



# Synapse



THE WEST HUDSON PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Robert N. Sobel, M.D., Editor & Syed Abdullah, M.D., Co-Editor

## My Journey to the WHPS Presidency

**I**t is with tremendous feelings of excitement and enthusiasm that I begin my two years as the President of the West Hudson Psychiatric Society.

I still remember seven years ago going to my first Executive Council meeting lunch as a "guest" of Drs. Ducker and Gerber. This is where I got to see first hand the working of the local district branch. I remember being impressed by the hard work of the members of the Executive Council.

During my Presidency, I would like to invite members, particularly those members who have never been to an Executive Council meeting to be our guests for lunch. This was the beginning of my involvement with the APA, which has played a significant part in my career as a Psychiatrist. After that lunch as a guest, I was "recruited" by Jim Flax, M.D. and Alan Tuckman, M.D. to be the Public Affairs Representative of the West Hudson Psychiatric Society. "Sure", I said, "but only for one year."

Well, six years later, as I assume the position of WHPS President, I am turning over the position of Public Affairs Representative to Dr. Bharati Palkhiwala. Being the PA Representative for WHPS started out with the creation of a speaker's bureau for WHPS to speak on a variety of issues to local groups.

Then, after the Public Affairs Conference in Florida, there came the

creation of the now nationally known "Mental Health Coalition of Rockland County". Not only have we united the mental health community of Rockland County, but also our efforts have been recognized by receiving National Awards from the APA in 1998 and 2000.

The month of May is Mental Health Month. The Rockland County Mental Health Coalition has targeted schools as the group to educate and destigmatize on mental illness. On Monday May 21, 2001. Several classes in Tappan Zee High School will receive a special program consisting of a consumer, family member, and a professional who will speak about mental illness from first hand experience. A similar program was done at Dominican College led by Dr. Dominick Ferro, myself, Carol Olori CSW, and Sherry Glickman, C.S.W. The program was well received. Rena Finkelstein, the Chairperson of the coalition's education programs is to be applauded for organizing these excellent programs. On April 24, 2001, the Coalition will do a special presentation with the Rockland Players from the Mental Health Association at Evans Park Elementary School in Pearl River, NY. The topics to be covered include bullying, Family Issues, and the Transition into Middle School. Gloria Ferber, Ph. D. is to be congratulated for coordinating this special project.

June 3, 2001 is the date set for the Picnic for Parity in Rockland County at Rockland Lake State Park in Congers, New York. (June 10, 2001 is the raindate.)



New York continues to be part of the minority of states that doesn't have a parity law. The Surgeon General has issued two reports in the last year highlighting the need for better psychiatric services for all, particularly children.

The enactment of the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 was the first step in ending the discrimination against individuals with mental illness. However, the fight is far from over. The laws on both the Federal and State levels which have thus far been enacted are limited. The Federal Law applies to mental health annual or

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## A Review: The Ethics Primer

"I swear by Apollo the physician, and Aesculapius and Health..." Thus begins The Oath of Hippocrates, written in the 5th century BCE, which we all, as physicians, have sworn to uphold in our daily practices. This started the rich legacy of principles, guidelines and rules which have culminated in "The Principles of Medical Ethics With Annotations

Especially Applicable to Psychiatry," first published in 1973 and updated periodically.

But ethics principles are not clear directives, easily understood and just as easily followed. Every ethical question is open to interpretation when applied to a specific issue raised about a specific practitioner.

Thus, there evolved The "Procedures" for evaluating each case brought to the District Branch and the APA, investigating its merits and when appropriate, deciding on proper punishment and education, always remembering that changing practices, societal values and individual choices affect the application of ethical principles and their ever-changing nature.

In order to help psychiatrists develop an understanding of the ethical dilemmas in contemporary practice, the APA Ethics Committee has published a "Primer" to address the myriad ethical and moral choices that face us every day, chock full of vignettes and concrete ethical questions.

Besides listing again the "Principles of Medical Ethics...", the booklet spans such topics as Boundary Violations, Children, Adolescents and Families, Geriatric Populations, Involuntary Hospitalization, Managed Care, Confidentiality, Gifts, Duty to Report Colleagues who Engage in Fraud or Deception, Ethics of Emergency Care, Ethics and Forensic Psychiatry and Consultation and Second Opinions, in only 77 jam-packed, but easily readable pages.

Each chapter includes examples of ethical questions such as the following, having to do with boundary violations:

"Your office is on the twentieth floor of an office building. The building mail slot has been jammed for days. You ask a patient to mail a letter for you, saving you a trip to the nearest mailbox on the

corner." That is certainly a boundary crossing between the professional relationship and the caretaking relationship. But is it a boundary violation? The



chapter goes on to describe the "slippery slope" from simple boundary crossings to overt violations.

