

## Theme: Our Lives During COVID-19



### OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Holly Crisp, MD

Welcome to the Candidates' Connection! In this edition writers reflect on the changes in our lives and practices in the past months. The landscape of our lives has shifted dramatically in the past months, from the losses in our lives and changes in our practices brought by the coronavirus, to the important uprisings against racism. These past few months have shaped and reshaped us all, in our professional lives and our personal lives. Given the significant changes in all of our lives, as you read, I invite you all to reflect on the roads you have traveled in the past months in your analytic training, in your work with patients, and in your professional and personal lives.

Though we have missed the opportunity to meet in person, candidates have gathered together online during the pandemic, both during Town Hall meetings and at the Candidates' Council, which has provided a way to connect across the country and around the world. It is my hope that even once the pandemic is behind us, this new mode of online connection can help to foster collaboration and friendship amongst the next generation of analysts in an ongoing way.

This edition will be my last newsletter in the role of the Candidates' Council president. It has been a privilege to get to know many of you, and an honor to work with and on behalf of candidates at our national organization. During the time I was involved as an APsaA candidate, I have seen increasing openness and welcome to candidates, as well as to the ideas

of the next generation. By the time you read this newsletter, there will be a new Candidates' Council President, Sumru Tufekcioglu, who will be leading the work at APsaA for candidates. The editor of this newsletter, Himanshu Agrawal, will be the President-Elect. The Candidates' Council is working to address the needs of all candidates by providing programming that is relevant and important to candidates, developing professional networking opportunities, and creating a culture of welcome in which candidates may connect with other candidates about professional and educational issues. As the culture has shifted online, the Candidates Council continues to work to support candidates in this new format.

We look forward to 2021 as another rich year of programming and connection for candidates in APsaA. Please read on and learn about candidate voices at APsaA and opportunities to engage with other candidates from across the country that may be of interest to you, both at the national and local level. Stay tuned for communications from Sumru Tufekcioglu, as she will continue to advance candidate interests with creative programs and ways to connect to one another. ❖

Warmly,

Holly Crisp, MD  
Outgoing President,  
APsaA Candidates' Council

*A special welcome to the analytic candidates  
from APsaA's newest Approved-Institutes:*

**The International Institute for Psychoanalytic Training (IIPT)**



**The Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis (Los Angeles)**



For the list of APsaA Approved Institutes/Centers, visit:  
<https://apsa.org/approved-training-institutes>

Interested in Local Events?  
Visit: <http://www.apsameeting.org/societies-and-institute-events/>

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## INCOMING PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Sumru Tufekcioglu, PhD

Dear Candidates,

As I greet you with this first message of my two-year term as the new President of the Candidates' Council, I find myself standing in between two spaces. Looking back, I see a year in which we unexpectedly found ourselves in a situation where we had to abruptly leave our offices and move our patients to video or phone sessions, learn how to keep ourselves and our families safe from a deadly disease, and move our classes and all components of training to online platforms. Simultaneously, as a nation, we went through a contentious election, civil and racial unrest, economic hardship and too much loss... loss of loved ones, loss of connection to loved ones, loss of our regular pleasures, and loss of a sense of safety in going about our most basic simple daily routines.

As we went through this previously unthinkable and difficult time, we found that APsaA was consistently there for us, organizing a taskforce on COVID-19, holding online townhalls to discuss many of the issues that came up with the pandemic and providing emotional support and new insights to us. We kept adapting to the new terrain and adjusting our work in ways we had never imagined... and we kept thinking, creating new thinking and staying curious.

Looking forward, I see that we are almost out of the woods but not quite yet. We are in that in-between space, "standing in the spaces," an analytic notion developed by Philip Bromberg, a revered psychoanalyst and teacher of mine at White Institute where I trained. Sadly, we lost Philip this past year. He has left much to us that is going to live on. Philip would say there is an in-between space in human experience where multiplicity of selves and self-experiences become possible. I think that this in-between space is also where things are not what used to be but not quite yet what they are going to be either. That leap of faith one must take to get to what is desired, almost like being up in the air before landing safely on the other side. There is much uncertainty in that space but there is also incredible potential for growth.

