This is an exciting time to be a psychologist of religion. For many years, our field was tremendously attractive to those who enjoyed working in relative obscurity. But religious study is now receiving a burst of national and international attention in the public, in the sciences, and in psychology. Is this just a passing fad? Maybe. But maybe not.

We now have a wonderful opportunity to create an awareness of who we are and what our discipline is about. But first we have to answer an important question: Who are we and what is our discipline about?

There is one issue that cuts to the heart of our identity and challenges who we are: it has to do with the concept of spirituality. I’m sure you’ve come across many people who have said to you: “I’m not a religious person but I am spiritual.” These aren’t isolated comments. In our research we have found that 78% of a diverse sample rate themselves as religious; in contrast, over 90% rate themselves as spiritual (Zinnbauer et al., in press). And the attention given to this concept has increased dramatically. The number of entries under Spirituality in the Religion Index has increased dramatically in the last ten years. Recently, several journals have devoted special issues to spirituality. Conferences have been called on topics ranging from spiritual intelligence to spirituality and health. The bookstores are filling their shelves with volumes dedicated to dimensions of the spiritual. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders now distinguishes between religious problems and spiritual problems.

Indicators such as these suggest our field may be in the midst of a potential transformation: the meanings of our central constructs are changing, the phenomena of greatest interest are being redefined. What do we think about these changes? Is spirituality a phenomena of interest for our discipline or does it fall outside our domain?

Perhaps the issue was most clearly articulated last year at one of our executive committee meetings when someone suggested that we rename our Division, the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality. Is that a good idea? In this paper I’d like to give my answer. It’s not the only answer, but in offering one point of view I hope to stimulate more dialogue on this topic. Should we be a Division of Psychology of Religion and Spirituality? Let me start by putting my answer into an historical, social, and empirical context.

A Long and Deep Tradition of Study about the Meaning of Religion

Psychologists of religion who have been in the field for a while can agree on one thing: we’ve never agreed about anything. The point is especially true for the ways

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we have defined religion. Over scores of years, religion has been called the supernatural, the ultimate, the institutional, the creedal, the ritual, the experiential, the ethical, the temperamental, the directional. I could go on. Today people in our culture continue to assign diverse meanings to the term “religiosity” (Pargament et al., 1995; Zinnbauer, 1997).

In spite of the diversity of meanings religion has held for so many years, there are three ways in which religion has traditionally not been defined by psychologists. First, historically, religion has not been viewed as a purely institutional phenomenon. William James (1902), for one, defined religion as “the feelings, acts and experiences of individual men in their solitude...” (p. 32). Since the time of James, few psychologists have taken a serious look at religious institutions and the roles they play in shaping character.

If anything, our discipline has been antithetical when it comes to religious life. Institutional religion has been contrasted unfavorably with interiorized religion. Those invested in congregational life have been assigned lower scores on our religious maturity indices. As a discipline, we have been much more concerned about the motivational, affective, behavioral, experiential, and cognitive sides of religion than the institutional.

Second, historically, religion has not been only about God. Certainly, we can find many substantive definitions of religion in the literature. These are definitions that focus on beliefs, practices, feelings or relationships centered around a Higher Being. But functional definitions of religion have also been plentiful in our history. These are definitions that focus on the special purposes religion serves rather than the content of religion. In many functional definitions of religion, there is no mention at all of gods, higher powers, or supreme beings.

Finally, historically, psychologists as a group have not approached religion in all-good or all-bad terms. (I say as a group because there have been a few exceptions). Nevertheless, from James' contrast of healthy-minded and sick-souled religion to Allport's comparison of intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity to Fromm's distinction between authoritarian and humanistic religion, psychologists of religion have generally been quick to point out the chameleon character of religion: its potential for good and its potential for bad. Most would agree with the notion that the relationship between religiosity and well-being depends on the kind of religion we're talking about.

Historically then, religion has been defined as a broad-concept, one that encompasses the individual as well as the institutional, the functional as well as the substantive, and the good as well as the bad. It is important to keep this context in mind as we turn to the rise of spirituality.

The Rise of Spirituality and the Evolving Meaning of Religion

David Wulff (1997) has a very nice discussion of how the meanings of religion and spirituality have evolved over the centuries. Let me focus on where we seem to be currently. Today, some writers use the terms religion and spirituality interchangeably, a device, Bernie Spilka and Danny McIntosh suggest, to add linguistic variety to our work (Spilka & McIntosh, 1996).