For example, regarding self disclosure to patients, it is clearly unethical to disclose the psychiatrist's fantasies concerning the patient, especially those of a sexual nature. But what about advising patients that the psychiatrist has become ill and may have to cancel future appointments with very short notice, in order for the patient to decide if continuing with that psychiatrist is in the patient's best interests?

Another example: A patient invites her psychiatrist to become an investor in her business or business venture. The doctor is flattered and accepts, buying more and more stock in the company. Ultimately problems arise in the company's management. Will this not impact on the transference and counter-transference?

More complicated issues are discussed with significant understanding and explanation, especially in the chapters on Managed Care, Involuntary Hospitalization and Emergency Care. Where appropriate, accepted standards or prior published guidelines are presented as underpinnings of opinions, always making it clear that here are few hard and fast "rules" in answering ethical questions.

But the primer does lay out a path to follow in approaching many questions which do arise in our practices, but which do not yield to easy answers.

Continued on next page

### Executive Council

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SYNAPSE designed by Lydia Dmitrieff

**A Review, cont'd**

Others are more clearly defined.

I was especially intrigued by an example in the chapter on Emergency Care, in which a 21 year old college student has a psychotic episode at college, away from home and presents to the Student Health Service for help. He is seen by a psychiatrist who recognizes the seriousness of his disorder and begins treatment in the local hospital. While his parents had some vague idea over the prior weeks that his conversions were more disjointed, they did not realize the extent of his disorganization and deterioration and thus did not themselves seek help for him. But when speaking with his roommate, they learn about his illness and contact the psychiatrist. The

student/patient does not want his parents to know about his illness, for fear that they will pull him out of school. The psychiatrist is torn between her legal obligation to not divulge any information without the patient's consent and her perceived ethical obligation to also relieve the anxiety and worry of the student's parents.

Taking this a step further, the psychiatrist is so troubled by the patient's refusal, that she wishes to terminate her treatment of the patient. Under what circumstances can she do so, knowing she is free to choose whom to treat and whom not to treat?

Certainly ethical issues arise in our practices daily. Most are easily resolved by ourselves, with no need

for guidance or consultation. For the others, this primer is an important addition to grappling with them and hopefully, resolving them satisfactorily, if not happily. But in addition it serves an even more important function of further raising our consciousness about the myriad pitfalls which exist in the practice of medicine and psychiatry.

To acquire a copy of The Primer, which costs \$24.00, you may phone American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc., at 1-800-638-5777 or by e-mail at [appi@psych.org](mailto:appi@psych.org), including the item #2317 and credit card # for the fee (\$24.00) plus shipping and handling (\$5.95). ▲

*Alan J. Tuckman, M.D.*

**Presidency cont'd**

lifetime limits but not to substance abuse, copayments, or inpatient outpatient treatment limits. Many state laws are limited and apply only to Government employees or those with serious mental illnesses. Many state laws do not address substance abuse. Pending Federal legislation would extend full parity to those who are covered by mental health or substance abuse plans. The bill introduced by Marge Roukema (R-NJ) has over 60 cosponsors. Another proposed piece of legislation, the Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act of 2001 would address limits on deductibles, coinsurances, copayments, and out of pocket expenses. Now is the time to show how important parity is. As they say, "Be There- Show Your Care." I hope to see you at Rockland Lake from 12 noon to 4:00 P.M. on June 3, 2001.

Many important issues will be facing us as Psychiatrists in the next two years. Some of these issues are parity, stigma, scope of practice, managed care, medical privacy issues, and how

to increase the members in our district branch. In addition we are faced with the crisis of increasing gun violence in our schools. Over the next few months, I would welcome your suggestions as to what issues you think our district branch should focus on in the next two years. Please feel to contact me at 845-364-2428 or via e-mail - [drkroplick@aol.com](mailto:drkroplick@aol.com).

