the very profession it is mandated to protect.

With kind regards for all, and even great sentiment as I watch the light fade in the backyard from where I write,

Alan

13] Posting Number Thirteen

Sunday night, June 16, 2013

Glendale, California

Dear Local, National, and International Colleagues and Friends,

CONSIDER THESE STATISTICS REGARDING The New Center:

1. When two other American Affiliated Institutes in the Los Angeles area merged during July 2005, the New Center was formed. It then had 346 members. Where two institutes had previously existed, one remained — the New Center.
2. Since that time, 51 members have died.
3. Since that time, 35 members have resigned.
4. Since that time, 25 members have joined.
5. We currently have 236 members, meaning that the New Center loses around 14 members per year.

CONSIDER THESE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOPS MEETING AS REPORTED BY THE NCP DEAN:

1. One of our members stood up early in the meeting and called for the BOPS leadership to resign in view of the lawsuit. They refused.
2. The COI sub-committee of BOPS reported that 1/3 of American affiliated Institutes “could potentially fail in the next several years on account of their having too few analysts to function.”
3. The Certification sub-committee of BOPS presented a four-page list of “core competencies” but showed no gains in establishing any form of a reliable and valid “assessment of competency” procedure.
4. Similarly, the Externalization sub-committee offered no specific plan as to how to externalize Certification — a process that, until achieved, leaves The American in a chronic state of unethical, internal conflict. Our own Dean referred to Certification as an “historical anachronism.”

SO WHERE SHOULD WE GO FROM HERE?

I believe the New Center should make a simple Bylaws change that will allow it to appoint its own TAs, using procedures to be written by our own Training Analyst Committee, until a. an external Certification process is in place and, b. that process meets well-established, contemporary social science standards for assessing competency.

Once such an NCP Bylaws change is enacted, we here at NCP can rapidly appoint our members who are interested in serving as TAs. That same TA committee could also quickly review the status of Clinical Associates who are receiving analysis from non-TAs, and develop ways to evaluate those analyses for meeting our standards for training. Such a Bylaws change could be enacted within a few months. We have the advantage of enjoying our small, local community which need not be hampered by the Byzantine, glacial-like movement The American demonstrates.

I will propose such a Bylaws change through this post next weekend, and will follow up with a mailing in order to obtain the required 15 members to hold a “Special Meeting.” This time we should hold that meeting on, say, a Sunday morning, so as to attract more of our members who are interested in reform, do not want to wait for The American to act, and, most importantly, do not want to see us continue to hemorrhage our 14 members per year.

For a review of my posts to date, please see alankarbelnig.com, click on Alan Karbelnig blog, and then click on Corruption and Perversion in Psychoanalytic Governance.

With kind regards,

Alan

12] Posting Number Twelve

Glendale, California

Sunday, June 2, 2013

Dear Local, National, and International Colleagues and Friends,

I am DELIGHTED to share with you that I am in fact able to retain my IPA membership, and at NO COST TO ME! Perhaps you may choose to join me in this.

My discovery provides yet another example of the corrupt, perverse, and bizarre nature of psychoanalytic governance. At its height some 1900 years ago, the Roman Empire governed much more effectively. (Of course they were burning Christians and doing other barbaric, awful things, but they knew how to govern). Psychoanalytic governance continues to mimic neolithic-period tribal structures more than anything even remotely modern.

Because the IPA is as Romanesque as the APsaA, the following loophole exists. As I have repeatedly noted, I will resign from The American at the end of this year because it is an overtly unethical and illegally operating membership organization. BUT I will remain a member of the wonderful if small New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP), with its 236 members (unless someone died or quit in the last week, which is always possible). By simply remaining a member of NCP, which is an affiliate of The American, I retain my membership of the IPA. I will save more than \$1,000 per year while still remaining a proud member of the IPA.

Because of the prehistoric-like "deal" made between The American and the IPA during the early 20th century, we members of any American affiliated psychoanalytic institute can ONLY pay dues to the IPA via The American. Therefore, if you don't pay dues to The American, you don't pay dues to the IPA. From a purely capitalist perspective, this is remarkably foolish. But as we all know the Romans demonstrated plenty of stupidity.

Here is a ridiculously simple solution

1. Either The American or The IPA develop a social-sciences-based assessment of competency test, with written and oral components. The measure should have reliability and validity. Graduates from institutes affiliated with The American or the IPA would take this test. If they pass, they will be considered "psychoanalysts." (By the way, the development of such an evaluation process would make an excellent PhD dissertation project).

2. When this test is developed, all graduates of American and/or IPA affiliated institutes would be “grandfathered in;” they would be able to call themselves psychoanalysts without having to take the test.

3. The Training Analyst committees of affiliated institutes would choose TAs based on their own criteria, but those criteria should include 5 years post graduation plus passing of the test noted in #1 above as minimum requirements.

That’s it.

This would ONLY comport with the now-global standards as to how other professions operate.

I will be preparing another petition soon to move NCP towards this plan. The time has come — nay, it is now long past — for the governance of psychoanalysis as a profession to move into modern times. Since I cannot imagine such a test being developed even in ten years, I hope to nudge our small community into adopting #3 above, but without the test since it does not yet exist.

If you are interested in my posts to date, or as an alternative to Ambien for those suffering from insomnia, please see alankarbelnig.com, click on Alan Karbelnig blog, and then click on Corruption and Perversion in Psychoanalytic Governance.

With kind regards and guarded hope for the future of our profession,

Alan

11] Posting Number Eleven

Saturday afternoon, May 25, 2013

Glendale, California

Dear Friends and Colleagues, Locally, Nationally, and Internationally,

Our New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) held its “special meeting” last Thursday night to discuss a petition that would have changed our Bylaws so as to eliminate The American’s involvement in the training analyst (TA) selection process. 37 members attended that meeting. 22 members present, or 59 percent, voted against the Bylaws amendment; 15 of those present, or 41 percent, voted for it. If 60 percent of those present would have voted for the Bylaws change, the proposed amendment would have been sent to the total membership for balloting. We have a total of 236 voting members at NCP, so unfortunately this important decision was made by only 15 percent of the membership.

The spirit of the meeting, and yesterday’s extremely kind letter from our Dean, Richard, praising my efforts, represents but a small sample of all that is wonderful about our small community. At the meeting, few if any ad hominem attacks were leveled. We listened to each other’s points of view. The discussion was well-moderated by our President, Bob.

Yet I left the meeting feeling intensely puzzled. I feel confused, perhaps dismayed, by the apparent inability of psychoanalysts to see what seems such an obvious, gaping problem in our profession. Medicine, psychology, law, accounting — these professions all have well-established social roles that are

global in scope. They separate their membership organizations from their mechanisms of certifying competency. They have empirically-based methodology for establishing such competency. They embrace the 21st century. In contrast, psychoanalysis remains mired in 19th century or, worse, primitive ideology.

For example, notice the splits evident even last Thursday night. I was rightfully accused of having a bias against The American. In doing so, I displayed precisely what I am about to critique: I became involved in an us versus them way of thinking, in tribalism, in almost a form of racism. Richard displayed the same primitive behavior in his remarks towards ICP as did Andrea in her remarks about The American.

Such tribalism dominated 20th century psychoanalysis. That is why Freud and Jung split, why later the Kleinians split off, why still later the Self-Psychologists split off. Each tribe formed its own institutes, clubs, and groups. If psychoanalysis is to survive, then it must mature. It must stop this primitive splitting. It must unite into a profession devoted to helping others through provision of psychoanalytic methods.

The entire range of psychoanalytic thinking, from Freud to Stephen Mitchell and everyone in between, consists of but three simple concepts: 1. The existence of an unconscious; 2. The emergence of repetitive psycho-behavioral themes of unconscious origin; 3. The focus on the transference-countertransference relationship as a transformative technique.

Contemporary ideas such as those promoted by Irwin Hoffman, with his "dialectical-constructionist" model, allow for an equal consideration of many diverse psychoanalytic points of view. Many dialectics operate in the psychoanalytic process, such as through the psychoanalyst participating but also observing the psychoanalytic process. Dialectics also allows us to view patients from different theoretical points of view. The word "constructivist" refers to the process through which the parties to the psychoanalytic process co-create a vision of the persons' unconscious minds, thereby allowing for Freudian, Jungian, Kleinian, etc ideas to be incorporated. Such integrative models would allow for the development of a "universal" vision of what makes a "competent" psychoanalyst, regardless of which tribe, club, or group they belong.

If psychoanalysis is to survive as a profession — no small task when under assault by the most powerful medical-industrial complex in the history of humanity — it must achieve just a few small (but highly difficult) tasks. It must develop a universal assessment of competency, it must embrace a more inclusionary ideology, and it must have proper professional membership organizations. We have NONE of these! We lack any proper assessment of competency, the field remains rife with one group hating another group, and we lack proper legal and ethical national and international professional organizations.

Of course I intend to be provocative, but my use of the word "corruption" correctly describes "deals," efforts to keep certain fields out of psychoanalysis, and other exclusionary tactics by The American that are all well-documented. Similarly, my use of the word "perversion" accurately describes our having a national membership organization rife with internal conflict, involved in internal litigation, and operating in violation of New York state law.