More and more, though, we are finding spirituality defined in contrast to religion. Two contrasts are particularly important to note. First, religion is being defined as the organizational, the ritual, and the ideological. For religion, now substitute institutional religion. This newly defined construct is contrasted with the spiritual, which refers to the personal, the affective, the experiential, and the thoughtful. The reminder that an individual can be spiritual without being religious and that an individual can be religious without being spiritual has become a standard part of many papers on spirituality.

Second, the term spiritual is increasingly reserved for the loftier functional side of life—spirituality is said to be a search for meaning, for unity, for connectedness, for transcendence, for the highest of human potential. Religion, which has to do with institution and formalized belief, is peripheral to this central task. While spirituality is increasingly described as a dynamic process, religion is eluding from what was once seen as a dynamic process (a
verb) to a static entity (a noun) (Wulff, 1997). Gradually, spirituality and religiousness are taking on positive and negative connotations. As Martin Marty (1996) puts it, spirituality is now cool; religion is uncool.

In short, religion is moving from a broad-band construct, one that includes both the institutional and the individual, the good and the bad, to a narrow-band construct that has to do with the institutional side of life, a side of life that often restricts and inhibits human potential. Spirituality, on the other hand, is becoming differentiated from religion as an individual expression that speaks to the greatness of our capacities.

Some Problems with the Emerging Spirituality of the Psychology of Religion

There are, I believe, some potential dangers in the ways we are approaching the construct of spirituality.

The Danger of Ungrounded Study

First, there is the danger of ungrounded study. Our work can be ungrounded theoretically and empirically.

Ungrounded Theory. Much of the literature in the area of spirituality is speculative. Now there is nothing wrong with arm-chair theorizing, but arm-chair theories can and should be put to test. How well, for instance, do our concepts of spirituality reflect those of the larger population? We might be surprised. Let me give an example.

Recently, my research group headed by Brian Zimbauer (Zimbauer et al., in press) conducted a survey of 11 diverse groups. They ranged from New Agers to nurses to mental health professionals to Roman Catholic parishioners to religiously conservative college students. We asked them about their definitions of religiousness and spirituality in a number of ways, let me present two of the key findings.

First, although the two terms have been contrasted with each other in the literature, many people themselves see no tension between the two. For instance, we asked our participants to choose whether they considered themselves to be religious and not spiritual, spiritual and not religious, both religious and spiritual, or neither religious nor spiritual. The large majority (74%) defined themselves as both religious and spiritual. Apparently, most saw no need to choose between religiousness or spirituality. When we content analyzed their own definitions of the terms, we found important areas of overlap. In fact, we were unable to detect any differences in the ways the sacred was conceptualized in the two sets of definitions.

Second, we found that almost everyone believed they were spiritual. (This is not to say that they agreed on what it meant to be spiritual. In another study by Zimbauer, 1997, the correlation among individual definitions of spirituality was essentially zero.) We saw more variation in the degree to which people defined themselves as religious. Even more interesting was our finding that our sub-group of mental health professionals showed one of the higher levels of discrepancy between their self-rated religiousness and self-rated spirituality. Now mental health professionals are doing much of the writing on this topic today. To what degree then are our conceptualizations of spirituality and religiosity reflective of the people we work with; to what degree are they projections of our own interests?

Ungrounded Research. Research in spirituality can also be ungrounded. For instance, a number of new measures of spirituality have been developed. These scales may be related to a variety of criteria. What we don't know is whether these measures add anything to what we already know from existing measures of religiousness. I have to admit that some of these new scales of spirituality look suspiciously like old measures of religiousness to me. But I also believe that some could very well add a new and valuable dimension to our existing approaches to measurement. Richard Gorsuch (1984) has pointed out that new religious scales should demonstrate "incremental validity" that is, the ability to add knowledge above and beyond that provided by existing measures. His point applies equally well to measures of spirituality.

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Presidential Address

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The Dangers of Polarization

Polarization is a second danger in the way we approach spirituality. There are two related types of polarization: the polarization of the institutional and the individual, and the polarization of the good and the bad.

Individual vs. Institutional. To speak of religion as institutional and spirituality as individual is to ignore two facts. The first is that virtually every major religious institution is quite concerned with spiritual matters. The primary objective of religious institutions is to bring individuals closer to God (Carrol, Dudley, & McKinney, 1986). Some succeed better than others, and some may have lost sight of this goal, but the search for the sacred remains essential to all religious missions.