I think that is where we are now. Before we can fully put this past year behind us, we will need to look back and process all the trauma we and our patients have gone through. As we heal, we will also grow. And I think that is what the next two years will be about at APsaA's Candidates' Council. I will be here to heal with you and to grow with you. And we will move past this trauma together, engaged, curious, and hopeful.

Joining me in this effort is an incredible team of Steering Committee members some of whom you already know from past years and some who have recently joined us: Himanshu Agrawal (President-Elect), Gerard Sobnosky (Treasurer), Melissa Jenereski (Secretary), Adam Moriwaki (Chair-Distance Learning), Christopher Rigling (Chair-Candidate Programming), and Rachel Maree (Chair-Diversity, Chair-Candidates' Paper Prize).

I and my partners-in-crime mentioned above are currently planning many activities to enrich your training, to provide for you a supportive network of fellow candidates, more opportunities to present your ideas, peer groups, consultation groups and of course social events where we can have some fun as well. We are additionally in the process of forming new committees and are open to your ideas as well. So, if you are interested in joining us to take part in the leadership of the Candidates' Council, let me know. I would be happy to hear from you.

Stay tuned, stay engaged, and stay safe and well. ❖

Warmly,  
Sumru

Sumru Tufekcioglu, PhD,  
President, APsaA Candidates' Council



## EDITOR'S NOTE

Himanshu Agrawal, MD, DF-APA

When I was a child, my grandmother told me a story about two brothers. The older one, *Bheem*, had a legendary fondness for food, and the younger one, *Arjun*, was determined to become the greatest archer of all time. One day, *Arjun* discovered *Bheem* sitting in a dark kitchen, gorging on a midnight meal. "How can you even see your plate?!" exclaimed *Arjun*. "Where there's a will, there's a way, dear brother", replied *Bheem*. "My love for food has helped me hone all my other senses—the smell of the sauces, the sound of the silverware, the texture of the breads." Inspired by his older

brother, *Arjun* started practicing archery day and night, light or dark. Both went on to achieve greatness.

I have thought about this fable innumerable times during my personal analysis, a substantial portion of which was conducted over the phone. Over the years, I learnt to dive into the recesses of my pre-conscious based on the cadence of my words, I came to predict when my analyst was about to speak, I could call him out on the rare occasion that he was distracted, based on the sound of his breathing. I learnt to tolerate silence, and even found important parts of myself in that abyss.

And then, it happened again, when my institute agreed take me on as its

first-ever (long) distance candidate. Technological malfunctions had us quickly abandoning video conferencing, and yet again, I found myself at the

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### APsaA Candidates' Council

Sumru Tufekcioglu, PhD, *President*  
Himanshu Agrawal, MD, DF-APA, *President-elect*  
Melissa Jenereski, MSW, *Secretary*  
Gerard Sobnosky, MS, LMFT, *Treasurer*

The Candidate Connection  
Newsletter of the APsaA Candidates' Council  
Himanshu Agrawal, MD, DF-APA, *Editor*

(A complete list of CC Committees can be found on the Candidate Members Information Page located in the members section of [apsa.org](http://apsa.org))

mercy of the phone. I remember how frustrating it was at first, interjecting clumsily with my comments, like a grown man playing Double Dutch for the first time.

And yet again, a most wonderful transformation started occurring over the years that followed. Over time, I started leaning back, closing my eyes and concentrating on the breathing on the other side of the phone, the pauses and the silences that started teaching me as much as the spoken word. When I made a comment, I started worrying less about what the facial expressions looked like on

the other end. I took significant strides learning to talk less and listen more, one of the reasons I had enlisted into Psychoanalytic training to begin with!