While reform in The American appears to be underway, it has been “underway” for literally decades. And it will take months if not years to develop a scientifically-based assessment of competency. Until our larger psychoanalytic organizations demonstrate real reform, we here at NCP should lead the way by instituting reform in our small community.

I believe that most of our 236 members in fact want this change to occur. Therefore, I will soon present another petition and seek 15 or more of our colleagues to sign it. In reaction to Andrea’s comments, I will carefully draft the proposed Bylaws amendment in a way that does not sound contentious. If we are to move forward as a profession, we must start in our small community by adopting an assessment of competency — as it exists for the most part in the policies and procedures manual (PPM) created by Mark Leffert — freed from oversight by a “membership” organization that not only lacks, by its own admission, empirical standards for the practice of psychoanalysis, but abjectly fails in its mission.

Stay tuned.

Wishing you all a lovely long weekend,

Alan

10] Posting Number Ten

Dear National Friends and Colleagues,

Here is a posting that I sent out to all New Center (NCP) members tonight:

Sunday night, May 19, 2013

My Dear NCP Friends and Colleagues,

I hope you all have in your calendars already this potentially historic meeting to be held this coming Thursday night, at 730pm, at the New Center. As you’ve all been advised by Cecilia, NCP administrator, the Bylaws change to be discussed is as follows:

Amended Proposal to Change the Bylaws (addition to Bylaws set apart in brackets):

10.2 FACULTY

(b) Training/Supervising Analysts. A determination of whether a faculty member is qualified to be a training/supervising analyst will be made by the Education Committee following the procedures set forth in the PPM.

[[[[The PPM must be written in a fashion that does not require membership in The American, Certification by The American, or any involvement by the Board of Professional Standards of The American.]]]]

Because I have posted on this topic extensively to NCP, and also on The American's list-serv, I shall now provide a rough draft of the remarks I plan to make at the meeting, which will be moderated by Bob James, our president. Here it is, subject to a few more days of editing:

My dear friends and colleagues,

I began this effort to change NCP's Bylaws last October, when I first wrote to The American to express concern regarding its Certification process and to ensure that my training analyst (TA) status would not be adversely affected should I resign from that organization. As I will explain shortly, I had become increasingly concerned regarding the ethics and the competence of the organization as a whole. Ironically, I never received a reply. Fortunately, the Ethics Committee of the New Center later ruled that I could retain my TA status without being an American member.

My initial motivation was sentimental in nature. Through my active involvement with numerous mental health professional organizations in the San Gabriel Valley as well as in the broader Los Angeles area, I came to learn that many younger colleagues, and even many same-aged colleagues, viewed the New Center in a negative light because of its affiliation with The American. Most of the persons I met who were interested in psychoanalysis sought training at other institutes, namely ICP, PCC, LAISPS, and NPI. There was a consistent view of our institute as stodgy, excessively conservative, and adhering to a psychoanalytic ideology characteristic of the early 20th century. I felt saddened.

My sentimental motivation took on a darker tone as I reflected upon my own passage through the Certification process, and as I learned of many local and national colleagues, including several at New Center, who had similar experiences. Peter Fonagy, a highly-respected scholar of psychoanalysis, failed Certification. I received Board Certification in Forensic Psychology during 2010, and in the course of training for that designation learned a great deal about the scientific bases of assessing competency in the professions. At around that same time, I learned that BOPS examiners received no training whatsoever before administering Certification examinations, that no scientific criteria for passing existed, and that such an examination should be administered by an external body.

As additional time passed and I began writing several different sets of postings, now continuing with "corruption and perversion in psychoanalytic governance," I learned a great deal about the history of The American, about its exclusionary ideology, about its origins in attempting to make psychoanalysis be a medical subspecialty, and about the cult-like nature of BOPS.

My dark tone gradually transitioned into outrage as a result of two fairly recent developments. First, and to my great surprise, I learned that corruption and perversion existed in the IPA as well. When I contacted IPA officials to advise them of my intent to resign from The American, and requested permission to join the IPA as an individual psychoanalyst, I was told that I could not do so. IPA officials indicated that, despite my having achieved TA status, having served in senior faculty and committee positions, and having earned teaching awards, I could only join the IPA via The American. I was advised to quit NCP and join an IPA-only institute, like PCC, if I wanted to resign from The American. How could this be? Second, I learned more about the shameful internal conflicts that have haunted The American

for decades, reaching new heights with the costly internal litigation has been underway since January of this year. That internal lawsuit remains unsettled as I speak here tonight.

With strong feelings of community with all of you, and with hurt and outrage at what has evolved in The American over many years, I now urge you to pass this simple Bylaws measure, one that consists of literally adding one sentence as noted above. It seems likely that NCP now has a majority of members who support this positive change. By allowing us to have our own TA committee select TAs, we will no longer be embroiled in the unjust, unethical, and illegal character of The American. Please remember that we are not, and cannot, vote tonight to “leave” The American. It is a membership organization, pure and simple. It consists of members, not Institutes. We are only voting tonight to liberate NCP from adherence to its problematic requirements for the appointment of TAs.

Before I address the concerns of those of you who I believe will resist this change, consider these benefits. We can provide a model for professional behavior that can then be a catalyst for change in other Institutes, and likely in The American and even the IPA. We will stop enabling a rather insane system — unlike occurs in any other profession — in which a membership organization (which is how the American is incorporated) accredits, educates, and also certifies its members. This is quite literally illegal, as well as unethical. It is a conflict of interest. The AMA, the ABA, the APA, or any other professional organization does not operate in this fashion. We will attract more members, and more clinical associates, because we will no longer be restrained by obsolete and unscientific screening procedures. Don't you find it disturbing that our wonderful institution trains only 11 of the 58 Clinical Associates in four year training programs (in seminars) in the Los Angeles area? Many former members, disaffected by the intransigence of The American, may well return. Entire institutions, such as PCC, might well be interested in merging with us. We could quickly increase the number of, and reduce the age of (currently 74), our TAs. We could shake off our reputation as an American-affiliated institution — once considered an asset but now clearly a liability.

Meanwhile, those who are interested in remaining members of The American can continue to do so. I believe we all eagerly await the evolution of that organization into a properly ethical and legal one. Personally, I hope that, if this infighting does not stop soon, those individuals interested in governance will start a new, national psychoanalytic organization, one with a standard governance like the AMA or the APA. We could then seek accreditation by that institution.

For those of you who resist this Bylaws change, please keep these themes in mind. You of course are free to remain a member of The American, to enjoy its conferences, to support its mentorships and other programs, and to continue to purchase insurance and derive other benefits from membership in it. You might consider becoming active in its efforts to create a scientifically-based assessment of competency process. Nothing contained in this NCP Bylaws change in anyway adversely affects your ability to remain a member of The American.

We meet here tonight with a chance to make psychoanalytic history, to publicly break from The American's well-documented dysfunctions, its illegality, its incompetency, its exclusionary ideology, its early 20th century-inside-group-cultish nature, its conflicts of interest, its infighting, and its clear failure

as a professional membership organization. Now is our chance to set an example for The American and the IPA. We can embrace the psychoanalysis of the 21st century, one that values integration over splits, one that heralds a university model rather than warring factions, one with an inclusionary, open ideology, and one that welcomes all those interested in psychoanalysis.

I propose we get to voting quickly so that we can all go home and celebrate the courage we have shown in standing up for what is so obviously right and just.

With affection and care,

Alan

9] Posting Number Nine

Dear National and International Friends and Colleagues,

Here is a copy of a posting reflecting of changes brewing at the New Center for Psychoanalysis, and which will hopefully help facilitate changes in governance in The American and the IPA:

Saturday, May 11, 2013

Glendale, California

12 noon

Dear New Center Friends and Colleagues,

Our potentially historic By Laws meeting now lies only 12 days away, on Thursday, May 23, 2013 at 730p.

PLEASE REFLECT ON THIS ONE FACT:

Since the New Center (NCP) was incorporated some five years ago, FORTY-NINE members have DIED. FORTY-NINE!! Dead, gone, buried. Can you imagine that? What does that say about our organization? Around 350 members in all categories entered NCP, rendering our mortality rate at FIFTEEN percent.

(In 2010, Afghanistan had the world's highest infant mortality rate at 14 percent).

NCP's association with The American was once viewed as an asset. It long ago became a liability. Only 12 of the 58 clinical associates in active psychoanalytic training (taking seminars) in the Los Angeles area attend NCP. The average age of a TA at NCP is 74. We have precious few of them. Psychoanalysis as a profession requires an open, inclusionary ideology in order to survive. We here at NCP now have a chance to lead the way by extending our "university model" into our own internal governance.

On May 23rd, we shall discuss adding this one simple sentence, separated out with brackets, to our By Laws:

10.2 FACULTY (b) Training/Supervising Analysts. A determination of whether a faculty member is qualified to be a training/supervising analyst will be made by the Education Committee following the

procedures set forth in the PPM. {{{The PPM must be written in a fashion that does not require membership in The American, Certification by The American, or any involvement by the Board of Professional Standards of The American.}}} A training/supervising analyst is required to be available to supervise one (1) clinic case on an ongoing basis (PPM stands for policies and procedures manual).