The second fact is that every form of religious or spiritual expression occurs in a social context. Privatization and individualization of spirituality are unfolding in a culture that supports privatization and individualization. That is to say, the tendency to overlook these cultural and institutional forces does not mean the cultural forces are no longer operative. Spirituality is never experienced outside of a context. Individuals dissatisfied with their churches or synagogues do not simply leave; they seek new religious homes. They may be smaller homes. They may be mobile homes. But they still look for place where they can share their views and receive the support of other like-minded people. Thus, today we find new forms of spiritual institutionalization: they take the guise of healing groups, yoga groups, meditation groups, New Age groups, Twelve Step groups, and so on.

Hood et al. (1996) note that in the late 1980s over 400 new spiritual associations have developed. If this church-sect literature is any guide (and I think it is quite useful here), eventually we should see many people moving from smaller spiritual to larger spiritual homes.

It is ironic that spirituality according to many views, reflects an appreciation for the interconnectedness of all things. Yet in some ways, this interconnectedness has been treated as a purely psychological process. It is a sense of connectedness that becomes the goal rather than a connectedness that is lived out. Paradoxically then, our approach to spirituality runs the risk of disconnecting people from their worlds. By polarizing religion and spirituality into the institutional and the individual, we lose sight of the individual mission of the institution. We lose sight of the social context of the individual, and we lose the opportunity to learn how people express their faiths within the context of their lives.

Good vs. Bad. To polarize spirituality as good and religion as bad is, I believe, another danger. Many definitions of spirituality are in fact definitions of spiritual well-being. They describe the author's view of the highest level of human potential. Naturally, this view differs from author to author. I see no problem with definitions of spiritual well-being as long as they are labeled and debated as such. But I do see a problem in saying that spirituality is by definition the good guy (and religion is by definition the bad guy). It does not hold up well to research study and it does not hold up well to what we see around us.

For one thing, people can pursue the highest of goals through dysfunctional paths. In search of the sacred, people have engaged in all sorts of destructive behaviors, behaviors that have resulted in the sacrifice of themselves and the sacrifice of others. The recent suicides of the members of Heaven's Gate is only one recent case in point.

On the other hand, the involvement in organized religious life is by no means harmful to everyone. Quite the contrary. Religious congregations are sources of support for people from all walks of life, including the most disenfranchised (Maton & Pargament, 1987). Organized systems of religious belief (e.g., there is a loving God who is vitally concerned about each of us) have also been associated with a variety of correlates of health and well-being. As psychologists of religion we have exciting opportunities now to work together with leaders of the hundreds of thousands of religious congregations in the United States, assisting them towards many common goals—but not if we hold to the view that religion is the bad guy (see Weaver et al., 1997).

Of course, we can find more than enough examples of the destructive influence of
religious institutions and beliefs, and the benevolent influence of spirituality. But to treat these constructs as good and bad by definition leads us away from far more interesting questions. For example, how is that in the search for the highest of goals, some people achieve the greatest of their potentials while others end up destroying themselves or others? Conversely, how is that some forms of organized religious life facilitate well-being while others impede it?

As a footnote, let me add that in polarizing religion and spirituality into the institutional/extrinsic and individual/good, I think we are reinforcing the intransigent religiousness pole. There are strong parallels in the literature between spirituality and religion (those saints who have pushed their faith), and between religion and spirituality (those who seem to use religion). The problem is, as I've argued elsewhere, that there aren't too many saints or saints among us (Pargament, 1992). Mortals that we are, we engage in both living and using our religion. We search for God and we search to satisfy our human needs. I. E., religion vs. spirituality—these polarizations are seductive. They offer easy ways to think about the world and easy solutions. But they are not particularly well-suited to a complex world that calls for well-integrated rather than simplistic solutions.

The Danger of Losing our Sacred Core

The third danger in the way we approach spirituality is, I think, the most serious one; that is, the danger of losing the sacred core of our field. Many definitions of spirituality are functional in nature. They view spirituality as a search for a variety of goals. One author says that spirituality is a "search for universal truth" (Goldberg, 1990 in Scott, 1997). Another says that "spirituality is the human dimension that transcends the biological, psychological, and social aspects of living" (Mauritzen, 1988, p. 118 in Scott, 1997). Still another says that spirituality is "a conscious or unconscious belief that relates the individual to the world and gives meaning and definition to existence" (Soeken & Carson, 1987 in Scott, 1997). Certainly these goals can be pursued in ways related to God or, more broadly, the sacred. But not necessarily.