And as if to complete my own version of the tripartite model, it has happened a third time over. All my patients are now long- distance patients. And just as it is said that it is of great benefit to be ahead of your patients when it comes to your own analysis, I am finding the same to be true now that I have a vantage point ahead of my patients in this online opera of screens and speakers. The longer I meander in the fields of Psychoanalysis,

the more I am becoming a believer in the dictum "It is ALL grist for the mill." What I am trying to say is this—our analysts are (still) calling. In the end—the end of all the training, the end of all our practice—in the end, all we can is answer the call, and hang on tight. So, what that this time it's on our computer screen? So, what that this time it's on our phone. In the end, the most valuable skill we have to offer might be our curiosity and our earnest willingness to help. ♦

Warmly,  
Himanshu Agrawal, MD, DF-APA

## OUR LIVES DURING COVID-19

### On Distance Learning

*Adam N. Moriawaki, PsyD, LLC*

In 2012, eight years before the pandemic, I began my psychoanalytic education from a distance. This was made possible by the collaboration between the Michigan Psychoanalytic Institute and the Minnesota Psychoanalytic Institute via the *Early Admissions Program* offered in Michigan. My home institute in Milwaukee could not independently train candidates, and I was also not yet ready to pursue full-time training. As a result, I gained access to a full course, co-taught on Saturday mornings by analysts of both institutes. In the early days this was done by teleconference and in later days by videoconference. This generated relationships with faculty and candidates that continue to deepen to the present day. Then, in 2016, when I was ready to pursue full training, I matriculated from an early admission candidate to a full clinical candidate, also via distance. Presently, I am set to begin my fifth and final year as an advanced candidate and have three active control cases.

None of this would have been possible if not for analysts in Michigan and Wisconsin who were willing to think outside of conventional wisdom. Such creativity and freedom in thought also brought together fellow candidates from South Korea, India, and Israel in my cohort alone. We are a diverse group, and together we have enjoyed a journey with our in-person candidate friends and colleagues in Michigan. As psychoanalysts,

we understand how profoundly structure affects process. The flexibility afforded in my process of training allowed my growth as well as many others in my cohort to grow together, in an otherwise infertile environment for psychoanalytic training and education.

### *If analytic training and treatment is possible during a pandemic, why should it not be made possible in non-pandemic times?*

Fast-forward to present day, 2021. All training necessitated a shift to a distance. Ironically, this did not mean much of a change for many candidates in my cohort in terms of our classes. Our in-person Michigan candidates were now also on-screen with us, and we remained connected. For us clinical candidates, it also meant our practices now moved to a telehealth format. This was something that many of our supervisors already provided to patients in different regions of the world. As a result, I was particularly well-positioned to move confidently forward in sustaining analytic relationships with my patients. In fact, I have found that in many ways the analytic work has deepened. I am deeply indebted to my analytic training, for I have been steeped in a rich environment that supports innovation and flexibility.

I have recently considered the question: *if analytic training and treatment is possible during a pandemic, why should it not*

*be made possible in non-pandemic times?* For the first time in APsA's history, the 2021 American Psychoanalytic Association meeting was held via video conference. There were a record-breaking 868 participants from around the world, including 164 first-time participants. What a

wonderful silver lining to find as a means of connection rather than disconnection! Much of the discussion focused on the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racism. A major question emerged in terms of what APsA's response and role should be to these crises. To my ears the most poignant reflection was to consider our role in maintaining a relatively non-diverse membership, with little inroads made to change the reflection of our own organization. To understand the lack of equal opportunity one needs to look no further than the rigidity of our own longstanding structures and policies. Having just completed my one-year term as one of your two Candidate Councilors At Large, I must say that despite these difficulties, I am optimistic about our ability to engage in meaningful change. I think giving consideration to changes in our psychoanalytic training and treatment is a wonderful place to begin. ♦