If and when this change is codified, the TA committee of NCP should meet quickly, edit the existing PPM to codify a new one, and then begin appointing new TAs — all freed from constrictions imposed by The American. The surge in TAs will attract more clinical associates. The process of treating The American like a professional membership organization, not an overseer, will immediately enhance our reputation.

We certainly NEED a national psychoanalytic membership organization, but one that: 1. Develops an empirically based system for assessing professional competency; 2. Externalizes such an evaluation process; 3. Comports itself with laws governing nonprofit membership organizations; 4. Is not endlessly involved in internal conflicts including lawsuits; 5. Behaves like similar professional organizations such as the AMA, the APA, and the ABA.

We need The American, or a similar national membership organization, to focus on its proper mission, namely sponsoring studies, issuing position statements, studying ethics, offering scientific programs, developing practice guidelines and accrediting institutes.

I am hoping you will soon close up your computers and enjoy this amazing day!

With kind regards,

Alan

<8] Posting Number Eight

May 5, 2013

Seattle, Washington

5:30p

Dear National and International Colleagues and Friends,

The New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) moves closer to making a historic change by removing The American's involvement in its selection of training analysts (TAs). On Thursday, May 23rd, a "special meeting" will be held to discuss the long-discussed amendment. If the majority of the attendees at that meeting call for the By Laws change to be sent to the general membership, then a ballot will be distributed by mail. If affirmed by a majority of the voting members, the By Laws change would become codified.

Two highly respected NCP members raised concerns last week regarding the potential lowering of our standards by separating out our TA selection process from The American. One writes, "quality control requires an external credentialing body... an internal one can easily go astray." Another adds that

Institutes, "like any other educational facility, must be reviewed by independent evaluators who do not have personal investment in a particular institution."

I completely agree with them. However, and as I have repeatedly noted, The American fails to provide an adequate "external credentialing body" or adequate "independent evaluators." Please consider only these few facts: The American operates in violation of nonprofit law; part of its "competency assessment" for TAs requires membership in its own organization – a cult-like phenomenon that is unlike anything the AMA, the APA, the ABA, or any other professional membership organization does; it has for years been wracked by internal conflict and now literal internal litigation; and it has a history of overt discrimination against non-MDs.

Using medicine as an analogy, the AMA furthers its members' profession by sponsoring studies, issuing position statements, studying ethics, offering scientific programs, practice guidelines, and the like. The AMA does NOT certify physicians nor determine faculty appointments nor who teaches and supervises trainees. These are all tasks performed by individual medical schools who are separately accredited as well as being accredited by the AMA.

Here is where the reform process at NCP stands now:

THE PROBLEM: NCP has lost half its members since the merger; we train 11 of the 58 professionals in psychoanalytic training in the Los Angeles area; our illegally operating national professional organization fails in its basic mission; and The American has made no progress in developing an effective "assessment of competency" for training analyst (TA) status.

THE WISH: We definitely need standards for what constitutes psychoanalysis, we need a well-functioning national professional organization, and we need a way to scientifically determine competency in our work as analysts and TAs. Passing the By Laws amendment on May 23rd would immediately free us to appoint our TAs using solely our own Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM), allow us to "waiver" in clinical associates who want to continue in analysis with their current analysts, and attract many younger, vibrant students and members who view BOPS regulations as discriminatory and exclusive. We could extend our heralded university model into our policies regarding TAs, training analyses, membership, and even curriculum.

THE RISK: The American could conceivably begin the process of removing our accreditation, but this requires a majority vote of the entire American membership, not just voting members. This is hardly worrisome given its current state of paralysis.

THE GAINS: Passing the new By Laws motion will free us to appoint our own TAs without relying on antiquated, obsolete, BOPS procedures. The American does appear to be moving towards reform, but that has been the case for years. This By Laws amendment would likely comport with the potential reforms.

Here is the most recent version of the proposed By Laws changes. The petition – now being sent to the original 19 signatories and others – proposes to add only ONE SENTENCE to section 10.2 of the NCP By Laws, as it was most recently amended on April 22, 2013. The change is bracketed and set-apart:

10.2 FACULTY (b) Training/Supervising Analysts. A determination of whether a faculty member is qualified to be a training/supervising analyst will be made by the Education Committee following the procedures set forth in the PPM. {{{{The PPM must be written in a fashion that does not require membership in The American, Certification by The American, or any involvement by the Board of Professional Standards of The American.}}}} A training/supervising analyst is required to be available to supervise one (1) clinic case on an ongoing basis.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I hope that NCP's actions will motivate other American members, as well as American affiliated institutes, to work towards the development of rational, fair and just governance of the profession of psychoanalysis.

With kind regards,

Alan

7] Posting Number Seven

April 27, 2013

Glendale, California

Dear Local, National, and International Colleagues and Friends,

PSYCHOANALYTIC HISTORY CAN OCCUR ON THURSDAY, MAY 23, AT 730PM, WHEN MEMBERS OF THE NEW CENTER FOR PSYCHOANALYSIS (NCP) DISCUSS A BY LAWS CHANGE.

We can soon seize a rare opportunity: To change our By Laws in a fashion that frees us from the constrictions on selecting our own training analysts (TAs) imposed by The American. On a much deeper level, this provides an opportunity to herald justice, to heal splits, to achieve integration, and to propel our fledgling organization into the 21st century. I have been warned to expect ad hominem attacks, and that the debate could "turn ugly." The simple utterance of such a warning in itself represents the unfortunate, nearly tragic, history that has haunted the governance of psychoanalysis in this country.

Here is the split:

On one side stand some NCP members who resist changing any aspect of our relationship with The American. These members apparently hold tight to The American's history and values. They seem to view adhering to all requirements of The American as sacrosanct. Some view the Expedited Pathway as a superior solution because it was designed in cooperation with BOPS.

On the other side stand others who mostly do not belong to The American, find its history disturbing, and yearn to free NCP from The American's outdated thinking. They feel concern if not horror that The American is now involved in internal litigation, has long operated in violation of New York state nonprofit law, and has a long history of an exclusionary ideology. They view the Expedited pathway as absurd

because it evolved to manage the problem of having too few and too old TAs (an average age of 74). Many mourn their friends who have left NCP in protest.

LET US PLEASE COME TOGETHER AND MAKE HISTORY ON MAY 23. We all love and work at the same type of psychoanalytic process. Here is our opportunity to expand upon our "university" educational style in which clinical associates as well as members learn and teach a range of psychoanalytic theory. Let us leave behind the 20th century splits of the Kleinians versus the Relationists, and even the Freudians versus the Jungians. We can initiate an inclusionary ideology, which could even result in disaffected members re-joining NCP or cause other institutes, such as PCC, to merge with us. The American will almost certainly follow our lead. In the meantime, we will be exalting ethics, fairness, and justice by de-linking our organization from the Certification process.

REMEMBER that this proposed By Laws change would ONLY remove Certification and membership in The American as requirements to appoint our own TAs. (In what universe is membership in a professional organization a measure of competency?) Yes, it is possible that The American could act to retract our accreditation, but that would require a majority vote of its ENTIRE membership, not just voting members. And, given its turmoil, this is extremely unlikely. In truth, we here at NCP, our small little community of some 100 active members, can take a national and possibly even international leadership role by refusing to adhere to unscientific, discriminatory practices. Using our own TA selection procedures, we can appoint many interested, vibrant, and younger members of our organization to TA status, and thereby render NCP a major center of psychoanalytic learning in southern California.

Hope to see you ALL on May 23rd, and wishing you a lovely weekend,

Alan

6] Posting Number Six

Saturday, April 20, 2013

Glendale, California

Dear Local, National, and International Colleagues and Friends,

Today I offer four brief reflections:

1. An esteemed colleague and friend recently posted this on our New Center (NCP) listserv:

"It seems to me that some of our members are getting unnecessarily upset about Dr. Karbelnig's proposal." I have heard nothing of this — no emails or phone calls to me, and certainly no postings (save the one I referred to in my posting number five) opposing the proposed By Laws change. Why the secrecy? Why wait until the public meeting to be held in a few weeks? Please join in a discussion via this listserv.

2. Consider looking at how the profession of psychoanalysis organizes itself from an outside viewpoint. Imagine you were explaining our governance situation to a friend in another profession or discipline. Say you limited your explanation to only these few points: The American functioning in violation of the NY

State laws governing nonprofit membership organizations, BOPS members appointed with no term limits, internal litigation costing tens of thousands of dollars, the unscientific and unethical Certification process, and the fact that an American psychoanalyst can only join the IPA via an American affiliated institute. Wouldn't it seem absurd? Wouldn't you feel embarrassed?

3. Some weeks ago, my wife and I enjoyed dinner with a young unmarried couple, the man a psychoanalyst and his romantic partner a professor of comparative literature. At one point the woman exclaimed, "what I love so much about him is that we are both in dying professions!" Psychoanalysis will continue in some fashion, but the future of psychoanalysis as a profession requires a new "coming together" and a greater emphasis on psychoanalytic psychotherapy. Our ability to appoint our own TAs at NCP will liberate us to be inclusive and expansive, more vibrant and youthful.