Meaning can be found through many paths as can wholeness, truth, community, and self.

These definitions of spirituality raise the problem of boundaries. If virtually any path can be taken in search of meaning, community, or self, then what makes that path religious? What is to distinguish our discipline from other disciplines that are just as concerned with questions of meaning, self, and community as we are? Where do we draw the lines around our field? Without clearer boundaries I fear that we will lose our own definition. To take it one step further, I believe that without a clear acknowledgment that our field deals with matters sacred, we lose what makes us unique. What sociologist Peter Berger (1974) had to say about functional definitions of religion applies all-too-well to many approaches to spirituality: its special transcendent nature is "flattened out...absorbed into a night in which all cats are grey" (p. 129). These types of definition, he suggests, subtly support a secular world view, providing a "quasiscientific legitimation of the avoidance of transcendence" (p. 128). A spirituality without a sacred core leaves our field without a center.

So let me answer the question, should we relabel our division, The Psychology of Religion and Spirituality? My answer is no. No, if it means we become a field in which the study of spirituality is ungrounded theoretically, empirically, and historically. No, if it means we place new labels on old debates and established methods. No, if it means we redefine religion as institutional and bad and spirituality as individual and good. And no, if it means we remove the sacred from the core of who we are, and expand our boundaries to include virtually any pathway leading to virtually any valued destination. If this is what it means to be a psychology of religion and spirituality then my answer is "no."

An Alternative

There is, however, another way to approach religiousness and spirituality.

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Defining Religion

Religion is a search for significance in ways related to the sacred (Pargament, 1997). This definition bridges both functional and substantive traditions in the psychology of religion. Functionally, religion is a search for significance. By search, I mean efforts not only to find significance, but to conserve significance once found, or transform significance when necessary. By significance, I mean whatever people value in their lives—be it psychological, social, physical, or spiritual; be it good or bad. There is no assumption here that we all seek the same things. To the contrary, the evidence seems to show that different people seek different objects of significance.

Not every search qualifies as religious. One thing distinguishes the religious search from others. Religion refers to the search for significance in ways related to the sacred. This is the substance of religion, and the dimension that separates religion from other human phenomena.

Every search is made up of two dimensions: a pathway and a destination. The sacred can be part of either or both dimensions. Attendance at religious congregations, religious beliefs, involvement in prayer and rituals, religious coping—these are just a few of the many sacred pathways taken to find, hold on to, or transform significance. These pathways may or may not lead to sacred destinations. People involve themselves in religious activities for many reasons, not all of them spiritual. But if the sacred is a part of the pathway, the search qualifies as religious, regardless of where it leads.

Of course, the destination of a religious search may also be sacred. People may seek out God, transcendence, a spiritual mission, a religious community, or any other number of sacred objects. And they may seek it through traditionally religious or nontraditional means, through personally created pathways or established pathways created by institutions, through healthy or unhealthy behaviors.

I am defining religion in the classic tradition of our field. The search for significance in ways related to the sacred encompasses both the individual and the institutional; it includes both the traditional and the novel, and it covers both the good and the bad. Where does spirituality fit here?

Defining Spirituality

I see spirituality as a search for the sacred. It is, I believe, the most central function of religion. It has to do with however people think, feel, act, or interrelate in their efforts to find, conserve, and if necessary, transform the sacred in their lives.

Let me say a bit more about the sacred. By the sacred I'm referring to God, related names for God, or other objects, attributes, or qualities that become sanctified by virtue of their association with or representation of the holy. In our arguments and debates about God and whether there can be a religion without God, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that much of the power of religious life comes from the human ability to sanctify secular objects. As Robert Emmons has pointed out, our most fundamental yearnings in life can become spiritualized (Emmons, in press). And there may be important consequences of the sanctification process. A job is likely to be approached differently when it becomes a vocation. A marriage likely takes on special power when it receives divine sanction. The search for meaning, community, self, a better world are likely to be transformed when they are invested with sacred character. And even if beliefs in a personal God fade, other objects of significance may remain sanctified.

