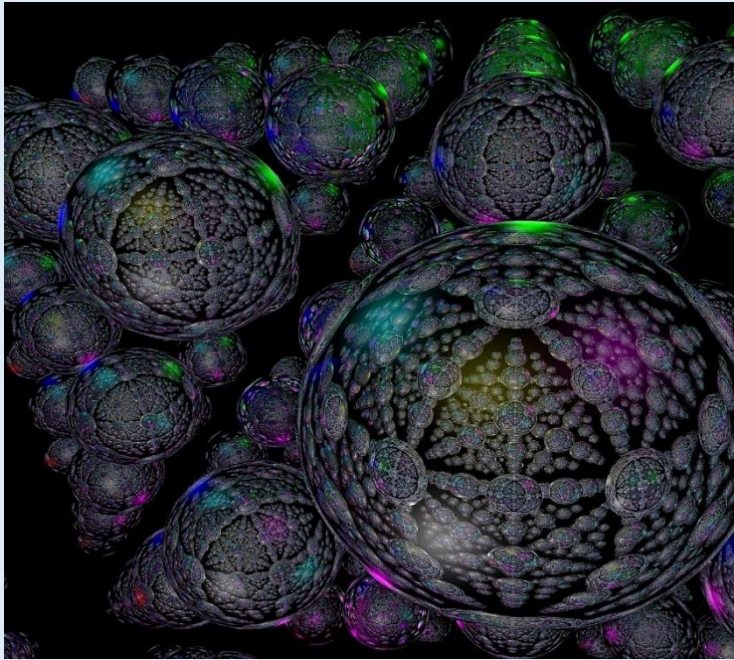


Society for Humanistic Psychology Newsletter

August 2022

News, Views, and Announcements from APA Division 32



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Outgoing president Todd DuBose's thoughts on the future of humanistic psychology.

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What the Future Holds

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Published three times annually, the newsletter of the Society for Humanistic Psychology (Division 32 of the American Psychological Association) explores the intersections of psychology, the arts and humanities, and current events. It aims to capture the discussions, debates, and new ideas at the center of research, teaching, clinical practice, advocacy, and justice. Like Indra's Net (pictured above), humanistic psychology honors the beauty of the individual while acknowledging cultural and social context, interdependence, and complexity. Co-editors: Kevin Gallagher, Andrew Bland, and Julia Falk.

Letter from the Editor

Les Temps Modernes: The Future of Humanistic Psychology

Kevin Gallagher

My second point is the urgency with which we need to move into a post-human(e)-istic alteriology, and this point has two subpoints. First, this direction suggests that being more humane, ironically, means expanding what we mean by *existenz* beyond the speciesism of merely self-referencing human existence. More specifically, this will entail a deconstruction of speciesism on one hand, and a competent and intentional response to our shared *existenzen* in the age of the machine. (DuBose, 2022, p. 2)

As our goal is to continue the discussion (following up on our February 2022 newsletter) about the *Future of Humanistic Psychology*, and our last conference theme was based on posthumanism, our focus in this edition is on issues affecting humanistic psychology as we

enter the posthuman future. For a society devoted to understanding psychology *humanistically*, the posthuman shift may come with trepidation, suspicion, and possibly repulsion. Specifically, is the posthuman world more, or less, concerned with our shared values of dignity, freedom, and equity? Does this shift take us further away from these values and goals? And when other terms enter the conversation, such as transhumanism (moving beyond the human) and anti-humanism, it can feel, at first glance, as though the posthuman world is misanthropic, undignified, and mechanistic. All of which oppose the ambition of our community. However, as Dr. Todd DuBose has pointed out, there may be more in common between the humanistic psychologist and the critical posthumanist than there is difference. To understand these links, we must first understand what the critical posthumanist means when they discuss and critique “philosophical humanism.”

What is Humanism?

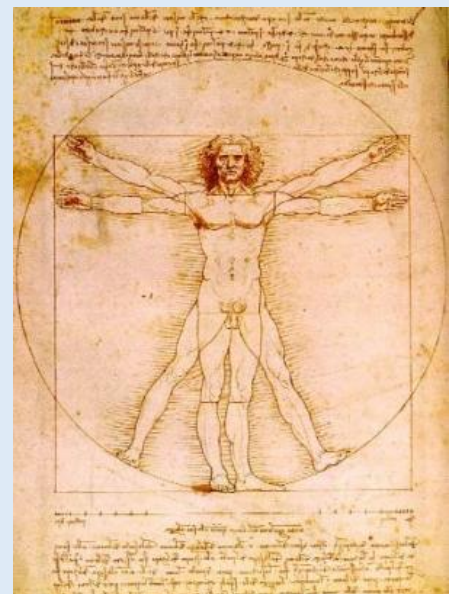
The human of Humanism is neither an ideal nor an objective statistical average or middle ground. It rather spells out a systematized standard of recognizability – of Sameness – by which all others can be assessed, regulated, and allotted to a designated social location. The human is a normative convention, which does not make it inherently negative, just highly regulatory and hence instrumental to practices of exclusion and discrimination. (Braidotti, 2013)

The (Hu)man (“Hu” being placed in brackets, as the first humanists always centered cis-men) of Enlightenment-era. Humanism is not the human as humanistic psychology understands it. As Braidotti states above, this (hu)man is not simply an ideal version of humanity, nor a statistical “norm,” but a way to carve out who is, and who is not, considered fully human.

And to be fully human is to be the rational, civil, enlightened creature that, to paraphrase Ernest Becker, sits somewhere between the natural and the supernatural, implying the human is in dominion of the natural world. This dominion also includes other human beings who are/were not believed to possess the rationality and civility of the enlightened human. Those humans are “reduced” to nature, uncultured and uncivilized. Braidotti, in her 2013 work, *The Posthuman*, uses Da Vinci’s Vitruvian Man to symbolize the humanist ideal:

An ideal of bodily perfection which, in keeping with the classical dictum *mens sana in corpore sano*, doubles as a set of mental discursive and spiritual values... Moreover, they assert with unshakable certainty the almost boundless capacity of humans to pursue their individual and collective perfectibility. (p. 13)

The image implies that the cultured (hu)man is a cisgendered, (suspectedly) heteronormative, white, Western/Christian, middle-aged man. He is healthy and fully abled and is concerned with the geometry and quantification of the world in order to properly sit in dominion over that which, either through divinity, evolution, or other means, has been bequeathed to Him. Through the use of rationality and technology, that which He creates using His near-supernatural mind becomes



culture, a separate and superior world from the natural order. The humanist believes this culture brings order to the chaos of the natural world. And at the center of this new order is always the (hu)man.