4. Please REMEMBER that the proposed By Laws change does NOT separate us from The American, which has accredited us. NCP does NOT belong to The American. The American is a membership organization, and it therefore consists of individual members. The proposed NCP By Laws change simply allows us to select TAs without requiring Certification. Yes, The American, as currently organized, could take steps to remove our accreditation as a result but, given the turmoil in that institution, this is an extremely remote possibility. Plus such a move would require a 2/3 vote by the ENTIRE membership of The American, not just members who vote, and such a vote has NEVER happened in its history.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend,

Alan

5] Posting Number Five

Wednesday, April 17, 2013

Nantucket Vacation Too-Rapidly Receding!

Dear Local, National, and International Colleagues and Friends,

Yesterday an internal memo was distributed to all New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) members, offering a gentle critique of my postings on the proposed NCP By Laws change. This colleague is a senior NCP member, a widely-respected analyst, and a friend. His letter was extremely kind. He disagreed with the petition with a "heavy heart." He said of me that "no one could ask for a more dedicated psychoanalyst, as well as one who has performed excellent service in its cause."

This friend endorses the "Expedited Pathway." He acknowledges that it requires membership in The American, and that part of the process requires that applicants choose at least one member of an examination panel "from the BOPS approved list." In bringing his letter to a close, he proclaims that, "whatever the faults of our system we should work from within the organization to remedy them."

I shall now reply with what I can only hope will be an equal level of warmth and respect. I offer him a series of questions to which he may or may not choose to reply at a later date. Dear friend, I ask you:

1. What is your opinion regarding the absurdity of the "Expedited Pathway" that I raised in earlier postings? As I understand it, this Training Analyst (TA) selection option resulted from The American's concern that the average age of a TA at NCP is 74, and applies only to NCP. I think my earlier analogy was to the AMA developing a special assessment process for an ophthalmology residency because the residents were too old. Can you see the absurdity in this?

2. As you know, I am eager to resign from The American, now knowing that it functions in direct violation of New York State law overseeing nonprofit membership organizations by having two competing ruling bodies (executive council and BOPS) which, ironically, are now involved in lawsuits against one another. I have also repeatedly referred to NCP's adherence to The American's Certification requirement as a form of enabling a dysfunctional system. Given these points, how can you find it acceptable that the Expedited Pathway requires membership in The American?

3. By the same token, how can it be acceptable to you that this special Expedited method for achieving TA status requires involvement of a panelist "chosen from the BOPS approved list?"

4. I previously expressed my grave disappointment in the IPA, having just recently learned from their leadership that I cannot independently join that organization. I must either quit NCP, and join an IPA only institute such as PCC or LAISPS, or remain a member of NCP through which I can ONLY join the IPA via my continued membership in The American. Given your intensely flattering description of me as a "dedicated psychoanalyst, as well as one who has performed excellent service in its cause," how can you continue to support policies that discriminate against me by requiring membership in The American in order to be a member of the IPA?

5. How can you support an organization, The American, when it continues to administer an "assessment of competency" examination, in the form of the Certification process, that abjectly fails every contemporary, scientific standard for such competency assessments, long ago established in the social sciences?

6. How do you justify, to use your words, "whatever the faults of our system we should work from within the organization to remedy them," when no significant change has occurred in my 20 years of involvement and internal lawsuits costing some \$300,000 in legal fees are currently pending?

7. Why not, instead, move forward with the proposed By Laws change and wait for The American to comport itself ethically and legally as the nonprofit membership organization in which it is incorporated? (As I have previously noted, The American fails to function as a professional membership organization. Such organizations, like the AMA, the ABA, and the APA, externalize the process of assessing the competency of the members of their profession. The American, in contrast, has a history of an exclusionary ideology [witness the 1989 lawsuit alone] and has persisted in its Certification process, despite years of protests regarding its unfair, unethical, discriminatory, and harmful procedure).

8. How do you feel about the fact that only 13 of the 58 professionals currently in psychoanalytic training in the Los Angeles area are at NCP, mostly as a function of our being under the control of The American,

an archaic, 19th-century-like-institution that, by its own admission, violates NY law and also has a discriminatory, exclusionary ideology?

9. Can you feel a sense of excitement at the vision of NCP — by freeing itself of the Certification requirement for the selection of TAs — attracting a broader and more diverse group of students and members, and thereby flourishing as the major center for psychoanalytic learning in southern California?

10. Do you agree that so many painful splits that characterized the 20th century, i.e. the Kleinians versus the Freudians, the Self-Psychologists versus the Ego Psychologists, can finally be addressed by NCP moving forward with this By Laws change, thereby being able to select our own TAs, rather than waiting for The American to behave ethically and legally?

11. Can you see how many members of “competing” institutes, such as ICP or PCC, may well be interested in re-joining NCP once they see that we have changed our By Laws as proposed?

I invite you, my dear long-term friend, to meaningfully answer these questions.

Or, better yet, how about we stand arm-in-arm at the special meeting, and argue, in unison, for passing these pending By Laws amendments?

Submitted with great affection and care,

Alan

4] Posting Number Four

Monday, April 15, 2013

In Nantucket, On Brief Retreat

Dear Local, National, and International Colleagues and Friends,

AS BUT ONE recent example of the insanity that now characterizes The American, a highly respected New Center (NCP) member just sent out this email regarding the pending internal lawsuit:

“I am angered and saddened by the need to commit \$300K to defend against the first law suit filed by APsaA members against our association in our 102 years of history.”

Such frequent flashes of news-of-the-absurd will hopefully help to catalyze change pending now at NCP. NCP administrators have now received enough petitions seeking to alter NCP By Laws in a fashion that will eliminate Certification as a requirement for the appointment of Training Analysts (TAs). This leads next to a meeting of members to discuss this proposed change. This meeting will likely be held on Thursday evening April 26 or May 9th.

I have been writing for some weeks now to address the concerns of my fellow NCP members, commenting upon one potential area of apprehension at a time. Some weeks ago, I reminded readers that The American functions in direct violation of New York State law governing the operation of non-profit membership organizations by failing to have a single body, in this case the Executive Council,

overseeing its operations. More recently, I informed psychologist-psychoanalyst members of multiple ways that the Certification process and other American functions directly violate the Ethics Codes of the American Psychological Association (APA). Towards that end, I reviewed the exclusionary ideology of The American, including how it only allowed psychologists into training as a result of successful 1989 Restraint of Trade litigation filed by The American Psychological Association (APA). Last week, I committed a genuine Freudian slip by using the word ENTROPY instead of INERTIA to describe the inherent resistance to change in all organizations. (Perhaps I meant "entropy" to describe the future of an unchanging American).

I write now to address yet another possible reason that some members may resist the passage of this upcoming, proposed NCP By Laws change. Apparently some NCP members might fear that, if these NCP By Laws are changed, The American will not recognize our graduates, or that a hypothetical future clinical associate might be blocked from becoming a American-recognized psychoanalyst or a TA.

If you simply reflect on the astonishing malfunctioning of The American, you should not be worried by such possible scenarios. By supporting this imminent By Laws change, we here at NCP would be insisting that proper, 21st century professional governance occurs. We will start by having such governance at NCP — a non-exclusionary, democratic system that appoints TAs without reliance upon an unethical competency screening system. We will stop enabling the unethical, illegal, and profession-damaging governing processes that characterize The American and the IPA. We will hope for, and then await, the evolution of nonprofit professional membership organization that behaves like other legal ones. These institutions, like the APA, AMA, and the ABA, externalize "assessment of competency" functions such as Certification; they utilize scientific, empirically validated assessment procedures to credential their professionals; they have legally-compliant organizational structures in which an Executive Council or similar body solely oversees the policies and procedures of the organization.

In other words, we need not worry about how our new TA appointment system will adversely affect our standing with The American. Ironically, the reverse is true, particularly given how The American, now caught up in its various internal lawsuits, has so completely failed in its mission.

Ironically, if our profession is to survive, we require bona fide national and international professional organizations. We have neither. Instead, we have 19th century-like, clubby, cliquish, shameful governance of psychoanalysis. Early psychoanalytic history featured fractious splits, group A hating group B, opening the A institute, and so on. Even now, psychoanalysis has certain groups, such as BOPS, which believe they have the "correct" means of assessing psychoanalytic competence. It is well past the time for us to transcend this embarrassing history. We here at NCP have a literal historical opportunity to lead the way.

PLEASE mark your calendars indicating a likely meeting on April 26th or May 9th, and prepare yourselves for a lively and hopefully even enlivening evening.

With kind regards from the chilly east,

Alan

3] Posting Number Three

Saturday morning, April 6, 2013, 11am

Glendale, California

My Dear Local, National, and International Psychoanalytic Colleagues and Friends,

The petitions submitted to the New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) are now being processed, and a “special meeting” will soon be scheduled. The meeting will likely be held on a Thursday night, sometime during May or June. As you know, the petitions call for a change in the NCP By Laws, specifically removing Certification as a requirement for the appointment of Training Analysts (TAs).

Please stay tuned for a communication from NCP.

Last week I addressed psychologist-psychoanalysts, pointing out how The American (APsaA) violates a number of the Ethical Codes of the American Psychological Association (APA) because of its Certification process and exclusionary practices.

Now I address the resistance to change in a different fashion, focusing on how difficult it is for organizations to modify themselves in any fashion. It seems that psychoanalytic organizations are unusually difficult to change — perhaps because we are all more artists than scientists, and therefore resist governance in general.

