25 Years a Society for Family Psychology
25 Presidents to Celebrate
George Nixon

1984-85
1st president

“As Nixon described his term as president, it was a period of time during which the organization evolved from a small group of activists with a tight-knit leadership involved in a social revolution into 'an institutionally viable member of the mainstream of psychology' (1990, p.11). Nixon believed that the primary accomplishment of his presidency was the creation of a broad-based system that would lead to democratic elections within the Division of Family Psychology” (Philpot, 1995, 276-277).
Gloria Gottsegen

"Gottsegen cited two major accomplishments of the division under her tenure. The first was the negotiation of the contract for the first Journal of Family Psychology (JFP) with Sage Publishing and the selection of the first editor, Howard Liddle (Gottsegen, 1986)...and associated establishment of the first publications board....The second major accomplishment during Gottsegen's presidency was the successful negotiation with Division 29 (Psychotherapy) and 42 (Psychologists in Independent Practice) to become a full member of the annual midwinter meetings (Gottsegen, 1986)" (Philpot, 277-278).

She also reiterated the importance of developing a presence in the APA and increasing the membership of the division” (Nixon, 1990, as cited in Philpot, 1995, p. 279).
Florrie Kaslow

“Inclusiveness of the scientists as well as the practitioners – the researchers and the clinicians. Forging our identity as family psychologists.”
“Internationally, 1987 was the first year a world congress of Family Therapy was held in Prague, Czechoslovakia. It was marvelous, stimulating, energizing – in today’s parlance, awesome, and it was there where we formed the International Family Therapy Association, to which I was elected first President—a position I held for four years.”
“I saw opportunities to spread the systemic outlook of family psychology in order to increase the appreciation and influence of Division 43 and enhance the functioning of the APA overall. Carol Philpot wrote an illuminating history of Division 43 in which she succinctly summarized the theme of my presidential year in the heading: *Expansion Into the Larger World*. ”
“I am impressed by the possibilities for Division 43 to extend awareness of the usefulness of an interactional and systemic view within all APA divisions, boards, committees, and directorates. Similarly, I believe we can extend the usefulness of this view and of family psychology by working collaboratively with other kinds of psychologists, mental health professionals, physicians, family businesses...The opportunities for the field of family psychology are limited mainly by our own imagination and energy.”
“...as President I worked as best I could to support partners in 43 and related divisions who were working hard to establish and maintain us as a solid, independent, and reimbursable (if I may) class of providers.”
Jim Alexander

“Since my time as President, FFT has been identified by many major reviewers and policy setting organizations (e.g., CDC, OJJDP, CSPV) as one of the (sadly) few evidence supported interventions for this traditionally difficult to treat population. This population spans diverse cultures, regions, and now countries. I never could have envisioned what it feels like to have been the progenitor of such a model. At the same time I remain indebted to those theorists and early researchers who paved the way, and to those who have chosen to join me on this wonderful journey.”
“The twin issues of getting systems theory thinking and approaches into APA and getting our members nominated and elected to APA Boards and Committees were major [ones]. We wanted to get more power in APA so that our members would get elected to Boards and Committees and Task Forces so our point of view would be heard.”
“Early in my tenure it became crystal clear that if family psychology ever aspired to be in the mainstream of psychology, if we wanted our journal to be the preeminent journal representing family psychology, if we wanted to be included in the myriad of glossaries and specialization indices generated by APA (such as the index terms utilized for convention presentations), then it was essential that the Journal of Family Psychology to become an APA journal at the end of the contract we had with Sage Publishers. This fit with our mission statement and I appointed a Task Force to explore this and the Journal became an official APA publication.”
Josephine Beebe

“Service and involvement—helping families cope with the numerous issues of war, tangible and emotional/psychological.”
Josephine Beebe

“I became President of Division 43 simultaneously with the onset of the Persian Gulf War. At my first Division 43 Board meeting on January 17, 1991, it was broadcast nationally that the US had entered war. Our goals became evident—we were energized as a division to support families of deployed personnel.”
“A comment made by Jim Alexander during one of our board meetings several years earlier stuck with me: “We’re finally a Division, but without direction or purpose.”... I truly believed the best thing for the Division was to find the direction and purpose Jim Alexander had said we were missing.... I reasoned that if we were to restructure the governance of the Division in a more efficient manner and develop a long-range plan, we could then make decisions regarding funding and effort based on the long-range plan. This way the diverse interests of members of the Division would each be represented and diverse goals would be realized in an organized fashion over a period of ten years. So the ‘theme’ of my presidency was inclusion, organization and planning.”
“We held a retreat at midwinter led by Lee Grutchfield. Those present shared in a vision of restructuring the Division governance so that the committees fed into the four areas represented by the directorates of the APA (practice, science, public interest, and education).

What facilitated the achievement of these goals was mostly the competent board members who were all systems experts and knew what we needed to do to fix our system. In other words, we treated ourselves!”
“Multicultural awareness and appreciation.”

