

COUNCIL NEWS

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CPP ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON OCTOBER 18th

THE IMPACT OF THEORETICAL INCLINATION ON THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to offer a belated thank you to all of you who elected me president-elect two years ago. I have, under the presidency of Ed Fancher, learned a great deal, and I have had the opportunity to see the Council grow in numbers and in scope of activities. Furthermore, I am particularly fortunate, as I start my term as president, to have Dan Rayelsberg as my president-elect.

I would like to share with you, in a somewhat cursory manner, some of my hopes and goals for CPP and to ask you, the members—the persons for whom this organization exists—to give me the benefit of your reflections and reactions to the issues which I see us, as a professional organization, facing.

It seems to many of us on the executive committee that we are being called on increasingly to help resolve the professional accreditation issues which face us, both in an academic and a legislative sense. This means in practice that we must address ourselves, not only to issues of standards and professional training, which we have started to do, but also to increasing our efforts to promote the understanding and the recognition of psychoanalytic psychotherapy and psychoanalysis in the body politic as professions whose rationale for existence is definable in themselves, and not subordinate to other disciplines. I believe the Council can exercise some leadership in these questions, while recognizing the wide variety of approaches evidenced among our institute affiliated organizations. And in this task I believe there are two mind sets to avoid: on the one hand, we have the danger of indulging in ideological righteousness, in our description of who is and who is not a psychoanalyst or psychoanalytic therapist; on the other hand, there is the danger of having, as a normative factor for our actions, political expediency.

Professionalism is best served, I believe, by a realistic commitment to accountability. Accountability implies a recognition of professional authority within the context of responsibility as a deliverer of services. (Professional licensure would guarantee not merely a possible financial benefit in terms of insurance coverage, but a sense of accountability in the practitioner to comply with a minimum set of standards in terms of training and professional conduct.) We must not have in our sights where psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic therapy were fifty years ago. If this is a viable humanistic science, we must trust its viability to grow in

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President's Message *(continued)*

multifaceted ways. Professional integrity is not compromised by respect for practitioners coming from different orientations; rather, its main concern should be bringing to our patients and students the best of what we know—with a constant self-critical eye.

I hope that the Council, as an umbrella organization, can continue to foster this mutual respect and mature self-evaluation among its members. If we evidence these qualities, we will be given much more credence by the public and gain more understanding for our profession. Traditionally, our annual conferences have served this function of communication among professionals. The conference this coming October will, I believe, particularly show this. Beyond that, I hope to find ways, with your help and advice, to implement these goals of professional cooperation and mutual respect within the context of professional accountability. I welcome your advice and your judgment, and would urge you to call or write me to communicate your thoughts. Thank you.

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