I was part of the merger of SCPI and LAPSI that resulted in NCP, during 2005 I believe, and our “merger consultant” literally said that the NCP merger, which involved a total of perhaps 200 individuals, proved more difficult to achieve than his involvement in the merger of a major corporation which, if I am not mistaken, was MGM. That one true story speaks volumes about our resistance to change.

I kindly ask those NCP colleagues opposing this pending By Laws change to consider a new idea, namely organizational ENTROPY. NCP has been carried along this APsaA stream, if you will, viewing itself as a “body” of APsaA — which it is NOT. NCP is accredited by APsaA. APsaA is a MEMBERSHIP organization, a collection of individual members. Institutes do not “belong” to The American.

I strongly believe NCP should be accredited by national and international psychoanalytic membership organizations, but in truth we do NOT have either. The American is not only deeply dysfunctional, but it also fails to operate as a true membership organization. (I won't repeat the details here, but in a recent post I pointed out my inability to join the IPA as an individual — despite being a TA, senior faculty member, winner of teaching awards, etc — without either quitting NCP or remaining a member of The American, this revealing madness in the governance of the IPA as well).

Remember that, as the cover letter of the petition states, we at NCP are NOT withdrawing from The American. We are simply removing the requirement that NCP members seeking TA status have achieved Certification by APsaA. This leaves the other TA selection procedures in place, all of which comply with IPA requirements. The American could take action to “decertify” us, but that would require a 2/3 vote of all of its members (not just voting members). This has NEVER happened in its history. Moreover, The

American remains so tied up in internal conflict — now involving actual lawsuits — that dealing with an Institute that ignores BOPS regulations will be the least of its problems.

Finally, we here at NCP — you reading this NOW, your friends and colleagues — have a chance to make psychoanalytic history by being the catalyst for a long-awaited and much-needed change in the governance of our profession that, well, concerns JUSTICE. Imagine this: We could break free of the constricting BOPS-related regulations regarding TAs, and that in turn could lead towards our being a broader, inclusionary institution. NCP already prides itself on its university model of education. Why not extend this further and open our doors to “depth psychotherapists” of all persuasions including — God forbid — even Jungians!

We could become the thriving center of psychoanalytic education and study in Southern California.

PLEASE keep this new idea of entropy, of a long-standing and irrational resistance to change, in your minds as the upcoming meeting for the NCP By Laws change draws closer.

Thanks so much for taking the time to read this, and I wish you a lovely weekend.

With affection and hope-for-change,

Alan

PS. For more information on my posts to date, please google alankarbelnig.com, click on alan karbelnig blog, then click on any of three headings: The American Civil Disobedience, The New Center Enters the 21st Century, or Corruption and Perversion in Psychoanalytic Governance.

2] Posting Number Two

Saturday, March 30, 2013, 115pm PST

Central Coast of California

Dear Local, National, and International Friends and Colleagues,

I have been WARNED that considerable resistance exists for the By Laws amendment proposal now winding its way through the New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) in Los Angeles. To bring you quickly up to speed, more than 15 members have now signed a petition calling for a By Laws change that would remove Certification as a requirement for the appointment of Training Analysts (TAs) at NCP. The New Center would still comport with IPA regulations for TA selection. This NCP petition will lead to a meeting, which will lead to a ballot of the members, which I HOPE will lead to real change.

I remain shocked and surprised — my mouth agape — at from where such resistance to change could arise. The governance of psychoanalysis, on local and international levels, is nothing less than a sham. Standards exist for the operations of professional organizations around the globe. The governance of psychoanalysis, as a profession, fails to follow these standards. Instead, it remains cultish, cliquish, absurd, and, worse of all — DAMAGING to the profession. Who can not see this? Are there MDs still

hoping, vainly, that psychoanalysis will magically become a medical subspecialty? Are there BOP members thinking only THEY know how to assess psychoanalytic competence? Really?

This pending By Laws change — if NCP can pull it off — will stimulate amendments to governance on national and, ultimately, international levels. It is insane, tragicomic that ONLY 13 of the 58 persons now seeking psychoanalytic training in Los Angeles attend NCP. This madness must stop. And it all results from rules set up by The American, an organization with a longstanding history of an exclusionary ideology.

PLEASE REMEMBER, those who fear that we at NCP are “breaking away” from The American, that we are NOT. We will be setting a precedent. We will be leading by example.

In this posting, I address licensed psychologists who belong to NCP, and also those across the US, who might be resisting this much-needed change.

As licensed psychologists in the US, and if you are a member of the APA (a properly, legally operating membership organization unlike APsaA), then you are bound by the APA’s Code of Ethics. APsaA membership conflicts with a number of APA ethical codes. Since I paid off my dues for this year ONLY so I could continue to make these posts, I am as guilty as any of you of these ethics codes violations.

By operating in violation of New York laws regulating nonprofit membership organizations, APsaA, and we psychologist-APsaA members, are violating Sections 1.02 and 1.03 of the APA Ethics Codes. Those sections mandate that which psychologists avoid participating in any activity that violates its ethical codes, and we are in violation by belonging to a corporation which in turn is violating New York State law. We are also violating Section 3.01, because The American has a long history of discrimination, and also Section 3.04 because, through the Certification process alone, it has caused personal harm to many. Section 9.01 mandates that psychologists use scientific methods in their use of assessments. Certification abjectly fails every social sciences standard — now well established in the literature — for the assessment of competency. So we also violate Section 9.01.

Further, we harm our professional status as psychologists and as psychoanalysts. For example, I only recently learned that I cannot join the IPA independently. This is a vestige of a deal made some years ago between The American and the IPA, all related to the American’s initial vision of keeping psychoanalysis a medical subspecialty. The American agreed to give the IPA all of its members through their own membership process, but only if the IPA agreed that that was the only way they’d accept members from America.

As I mentioned last week, the IPA administrator and president sent me an EM ten days ago advising me that I could only remain a member of the IPA if I: a. quit NCP and joined PCC or LAISPS, or, b. Stayed a member of the American. (This violates at least Sections 3.01 and 3.04, because I have served in multiple leadership positions at NCP and am an award-winning senior faculty member there, and yet I cannot independently join our international psychoanalytic membership organization, thereby discriminating against me unfairly and also harming me).

I think the Soviet Union had more rational governance.

Please also REMEMBER that, until the 1989 lawsuit, psychologists could not become psychoanalysts. As a direct result of that cultish nonsense, non-APsaA institutes sprung up like unnecessary metastases. The IPA in turn accredited many of these institutes, like PCC and LAISPS in Los Angeles, probably because they wanted a “piece of the action” in terms of dues. That explains why I have been advised to quit NCP, my psychoanalytic home, and join one of these IPA-only institutes, if I want to belong to our only international psychoanalytic organization.

I close now with the hope that you will join me in saving the psychoanalytic profession, in leaving the cliques and argumentative splits of the 20th century behind us, and in moving the governance in our profession into the modern age.

I now step outdoors to work off some of my outrage walking along the Pacific coast...

Alan

1] Posting Number One

Saturday, March 23, 2013

Dear Friends and Colleagues — Locally, Nationally, and Internationally,

I have felt punched in the gut since I learned, only one week ago, that I am unable to join the IPA as an individual. A sort of “last straw” for me, this caused me to: 1. pay my remaining APsaA dues ONLY so I could post on list-servs for the rest of this year; 2. prepare for litigation to have the more than \$20,000 in dues I've paid to APsaA over the last two decades plus damages returned to me*, and 3. Redouble my efforts to elicit change at the New Center (NCP).

On a POSITIVE note, the minimum 15 petitions have now been sent to NCP, thereby starting the process of a By Laws change that could liberate NCP from requiring Certification as a requirement for the appointment of NCP Training Analysts (TAs). Next comes a Special Meeting — so NCP members please be on the lookout for this. If enough NCP members at that meeting vote for this to go to ballot, then a ballot goes to the full membership. To any local friends and colleagues with shaky knees I offer this Goethe quote that I just stumbled upon: “Be Bold and Mighty Forces Will Come to Your Aid.”

On a NEGATIVE note, I am nothing less than astonished at what I have learned about APsaA in the past few months and about IPA in the past few weeks. As I wrote last week, since I trained at an Institute affiliated with the APsaA, I can ONLY join the IPA via the APsaA. This is why I added the word “perversion” to the word “corruption” to the above-noted subject heading. I was literally told, in writing, by IPA officials, to either join another IPA only institute, like PCC or LAISPS, or resign from NCP!! If I fail to do either of those actions — which would be ridiculous — then I cannot be a member of the IPA without being a member of APsaA.

Since I will be posting probably weekly for the rest of the year, I will now quickly conclude:

1. My provocative subject heading refers to the obscene way that psychoanalysis has been governed, damaging the profession in America to an immense and possibly fatal extent. The solution is simple:

Govern our profession in accordance with international standards for professional membership organizations, namely accredit institutions, externalize some sort of a "competency" or "certification" process, and focus on promoting the profession. This is the way the APA, AMA, ABA, the accounting profession, the architecture profession, etc works not only in America, but throughout the developed world.

a. Instead of this, psychoanalysis has been run much more like a religious cult, with cliques and in-groups and out-groups. This is shameful. This has led to divisiveness and exclusions. This belongs in the past, namely the 20th century.

i. Such cult-like behaviors have two possible causes: x. the now-failed attempt to medicalize psychoanalysis in America; xx. the possibility that we psychoanalysts are much more like artists than like "doctors," and therefore we will not be able to properly organize ourselves. (Here I intend no offense to artists but, bless them, they feed on nonconformity, as they should).