What happens to everything (and everyone) else within this new order? Well, this is the point of the post-and anti-humanist critiques. The (hu)man of humanism is an exclusionary function, one designed to enclose a border around a specific version of humanity, very limited in number, and to then exclude the rest of humanity due to irrationality or lack of civility. This group's attributes then become the norm against which everyone else is contrasted. Those who contrast against this (hu)man are then seen as separate *communities* of people which exist outside the true human society:

When talking about identity groups, the word "community" often crops up. The working class, gay people, black people or Muslims are always represented by a "community leader." We rarely, if ever, hear of the white middle-class community. "Communities" are defined in the eye of Default Man. Community seems to be a euphemism for the vulnerable lower orders. Community is "other." Communities usually seem to be embattled, separate from society. "Society" is what Default Man belongs to. (Perry, 2014)

Women were not placed within this boundary because they were, to the Humanist, irrational creatures, easily given over to emotionality (Fleischer, 1981). People of non-white origins were excluded due to their (perceived) lack of civility, even though who was and is considered "white" has never been a settled debate (Ignatiev, 2012; Yancy, 2012).

Not only does the humanist version of (hu)manity differentiate between full humans and not-quite-humans, but also between human beings and everything else. Even between humanity and its own technology. In the fundamental humanist view, everything that does not sit within that bubble of (hu)man is subservient and there to be governed and controlled. The planet, and even the universe itself, exists for the (hu)man to conquer.

The Posthuman Argument

It needs to be said, first and foremost, that the posthuman position does not eliminate the human (here, we are accepting all humans as humans, with no exclusions, normative assumptions, or taxonomical distinctions). Posthumanism first *decenters* the human as the "*systematized standard of recognizability*" (Braidotti, 2013) and accepts that the human is ever embedded in nature. No matter how sophisticated our culture becomes, it is never unnatural as we have not, and cannot, fully transcend nature.

Nothing disproves humanity's dominion as the "center of things" than the struggle we face today with climate change. Humanism is one of the driving factors for the acceptance, acceleration, and attachment to the extraction and burning of fossil fuels. If we believe humanity is in dominion over the world, then burning fossil fuels is not just our right, but our telos: burning nature in order to create culture. A cursory examination of our propensity to burn an inedible, toxic substance in order to create energy, which is then used to manufacture more goods than we know what to do with is apodictic evidence that we as a species are suffering from a superiority complex. Yet, no matter how hard we try, we can see over and over again that what affects the world affects humans. Our limitations become more than evident, as we see terrible storms, scorching temperatures, disappearing water,

and even the threat of bee extinction, enacting vengeance on us for our hubris. As Elliot Benjamin also points out in this issue, with his article, "The Future of Humanistic Psychology and the Preservation of the Human Species," our insistence on damaging the Earth is not even limited to extraction and production, but even in the conquest and destruction that follows in the wake of war.

We can also see our follies in the still rampant structural misogyny and racism (as well as genderism, heteronormativity, ableism, etc.) evident today. Placing the (white) "Man" as the center of all things then forced those who are not, or do not identify as, men into the margins. If "Man" is a rational, civil, thoughtful, and responsible creature, then the Woman must be the opposite, right? While misogyny had existed well before the rise of humanism, it stringently entrenched those existing aspersions. And this happened not just to women, but also to men who were/are fully masculine, or lacking in some fashion, and especially if they were/are not considered "white." For example, we know the use of racial slurs is a calculated dehumanization which marginalizes one trait of humanity and normalizes the other (Jardina & Piston, 2021). And coming full circle to our environmental predicament, our former president, Dr. DuBose, stated, our arrogant, supremacist notions allowed us to ignore the wisdom of peoples across the globe who already knew that we are but one part of the whole system that makes up Earth. The posthumanist position understands that our survival depends on seeing ourselves as such.

This environmental crisis also entails dealing with issues of technology and "the age of the machine." A topic that is also taken up by Dr. Robert Walden Kurtz in his article, "Transhumanism and the Future of Humanistic Psychology." The human is no longer viewed as the pinnacle being on Earth and is instead embedded in nature, as we see with climate change, while also being intertwined with the technology its culture creates. For example, our minds have become intertwined with our communications equipment (smartphones, laptops, even our own homes [Solaimani et al., 2015]), leaving us dependent, and vulnerable, to our own creations. The post-COVID world will be remembered for the cybernetic interactions we relied upon (such as Zoom, Skype, DoorDash, Instacart, etc.), and the truth is, we cannot put them back into Pandora's Box. To become Luddite is no longer an option as we have moved beyond the analog world. It is nigh impossible to get an education, employment, welfare benefits, or even maintain relationships, without at least some use of this technology. While the anthropocene leaves us in a position of possible peril, it is also molting unknown opportunities for dignity, hope, and liberation: all those values which humanistic psychology holds dear.

Is a Posthumanistic Psychology Possible?

Let's first remember that the (hu)man that is being decentered by posthumanism is not one of difference, multiplicity, situatedness, or intersectionality. Posthumanism decenters the standardized, normative human, of which all others (including the world we live within) are differentiated from. What better way to ensure dignity for all than to recognize dignity in everything? If we allow ourselves to treat the flora and fauna that sustains us without dignity (factory farms, rampant deforestation, hunting species into extinction) it becomes easier to then negate the dignity of everything, including human beings. And this is especially dangerous at a time when we face inconceivable arguments against teaching the history of racism in America (Watts, 2021) and attacks against women's autonomy based on the decisions of undemocratic institutions (Stevenson et al., 2022).

Our humanistic forebearers have taught us that we must learn humility and understanding in the presence of the other as we accept our own limited, natural, situated state. Even Carl Rogers (1977) wrote about the similarities between humans and other beings in terms of their teleological flow towards constructive fulfillment of purpose. Even more recently, the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* took on a similar question with its special issue on Radical Intersectional Humanism, a close cousin of sorts to critical posthumanism as both see the individual's psyche inseparable from the social, political, and environmental worlds. It "invited work by positing the critical urgency for incorporating decolonized transdisciplinary and transnational perspectives, analysis, and activism to alleviate human suffering and address the historical and ongoing realities of structural inequalities and injustice" (Saleem et al., 2021, p. 1).