Thinking about the sacred and sanctification in this way extends our field to the study of a larger array of phenomena. By defining spirituality as the search for the sacred, we avoid restricting ourselves to narrow or traditional conceptions of God. But we maintain some boundaries. As much as we value connectedness, authenticity, meaning in life, holism, and many other processes so often associated with spirituality, these goals and values do not fall within the spiritual realm unless they are somehow connected to the sacred. Certainly they can be. Often they are. I believe, at least implicitly. But we can do a better job of making the implicit explicit. We can also begin to test the implications of sanctification for how.
people live their lives. Our research group has begun to study the sanctification process and the results have been promising. In a study led by Annette Mahoney, we found that couples who define their marriage as sacred report higher levels of marital satisfaction, dependence, and more effective marital problem solving strategies than couples who see their marriage as less of a sacred light (Mahoney et al., 1997).

Let me underscore an important point. As I have defined it here, spirituality (like religion) can be experienced and expressed individually and institutionally; it can take traditional or nontraditional forms; and it can be good or bad. So what is the relationship between the two?

The Relationship between Religion and Spirituality

Spirituality is the heart and soul of religion. The search for the sacred is the most central religious function. It may sound a bit odd, but I believe it is the case that we have not paid much attention to the sacred in the psychology of religion. We have tended to reduce sacred phenomena to other psychological, social, biological, or evolutionary motives and drives. But the search for the sacred is, I believe, a legitimate search in its own right, one that cannot be reduced to other processes. Of course, we cannot measure God or determine whether objects do, in fact, have holy powers. But there is no reason why we cannot and should not study the physical, psychological, and social 'footprints' left by those engaged in the search. And we can compare those who take different pathways towards different destinations.

Perhaps the hardest thing to swallow in the approach I have presented here is the notion that religion is a broader construct than spirituality. Most people view it just the reverse. But I have hearkened back to classic psychology of religion. Religion is a broad-band construct. It encompasses the search for many objects of significance. Spirituality focuses on the search for one particular object of significance—the sacred. But note that from this point of view, there is less and less of a distinction between religion and spirituality as more and more objects of significance in life are sanctified. For those who find the whole of life sacred, there is little difference between religion and spirituality.

It doesn't follow though that the psychology of religion should focus exclusively on spirituality. There are other important questions for our field. For example, we should be concerned about religious means as well as ends; with methods of religious coping, prayer, and congregational involvement even if these methods are used to reach nonspiritual goals. (Note, with all due respect to Gordon Allport, there is an important distinction to be made between nonreligious ends and anti-religious ends. The individual who returns to church in search of fellowship may be just as extrinsic as the individual who joins a church to establish his social superiority, but they are quite different in some important respects.) As practicing psychologists we might be willing to work together with religious congregations to facilitate the health and well-being of their members, even if these goals are, at least for some, extrinsic to their faith. And, as I have already stressed, we should also be concerned about religious socialization; how secular ends become sanctified, how seemingly nonreligious objects become imbued with such sacred power. Questions such as these take us beyond spiritual concerns to broader religious issues.

A Return to the Question

So let me return to the question I began with: Should we relabel our division "The Psychology of Religion and Spirituality?" Here's my answer: If the change serves to remind us that the sacred lies at the very heart of the psychology of religion, if the new label comes with an appreciation for the long and deep tradition of thought, study, and practice in our field; if the term "spirituality" offers a bridge to the study of new pathways to the sacred, new meanings of the sacred itself, and new applications of our work; if the modification in language helps to clarify rather than confuse the boundaries of our field; and if a change in title helps us develop a more integrated rather than a more polarized view of the many dimensions of religious and spiritual life, if this

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is what we mean by a psychology of religion and spirituality, then I vote "yes" for the change.

I would like our field to remain an inclusive discipline: a discipline broad enough to encompass individual and social expressions, the helpful and the harmful, basic research and applied interests, skeptics and believers, and any human pursuit as long as it is in some way connected to the sacred. Lose that and we do lose our spirit, our soul.

Should we become the psychology of religion and spirituality? My answer is yes and no, depending on the way we approach these constructs. We are coming to a crossroads, but I have to admit that I am worried about our direction. My concern is that the construct of religion is losing its richness, breadth, and potency, and in the process, our discipline is moving toward less historical sensitivity, toward greater polarizations of the individual and the institutional, toward greater polarization of the good and the bad, and toward greater boundary confusion. As a discipline we are reacting to many of the large scale socio-cultural-religious forces that are shaping the lives of those we study. But the psychology of coping teaches us that people not only react to their changing circumstances, they have the power to transform them as well.