2. I recommend that those courageous individuals who are working for change nationally to stop their foolish lawsuits, RESIGN from The American immediately, form a new membership organization that operates legally and ethically like it should (which the American never has), and begin appealing to Institutes across the nation to seek accreditation from this NEW national organization which will NOT be exclusionary and WILL operate properly. The APsaA, moribund already, will vanish within months or years.

As for me, unless I see real change by the end of this year, I will be resigning from APsaA and from the IPA. Frankly, unless NCP can lead real change as I am hoping and even praying it will in the coming few months, I may well leave NCP as well, and for this reason: I'm no longer interested in spending my time, energy, or money in a fashion that promotes self-sabotage and lacks integrity.

Submitted with hope and pain,

Alan

*In California law, a tort is based on negligence and damages, and a one year (perhaps longer) statute of limitations runs from the time that the "injury" has been discovered. It was only last October that I realized how the APsaA had damaged me and NCP, and only last week that I learned how its "deal" with the IPA has been similarly damaging. I want my hard-earned \$20,000 in dues back plus damages.

THE NEW CENTER ENTERS THE 21ST CENTURY

5] The New Center Enters the 21st Century Posting Number Five: Formal Request for By Laws Change In The US Mail!

Saturday, March 9, 2013

Dear New Center Friends and Colleagues,

I just mailed around 60 personal letters, along with petitions and a self-addressed, stamped envelopes, to all NCP persons with whom I feel I have a personal connection. I hope I have not offended anyone by leaving them out (or, sadly, by including them!). This is just a heads up; I don't think I need to explain further. If you do not receive one and wish you did, please just accept this EM as a substitute. I am anticipating having little difficulty getting the minimum 15 signatures we will need.

We need those 15 signatures to move onto a "Special Meeting" which then leads to a balloting and then leads to a By Laws change which in turn could create REAL, PALPABLE change.

Alan

I have cut and pasted the three page document here:

March 8, 2013

Re: Proposed Bylaw Amendment

I am writing to you specifically because I feel we have a personal relationship. I am hoping you will sign the enclosed, proposed NCP By-Law amendment which, if 15 people sign, triggers a membership meeting and hopefully real change. I have included a self-addressed, stamped envelope and, once I get the minimum number of signatures, I will immediately submit them to NCP.

NCP stands at a historical crossroad, with our small group of 100 active members poised to promote significant growth in psychoanalysis locally and nationally. By eliminating Certification as a requirement for the selection of our TAs, we could re-integrate the unfortunate rifts that characterized the 20th century, i.e. medical versus non-medical, Kleinian versus other theoretical orientations, etc. I can imagine PCC merging with the New Center. I can envision disaffected NCP members who left for ICP returning to NCP. Rose City Center, a vibrant nonprofit psychoanalytic psychotherapy clinic in Pasadena (four NCP members serve on its nine-member Board) could perhaps formally affiliate with our New Center. We could become the leading Los Angeles psychoanalytic center of learning – the likely first choice for younger and more diverse mental health professionals seeking psychoanalytic training.

Nationally, we could make history by taking a stand against the Certification process and thereby facilitating a change in The American that has been needed for decades. This proposed By Law change does NOT represent any "separation" from The American. It creates some risk of losing our accreditation, but given the turmoil engulfing that organization, this point is moot. We need a national psychoanalytic "membership organization" like the AMA, APA, and ABA. We do not have one.

BOPS, as well as the Certification process, has been guided by an exclusionary ideology. Furthermore, Certification abjectly fails well-established, empirical procedures for "assessment of competency" long ago developed in the social sciences. When taken together, these two problems have directly harmed NCP. Since the 2005 merger, we have lost half our members. Currently, 58 Clinical Associates receive psychoanalytic training in Los Angeles at PCC, LAISPS, ICP, NCP, and NPI. Of the 58, NCP trains 11.

Please join with me by signing and returning the attached petition. I understand this is a deeply personal decision, and can assure you that I will not have any negative feelings towards you should you choose not to do so.

FORMAL REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN NCP BYLAWS AND TRAINING ANALYST SELECTION COMMITTEE PMP

Submitted by _____

[Individual Name Printed Here]

PLEASE NOTE THAT I CAN'T GET PLAIN TEXT TO "STRIKE THROUGH" PHRASES, SO I AM INSTEAD INDICATING THEIR EXISTENCE WITH THREE ASTERISKS BEFORE AND AFTER EACH SECTION TO BE ELIMINATED.

Dear New Center President and Board of Directors,

I am writing to express my desire to have the Bylaws of the New Center changed in the following fashion. Deletions are noted with a strikethrough over the original text, additions are bracketed. That document, dated July 7, 2005, with amendments on May 23, 2006 and on May 31, 2007, should read, Section 10.2 (b), Training/Supervising Analysts:

A determination of whether a faculty member is qualified to be a training/supervising analyst will be made by the training analyst subcommittee of the Faculty Committee. ***following the procedures set forth in the PPM.***

Further, I request that the "Policies and Procedures Manual, Training Analyst Selection Committee, The New Center for Psychoanalysis," dated July 2007, (hereafter referred to as the PPM), be altered in the following fashion:

Page 3, second full paragraph followed by notes b and c be eliminated, the first full paragraph on p. 4 be eliminated. These sections of the PPM are reprinted as follows:

The Committee views post-graduation educational experiences such as case supervision, consultation or further personal analysis in a positive light. We invite applicants to describe any such experiences that they have had and wish us to know about.

The New Center is an accredited member institute of the American Psychoanalytic Association . ***The Board on Professional Standards of the American has minimum requirements for confirming eligibility for appointment as a Training Analyst. These requirements have been developed solely by the Board on Professional Standards and are found currently on p. 26 of its "Principles and Standards for Education in Psychoanalysis". BOPS' Committee on Institutes uses these requirements in carrying out BOPS' self-designated function of confirming the appointments of Training and Supervising Analysts made by the component institutes of the American. These requirements are as follows:***

[The New Center requires that:]

a. Appointment is possible [only] after the individual has had a significant number of years, optimally five, of psychoanalytic clinical experience after graduation in adult psychoanalysis. This is to insure sufficient experience with unsupervised analytic cases beyond the training cases.

b. The applicant must be certified in adult psychoanalysis by the Board on Professional Standards.

c. The applicant must be an Active Member in good standing of the American Psychoanalytic Association.

d. The applicant must have had experience with the analysis of both male and female patients.

e. The applicant must have had experience with the termination of psychoanalytic treatments.

f. The applicant must show evidence of clinical immersion in the practice of psychoanalysis. This is shown by maintaining a minimum of four adult or combined adult and child cases carried out at a frequency of five times per week with a minimum frequency of four times per week, on separate days, during the 5 years preceding appointment.

g. The applicant must have had both teaching and administrative experience as a member of the Institute's faculty.

While the Committee endorses these requirements it also expects to encounter applicants for appointment as Training and Supervising Analysts who, for whatever reasons, do not meet on or more of the above requirements, but are deemed potentially suitable for appointment 1 In such instances the Committee will follow its procedures , as described in Section 3 of this document.

If the applicant is then approved for appointment as a TA, the application will be forwarded to the COI for confirmation accompanied by requests for a waiver of the missing requirement(s). One particular reason that would lead the Committee to seek a waiver of requirement "b" would be circumstances in which a candidate or potential candidate is already in analysis with a non-certified analyst and would otherwise be required to switch analysts. The committee believes that such a requirement is unanalytic and imposes an impossible burden upon the candidate.

Section 3 Procedures for Appointment of Training and Supervising Analysts What follows is a very, perhaps unnecessarily, detailed description of the of the Committee's process. It is impossible for an application process not to be accompanied by some anxiety. In attempting to make application so visible we are trying to do as much as we can to both minimize that anxiety and make our community aware of our attempts to make this process as collegial and respectful as possible.

a. Initial Steps

A graduate analyst, usually with five years of post-graduate analytic experience, who wishes to apply for appointment as a TA should initiate the process by informing the Chair in a brief letter with a copy to the Institute Administrator. S/he will receive an application packet that will include a copy of this PPM

*** (before going any further, read the PPM!), a form developed by the American for completing an Analytic CV***

[and] a release form that will allow the Committee to review the applicants records as a clinical associate, to contact supervisors, pre or post-graduation , to review records including student evaluations of courses the applicant has taught, and to contact two professional references whose names the applicant will supply.

1 Applicants having such issues should discuss them hopefully in advance, and certainly not later than the start of the application process, with the Committee Chair.

Signed by:

FIRST AND LAST NAME TYPED IN

Date _____

Sign Name _____

4] The New Center Enters the 21st Century Posting Number Four: Immediate Next Steps

Sunday, February 24, 2013

My Dear New Center Friends and Colleagues,

As you may already know, I have been on a campaign for change in the way that TAs are appointed since October 2012. In last week's posting, I described my review of the various documents governing our local New Center for Psychoanalysis' (NCP) TA appointment process, and offered a final critique of The American's Certification process.