As you can see, my journey from being a "guest" at the Executive Council lunch to the Public Affairs Representative to the founder of the Mental Health Coalition of Rockland County has led me in the direction of becoming WHPS President. I will need everyone's support. Let's begin by participating on June 3, 2001 at the Picnic for Parity. If you would like to be a guest at the Executive Council lunch on May 18, 2001 or June 15, 2001, please call me (845-364-2428). I look forward to an active and prosperous two years as your President.. ▲

*Lois Kroplick, D.O.  
President*

*I would like to thank Dr. Les Citrome for doing such a tremendous job these last two years as President of the West Hudson Psychiatric Society. Dr. Citrome's hard work and enthusiasm is well appreciated. He will continue on our board as Secretary as well as the Co-President of the Mental Health Coalition.*

*Also appreciated and recognized are the Executive Board members. Without your efforts, the job of President would be impossible. This includes Dr. Ducker, Dr. Flax, Dr. Tarle, Dr. Hornstein, Dr. Ferro, Dr. Palkhiwala, Dr. Abdullah, Dr. Sobel and Dr. Brody. And special congratulations to Drs. Sobel and Abdullah for their fourth win as APA Newsletter of the Year.*

Our new Executive Board members are:

- Dr. Lois Kroplick, President
- Dr. Andrew Hornstein, Treasurer and President-elect
- Dr. Les Citrome- Secretary, Deputy Representative to the Assembly
- Dr. Ducker- Legislative Representative
- Dr. Tarle- Assembly Representative
- Dr. Tuckman- Chair, Ethics Committee
- Dr. Brody- Chair, Education Committee
- Dr. Flax- Chair Private Practice
- Dr. Ferro- Depression Screenings
- Dr. Palkhiwala- Public Affairs
- Dr. Sobel - Editor, Synapse
- Dr. Abdullah - Co-Editor, Synapse

*Welcome to the new board!!  
I look forward to working with you for the next two years. Lois*

## Franz J. Kallmann, M.D: His Controversial Role In The Eugenics Movement.

**O**n January 30th 1933 Adolph Hitler became the Chancellor of the 3rd Reich. Dr. Ernst Rudin, professor of Psychiatry celebrated the occasion in these words: ..it is thanks to him that "the dream we have cherished for more than 30 years of seeing racial hygiene converted into action has become reality." Events moved very fast to make this "dream" unfold into the ghastly scenario of the years to come. On July 14, 1933 Hitler put into law the Nazi Act for Averting Descendants Afflicted with Hereditary Disease. This was based on Harry H. Laughlin's US Model Eugenic Sterilization Law of 1922. Laughlin received an honorary degree from a German University, which was a major Nazi research center for race purification, for his contribution to eugenics. Harry H. Laughlin and Frederick Osborn played a leading role

in the American eugenics movement and openly supported the Nazi racial policies. They founded the Pioneer Fund, the primary benefactor of which was textile magnate Wickliffe Draper. The Fund's purposes included encouraging, among other things, increased reproduction on the part of "white persons who settled in the original thirteen colonies" and research on "race betterment." Dr. Fritz Lenz, the Nazi race hygienist at the University of Munich expressed similar opinion in 1933 in these words "As things are now, it is only a minority of our fellow citizens who are so endowed that their unrestricted procreation is good for the race." He also recommended sterilization of people with only slight symptoms of mental disease. His friend and associate, Martin Borman stated in a directive that the person's moral and

political behavior be taken into account when determining whether sterilization should take place. Eugenics is defined as the



theory and practices designed to improve the human genetic composition. Scientists have been doing this to domestic animals, plants and to microorganisms. Himmler had predicted that in 120 years, by enforcing the eugenic methods, the entire German population will be pure-blooded Aryans. In 1935 the SS Race and Settlement Bureau was given the authority to control the marriages of the entire German civilian population. Cohabitation of Aryans and Non Aryans was banned and made punishable by law. The children born of such unions were to be sterilized to stem the tide of "tainted" genes from pervading the mainstream of German society. Abortion was to be performed, voluntarily or involuntarily, if pregnancy were detected. Amongst the candidates for sterilization were included those suffering from: Congenital Feeble-mindedness, Schizophrenia, Manic Depressive illness, Epilepsy, Hereditary blindness, Hereditary deafness, Gross bodily malformation, Hereditary alcoholism etc.


The first thorough exposition of eugenics was made by the English scientist Francis Galton, who was a pioneer in the use of statistics.

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**Doug Ward**                      **Michael Mekler**  
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Galton, a cousin of Darwin, wrote a definitive book on the subject Hereditary Genius in 1869. He proposed that marriages between men of distinction and women of wealth would eventually produce a gifted race. Based on his studies of the families of eminent men, he declared that "it would be quite practical to produce a highly gifted race of men by judicious marriages during several consecutive generations." He coined the term eugenics in 1883 and continued to expound its benefits until his death in 1911.