As a discipline, I believe we should be at the forefront of the battle over the definitions of religion and spirituality. We should be out there talking about what we mean by these terms. We must make it clear that there is a difference between broad-band and narrow-band religion; that religion is not a synonym for institution, dogmat, and ritual; that religion is not a dry, static, dead-end construct. And we must make it clear that our field is vitally concerned with spirituality and all matters sacred. We do have a long history to bring to bear on this debate; we do have a sense of the critical issues, problems, and pitfalls; and we even have some relevant data. Let's respond to this important challenge and transform the argument. The tremendous interest and energy in the topic of spirituality represent a wonderful resource for our field. We must lay claim to this topic within the tradition of religious study and scholarship before it is appropriated from our discipline. In the process, we may discover that this is an exciting time to be a psychologist of religion and spirituality.

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President Ken Pargament opened Division 36's annual business meeting at 2:05 p.m.

Election Results:
- President-Elect: Sian-Yang Tan
- Secretary: Nancy Thurston
- Member at Large: Mary Reeder

Membership Chair: Ralph Piedmont

Newsletter Editor: Mark Krejci

Treasurer's Report (in absentia): Ken circulated this and mentioned that income exceeded expenses by $489.98 because of careful cost control by the Executive Committee.

Proposal for Annual Dues increase from $12 to $15 was proposed and discussed. Proposal was moved, seconded and passed by those present at this meeting.

Awards announced by Ralph Hood:
- Early Career Research Contribution Award: Christopher Burns
- Bier Award: Ed Schafroth
- James Award: Helmut Reich
- Seed Grant Research Awards:
  i. Mark S. Rye
  ii. W. Paul Williamson

New Fellow: Peter Hill was elected Fellow of Division 36 by the APA Council today.

Membership Report: Net drop of close to 100 members mainly because of people dropping their APA memberships.

APA Council Representative’s Report:
- Ed Schafroth reported that APA has 85,000+ Members, Fellows, etc., and 67,000+ Student Affiliates, etc., with a total of around 150,000.
- Ray Fowler has been reappointed as APA CEO for another 5-year term.
- Dues increase from $195 to $215 ($20 increase) for APA Membership was approved, and $5 increase in journal credit.
- $1M Revenue annually from APA buildings.
- $400,000 annually in income (not from buildings) will now be used for operating budget for a cushion.
- There'll be 46 additional seats on Council, 2/3 allocated to Divisions and 1/3 to States.
g. An exam for prescription privileges (it’ll cost $188,000) will be developed by APA’s College of Psychology.

h. APA has hired a full-time person to ensure that diversity is appropriately represented in its hiring of 450 employees.

i. There was a 2 1/2 hour debate on trying to change “Health Psychology” into “Clinical Health Psychology.” Clinical Health Psychology was finally approved as a sub-specialty, but a task force was formed to clarify the meaning of “Clinical.”

j. Council passed a resolution strongly requiring proper informed consent re: treatment for homosexuality.

New Business:

a. Ed is starting a Task Force in Graduate Training in Psychology re: Clinical Education and Training and a report will be due in a year.

b. Division 36 will support APA in giving 2nd year Division Memberships free.

Certificates of Appreciation and Awards were given by Ken Pargament. The Awards and recipients were:

a. Distinguished Service Award: Bernard Spilka

b. Mentoring Award: Carole A. Rayburn

c. Certificates of Appreciation were given to:
  15. Fellows Chair, Raymond F. Faloutzian (1996–1997)

Ken handed the Presidential gavel to David Wulff the new President of Division 36.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Siang-Yang Tan
Outgoing Secretary
I wish to preface my inaugural reporting of the APA Council meeting with a statement of appreciation to Mary Reeder, Ph.D., who has faithfully represented our division for many years within Council. Through her reasoned arguments and political savviness, Mary has contributed both to our division and national organization. On a more personal note, I want to publicly thank Mary for her tutelage in preparing me for the complexities of the institutional and political process of Council, and her continuing membership.