The time has now come to formally propose a Bylaws change. Next weekend, I will personally write to those I know best at NCP, ask for their support with this change, and hopefully receive the minimum 15 signatures required to call for a "special meeting" that would begin the Bylaws amendment process.

Here is an extremely abbreviated list of why this change is imperative and why the timing is perfect:

1. The American has descended into near chaos, with their two governing bodies — the Executive Council and BOPS — literally engaging in lawsuits against one another. The American has never functioned as the membership organization under which it is incorporated in New York state; it has been dominated by an exclusionary ideology since its inception; it utterly fails to comport itself like similar organizations, i.e. the AMA, the ABA, the APA, all of which serve accrediting functions (like The American) but all of which also externalize credentialing (unlike The American). We need a well-functioning national psychoanalytic association. We do not have one. It is nothing less than self-destructive, enabling, and co-dependent to be in any way constricted by The American, an organization that has never been so dysfunctional.

2. The BOPS Certification process fails social science standards for “assessment of competency” in every way. It therefore has no place in or, worse, is unethical and even dangerous for it to be any part of NCP’s selection of TAs.

3. We have at NCP an amazing set of resources — analysts, administrators, clinical associates, libraries, a beautiful building, and more. Yet by adhering to The American’s Certification process, we weaken our capacities. We are currently only training 11 of the 58 individuals seeking psychoanalytic training in the Los Angeles area.

The best way to cut through the various unfinished processes governing our appointment of TAs, ranging from the traditional TA selection process to the recent “Expedited Pathway,” is to change our Bylaws. According to the “Bylaws of the New Center for Psychoanalysis,” dated July 5, 2005, amended May 23, 2006, and again amended May 31, 2007, the selection of TAs is mentioned on page 16, under Article X (Division of Psychoanalytic Training), 10.2 (Faculty), (b) (Training/Supervising Analysts).

Here the document reads, “A determination of whether a faculty member is qualified to be a training/supervising analyst will be made by the training analyst subcommittee of the Faculty Committee following the procedures set forth in the PPM (Policies and Procedures Manual).” [According to that “Policies and Procedures Manual, Training Analyst Selection Committee, dated July 2007”, page 3, TAs appointed by NCP must adhere to BOP standards including the Certification requirement].

{Interestingly, and surprisingly, our own recent Expedited Pathway conflicts with this earlier, July 2007 document}.

The PPM needs to be completely revamped but, in the meantime, it can be simply over-ridden by changing the Bylaws.

Here is my proposal for doing so:

Where the Bylaws currently read: “A determination of whether a faculty member is qualified to be a training/supervising analyst will be made by the training analyst subcommittee of the Faculty Committee following the procedures set forth in the PPM,” we simply eliminate the last eight words so that it will then read: “A determination of whether a faculty member is qualified to be a training/supervising analyst will be made by the training analyst subcommittee of the Faculty Committee.”

By erasing those last eight words, we effectively eliminate the PPM, allow time for NCP to redo it, and also clarify our own internal governance because, again, our own July 2007 PPM conflicts with the Expedited Pathway document. With that simple Bylaws change, we could more rapidly appoint new TAs, attract students currently flocking to the other four or five psychoanalytic institutes in Los Angeles, allow for other similar institutes like PCC to join us, and begin to grow NCP into the more vibrant center for psychoanalytic education and learning that it can and should be.

This creates the possibility that The American could begin moving to remove our accreditation by them, but at this point that is a meaningless if not ridiculous concern.

Thank you, as ever, for considering these ideas. Please reflect on conventionality, tradition-gone-awry, fear of change, and other forms of resistance. We can do this. We should do this. We here at NCP can make a difference for psychoanalysis in Los Angeles and in the entire United States.

For more background, please go to alankarbelnig.com, click on Alan Karbelnig blog, and then click on The American Civil Disobedience and The New Center Enters the 21st Century.

Please stay tuned.

With great respect and care,

Alan

3] The New Center Enters the 21st Century Posting Number Three: A Final Critique of Certification and Plan for ByLaw Change

Saturday, February 16, 2013

My Dear New Center Friends and Colleagues,

I am growing close to proposing a specific Bylaws change that will liberate the New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP) from requiring Certification for appointment of training analysts (TAs). This is my third New Center post, that following some 15 posts that I made on The American's List-Serv in a failed effort to effect a similar change on a national level. As I write to you today, leaders of that organization have "lawyered up," actively involved now in litigating internal governance matters.

That comprises but one reason why the timing is ripe for us to take matters into our own hands, use our smaller local numbers to change our TA selection process, and then hope for the American to follow suit or collapse. In that event, a much-needed and more functional national psychoanalytic membership organization will certainly emerge.

For this posting, I focus specifically on why I believe, after much research and reflection, that we MUST proceed to appoint training analysts (TAs) here at the New Center without requiring our TA candidates to pass through the Certification process. If you are interested in following my thoughts in this regard thus far, please look up alankarbelnig.com, click on Alan Karbelnig blog, and then click on the headings The American Civil Disobedience and The New Center Enters the 21st Century.

Today I reviewed The Articles of Incorporation of the New Center from 2005, the Bylaws written that same year, and a document entitled "Implementation of an Expedited Pathway for Certification, Training, and Supervising Analyst Status at the New Center for Psychoanalysis" from 2011. Interestingly, the legal incorporation of NCP makes no mention of any association with The American; the Bylaws (surprisingly) fail to mention anywhere that NCP's appointment of TAs requires Certification; and the Expedited Pathway document — although representing immense work by some of our members — is akin to putting a denim patch on the Hindenburg. Any type of competency assessment procedure, such as Certification, must comport with well-established, objective methods for determining proficiency. The Expedited Pathway, although arguably moving closer, fails in this regard.

I offer this final provocative analogy of assessing treatment of urethral stricture as a comparison for assessing psychoanalytic competency. That medical technique consists of passing instruments through the urethra in order to stretch that anatomical canal. The well-established procedure has a long history to it, consistently applied international methodology and technology, and a high success rate in achieving its goal of increasing urine flow. Beginning with classroom instruction, and proceeding to clinical experience with patients, students of urology quickly develop proficiency. Assessment of competency proves straightforward, with the variables assessed — comfort of the patient, efficient insertion of the instruments, and maximal stretching of the urethral tissues — all being objectively measurable.

In stark contrast, consider now the assessment of the competency of a psychoanalysis based on the review of several psychoanalytic sessions. It would be difficult, even if writing fiction, to create a more diametrically opposed “treatment” process to the urological one just described. Even if viewed from the lens of a simplistic, myopic, medical-model approach to extremely complex mental disorders, the number of variables involved in the psychoanalytic process are infinite. Factors affecting the patient range from biological to psychological to historical to cultural to nutritional to sociological to situational. Not a single one of these takes into account the multi-faceted impact of those same variables, if not more, emanating from the psychoanalyst him or herself; further, this does not account for the dynamics of the parties evaluating the psychoanalyst and to that list must be added political, theoretical, group-psychological, and many other factors.

The American’s Certification process, developed by the Board of Professional Standards (BOPS), an unethical and arguably illegally operating entity within The American (because it fails to comport to the legal standards for the governance of a nonprofit professional membership organization in the State of New York), strives to assess psychoanalytic competency with precisely the same intention as professional urology seeks to assess the competency of its practitioners. This is patently absurd. When I went through the process during 2007-8, I learned that examiners were provided no training whatsoever in how to assess competency of psychoanalysts. Much more egregiously, and again in nearly perfect opposition to the objectivity of assessing treatment of urethral stricture, no even remotely objective process yet exists for measuring psychoanalytic competency. How and when do psychoanalysts interpret the transference? What are the proper procedures for interpreting dreams? What specifically are the criteria for analyzability? When (or even who) determines when successful termination of the treatment process?

How now do we map the level of objectively measuring increased urine flow onto evaluation of successful psychoanalytic treatment? Is the patient happier, married, no longer having anxiety-ridden dreams, more productive at work, less tempted by the sexual advances of colleagues, more compliant with exploitative corporate supervisors, better able to pay their taxes on time, or less likely to smoke cigars?

While it is possible to develop methods for assessing elements of psychoanalytic competency, i.e. knowledge of the concept of transference and counter-transference, an understanding of various theories of psychoanalysis or of dream interpretation, each psychoanalytic “treatment” session stands alone, like a work of art, like a dance, like a musical performance. It therefore exists in an entirely different universe from the assessment of the treatment of a medical condition. Because of the immense number of variables involved in the process of even a single psychoanalytic session, any assessment of such is

vulnerable to completely subjective interpretation by examiners or, worse, by political or theoretical influences irrelevant to the actual competency of the psychoanalyst.