“I sponsored activities at the APA convention that focused on systems work with individuals and families with American Indian, African American and Asian heritage. I spearheaded the campaign to create the Carolyn Attneave Diversity Award, which was first presented in 1995 to Nancy Boyd Franklin. I also attempted to interest members in problems of addictive behavior.”
“There was a general lack of recognition/understanding among psychologists of the difference between a systems perspective and an individually focused viewpoint. This was an opportunity and a challenge for family psychology to correct.”
“I was president during the 10th anniversary year, so there was a lot of focus on that celebration. One of the largest issues we were facing was President Bill Clinton’s healthcare reform. We wanted family psychology to position itself on those issues.

Additionally, we were still working on establishing the division as a bona fide specialty in professional psychology.”
Ronald Levant

10th President

“The field was just emerging during that time. But, we knew the role of family psychology was important because that year the UN (United Nations) named it the Year of the Family. We also knew that internationally, family psychology was more advanced than what has happening here.”
James Bray  
Current APA President

“My goal was to have Division 43 be recognized for its role within health care, and particularly primary care, and also to recognize family psychology as a science.”
“We entered in the conference that we had in 1995, we ended up publishing a book. Howard Liddle was the lead editor. There was myself, Howard Liddle, Ron Levant and Daniel Fantiseban. We published the book, Family Psychology: Science-based interventions. We also created Carol diversity award, and it was, if not the first, one of the first diversity awards in the APA. That was based on the first big family psychology conference we had in 1995.

We really shifted a lot of things and we laid the groundwork for collaborative family health care...it was really cutting edge back then.”
“The unique issue that faced the division as I assumed the presidency was that of a response to APA’s creation of the Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP). Since this matter seemed of paramount importance to Division 43, I made it my primary focus for the year and had the good sense to appoint Roberta Nutt to organize and spearhead this enterprise.”
“The appearance of the Academy, and ultimately the Division, was an immense source of excitement and affirmation – one could actually be both a psychologist and a family therapy practitioner.”
“My theme was primarily how to bring new people and especially psychologists of color into the division, and especially into the governance of the division.”
“I think that the field has made some progress toward diversity. The continuing involvement of James Dobbins, George Hong, and Robert-Jay Green testifies to the fact that diverse voices have been integrated into the division. Family psychology has become a recognized specialty within psychology, thereby decreasing the marginalization of family therapy in psychology.”
“My biggest concern is that the Division 43 and the specialty of Family Psychology as a whole take whatever steps necessary to make it finally possible for our doctoral programs to gain APA-accreditation as Family Psychology programs.”
"My career has taken me many places since being Division 43 President. Highlights include: being the Family Psychology representative on the Council of Specialties in Professional Psychology and eventually being elected President of CoS; Chairing the APA Commission on the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP); being President of APA Division 17, the Society of Counseling Psychology; and after 31 years, retiring from my academic position and training directorship at Texas Woman’s University and my practice in Dallas to become the Director of Professional Affairs at the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards."
“My goal was to promote family psychology as a good foundation for working in healthcare....

...I had a task force and interdivisional grant to develop a comprehensive curriculum for primary care psychology.”
“We’ve always had a national and international presence because of the good scholarship that comes from family psychologists. We also want to spread the gospel—systemic thinking is so useful in psychology and other contexts.”
“My theme was working collaboratively across different presidential years...

...Continuing the agenda that previous Div 43 presidents had set (especially Louise Silverstein, Roberta Nutt and Susan McDaniel) seemed particularly important.”
Michelle Harway 16th president

“Successes included that the CRSPPP application was completed, although the work of Roberta Nutt and others who worked on this were ultimately responsible for this success. Furthermore, the Division brought in a few new members (especially of color) who have remained actively involved.”
15 year celebration  APA, 2000

Front (left to right): N. Kaslow, T. Patterson
Terence Patterson

“Promoting the diversity of all couples and families, which remains on the banner of TFP today.”
Terence Patterson 17th president

“Foremost was the need to increase diversity, and we developed a number of initiatives in that regard. The Board held the mid-winter meeting at the Multicultural Summit in Santa Barbara in 2001, and had a "Sensitivity Training" session at that time.”
“The themes for my presidential year were celebrating the diversity of all couples and families, educating and training the next generation of family psychologists, conducting clinically relevant research, and advocacy on behalf of families...

The major issue facing the field and the division related to our specialty status. In the Spring 2002 Family Psychologist, it was a pleasure to proclaim, ‘Family psychology is now officially a specialty area within psychology.’”
“When I took the helm of the presidency, it was the first time within the history of APA that a mother and daughter had both served as President of the same APA division. It seems especially appropriate that this occurred in the Division of Family Psychology. Of course, I learned about APA politics at the dinner table as my mother is one of the founders of the Division.”
David Scott Hargrove

“Back to basics: Reaffirming systems”
David Scott Hargrove  19th President

“I became involved in the division in the mid to late 90s. The concept of ‘systems’ became increasingly meaningful to me because it focused on human behavior in the larger context, both family and the larger institutional and social context.”
Jay Lebow

“The co-evolution of research and practice in our domain.”

“The broader field of family psychology faced the issues of relating to an evolving notion of family psychology in which integrative treatments were evolving from the old schools of family therapy. Both the division and broader field faced the need to expand diversity.”