Destabilizing the hierarchies and ideologies that have separated us, and turned us against each other and the world itself, gives way to a "shaky ground" where we can find a horizontalized state of community. "[W]hen we willingly stand on shaky ground, we are agile and adept, uncertain but nevertheless moored" (McInerney et al., 2020, p. 165). Neither "I" nor "Thou" is at the center of any discourse, analysis, or even understanding. This leaves open the opportunity for an "awe-inspired" state of being (Schneider, 2017), where the overwhelming state of interconnection can push us closer towards equality and harmony. Both as people and as members of the natural community.

Recently, I had the opportunity to virtually attend a talk given by Robin Wall Kimmerer (2013), the author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*. Kimmerer is a natural scientist and environmentalist, focusing on biology and ecology. She is also a citizen of the Potawatomi Nation, and she has used the wisdom learned from her fellow Potawatomi citizens to shape her approach to natural science. Her approach removes the hierarchies and barriers between the human, the plant, and the Earth itself, and instead understands each as interconnected parts of a whole living organism.

Action on behalf of life transforms. Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal, it is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us. (Macy, as cited in Kimmerer, 2013, pp. 338-339)

The autopoietic state of humanity is one of perpetual reciprocity with what the humanist would denigrate as the natural world, there-in leaving us at the mercy of the world we are embedded within. If it is sick, then so are we. And how did I go to this talk in the middle of a global pandemic you may ask? Well, it was simulcast over Zoom, allowing her wisdom to sift through the rhizomatic network of mutuality we call the internet and enter my home and psyche.

Yet, this posthuman era does not come with the guarantee of a future utopia. I have not forgotten the warnings from *The Terminator*, *The Matrix*, *Children of Men*, *Blade Runner*, *Ex Machina*, and many, many other stories foretelling the possible dystopia that a posthumanist future could hold. However, the purpose of this article is to show that neither the utopia, nor the dystopia, is guaranteed, and that both futures are possible. As humanistic psychologists, we may enter into the posthuman era kicking and screaming, but we are there nonetheless. To quote the heroine of the second *Terminator* film (the rest of the anthology not withstanding), "The future is not set. There is no fate but what we make for ourselves." But maybe that idea is possibly too humanist?

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Outgoing Presidential Reflections

Strong Winds Ahead

Todd DuBose

I am grateful for the time I have been granted to serve as president of our Society for Humanistic Psychology this past year. I turn over this role into the hands of Dr. Gina Belton as your new president for 2022-23. I wish her—and Div. 32—all the very best. I will serve out this next year as past-president and am open to help in any way I can. As I exit, I want to leave behind on the desk a brief note on cautions and aspirations for the Division's future—which, I think, in terms of guarding the soul, are of lethal importance.

Caution #1: The Supremacism of Deficit-Correction, Rank-Ordered Scales of Worth, and Efficient Production

Humanistic psychology is founded on betterment of lives and actualizing potentials. It gives us hope and inspires. The flip side of these values is exactly what is killing others unless they can crawl into "therapeutic care" (a phrase slowly becoming an oxymoron to me, as has "clinical psychologist"). Deficit-corrective engineering inherently stigmatizes and is life denying; it leaves one with a chronic "never-enough-ness"—and, hence, chronic disappointment—in the wake of ever-receding transcendence. Purity cult influences on the goal of symptom alleviation are stronger than ever and are accompanied with equal ferocity by the pressure of commodification for patient/client and therapist alike: We are only valuable if we efficiently produce the elimination of symptoms, but in doing so, erase the pathos of life. As long as difference is seen in any way as deficient, we will never offer an alternative to supremacist ideology. An alternative? A heeding companionship and clearing for ANY way of being in the world, as it is, in its own way, without needing it to be anything other than what it is. Then what? The very question shows how hard it is to "be" with what "is." Unless we do, we will forget what it is like to be with "what is" unfettered by what should be. No wonder we are empty. No wonder antidepressants have increased 400%. No one is with what is. Let's provide an opportunity for this to happen.

Caution #2: Algorithmic Reduction

We are in the age of the machine—and, by that, I don't mean in an age of technological gadgets. Like it or not, we are post-humanistic, meaning existence is no longer human-centric. Ray Kurzweil, in *Transcendent Man*, warned of approaching "singularity" in the near future where we will be replaced by artificial intelligence and robotics. I say singularity is already here in how we enframe ourselves as data-bytes and algorithms and expect others to follow suit. We are reduced to "nothing but" algorithmic programs, code, "if this, then this"—erasing uniqueness and diversity in a tsunami of genericity. We are reducing the other's uniqueness through coding it in some form of sameness needed by the code writer (to paraphrase Levinas). Levinas's face has become exchangeable, transplantable, replaceable, taking on the fixedness of existential Parkinson's. An alternative: Let's highlight the ontological complexity of life. There is no such thing as a generic anything unless it has been decontextualized, and thus, colonized. Let's offer a diversity of another kind of singularity than Kurzweil has in mind. The singularity I am suggesting listens beyond objectifying categories and classifications and looks to the birth of phenomena out of the womb of particular contexts.

Caution #3: Quarantine

The final caution/invitation has to do with where we belong in this world and echoes the difficulty of coming out of a pandemic quarantine and back “out there.” We have to be cautious of interprofessional and transdisciplinary isolation among ourselves. One of my teachers at Union Seminary, Tom Driver, used to quip, “Theologians are like manure: Spread out widely they fertilize beautiful things that bloom. If placed all in one pile together, they stinketh!” I would say all more the case with humanistic psychologists, if we are not careful. And the stench will come from a surprising source: Self-congratulatory virtue signaling—and hence, back to an unwitting supremacism. I am concerned that the diversity of ideologies is waning in Division 32. There are vast differences among us, let alone between us and those outside of Division 32. If what we believe is what we do, and we believe in diversity, well, can those who are exclusive, dominant, violent, unjust, or unethical, find solace with us? Do we know that every time we sign a statement of protest we are also being exclusive? The diversity among what we mean by existential is a conversation far from being finished. Can transpersonalists or those not from Saybrook, EHI, or either the Chicago or Michigan Schools of Professional Psychology sit at the table with us? Strangely, of all the groups I have encountered over 34 years of practice in eight states and 15 countries, and in three professional disciplines, I have felt the warmest reception among humanistic psychologists—and yet I have feared being condemned the most by humanistic psychologists. I don’t think I am alone. Perhaps it is my privileged fragility fearing confrontation about my privilege. But maybe more is going on. The Taoists have a proverb: Evil begins when the good person enters the room.