A large percentage of urologists evaluating the competency of a urological resident providing treatment for a urethral stricture would agree on his or her competency; precisely the opposite occurs, and has occurred, in evaluating the competency of any particular psychoanalyst in training. Rather than being influenced by theoretical, personal, political, or emotional biases, the evaluation of psychoanalytic competency has in fact been DOMINATED by them, rendering the entire process not only absurd but harmful. All of the proposed new assessment procedures share the same basic flaw: A persistent effort to assess an extremely nonlinear, complex, dynamic process using early 20th century, modern-period ideology. Our field will be enhanced by a national assessment of competency process — and the development of such is readily available within the field of social science research. But this will require years to develop and will bear little semblance to any of the extant or proposed competency assessment procedures.

By taking the simple step of eliminating the Certification process from the selection of TAs at the New Center, and relying instead on procedures already in place — ones that comport with the standards of the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) — the New Center can move the profession of psychoanalysis forward. As of May 2012, NCP had 49 TAs, 10 over the age of 85, with an average age of 74. Why? Because most of those TAs are MDs who — God bless them for they knew not what they were doing — were indoctrinated into a vision of psychoanalysis as a variant of urology rather than as an extremely complex form of transformational human interaction. Further, many NCP members have been reasonably afraid of the time, expense, and trauma of passing through the Certification process. And of course many are simply disinterested.

Interestingly, since the NCP Bylaws fail to mention Certification as a requirement for appointing TAs, we should be able to simply add a ByLaw amendment that will eliminate that requirement. We can then proceed to select TAs, and thereby attract more, younger, vibrant ones. These fresh new TAs will, in turn, attract more students in the Los Angeles area who will be interested in undergoing training analyses with them. This will lead, and I predict rapidly so, to the healing up of the many so-unfortunate splits, like between non-MD and more-MD institutes, or between the more conservative and more liberal institutes, resulting in the emergence of NCP as a center of learning of depth psychotherapy — the unifying variable behind all of these archaic and immature splits that characterized the last century.

PLEASE remember again that NCP is NOT “resigning” from or in any way leaving The American; the ByLaw change will create a conflict in terms of the American’s accreditation of NCP, but in my view that, most ironically, will actually enhance rather impair the functioning of our fledgling national membership organization.

Thank you for your tolerance, and please stay tuned for upcoming postings in which I will propose the new ByLaw Amendment and specify how to implement it. I now await more information from NCP administrators before doing so.

Submitted with kind regards for all,

Alan

2] [NewCenterPsa] The New Center Enters The 21st Century: Posting Number Two: The Proposal, John Lennon, and Reassurance

Tuesday night, January 29, 2013

Dear New Center Friends and Colleagues,

So now I begin a posting campaign, rather 21st century in and of itself, in an effort to encourage a bold and positive change in our small community. I will soon begin the process of collecting signatures required to put a proposal before the membership of our New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP). I know how busy you all are, so I shall endeavor to make these postings brief and to the point. The proposal is subject to editing and revision; the John Lennon and Reassurance part are not.

THE PROPOSAL: "The New Center shall immediately activate the Training Analyst Committee and solicit applications from NCP members interested in service as Training and Supervising Analysts (TAs). That Committee shall then screen these applicants, using procedures already in place (except the Certification requirement), and appoint all those qualified to be TAs. This action results from NCPs concern that The American's Certification process — an antiquated and unscientific screening process that historically has been driven by an exclusionary ideology — has not been sufficiently reformed. If and when The American demonstrates that it has developed a proper 'assessment of competency' process, then NCP will consider incorporating Certification by The American as a component of its own selection of TAs."

JOHN LENNON'S IMAGINE: So, folks, we've been entrapped in this early 20th century, constricted model. That century was characterized by massive and tragic splits, Freud v. Jung, Klein v. Anna Freud, Fascism, Communism, and more. Our own institute split into SCPI and LAPSI in around 1950, I think, and I don't even recall the reason. Can we view it as a sign that we came together again after the year 2000? Going into the 21st century requires an embracing of integration, tolerance, and unity. The Certification process has, sadly, been much to blame for the persistence of the primitive splitting process. Just look at the APsaA posts in, literally, the last week, and you will see how it continues. We cannot wait. We should not wait. We here at the New Center can be the center for a change in ideology. We can

move towards a model where we appoint our own TAs, and thereby virtually eliminate any reason for many, many young and middle-aged and older persons interested in psychoanalysis to feel repelled by our rigidity. Imagine a thriving institution in Southern California where Jungians and Kleinians and Inter-subjectivists and Self-Psychologists and Ego Psychologists can all work on helping others, on learning, and on studying together. We all practice “depth psychology.” It is time to move past religious-like group identifications and come together as a group of helping professionals.

THE REASSURANCE: I am totally in agreement with those who think we need a national psychoanalytic organization. But — and again just a quick gander of last week’s posts would confirm this — our national organization is ill, possibly terminally so. Lawyers? Conciliation meetings? The President offering a different TA model from BOPS which then differs from what Otto Kernberg proposes? Really? The American may evolve into the membership organization it is supposed to be, or it may fail and then a new organization will develop in its place PLEASE let’s not wait for them. Let’s take our own stand, and in the first half of this year.

Again, I am in no way endorsing a “split from The American.” I am putting forth the above-noted by-law amendment, or some version thereof, which will conflict with The American’s bylaws but will IN NO WAY separates us from them. We will retain our accreditation. We will remain in compliance with the requirements of the IPA. In order for The American to “decertify” our NCP, there would need to be a MAJORITY vote of the ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP.

[The entire membership of The American is around 2970 members and the largest turn out in an APsA election in memory was around 1,500 votes so such a vote would have to practically be unanimous to be effective even in the unlikely event that a majority ever actually turned out to vote either way. Further, before the issue of dealing with NCP could come before The American there would have to be a vote of 2/3 for disapproval in the BOPS and that would have to be followed by a 2/3 vote for disapproval in the Council. Only AFTER those votes actually happened could the issue be put to the membership, which is another reason why the “disapproval” of an Institute is so extremely improbable].

And how can The American, with its current, tragic, no-one-person-to-blame paralysis, possibly devote energy to NCP? Let us let them sort out their decades-long difficulties, while we, as a local organization affiliated with them, move firmly in the direction of integration, firmly into the direction of the future of depth psychology.

Please join in an online discussion of this proposal so that we can move forward, and come to a unity ourselves, well before we take up this motion as an organization.

Submitted with affection, and with great hopes for the future of our NCP,

Alan

1] NCP's Stand-For-Justice Number One: Seeking A Growth-Enhancing, Local Change

Saturday, January 26, 2013

My dear friends and colleagues,

I have been actively involved in the New Center (NCP) since I entered training in 1992. My experiences have been uniformly positive, and I count many of you as personal friends. I have been student, analyst, teacher, lecturer, committee-member, training analyst, and friend. I am now embarking now on an effort, through email, US mail, and phone calls, to ask your support for a bylaws change that would allow us to appoint training analysts (TAs) without requiring them to be Certified by The American.

I start this afternoon with only two simple points.

First, the Certification requirement is based on early 20th century, primarily medical models of assessing competency. In the process of earning my Board Certification in Forensic Psychology, I received extensive training in contemporary "assessment of competency" methods. The American's Certification process completely fails every element of such methods. I liken it to attempting to assess the competency of an artist. You could, and if you were an educational institution you should, evaluate basic artistic methods like color theory, the chemistry of various media, art history, and even perhaps the knowledge of certain styles, like impressionism. But you would never be able to test the competency of an artist based on one or two particular pieces of art. Certification does the latter. Many of our clearly competent colleagues, right here at NCP, have failed it because of any number of subjective biases. Many more fear it, and many perhaps wisely avoid applying for it.

I am extremely active in professional psychology, having friends and colleagues throughout the Los Angeles county area. Only a small portion of those entering psychoanalytic training in LA are applying to NCP. They know that the average age of a TA is 79. They know that we have an extremely small number of TAs. This is a direct result of the Certification process. By eliminating it as a requirement, we could rapidly appoint new TAs, attract new students and invigorate our organization. I will soon re-post my proposal. In the meantime, I will begin seeking the 15 signatures I will require to have it formally considered by the NCP membership.

Second and last, PLEASE note that, as many have mis-understood, even our dear president Bob James, I am NOT endorsing that we "break away" from The American as an institution. We are an American-accredited institution, and that ironically gives us a certain amount of prestige. The proposed bylaw change would create a conflict between NCP and The American. NCP would be in violation of one of The American's bylaws.

However, 2/3 of the ENTIRE membership of The American would have to vote — and remember this is not just voting members, this would be actual members — to have NCP de-certified and therefore no longer an American-affiliated institute. Now how would The American POSSIBLY have the energy to do that, given the threats of internal lawsuits pending, quite literally as I write this, not to mention decades of infighting and a basic exclusionary ideology. Moreover, The American has NEVER achieved a vote, EVER, by 2/3 of its membership!

I know you are all super-busy, and so I shall end this posting on this note. Please think this over carefully. I am hoping to get the bylaw-change proposal openly discussed, and then voted on, within, say, six months or less.

Please also consider this: We at NCP have a rare opportunity to foment change on a national level, and to communicate to the greater Los Angeles area, to the US, and even to the world that we can reject the policies of an archaic organization and move forward into the global, tolerance-oriented, integration-seeking ideology that will hopefully dominate this 21st century. We will likely have a significant impact on The American itself.

Thank you for your kindness in reading this, and I shall post again soon.

With warmth,

Alan