It seems appropriate that my first formal introduction to Council would occur in Chicago, a city rich in history and a host of "back room" politics. The action of Council is not found predominantly in its formal consideration of matters within session but like most august bodies, the real work of persuasion occurs in the hallways and the caucuses. Indeed, it was my impression that many of the comments raised on the floor were intended to signify the positions previously stated in the caucuses (and for the most part already brokered) or functioned as a stage in which members could increase their personal visibility. There was little earnest debate and under the disciplined gavel of President Norman Abeles the assembly efficiently moved through its lengthy agenda. I was not surprised by the process but rather I was impressed by the seeming effectiveness of particular coalitions within APA. This leads me to my main point: the degree of influence that our division will have on the policy will reside not in our singular voice but in the collective voice on Council but rather is located in each of our individual relations within other constituencies within APA. We are made of academicians and clinicians, researchers and applied scientists. Most of us participate in other APA-affiliated organizations and it is important that we become actively involved. It will be through personal influence and the aggregate of associations of our members within division and state and provincial political structures that our issues of importance to this division will best be given a hearing. It is also of critical importance that the division receive strong support of our membership in the annual apportionment ballot; our political clout will certainly be enhanced by increased representation on Council.

I also wish to invite dialogue and discussion regarding Council initiatives and division concerns. To facilitate this a website is being developed in which Council and division activities and issues can be presented. I ask that you e-mail me at eshafran@pepperdine.edu and I will send you a notice when the site is available. In this column I intend to highlight the actions of Council and present information that I believe is of particular relevance to our division. As such, this report will not present every issue nor vote taken. I intend to post the agenda and minutes of Council at the website and would be pleased to respond to any query regarding any Council item.

Among the items discussed and presented at Council, there are three that particularly stand out as they have bearing on the structure and function of the organization at large and effect each member directly. The first concerns the reconfirmation during the summer of Raymond Fowler, Ph.D., to serve as APA Executive Office for a third five-year term. His tenure, which began in June, 1989, will run through 2004. This will provide unprecedented stability within this office of leadership. Also of significance was the approval by Council of the plan for council representation which was proposed by the Board of Directors Task Force on Council Representation.

This proposal was developed to address issues of equity among the various constituencies and to ensure that every group within APA has formal representation and a vote on Council. In essence, the plan proposes to increase the number of representatives by 48 on Council which would first be distributed to units that had not gained an initial seat, then to units that came closest to gaining a seat until all 48 seats have been exhausted. It is important to note that our division may be in a position to gain an additional seat if our membership casts its apportionment to the division. The proposal received strong support from a number of constituencies.

The impact of the plan was summarized as taken from the agenda: The proposed system if applied to 1997 would have seated 151 representatives, 95 from divisions and

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Division 36 Membership Survey

Please feel free to skip any items that do not apply to you or that you do not wish to answer.

Name: ________________________________

Address: _______________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
e-mail address: _______________________________________________________

Division Status: Fellow □ Member □ Associate □ Professional Affiliate □ Student Affiliate
Primary area of training (select only one):
□ social □ personality □ developmental □ clinical □ community □ I/O □ pastoral psychology
□ Other: ___________________________________________________________

Primary place of employment (select only one):
□ college/university □ clinic □ private practice □ seminary □ religious organization □ student □ retired
□ Other: ___________________________________________________________

Approximately what proportion of your time do you give to (total should add to 100%):
teaching: ________ research/writing: ________ clinical practice: ________ other: ________

Approximately how many years have you been a member of Division 36?

The interests of the members of Division 36 are predictably diverse. Please read over the following topics and check off ALL OF THOSE that interest you. If one stands out for you, please double check it. If you think of still others, please add them.

□ the origin and dynamics of religious concepts and practices
□ the individual and social consequences of religious experience & behavior
□ religious or spiritual assessment
□ Other: ___________________________________________________________

□ clinical treatment of religious persons
□ religious or spiritual resources for clinical practice
□ integration of psychology and theology
□ religious development/religion through the lifespan

□ Other: ___________________________________________________________

In the years immediately ahead, how often are you likely to attend APA conventions?
□ never □ seldom □ every few years □ nearly every year □ every year

Are you interested in becoming more active in Division 36? □ Yes □ Uncertain □ No

What is your religious affiliation, if any: ________________________________

How religious do you consider yourself to be? ________

How spiritual do you consider yourself to be? ________

How would you characterize your general orientation to the world?
□ very liberal □ liberal □ middle of the road □ conservative □ very conservative

Is there anything you would like to see Division 36 do that, so far as you know, it is not now doing? Is there anything you would like to do in the division?
Please refer to "Incoming President's Remarks" on page 16 for instructions.

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from state/provincial psychological associations. With the Board of Directors and 2 coalitions, the total under the proposed system would be 164. At a cost of $500 per representative, the increase of 37 additional representatives would be $35,300. Council mailing costs and meeting related expenses would also increase by approximately 5%. Council approved the changes to the APA Bylaws and will now send the amendments to the membership for a vote in November 1997.