The American Eugenics Society was founded in 1926. It supported the proposition that the wealth and social position of the upper classes was justified by a superior genetic endowment. The US eugenicists called for restrictions on immigration from countries with "inferior" stock, such as Italy, Greece and countries of eastern Europe. In 1934 an exhibition of the Nazi eugenics program was held in Pasadena, California. Its brochure lauded the scientific and humane methods of race purification being practiced in Germany. They also argued in favor of sterilization of insane, retarded and epileptic citizens in the United States. As a result of their advocacy, reinforced with pseudo-scientific jargon and statistical "evidence", sterilization laws were passed in more than half of the U.S. States. Isolated instances of involuntary sterilizations continued into the 1970s. In the 30s the Nazis extended their targets for extermination to Jews, Gypsies, the insane, and the homosexuals. This caused increasing opposition to the recommendations of the American eugenicists.

Dr. Ernst Rudin became the head of the division of genetic studies at the

Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Psychiatric Research. The Rockefeller Foundation, created from the fortunes of the Standard Oil Company and run by a board controlled by members of the Rockefeller family, poured funds into the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute (formerly called Kraepelin Institute), for studies in psychiatric genetics. James Loeb of the Kuhn-Loeb banking family also mobilized American donors to fund the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Eugenics, and Human Heredity. Dr. Ernst Rudin incorporated in his elite and powerful inner group, Dr. Otmar von Verchuer, and Franz J. Kallmann, a young and energetic scientist who was busy studying the hereditary "degeneracy" in Schizophrenia. In 1935 Kallmann presented his paper at the International Congress for Population Science in Berlin, hosted by Hitler's Interior Ministry, therein he argued for the sterilization of even the apparently healthy relatives of schizophrenics, along with the schizophrenics themselves, to eliminate all the defective genes. Through the study of relatives of the schizophrenics in the mental hospitals of Germany, Kallmann came to the conclusion that this disease is caused by a single recessive gene which was passed on in accordance with a simple Mendelian principle. This contention was later disproved as too simplistic and invalid. Despite the acclaim he received at the Berlin meeting, Kallmann, who was a Jew married to a Lutheran, in clear violation of the Nazi law against the marriage of non-Aryans to Aryans, saw the writing on the wall. His sister-in-law, an ardent Nazi functionary, warned her sister to either divorce Kallmann or get the hell out of Germany.

Kallmann hurriedly packed and left

with his wife, Helly, for America where he was known and admired by the eugenicists. Arriving in New York, he soon found employment at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and in

Continued on next page 

## OBITUARY

*On January 4th 2001, Francesca Sales, M.D., breathed her last at the Ramapo Manor Nursing Home.*

*She was 95 years old, and was a life long member of APA and the West Hudson Psychiatric Society. She worked on the staff of Rockland Psychiatric Center for many decades, mostly in the Geriatric Wards of Building 57.*

*Dr. Sales had many stories to tell of her life in Europe before she came to America. As a child she had known Sigmund Freud who was a family friend. During the war years she was in Italy where she finished her medical education and later joined the Italian Resistance movement as a young physician and underground worker. She was wanted by the Germans and while attempting to escape from a hot pursuit she fell off a cliff and was pinned down under the horse she was riding. Her injuries resulted in a crushed leg and a life long limp, but an unbroken spirit. She was rescued by American soldiers and was brought to America. She has not left any known survivors.*

*We remember her fondly, specially those of us with whom she used to take rides for the District Branch Meetings.*

*She was buried at the St. Anthony's Cemetery.*

**Franz J. Kallman, cont'd.**

a short time became the Director of Psychiatric Research. Some investigators have come to the conclusion that Dr. Ernst Rudin orchestrated this move of Dr. Kallmann to the USA. Dr. Kallmann conducted a study of 1000 cases of Schizophrenia to reconfirm his findings of previous years in Germany. He is reported to have commented that the Schizophrenics were a source of maladjusted and criminal offenders. He declared "I am reluctant to admit the necessity of different eugenic programs for democratic and fascistic communities...There are neither biological nor sociological differences between a democratic and a totalitarian schizophrenic." His findings were published simultaneously in the United States and Nazi Germany in 1938. In the preface Kallmann thanked his mentor Dr. Ernst Rudin, who in the meantime was proceeding with implementation of the "findings" he shared with Kallmann. The scholarly studies of Kallmann were part of the justification used by the Nazi government to begin in 1939 the murder of mental patients and various other "defective" people, many of them children. Lethal gas and lethal injections were used to kill about 250,000 hapless individuals in this initial wave of euthanasia, during which the staff were desensitized and trained for a much broader program for mass murder.

