

Seattle Psychoanalytic Society and Institute Newsletter

January 2009

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Dear SPSI,

Holiday greetings and a Happy New Year from the SPSI Board of Directors. Welcome to our inaugural issue of a relaunched SPSI newsletter. Over the next months we will be refining it for design and content as we roll out a concurrent visual makeover of SPSI's face to the world.

Our goals in producing this monthly letter will be to increase the SPSI sense of community, to generate cohesiveness among all members, to promote and support member successes and initiatives, and to present SPSI to the world in a way that supports the private practices of SPSI members and SPSI as a training institute.

To these ends we welcome your comments, suggestions, ideas and input. This newsletter is for you, and we will do everything we can to make it as useful and relevant as possible. Please take some time to let us know how it can serve you best. Send an email to info@spsi.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

Letter from the Director

A Year-End Look at the State of the Institute in 2008

January, 2009

Psychoanalytic colleagues:

Greetings to you, as our organization re-launches communication with the SPSI community via this newsletter.

During the past year, many constituents of the Seattle Psychoanalytic Society and Institute spent considerable time preparing for the October 2008 site visit by the American Psychoanalytic Association. The site visit provided SPSI with a welcome opportunity to reexamine all structures and functions of our organization, stimulating a creative and ongoing organizational integrating process.

The 1988 reorganization established SPSI's democratic structure, which empowers the entire body of our faculty to govern the educational arm of the Institute, while the SPSI Board of Trustees oversees and supports the Institute's operations - with special attentions to balancing the budget. This requires setting faculty dues, initiating tuition increases, and seeking support through gifts and grants to SPSI.

In the 2005-06 academic year, through SPSI's fundraising efforts we brought in nearly \$16,000, which

increased to nearly \$17,500 in 2006-07, and to more than \$20,500 in the year ending June 2008. The Board thanks all who have supported SPSI in this way, and will hope to rely on your continuing generosity - and to seek additional support from existing and new donors.

The Board also attends to "housing" our Institute. You may have noticed the addition of more comfortable furniture, updates to our library, and optimization of library and classroom space. We continue to explore the feasibility of increasing SPSI's overall physical space, to accommodate our growing student body and expanded functions.

Another Board objective is to facilitate a mutually beneficial relationship between SPSI and the extended psychoanalytic community - and extending to the public in the greater Seattle area. We aim to make our organizational structures and functions readily understood by others. Recently our Board welcomed two new members with expertise in this area of organizational functioning - Amber Ratcliffe and Aric Mayer. The Board's ad hoc "Vision Committee" will soon bring recommendations of long- and short-range organizational goals to the Board and to the faculty; and with consensus, to proceed toward realization. Please join me in appreciation of Board members' creative contributions to our work.

The SPSI faculty, an-ever changing and dynamic body, devotedly provides and supports the teaching functions -- including the Core program, the adult psychotherapy training program, and the child psychotherapy training program. A significant number of graduates from the psychotherapy training programs continue on to the Core training program. Faculty committees continually assess and address the effectiveness of SPSI programs, with valuable involvement by SPSI students who add much to our understanding of good teaching/learning.

The Admissions Committee has successfully created visibility in our community, attracting an impressive number of highly qualified applicants - many of whom successfully proceeded to admission. Most promising: the diversity of backgrounds among these new "students" who have already achieved a great deal in their respective fields. Such well-qualified individuals share their knowledge with one another and with all of us as they pursue advanced studies in psychoanalysis, in and beyond classroom discussions.

The Curriculum Committee seeks and develops innovative ways to advance the teaching/learning process, and to assess the results. SPSI's Training Analyst Committee and the Progression Committee have initiated a cooperative working arrangement, for the purpose of examining the supervisory process. As one element, the Progression Committee will invite all case supervisors of a given clinical associate to attend meetings involving discussion of his or her progress. We believe this format will better our understanding of the supervisor's functioning as well as the clinical associate's progress.

The Site Visit Committee offered helpful suggestions to our Ethics and Colleague Assistance Committees - including that of establishing estate-planning functions that could benefit SPSI.

The entire institute and psychoanalytic community takes part in and benefits from the work of the Continuing Education and Symposia Planning Committee, with its central function of keeping us informed about emerging scientific developments in our field. Researchers' presentations, and interaction with visiting educators, stimulate research interest in our community and the formation of study groups.

All of us have much to be proud of and much to look forward to. Please contact me with your comments and questions about any aspect of the SPSI organization, and do let me know what you might do with and for SPSI.

On behalf of SPSI, I sincerely thank the many individuals who work to make SPSI function effectively

now and into the future.

Best Regards,

Werner Schimmelbusch, Director
Seattle Psychoanalytic Society and Institute

SPSI Office Gets Makeover

In October the office and classrooms of Seattle Psychoanalytic Society and Institute received a generous and much needed gift. In keeping with the theme of "A New Look" for the institute, and in anticipation of the site visit conducted by The American Psychoanalytic Association, SPSI board member and benefactor Deehan Wyman and friends transformed a worn and utilitarian space into an open, inviting and user-friendly environment.



SPSI's transformation is apparent to anyone who was accustomed to walking into its main lobby and facing little more than an impressive but imposing library, an old, scarred wooden table, an interesting but unexplained series of historical photos, and an attractive glass vase on a pedestal that looked as if it had been left there as an afterthought. The three classrooms had much the same look; a combination of library, storage space, and an assortment of tables and chairs that appeared to have been assembled over time and with an eye toward serving their functions, but without concern for aesthetics or comfort.

Today's SPSI visitor or member enters a warm and welcoming space that reflects the institute's movement into the future, while retaining and showcasing its past. Clearly still designed to serve multiple functions, the new layout uses the space intelligently and with consideration for its need to accommodate both intimate meetings and large groups. With the aid of Dr. Charles Mangham, Sonia Cole and administrator Victoria Jenkins, the library's content has been winnowed down to its essentials, and the overflow donated to a burgeoning analytic center in Taipei. The remaining shelves serve as a backdrop for a comfortable new sofa, and a set of padded ottomans that can also serve as tables or seats. The table rests in a study corner beneath the now organized photos of the SPSI family lineage, and across from a wooden cabinet featuring books donated by its founders.

The three classrooms sport dark wood tables and matching upholstered chairs in warm, neutral tones, allowing for rearrangement of furniture in the largest of them to accommodate large meetings, while retaining the overall cohesion of design. A comfortable nook with two armchairs makes a place for quiet conversation away from the flow of traffic. And, while one classroom remains "The Freud Room," decorated with photographs and even an action figure of the Father of Psychoanalysis, the others now feature a variety of colorful artworks, including the blown glass vase which, like the world-famous glass artist William Morris, its creator, has a showcase worthy of its inclusion.

Acknowledgements

In the spirit of our recent makeover, we also need to take care of some unfinished business to close out 2008. Thank you to all the contributors to the 2007-2008 Annual Fund. Giving back to SPSI makes it possible for us to go forward as an institute. And thank you to all the community members, whose participation increases our diversity and broadens our relationship with the greater Seattle community. We look forward to increasing our community involvement in this next year.

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