I honestly don’t know how we will survive as a human race without humane, intimate, and nurturing relationships being at the heart of any situation, profession, discipline, or practice. Over this past year, I have suffered significant loss in my own life—and, nonetheless, have tried to hang in there with you. One thing for sure has become crystal clear to me: nothing matters more to me than the beauty of intimate encounters, of any sort, anywhere, with anyone or anything. This intangible is a different kind of evidence of the heart and is the wind that blows where it will, of which we hear its sound, but of which we do not know from where it comes or to where it goes. Nevertheless, let’s clear space for its coming. Thank you and see you... out there.



Todd DuBose, PhD, outgoing SHP president, is a Distinguished Full Professor at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology, where he is the coordinator of the concentration in humanistic-existential and other human science orientations in psychology. He is a licensed psychologist with over 30 years of clinical experience, 11 years as a former chaplain, and 17 years as a teacher, supervisor, and consultant in local, national, and international venues. He holds advanced degrees in the integration of continental philosophy of religion and human science psychology.

The Art of Humanistic Psychology

The Alchemist

Ken Feigenbaum

To G.B.S.

Did I make you, out
Of wood as Pinocchio
And set you to dance with Petrouchka?

Did I change your pyrite
Skin to gold?

Did I mold your
Graven image?

Did I change rain drops
Of sorrow to honey, dew?

Did I forge
Rigidity into principle?

Did I transform stinginess
Into frugality?

Did I mute anger
Into compassion?

Did I interpret synonyms
From antonyms?

Did I confuse wellness
With charity?

Did I discern smartness for
Glibness?

Tolerance for miserableness?
Did I interpret your abstract for fuzzy thought?

Conscientiousness for
Obsessive scrutiny
Did I?



Ken has reached 95 years of age with his wife of 65 years. They live in Chevy Chase, Maryland. He received a PhD from the Committee on Human Development of the University of Chicago in 1961. He considers himself fortunate to have been colleagues with or students of such luminaries as David Riesman, Clark Moustakas, and Robert J. Havighust. He has taught psychology in Ireland, Sweden, Germany, Turkey, and Kyrgyzstan, developing a global and humanistic view of human behavior. Ken continues to teach at the University of Maryland Global Campus.

Humanistic Psychology and the Future

The Future of Humanistic Psychology and the Preservation of the Human Species

Elliot Benjamin

I have previously conveyed my ideas about how the future of humanistic psychology goes hand-in-hand with the future of democracy, with an indication that I may subsequently write a follow-up essay linking the future of humanistic psychology to the future of our whole planet in regard to preventing environmental destruction and nuclear war:

It does not make sense to talk about the future of humanistic psychology without simultaneously talking about the future of democracy. Of course, one could go much further and talk about linking humanistic psychology to the future of our whole planet in regard to preventing environmental destruction and nuclear war, but this is a whole other discussion... Thinking once again about the current nightmare debacle in Ukraine, we are currently faced with the possibility that Russia may decide to drop a nuclear bomb on Ukraine, which could lead to a nuclear war, which could become World War III. (Benjamin, in press)

Given the invited topic of the future of humanistic psychology in this current Division 32 newsletter, it seems like an appropriate and relevant time for me to write about the future of humanistic psychology from a more extended perspective that includes the future of our whole planet, which can be described as the preservation of the human species. The immediate impetus for my concerns about the preservation of the human species is the war between Russia and Ukraine that was spurred on by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the possibility of nuclear war arising from this conflict (Benjamin, 2022). This is a concern that is shared continuously in mainstream news, but my concern about the environmental destruction consequences of the war (Meyerhoff, 2022) has been portrayed much less. However, I believe that both horrific scenarios need to be taken very seriously, and I am wondering what position humanistic psychology could possibly take to work against these human disasters becoming actualized.

What comes to mind for me is the basic core value of humanistic psychology that is related to authentic communication (Rogers, 1969; Schneider et al., 2015). However, this value of authentic communication needs to be broadened to the political arena, as both humanistic psychology founder Carl Rogers (1986) and current humanistic psychology leader Kirk

Schneider (2015, 2020) have advocated for. In regard to the current Russian invasion of Ukraine, this perspective takes the form of engaging in peace talks through diplomacy, in spite of the very challenging and discouraging issues that make it appear hopeless to achieve an end to the war without giving Putin everything that he wants and ending Ukraine's sovereignty as a result.¹ This perspective of engaging in peace talks through diplomacy in spite of the enormous challenges of doing so has been championed by esteemed political philosopher Noam Chomsky.² Chomsky's position here is not the position that the United States is currently following, but I think that it is the only way that the worst of the consequences of the war between Russia and Ukraine can be minimized.

I believe that when one thinks about the future of humanistic psychology, it is imperative that one simultaneously thinks about how humanistic psychology can address the crucial political issues that are threatening the preservation of the human species—namely, nuclear war and environmental destruction. The historical basis of humanistic psychology involves the values of empathy, authenticity, and creativity, which have more recently evolved to an extension to social and cultural issues (Rogers, 1969; Schneider et al., 2015). But unless this basis of humanistic psychology extends itself further to the political arena with the focus on doing the necessary but difficult work of reducing political polarities (Schneider, 2015, 2020), I am afraid that there will soon be no future of humanity left to even think about the future of humanistic psychology.

Thus, I am advocating that humanistic psychology adopt a political position that is consistent with its inherent values. I have always tremendously appreciated the focus of humanistic psychology on finding one's deepest core of self, one's precious creative yearnings, one's spiritual essence, and one's intimate bonds and relationships with others. I still very much appreciate these noble human attributes that humanistic psychology has promoted for over a half-century. But the hardcore reality is that none of these beautiful human qualities are going to have any chance of existing if the human species itself is not preserved. And this in a nutshell is why I believe that humanistic psychology must adopt a political perspective that in the present Russia/Ukraine crisis involves engaging in the extremely challenging process of promoting peace talks to strive for a diplomatic ending of the war. I think that it is necessary to do this to give humanity the possibility of avoiding nuclear and environmental devastation, in order to preserve the human species, while simultaneously working to promote all the inherent precious human values of creative development of self and intimate relationships.