## The Couch in the Desert

Bill Bobowicz, PsyD, ABPP

When I was activated for overseas deployment in the US Army on 05 December 2019, I thought that my psychoanalytic training was placed on hold until I return to the United States and to the Cleveland Psychoanalytic Center. Sure, I had brought plenty of analytic reading materials to stay engaged, but with the seven-hour time difference between Iraq and the USA, it did not seem feasible to try and continue in my training through any sort of distance medium. My center had

the rest of my colleagues as I can still meet with my patients, face-to-face, due to the fact that my base is in the middle of the desert and its isolation has protected us from COVID-19 (no cases up to the time of me writing this). Given that we all have a need to connect as we are inherently social beings, it was only a matter of time before social media and telehealth became the norm for continuing to reach out and connect with our fellow humans.

*... since the advent of COVID-19 upon the world stage, I have found that literally everyone is in a similar situation as me: isolated and in the middle of a proverbial desert.*

thought that maybe I would be able to telephone in, from time-to-time, but when classes meet from 1830-2130, well, that's too early for me to join in at 0130 in the morning.

However, since the advent of COVID-19 upon the world stage, I have found that literally everyone is in a similar situation as me: isolated and in the middle of a proverbial desert. Yet, I might actually have it a little easier than

So, for me, COVID-19 has actually had a positive outcome. My center has gone fully virtual to continue to operate and provide services. While I still cannot join in the weekly classes due to the time when they are offered, I have been able to join in weekend discussion groups. While I thought that I would miss out on APsA's meetings this year, I was now able to join in the "Virtual" Annual Meeting in June. So many forums

that were previously closed off have opened up due to COVID-19 pushing our analytic community into an uncomfortable, but necessary new territory.

I still like face-to-face encounters: treatment sessions, consultations, classes. There is nothing like being in someone's presence. The feel of the energy, the subtle cues and signals, and the life breath of two or more people in the same room cannot be trumped by video conferencing. There will always be a need and desire to be in the same space with someone else. Perhaps COVID-19 will drive a hunger for that in our patients so that they will be even more desirous to come to our offices once the social distancing restrictions are lifted and it is safe to be with each other, again. However, it is good to know that we have other options to connect when being in proximity to each other poses a physical risk for it has, and will, again. COVID-19 will likely yield to COVID 20 or 21, or some other mutation of a pandemic. We must be prepared for it and becoming comfortable with connecting to each other over great distances will help us moving forward as a profession and community. ❖

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## Special Article by Invited Guest

### COVID-19 and Racism: Another Perspective

Rachel Maree, MD, MPH

The year 2021 ushered in a sudden and unexpected change in lifestyle for most of the world. The severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the measures taken to quell its spread, have required an abrupt restructuring of life as many people knew it. Our personal spaces have become places of confinement while also serving as our full-time classrooms, daycares and workspaces. This state of forced immobility with no foreseeable ending is not an unfamiliar concept to Black Americans, but rather one that has been repeatedly enacted and endured in countless ways—physically, economically and socially—throughout history. The various shelter-in-place orders that were issued, albeit necessary, were newly reminiscent of these acts.

The pandemic has also worsened economic uncertainty, with many facing financial, employment and housing unpredictability. This uncertainty is coupled with ongoing racial and socioeconomic disparities related to health and access to healthcare which were highlighted as Black Americans disproportionately suffered from the virus. Then, the killing of George Floyd created a tipping point, shining a spotlight on the longstanding issues of police brutality and racism that have pervaded American society for generations. Floyd's killing, against the backdrop of growing public mistrust related to poorly managed COVID-19 interventions that prioritized the American economy over citizens' health and safety, catalyzed an

eruption of widespread demands for systemic change.

One could posit a global awakening of consciousness has emerged regarding the social construct of race, economic inequality, police brutality, perceptions of power, and civil discord. Thus, what we have seen and continue to witness is a reckoning of many sentiments including shame, guilt, sorrow and outrage. These sentiments are displayed by many people, but for different reasons according to their personal and ancestral histories. For some Black Americans, longstanding conflicts regarding the construct of race as well as their history in society were reinforced. For others, these conflicts were brought to acute awareness.