In the 1940s Kallmann used his enormous energy to launch a twin study of all patients in the State Mental hospitals in New York State. Of the 73,000 patients in the system he identified 691 schizophrenics with a traceable co-twin. For the monozygotic twins he found a 85.8

percent concordance rate, and for the dizygotic 14.7%. He presented these findings at the First World Congress of Psychiatry in Paris in 1950. He claimed that a single recessive gene was the cause of Schizophrenia, virtually ruling out all the environmental, psychological and psychoanalytic theories then prevalent. This caused an angry uproar at the meeting which was attended by many psychologists and psychiatrists. Kallmann dubbed the opposition as "a host of cynical armchair workers." Although the later twin and adoption studies by Seymour Kety and others, pointed to a definite biological/genetic factor in the causation of schizophrenia, Kallmann's high rate of concordance was never duplicated. This may be explained by the greater sophistication in the diagnosis of zygosity and schizophrenia in later years. After the stormy conference in Paris, Kallmann spent the next fifteen years mainly studying the genetics of congenital deafness. In his characteristic thoroughness he

scanned the entire deaf population of New York State and determined the incidence of schizophrenia and other mental illnesses in this special population. He pioneered the first comprehensive mental health services for the deaf in the country. This service is still in existence at Rockland Psychiatric Center in Orangeburg, N.Y.

The purpose of this brief presentation is to emphasize that research in psychiatry should be conducted with compassion, humility, and restraint. As these qualities are not always found in the modern researcher driven by non-altruistic motives, the need for ongoing watchdog surveillance by citizen's committees and regulatory agencies is imperative. Paternalistic authoritarianism can only lead to human tragedies and social disasters as witnessed in the events of the twentieth century, only some of which have been touched upon here. ▲

Syed A. Abdullah, M.D.

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## Women's Committee of West Hudson Psychiatric Society

The Women's Committee was re-vitalized again on 03-24-2000.

That was our first woman's committee meeting. Since then, a group of female Psychiatrists have been religiously attending these meetings on a monthly basis. During the initial meeting, we spend time to get to know each other, develop bonding and explore the topics we need to discuss. Following are the topics and issues related to female Psychiatrists that have been discussed so far:

1. Pregnancy and Psychotropic drugs
2. Pregnancy and Psychotropic drugs, Part II

This discussion has helped us to develop guidelines to safely

prescribe medication for pregnant patients.

3. Treatment and Pre-Menstrual syndrome (PMS)

Premenstrual Dysphoric disorder (PMDD) audio conference by Meir Steiner, M.D. PhD. This discussion has made us more aware of this disorder and of the methods to diagnose them more accurately.

4. Female Physician and female Psychiatrist families.

5. Children of Psychiatrists and Psychotherapists

These meetings have given us more insight into our family members and their experiences.

6. Grand Rounds

Women's Issues and female lives by Tanya Grady Wellik, M.D. It has given us an overview of biological changes correlating with Psychological effects.



7. Spirituality in Psychiatry, its role in different disorders.

We came to the conclusion that spirituality has a definite role in Psychiatry and one should be more aware of it while treating psychiatric patients.

8. Alternative medicine, issues in Psychiatric disorder



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This has been a hot topic and growing interests in medicine as well as in Psychiatry and we are planning to have more meetings related to this topic.

I would like to quote some of the female Psychiatrist's response to the committee meeting

Dr. Lois Kroplick says: "these meetings have been stimulating both intellectually and emotionally. There is enthusiasm and cohesiveness among this group which brings us back to these meetings every month."

Dr. Tanya Yasnovsky remarks: "these meetings are interesting, they give me a feeling of connection and also a chance to explore different issues which we are unable to deal with in other general meetings."

Dr. Bella Verkhovsky says: " I like it and I look forward to these meetings to discuss various topics related to women in general"

Dr. Rexdale states that she likes these meetings because she could openly discuss women's emotional

and family issues.

I, as chairperson of this committee enjoyed organizing these meetings. Not only did I enjoy the discussions which are intellectually and emotionally stimulating and refreshing, I would like to thank Rosanne Center from Smith Kline Beecham for arranging refreshments and special thanks to Elenor Gross, the librarian, for literature search.

All female Psychiatrists are welcome to attend these meetings. I encourage all female Psychiatrists to become APA members. Please contact me at 845-364-2467 for more information.

Our next meeting is scheduled on Monday, April 30th, 2001 at the Robert Yeager Mental Health Center, Building F Conference Room. Topic: Menopause and Hormonal treatment - Dr. Bella Verkhovsky will be bringing article for discussion. ▲

Bharati Palkhiwala, M.D.

## Synapse Wins Again!

*Synapse wins the APA newsletter of the year award again!! This is the fourth Newsletter of the Year award for Synapse. This is in addition to several honorable mentions and continuing excellence awards. This year the awards were given in different categories from previous years. The award winners were evaluated against other newsletters of comparable size. We won in the 12 page and under category and competed against considerably larger district branches such as the newsletter of entire state of Texas.*

**The Editors**

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