Notes

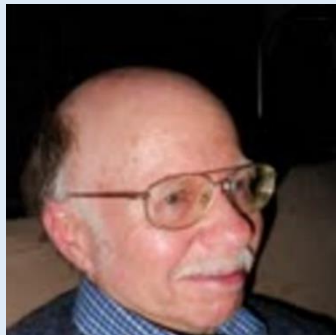
1) See Visser (2022) for references to a collection of 27 essays by a half-dozen authors who describe various perspectives on the war between Russia and Ukraine. The collection is continuously updated and includes debates in the comments regarding who is responsible for the extensive reports of Russia's bombing of civilians and committing horrendous war crimes. My own attempt at a balanced perspective is included in these essays and comments (Benjamin, 2022), although my inclination is that the bulk of the evidence points to Russia being responsible for the war horrors against civilians that have been committed in Ukraine.

2) Noam Chomsky has been described on Wikipedia as "an American linguist, philosopher, cognitive scientist, historical essayist, social critic, and political activist." See the full Wikipedia description of Chomsky at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noam_Chomsky. See the following two Chomsky videos at <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Fb7AD49WIIY> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0Z5sNAr8qI>; see a transcribed version of a third

Chomsky at https://theintercept.com/2022/04/14/russia-ukraine-noam-chomsky-jeremyscahill/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20Intercept%20Newsletter

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Transhumanism and the Future of Humanistic Psychology

Robert Walden Kurtz

Are you familiar with transhumanism? Transhumanists believe that, through technology, we will modify essential aspects of our species (Bostrom, 2005). Diseases will be conquered, lifespans will be lengthened, and cognitive functions will be enhanced. Sensory abilities will be dramatically extended, and new senses will be added. Technology will give us telepathy, increased strength, speed, and stamina. We could have gills, built-in scientific calculators, brain-to-internet access, and incredible memory function.

A friend told my wife that the transhumanist expectation of combining machinery with human bodies is outrageous and implanting technology in the human body should never be allowed. My wife asked, "If, in a few years, your child is diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes,

would you object to implanting an artificial pancreas?" Our friend replied, "No. I would not object."

Imagine that ten years from now, a stroke takes your ability to sensibly converse. What if an implanted computer chip could restore full function? Imagine any other brain function that a survivable stroke could compromise, and then imagine that an implanted computer chip would fully restore you.

I have been a futurist for more than 30 years and a part of the humanistic psychology community for less than 9. My path to embracing humanistic psychology's particularly altruistic perspective and refreshingly honest culture was most influenced initially by Rollo May's writings and interviews. I resonated with May's (1981) validation of the full spectrum of human experience and with valuing dimensions of our lives that are typically regarded as pathologies demanding cures.

Imagine, though, that you have a child who, despite their best efforts and years of therapy, experiences only failure and disappointment in the classroom, at play, and in every kind of relationship. Imagine that an implanted computer chip would facilitate substantial progress leading to academic success, athletic ability, and rewarding social development. I do not picture Rollo May (1981, 1983) eagerly embracing such interventions. Many of my treasured friends in the humanistic psychology community have told me they oppose transhumanism. Humanists, whose chief value is, perhaps, essential humanness, would understandably be uncomfortable anticipating superseding descendants abandoning the legacy of humanity's essential nature, including many of our limitations. Our limitations can be viewed as defining parameters, as parts of what make us human.

Identifying as a transhumanist does not necessarily mean I am eager to see every kind of transhumanist technology implemented. It does not have to mean I prefer transhumanism's profound impacts on our species. Instead, identifying as a transhumanist can mean I believe realization of most of transhumanism's predictions is inevitable. Forecasting is risky business indeed—especially, according to the cliché, forecasts about the future. I am, however, not predicting. I am just noticing.

Transhumanists have, for centuries, believed that, through technology, we would modify essential aspects of our species. Diseases would be conquered, lifespans would be lengthened, cognitive functions would be augmented. Sensory abilities would be dramatically extended, and new senses would be added. Technology would give us telepathy, increased strength, speed, and stamina. We would have gills, wings, scientific calculators, brain-to-internet access, and incredible memory function. It already has. Technology has delivered every one of those transhumanist promises. All that remains is further miniaturization to the point of practical implantation. I am writing this article on my iPhone while sitting in a chair in the sky. The seat back monitor says I am 36,998 feet above sea level and traveling at 611 mph. My nervous system is well adapted to all of this, and so, I would guess, is yours.

It is easy to yield to the temptation of perpetually opposing or even just fretting about whatever invasive new technologies we or our children will inevitably embrace in a few years. Instead, we can explore how to best maintain and adapt our legacy of humanistic psychology for a radically-changed world. We can help to discover and transmit new applications of humanistic values to reshaped lives and cultures. We can keep pioneering helping methods

to meet ever-increasing needs of a species whose world changes so rapidly that it is harder and harder to thrive. Enhanced as we already are by our technologies, we are better equipped than ever for such challenges.

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Socially-Sustained Divorce

Dominique Walmsley

Since the days of William James and Rollo May, humanistic psychology has given much that is good to the practice of psychology, enriching the understanding of the psyche, and deepening its approach to humans by displaying and accepting the condition in which they find themselves. However, as much as it has developed experiential therapies, one of the areas in which existential fears abound is in divorce. The courage of practitioners to work with marital distress somehow wanes in the situation where couples are breaking up, or, said another way, transferring from one state of relationship to another, from being married to being "relatives." Like couple therapy, support toward an amicable divorce would be contraindicated for some situations—but, nevertheless, many could be helped in a very difficult moment. By developing a practice to support the emotional waves during the divorce process and bringing couples temporarily to a sense of safety to make a good agreement, even society at large might benefit. The fallout from divorces, such as isolation, depression, and anger developed in the absence of a sense of belonging has in its history gunmen, suicides, and drug addiction, as well as the lesser issues such as a good sense of self.

At this moment, divorce is more commonly in the hands of the law courts which cannot manage the existential nature of the crisis and can, therefore, fling people into a worse crisis. Using law courts makes sense in the parts of the work that are for the state, but not for the ongoing relationships, either between people or within their inner sense of developing guilt or self-blame. Humanistic psychology knows the pain of crisis and particularly of a crisis of existence. In divorce, all the most essential supports for survival are in question, and yet people are required to bring their best thinking and most equanimous negotiating toward making decisions. Moreover, they will often hire an attorney who is ethically commanded to

attend to one person and advocate for him or her against the other, increasing the fear and threat that the individuals will feel.