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This awareness, coupled with the failure of the government and civilization to deliver their respective constitutional and humanitarian promises, necessitated a disruption of the current social order. For those who self-identify as non-Black allies, the origins of these feelings vary by history and experience. As a result, some embrace continued efforts for social justice while others are beginning to confront previous acts of willful or unconscious ignorance and complicity. Despite the contrasting roots of the sentiments for either group, what cannot go unnoticed is that they have similarly manifested as unified efforts of social unrest aimed at rectifying societal and personal affronts and disparities due to racism. It should also be recognized that the same feelings—shame, guilt, sorrow, and outrage—and likely many more, are also

experienced by those who remain ambivalent or resistant to the movement. We can only continue to observe the manifestations of these feelings and hope some level of exploration begins to occur.

interpersonal fears, patterns and desires. We should be inspired by the recent efforts at societal change and view this as an opportunity to also broaden the lens we use to practice. The task of

***We should be inspired by the recent efforts at societal change and view this as an opportunity to also broaden the lens we use to practice.***

Many people have begun to engage in personal and professional work to reflect on their biases and to dismantle the systemic racism within their organizations. This shift has moved the construct of race—once a commonly ignored or overlooked element—to the forefront of the clinical encounter, resulting in an exploration of one's sense of self, identity, and

learning about ourselves and from our patients is inherently analytic and in the service of life. We must not shy away from this convergence of deep-seated issues, as our efforts to understand, explore and heal the open wounds that continue to debilitate people, both individually and collectively, are paramount at this time. ❖

## OFFICER AND COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES

### Candidates' Council Paper Prize Committee

*Rachel Maree, MD, MPH*

The American Psychoanalytic Association Candidate's Council continues to foster analytic thought and writing through the Candidates' Council Psychoanalytic Paper Prize. Candidate members as well as recently graduated candidate members are eligible to submit papers. The finalist is awarded a \$1000 prize and the semifinalist prize is \$500.

The prize winners usually also present their papers for discussion during the National and Annual meetings. Unfortunately, the 2021 Semi-finalist, Genie Dvorak, PsyD from the San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis, was

unable to present at the 2021 Annual Meeting due to changes in meeting structure related to COVID-19. Her paper is entitled "The Persistent Past: Listening for the Logic and Potentials of the Repetition Compulsion."

The 2021 finalist is Rochelle M. Broder, Ph.D. from the Michigan Psychoanalytic Institute. Her paper is entitled "Low Fee, Rage and Countertransference" and explores countertransference reactions during a low fee/control case treatment. The 2021 semi-finalist is Elizabeth Levey, M.D. from the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute. Her paper is entitled "Analyzing from home: Where does psychoanalysis go in a pandemic?" and explores the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on psychoanalytic work.

The committee also welcomes any candidates who are interested serving as judges for the paper prize. Please contact me at [racheldmareemd@gmail.com](mailto:racheldmareemd@gmail.com) if you are interested in serving as a judge or have questions about submission for the paper prize. You may also find more information about the paper prize here: <https://apsa.org/content/candidates-council-paper-prize>.

### Candidates' Council Diversities Committee

*Rachel Maree, MD, MPH*

The Candidates' Council Diversities Committee works in liaison with the Diversities Section of the American Psychoanalytic Association's Department of Psychoanalytic Education. The DPE Diversities Section is charged with raising awareness of and promoting conversations about diversities within psychoanalysis, specifically with regard to training and education. Currently, the section has committees addressing issues of race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and physical abilities. As a growing and developing committee, the Candidates' Council Diversities

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Committee hopes to foster candidate involvement in these areas. Please contact me at [racheldmareemd@gmail.com](mailto:racheldmareemd@gmail.com) if you have any interest.