2004
20th president
“Education and Training in Family Psychology.”

“We made such significant progress in identifying doctoral programs in the specialty and in developing recommendations for doctoral education in the specialty that were formally approved by the constituent family psychology organizations.”
Cindy Carlson

2006

22nd president

“The interrelatedness of family and school systems.”
“A systems understanding of mind-body problems (conversion disorder and the like) and spirituality in family therapy”

“The field was facing the blessings and challenges of becoming established, part of the status quo. On the one hand, systems views were now widely accepted as an important and vital perspective on human functioning and family therapy was entering the mainstream of popular culture. On the other hand, the struggle then became how family psychology is to maintain its distinctiveness as a profession in such a context.”
“Families and public policy.”

“I wanted to illustrate how public policies affect families, and how family psychologists could and should be advocates for family-friendly public policies. Our Society has focused on education and training, science, practice, and the public interest—all worthy cornerstones of family psychology. I've wanted to add a fifth cornerstone!”
“Celebrating our past, and Crafting our future.”

“Now it’s time to celebrate our distinguished past by starting a dialogue with the Society. It’s time to ask critical questions of research, practice, policy/diversity, and education/training. It’s time to chart the course of our future by linking what we do with the larger context of professional psychology.”
PRESIDENT'S LETTER
Division 43

Dear Colleagues,

It is a distinct honor and privilege to serve as the first president of Division 43. Having been elected to serve as your president, I am acutely aware of the challenges that lie ahead and the role of representing our organization as a whole. The commitment of our diverse membership in the field of psychology is evident in our dedication to advancing our understanding of family psychology.

I am particularly grateful for the support and encouragement I have received from my colleagues, whose contributions are essential to the success of our division. I am committed to working closely with them to ensure that our goals are achieved.

In the coming year, I believe that our division will be able to take on the challenge of addressing the needs of our members and strengthening our connection with the broader community of psychologists. The theme of our annual convention is "Fostering Connections Through Family Psychology." This theme reflects our commitment to promoting the well-being of individuals and families through the exchange of ideas and the sharing of knowledge.

I look forward to working with all of you in the coming year to ensure the continued success of Division 43.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

President, Division 43
President's Message

Los Angeles: The Family Psychology Convention

The APA Annual Convention in Los Angeles also marks the 15th anniversary of the Family Psychology Convention. The event will be a highlight of the convention, with a focus on family psychology and its role in contemporary society.

This year's convention will feature keynote addresses by leading experts in the field, including Dr. Jane Smiley, author of "A Thousand Acres" and "Any Human Heart," and Dr. John Bowlby, psychologist and author of "Attachment Theory." The convention will also feature a panel discussion on the impact of family psychology on public policy.

In addition to the keynote addresses, the convention will feature a variety of workshops and seminars designed to provide attendees with practical tools and strategies for improving family life.

President's message continued on page 2.

Terence Patterson, Editor

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From the President: Bridging the Mind-Body Split: Towards an Integrative Framework for Thinking About Somatoform Symptoms

William H. Raison, PhD

In my capacity with the NIC, I have seen hundreds of such patients, all with psychiatric non-organic symptoms (PNS), most of whom I classify as conversion disorder, anxiety, or somatoform disorders. These patients often dramatically exacerbate the distress of patients, families, and healthcare providers. In my experience, one of the biggest difficulties faced by those confronting such symptoms, including medical providers, is the lack of understanding of how emotional processes can go out of their usual self-regulating patterns. It is tempting to jump to the conclusion that somatoform symptoms are being consciously or unconsciously generated in order to draw attention to a real, but, and difficult-to-detect, organic disease. In patients with panic attacks, for example, sensations, in addition to real and often obvious symptoms, and the patient's anxiety and avoidance encourage the symptom formation.

Based on my clinical experience with this population, I would like to offer a strategy for understanding the interaction of mind and body in somatoform disorders that integrates the mind-body dyad and acknowledges the defensive thinking that frequently leads to misattribution about the origins of these symptoms. I will present a framework for understanding somatoform disorders with PNSA, but much of what I present can be applied to somatoform disorders in general.

In this hope that a description of this framework will prove relevant to any treatment of somatoform symptoms, I would like to start with a few quotes about speaking to patients and families about the nature of psychosomatic events that can be helpful in defining roles and managing symptoms, expectancies, and willingness to explore. Because it is so important to have a way to discuss these symptoms, I will offer examples of specific language for translating these concepts into clinical practice with patients and families.

The embodiment of emotional processes: The concept of embodied emotional processes provides a framework that can help bridge the mind-body divide and simplify the diagnosis, effective thinking that is crucial to developing an adequate understanding of mind-body problems. This framework clarifies how psychosomatic symptoms, including somatoform symptoms, can be both psychologically generated and physiological, understood, and largely uncontrollable.

Somatoform symptoms like PNSA can be understood as simply a series of symptoms that occur in response to emotional triggers. We might call this "the psychophysiology of everyday life."
A project of

Div 43 Student Affiliates & The Presidents Book Committee

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Special Thanks to

APA Archives for providing photos of past presidents