Divorce is one of the most traumatic and disruptive life events because the relationship has provided many of the existential necessities for human flourishing (Amato, 2010; Holmes & Rahe, 1967). Divorce occurs frequently and instances are rising. Humanistic psychology, especially phenomenological and existential approaches—already well-developed since Rollo May, Abraham Maslow, and others—can address these fears and emotional dysregulations. It is understandable that these will arise, which then produces a diminished ability to think clearly about the great matters that are at stake in the divorce process. To get support in directly addressing the expected shame that comes with a feeling of failure, and the fear of losing the most basic human safeties, opens the divorce deliberations more safely to the most significant issues that affect future flourishing. It would allow, for example, a couple to decide what is best for their vulnerable children, rather than vying for equal time right away. Perhaps transitioning slowly to equal time would make more sense for the young developing minds. Also, to support each other to become financially self-sufficient over a period might be best if both could manage the inconvenience, knowing that everyone would be better off in the long run. These are often terrifying decisions and people become positional if the safe space for thinking more deeply and considering options is absent.

The professionals involved in facilitating the divorce have a responsibility to the couple, but also to the society at large. They are being paid to be attentive to the couple's ability to make the decisions necessary for a divorce document that is legally binding and enforceable, and which also suits the family as a parameter for living in a new way.

With high emotional arousal, cognitive abilities are often compromised, and yet for a divorcing couple, those abilities are greatly needed when creating the agreement that will significantly influence their future. The huge gap between the nature of such a document dedicated to psychological and emotional support for those involved in divorce and the evolving and changing lives that it is meant to guide make it vitally important to create a clear understanding between the partners who are divorcing. It needs to capture the intent of their words on paper and in their ongoing understanding of each other. If they make agreements in anger or feel coerced to finalize agreements that they are not prepared to make, they will find great difficulty in letting the words of the document continue to guide them or, on the other hand, come to mutual agreement about how to adjust what it says to the reality of their situation in each moment.

There has been ample research (see Walmsley, 2019) to uncover the effects of divorce on the future functioning of children (Amato, 2010; Hetherington, 2006; Wallerstein, 2005; Wolfinger, 2000) and adults (Finzi-Dottan & Cohen, 2014; Weaver & Schofield, 2014; Willén, 2015). The problematic outcomes of divorce affect not only the divorcing couple (Amato 2010; Weaver & Schofield, 2014), but also the children in the home (Faber & Wittenborn, 2010), as well as the children who are either grown or have left the home since before the divorce of their parents (Greenwood, 2004). Although the process aims at producing a good agreement that will be effective for years into the future, the effective interventions that promise positive results have been less than forthcoming (Amato, 2010).

Supporting people with the distressing outcomes after divorce is a possibility for cultivating ongoing healthy relationships, mitigating that distress by supporting changes in the process

itself. Trauma from a single divorce is most often transferred to the next generation because of attachment issues that are significant to the developing minds of children.

Humanistic psychology can support this tricky dynamic because it focuses on human existence and all the aspects that create the foundation for existing and flourishing—home, family, comfort, purpose, interrelationships, and changes over the lifespan. In the divorce process, the emphasis is on issues that matter to the state—assets, taxes, ownership of physical items, responsibility to children, ownership of health insurance. However, what really matters in terms of well-being is emotional and psychological.

Currently there is nothing requiring professionals to provide a sustainable, humanistic process when couples are divorcing, and yet, this is not so difficult to achieve and institute. It is well known in couples work that people having difficulty being understood by their partners will experience emotional escalation. Divorcing couples might be more challenging because of their present woundedness and lack of trust, but this has not stopped couple therapy from addressing these problems in the work of helping people to improve their committed relationships. The therapist could guide them in the humanistic way to open to their fears and feelings, and then work the therapeutic dance, accompanying them to a feeling of collaboration and trust. This trust would not be the same as when they were married, but good enough to be in the world together, and good enough not to have to unrealistically cut off a relationship that has all the qualities of an attachment. Such a process would help people in divorced families make sense of the shift in their existential worlds and offer them, in a moment in which they are paying attention to these matters, a better way to settle into a new set of self-supporting structures and understandings. By reducing the fear of their soon-to-be exes, for example, people can go forward with the thought of evolving their future relationship according to need. They might be able to make agreements in which they reassess their various needs later. To some at this moment, this might seem like an impossibility when seen from their place of self-protection. However, interrelationships of all kinds are possible for humans, and learning more about how to help people transition to a peaceful place that has no tale of resentment would be quite manageable with humanistic psychology (with minor adjustments), at this point of development.

By attending to the waves of fear and catastrophic thinking, and the fueling of that fear spiral by the other spouse, the humanistic psychotherapist can help the couple over the crisis moment and into a new life. Supporting the couple to craft a sustainable agreement can foster the transformation of their once intimate relationship to a familial one.

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Dominique Walmsley, PhD, has been practicing psychotherapy since 2006 when she received her master's in existential-phenomenological psychotherapy from Seattle University. In 2019, she received her doctorate from Saybrook University. She is in private practice, working mostly with couples, in Seattle. Born in South Africa, she is enjoying the riches of psychology's development in the USA and is pleased to be living in the beautiful Northwest.

Book Review

The Person Behind the Psychotherapist A Review of *Different Paths Towards Becoming a Psychoanalyst and Psychotherapist: Personal Passions, Subjective Experiences and Unusual Journeys*, by Arnold W. M. Rachman & Harold Kooden (Eds.)

Ilene Serlin

For decades, both laypersons and other therapists have been curious about what goes on inside the therapeutic sanctuary. What do people really say and feel? What does the therapist say and feel, and what is the relationship between their personalities and their practice of therapy? Volumes from the *50 Minute Hour* (Lindner, 1955/1976) to Yalom's (1996) *Lying on the Couch* have been developed to address these questions. I count *Different Paths Towards Becoming a Psychoanalyst and Psychotherapist*, part of the Psychoanalytic Inquiry Book Series, as being part of this tradition.

The book is a compendium of narratives from a widely-diverse group of experienced psychoanalysts and psychotherapists who represent and demonstrate a plurality of backgrounds and approaches in the field. For example, one of the editors, Arnold Rachman, PhD, FAGPA, is a training and supervising analyst at New York's Postgraduate Psychoanalytic Institute, a clinical professor of Psychology at Adelphi University, and an honorary member of the Sandor Ferenczi Society. The other editor, Harold Kooden, PhD, is a clinical psychologist in private practice, a founder and board member of the National Gay and Lesbian Education Foundation, and a board member of the NY State Martin Luther King, Jr. Institute for Nonviolence.