### Candidates' Council Distance Education Committee

*Adam N. Moriwaki, PsyD, LLC*

As the Chair for Distance Education, I have begun working with Charles Fisher, MD, Chair of APsaA Fund for Psychoanalytic Research and Deputy Director of APsaA's Science Department, as well as with Karl Stukenberg, PhD from the Cincinnati Psychoanalytic Institute. We are developing a survey to better understand analysts' experiences with distance treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications for post-pandemic practice. This will help to determine what's being done in clinical practice as well as the associated observed effects. If, as a candidate, you have particularly salient experiences with recent shifts in distance education

or practice you would like to share, please email me directly at [drmoriwaki.com](mailto:drmoriwaki.com). I welcome any and all input to help ensure your voices are heard.

### Research—Fund for Psychoanalytic Research Committee Meeting

*Sumru Tufekcioglu, PhD, Chair, Research*

The Committee for the Fund for Psychoanalytic Research convened for its June 2021 meeting virtually through Zoom with seven members in attendance. Following the discussion on finances, the Committee reviewed and discussed in detail the grant proposals that were submitted in this cycle. The proposed research projects focused on attachment in psychoanalytic treatment, developing model of psychoanalytic treatment for psychosis, and the role of defense mechanisms in depression.

Committee discussions included assessment of the quality of each research project outlined above, i.e.,

whether the project is psychoanalytic in nature and promotes public health, whether the costs budgeted are justifiable, and whether the project has strong research design qualities. The Committee will meet in February of 2021 for the next round of grant submissions.

### APsaA Candidates Council Treasurer's Report

*Gerard Sobnosky*

#### **Candidates Council (CC) Budget**

Our FY 2021 budget (Sep 2021–Aug 2021) was approved in February for the requested amount of \$43,237. Our actual expenditures will be less, as travel, audio-visual, and food/beverage funds were not used for the June APsaA meeting, which was conducted online. Our FY 2022 budget will be submitted in February before the APsaA National Meeting.

#### **American Psychoanalytic Foundation (APF)**

The Candidates Council Treasurer is an ex officio member of the APF. The APF is seeking new committee members to assist in reviewing proposals and allocating funding. An announcement will go on the candidate listserv for a candidate member. Since Sep 2019 the APF has approved funding for the following programs: Candidates Council Psychoanalytic Paper Prize, ROOM: A Sketchbook of Analytic Action, Center for Child Wellness, St Louis Psychoanalytic Institute Bilingual Clinical Program Through St. Louis's Mental Health Collaborative, Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia Youth Psychotherapy Program, Child Analytic Traveling Scholar Program, What They Bring: The Poetry of Migration and Immigration, The Hawaii Psychoanalytic Outreach Project.

#### **APsaA Finance Committee**

The Candidates Council Treasurer is an ex officio member of the APsaA Finance Committee. The Committee met in person at the winter meeting in February 2021 and online in May 2021 to review the APsaA budget. We are trying to remain flexible and agile as we adapt to budget implications of the pandemic. ❖

### **Are YOU connected to the national psychoanalytic community?**



#### **Candidate Member Benefits:**

- Significantly reduced membership fee
- Reduced candidate member rates for APsaA meetings
- Low cost professional liability insurance
- Find an Analyst listing / Opportunities for referrals
- Candidate programming with CEUs
- Network with candidates & analysts from across the country
- And more!

The first-year of Candidate Membership includes a complimentary subscription to the *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association-JAPA*. Candidates enrolled in psychoanalytic training at an APsaA-approved institute are eligible.

**Email Membership Services to join: [membership@apsa.org](mailto:membership@apsa.org)**

#### **Has your APsaA membership lapsed?**

To rejoin the dynamic APsaA national community,  
contact membership services today.

#### **Questions?**

**Email: [membership@apsa.org](mailto:membership@apsa.org) or 212-752-0450 x26.**