The third item will affect each of us directly and may impact membership in our division. After lengthy presentations and discussion, Council approved the 1998 Preliminary Budget which includes a $20 ($195 to $215) member dues increase, a $14 associate member increase ($140 to $154) and a $5 ($40 to $45) journal credit increase for 1998. In part this increase will reduce dependence on the subsidy from the building and insure funding for the operating budget. The 1998 preliminary budget is set at almost $70,000,000. APA's budget showed a significant increase over the past 10 years. In 1987 expenses were almost $29,000,000; the projection for 1997 is over $65,000,000 (these figures are not inflation-adjusted). Nevertheless, it appears that the organization has increased its scope of operations and services as well as managing fiscal difficulties related to past ventures, e.g., Psychology Today Investment. A dues increase had been proposed in 1995 for effect in 1995; however, this had been avoided up to this point. The association appears to be financially healthy; the two APA buildings have provided an important foundation for financial stability into the future. The new building is already 70% leased and the forecast for revenue generation and building equity appear to be sound.

On a related note, membership in APA is growing. Membership estimates project a year-end total of 4,000 new members. As of the end of June 1997 there were 150,626 APA members and affiliates. Within this total there are 85,526 full Members, Fellows, and Associates. There are close to 67,000 affiliates; the majority of whom are Student Affiliates.

Other issues that were taken up by Council include two items that may be of particular interest to our members. The first was a highly politicized debate regarding sexual orientation conversion therapy which dates to a resolution that was proposed in 1995. The proposed resolution provides guidance to practitioners and consumers on the ethical, professional, and scientific issues that are relevant to such treatments. As I see it the heart of the matter concerns the issue of the appropriateness of treatments that aim at or result in sexual orientation conversion. On one hand there is a constituency that is opposed to any treatment specific to homosexuality from the position that since homosexuality is not a disorder it should not be treated. Others contend that issues of sexual orientation emerge in treatment and are legitimate areas of focus and may result in modifications of behavior and orientation. The proposed resolution and the revised substitute motion that was passed which supported in substance the first position are too lengthy for inclusion in this report. I would be pleased to send interested parties the background materials.

A policy for a disclaimer for divisional work projects was also approved. Thorny issues of standards and guidelines, as well, restriction of trade, abound in statements issued by APA and its member divisions and their task forces and committees. The following is a portion of the amended text (to Association Rule 108-1.5) that we must keep in mind whenever issuing statements or documents.

When an APA division or one of its official sub-units authorizes a published document that the division does not intend to be standards or guidelines but which the public may reasonably construe as a set of standards or guidelines for professional practice, the division shall make it clear that the contents of the publication are not intended to set a standard or guideline for practice and that the division or one of its sub-units is not speaking on behalf of any division or one of its sub-units or on behalf of the APA.

In closing, I wish to express my appreciation to the membership for electing me to serve as representative to Council. I look forward to the on-going challenges of this responsibility and to providing a forum for our division's discussion of timely issues within our national association.
The honor of being elected president of Division 36 brings with it various responsibilities in relation both to APA and to division members and associates. During my year as division president, I would like to promote several initiatives, including the establishment of a division Web page, the furtherance of the directory of persons and programs in the psychology of religion proposed some time ago, and a survey of division members and associates regarding their interests in religion and spirituality and their hopes for the division. The latter project I consider especially vital, for if we on the Executive Committee are to act on behalf of the division membership, we need to know more about its interests and goals. Accordingly, enclosed with this issue of the Newsletter is a one-page questionnaire that I composed in consultation with several other members of the Executive Committee and that was helpfully formatted by Ralph Piedmont, our Membership Chair. Please complete this questionnaire at your earliest opportunity and return it to me, either by holding it in thirds, taping it shut, and affixing a 32-cent stamp, or — especially if you wish to include a longer message — by placing it in an envelope addressed as on the back of the questionnaire. Be assured that your views will not be personally identified with you once the results have been tabulated.

As you can infer from the questionnaire, the Executive Committee wishes to encourage more active participation by members and associates in the affairs of the division as well as in the fields of scholarship and practice that the division represents. But whether or not you are personally interested in becoming more active now, we would like to know more about you. Thank you in advance for completing and returning the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or remarks that you wish to convey to me, regarding either the questionnaire or any other division business, you may reach me at the following E-mail address: dwuiff@wheatonma.edu. I look forward to serving you in the year ahead.