One aim of the book is to emphasize the importance of lay analysts in the field, especially those coming from creative backgrounds. The editors situate their book in the tradition of Freud's (1926/1990) essay, *The Question of Lay Analysis*, which supported the careers of Otto Rank, Anna Freud, Melanie Klein and Erik Erikson—all of whom had faced the medical establishment of their day. Given today's trend toward a technical and reductionistic view of psychology, the reminder of psychoanalysis' roots in diverse and philosophical fields is welcome.

The other aim is to humanize the profession of psychotherapy. The therapists interviewed in this volume "view the therapeutic experience as a human enterprise" (p. 3). They reveal their personal struggles and bring their backgrounds in the humanities, philosophy, and biology into their encounter with their clients. In their therapy, they regard the encounter as a dialogue in which both persons learn and grow from the experience. Given this philosophy of therapy, it is clear that this book belongs on the bookshelves of humanistic therapists!

In the first essay, Rachman reflects on the significant role his nurturing grandmother played in his life, becoming in essence his therapeutic role model. Rachman believes that most therapists have had a therapeutic role model in their lives that helps them form their own version of the "curative image." After his background at the University of Chicago provided him with the "liberal, phenomenological and person-centered attitude toward human relationships," Rachman discovered Sandor Ferenczi. Inspired by Ferenczi's warm and active participation in the therapeutic relationship, Rachman began to develop his own version of an active "two-person" psychology as a "co-creator" of the therapeutic relationship.

Another example of a therapist with a non-traditional background is Alan Entin, PhD. Entin starts his story with a revelation about a family secret: the discovery of a group of enticing letters from his uncle that started him on his career as a family therapist. In addition, Entin began to take photographs—first of family members, then of creative adaptations of family situations, that would form his work as a photographer who worked with images, stories, and the imagination in his family therapy. Entin also benefited from a liberal and humanistic education at the University of Chicago, followed by studies with Carl Whitaker and Murry Bowen. Bowen's Family Systems Therapy model emphasizes a family interview, and so lends itself to creative uses of family genograms or photograph albums. Entin sees the current family situation in the context of a three-generational emotional process, in which family visits help people see who their parents and grandparents really are. Through the use of photographs to provide safety and some distance, family members can then begin to tell their stories and come to mature terms with those relationships. Adding more active versions of family therapy such as the Family Sculpting of Peggy Papp, Entin does not interpret the photographs but instead encourages his clients to learn about family systems, and then use the photographs as a way to engage their family members in discussions. His work evolved

into a new field called phototherapy, which sponsors books, journals, and conferences. As one of the founding members of APA's Division 42: Independent Practice, Entin exemplifies the importance of a therapist who is engaged in his own creative process, and who sees creativity as "a process, a practice, and a journey, an unusual journey, much like psychotherapy. It does not depend on technology. It is about vision" (pp. 73-74).

For those interested in the human being in the therapeutic process, this book gives revealing, humanizing, and creative information. It is highly recommended for psychology students and professionals.

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Ilene A. Serlin, PhD, BC-DMT, licensed psychologist and registered dance/movement therapist in San Francisco and Marin County, is past-president of the San Francisco Psychological Association and the Society for Humanistic Psychology, as well as a Fellow of the American Psychological Association. She is associate distinguished professor of psychology at the California Institute of Integral Studies, has taught at Saybrook University, Lesley University, UCLA, the NY Gestalt Institute, and the C.G. Jung Institute in Zurich. She is the editor of Whole Person Healthcare (2007, 3 volumes, Praeger) and co-editor of Integrative Care for the Traumatized. She has authored over 100 chapters and articles on body, art, and psychotherapy.

Updates and Announcements

Student Ambassador Program Enters 15th Year

Richard Bargdill and Kevin Gallagher

The Division 32 Student Ambassador program will begin its 15th year this fall. The program was founded in 2008 by Richard Bargdill (VCU), then membership chair of Division 32. In 2009, at the APA convention in Toronto, the program was strengthened by the addition of student leader, Trisha Nash (now Trish Wright). Trish was a graduate student at the University of Memphis who was mentored there by Sara Bridges. Bargdill and Nash ran the program together for almost a decade. Nash continued as co-leader even after she earned her PhD. The purpose of the Student Ambassador Program is to create a vibrant community of graduate students and help nurture them to become young scholars, practitioners, and researchers who are invested in the humanistic psychologies (humanistic, existential, constructivist, transpersonal, and somatic areas). This group also created a line of communication between humanistic psychology graduate programs and the Society of Humanistic Psychology. The penultimate goal included having at least one ambassador from each program that has a strong humanistic leaning—whether the whole program or only a single faculty member held that orientation.

Over the years, the Student Ambassador program held special events at both D32 annual conferences and at the APA convention. Students were encouraged to present posters every time they came to a conference. Bargdill's often-repeated statement was, "No empty trips—if you are going to come, you might as well present." Another goal of the organization was to help enrich the CVs of students in qualitative programs who often don't leave their programs with the hefty publication and presentation record that other grad students can have when leaving quantitative programs. "We wanted our humanistic folks to be competitive in the job searches," said Bargdill.

In additions to poster presentations and APA Hospitality Suite presentations, students often collaborated to present on important graduate issues such as internship application process, internship scarcity, theoretical explorations (e.g., Levinas, Derrida, and others), and BIPOC and LGBTQ+ advocacy. Student Ambassadors began putting together symposiums of their own, particularly at the Division 32 conferences, which have much more flexibility than the APA convention. Speed mentoring events also were held at Division 32 conferences where students could talk for about 5 minutes with an established faculty member on topics like supervision, academic careers, therapy careers, internship, post-docs, dissertation processes, and others. Another achievement was that each chapter in the textbook, *Humanistic Contributions to Psychology 101: Freedom, Choice and Responsibility* (Bargdill & Broomé, 2020), was a collaboration between student ambassadors and an established humanistic scholar. The book was edited by Bargdill and one of the original student ambassadors, Rodger Broomé.

The Student Ambassador program also encouraged the Division 32 executive board to give its two student members voting privileges. Prior to this, students could attend meetings where they would often observe and occasionally, they might be asked for input "from a student's perspective." Yet, their point of view did not carry the weight that it does with having a vote. Trish Wright was instrumental in setting up the current system that has two student representatives serving staggered two-year terms. In this way, there is always one representative who has some experience to share with the newest member.

The Ambassador program has continued through the COVID pandemic with a Zoom meeting on the third Sunday of each month. Without being able to meet in person, the Ambassador program has been able to communicate (and record via Zoom) important information this last year on internships (with Jared Boot and Sierra Gillis), academic careers (with president-elect Dr. Gina Belton), and dissertation tips (with Drs. Brent Robbins and Lisa Cosgrove). While numerous former ambassadors have gone on to be members of the D32 executive board, Dr. Gina Belton is the first SA to go from grad student to president!

The D32 SA program has hosted ambassadors from 20 different schools. We currently have members from Saybrook, Michigan School, Point Park University, Miami University, California Institute of Integral Studies, Virginia Commonwealth University, Denver University, and Boston College. If you or someone you know would like to be part of the 15th year of this program, please contact Richard Bargdill, PhD at rwbargdill@vcu.edu.

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Richard Bargdill, PhD is an artist, environmental activist, and associate professor of psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University. He received his PhD in clinical psychology from Duquesne University. His research has investigated the interface of boredom, creativity, and meaning and explored their contribution to the "good life." In addition to his work with HP students across diverse universities, he has held a variety of supportive positions in Division 32 leadership.

Experience as a Student Representative and Ambassador

Jared Boot

I am a third-year clinical psychology doctoral student at the Michigan School of Psychology, and as the Division 32 senior student representative, I tackled four initiatives this year during my term. I believe that all four of these initiatives relate to the future of humanistic psychology and our division to ensuring our division has a robust voice in the field.

First, I sought to update the four position statements Division 32 has developed regarding sexual and gender-diverse people (same-sex parenting, same-sex adoption, conversion/reparative therapy, and sexual- and gender-diverse people). I worked on updating these statements to amend the conflation of sexual orientation and gender identity, rectify bisexual erasure in the statements, and with the rest of the board's input, change terminology from "sexual and gender minority" to "sexual and gender diverse" to avoid othering or minoritizing individuals within these communities. It is essential that the Division uses its voice in humanistic psychology to be a leader in sexual and gender diversity. The future of humanistic psychology must include more diverse communities; without recognizing this and fixing past oversights, that future might not be as bright (Hoffman et al., 2019). I'm proud to announce that the board approved the updates in June (Pride Month)! These will be available once they are reviewed and approved by APA's Legal Team.

Second, I updated Division 32's presence on social media. As somebody who used to work in business and received an MBA, I know how crucial unified branding and social media presence is. I'm pleased that the Division name across social media platforms, profile photo, and bio are unified. In addition, all social media accounts are linked to one another, and links to each account are now on our Division website. Future visibility heavily depends on a vibrant digital presence, and these changes position Division 32 to attract a broad range of burgeoning humanistic psychologists to our division.

Third, I made it a goal to ensure Division 32 resumed awarding the Sidney Jourard Annual Conference Poster Symposium Award. I'm happy to say this was the case, and I was one of the reviewers for the award. Shannon Roberson, BA from Virginia Commonwealth University, was selected for the award for her work titled, *Preliminary Results for Differences in Violence Based on Gender in Assassinations of Eco-Martyrs*. I'm happy that Theopia Jackson, PhD,

chair of the Division Awards Committee, was receptive to this and to offering the award in future years because the future of humanistic psychology influencing the rest of the field of psychology relies upon recognizing high-quality scholarly work to encourage graduate students to stay actively engaged in our Division and stay involved in research focused on humanistic psychology(ies).

Finally, I delivered a proposal to the board at our annual midwinter meeting for a student paper/dissertation award. The board was very receptive to this, and the Awards Committee is working to smooth out these proposals to, hopefully, offer these awards in future years! A bright future for humanistic psychology depends on encouraging research that expands the reach of interventions and theories based upon humanistic psychology's tenets and expands psychologists' consciousness to the full spectrum of human experience (Taylor & Martin, 2015).

It has truly been a joy and a privilege to advocate for students within Division 32. I have particularly enjoyed going to and speaking at Student Ambassador meetings on topics ranging from careers in academia to internship preparation. Because students in the Division genuinely represent the future of humanistic psychology. I hope this article will inspire other student members to get involved within Division leadership and use their voices to advocate for their future and the future of their professional home to transform psychology.

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Jared Boot MA (he/him) is a 4th-year doctoral student in clinical psychology at the Michigan School of Psychology. He is currently on internship at Bowling Green University's Counseling Center. He has particular research interests around gender and sexuality and serves as a student board member and Health Professionals in Training co-chair for GLMA, Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ+ Equality.

Division 32 Election Update

Julia Falk

The APA has announced the results of Division elections across the organization. For Division 32, elected members will soon be stepping into their new roles for 2023. Current president Todd DuBose, PhD will pass the presidency along to Gina Subia Belton, PhD at the time of the APA annual conference in August. Andrew M. Bland, PhD has been elected president-elect. Others taking up new responsibilities include Vanessa F. Brown, PsyD as treasurer and members-at-large Alexandra L. Adames, PhD and Justin M. Karter, PhD. We wish them a productive and positive term as they lead the division through a challenging year, which is likely to include an in-person annual conference and the many demands facing the discipline and the nation.

2022 Heritage Award Honorees

Congratulations to the honorees of the 2022 Heritage Awards! In case you were unable to attend the celebration, they are shown in this announcement for the awards ceremony that took place on July 31.



APA Division 32
The Society for Humanistic Psychology

proudly invites you to join in
a **celebration** of the

2022 Heritage Award Honorees

Leave well wishes for the honorees on our virtual message board and bring your favorite beverage for a group toast at the end of the ceremony!



Lillian
Comas-Díaz



Alberto
Zucconi



Veronica
Lac



Margaret S.
Warner



Robert D.
Romanyshyn

Sunday July 31, 2022
1 PM – 3 PM Eastern Time
10 AM PT | 11 AM MT | 12 PM CT | 7 PM Rome

Register for the Zoom Link at
<https://tinyurl.com/SHP22HeritageAwards>

Awards Ceremony is free and open to the public

Please contact Dr. Betz King (betzking@gmail.com) prior to the ceremony if you would like to request accessibility accommodations