

Fall 2011-Winter 2012

Greetings and Happy New Year.

I trust you had an enjoyable summer with some refreshing vacation time, a fruitful fall, and a joyful Advent Season as we celebrated the birth of our Lord.

This is our first newsletter since the APA in Hawaii. We had a great time together and once again were challenged to think about integrating our faith with our psychiatric practice.

One of the aspects to our meetings at the APA that I particularly enjoy is the international dimension. Being in Hawaii this year brought that to the fore even more. It is amazing to think of the wide variety of cultures that exist now and that have existed down through all the generations of humanity, and to think of God's love and relevance to all of them. What a challenge for us, though, to remember the wide diversity of perspectives and cultures.

The upcoming APA in Philadelphia (May 2012) is our 50th anniversary as a Psychiatry Section and we are planning to make it a celebration. We are trying to contact as many past presidents as we can to get gems of wisdom and will be presenting these at the APA. Think about joining us for this big birthday of our section.

We have tried in this newsletter to include some of the content of the presentations so that you would have some meat to chew on. We would welcome any thoughts or reflections in response to this. We have also included testimony from new members as we were struck by the power of the stories as we read them, brief as they were, on the application forms. It is really quite amazing to think of God constantly at work in peoples' lives, as I'm sure each of us have experienced in our journey to Him and our journey deeper into Him. We would love to hear from you any ways that you think our section could be of help to you.

In this New Year, may God bless each one of you as you labor to bring His love to the many people you touch each day.

Nadine Nyhus, M.D.

Chair, CMDA, Psychiatry Section



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Welcome New Members

Currently in Practice—Dr. Joe Bates (Tyler TX), Dr. Jose Mathews (Chicago IL)

Residents --- Dr. Sara Clark (University of Washington), Dr. Esther Lee (UC Irvine).

It is always a pleasure to know what brings members to the Psychiatry Section. With permission we wanted to share them with you!

Dr. Bates writes: "I have been a Physician for over 45 years--5 years in the Army, 20 years as a Pediatrician, 20 years a Psychiatrist. My current church affiliation is Methodist, but I grew up in a Baptist Church. At age 5 in a Training Union Program, I stood up dressed in white with a toy stethoscope and said the lines I had memorized, "I am a Christian doctor. Many people need doctors to help them when they are sick and to tell them about God, so they can love and serve Him, too." It was over 65 years ago that I recited these words, but I remember the event as if it were yesterday. This idealistic message has been a guiding principle in my professional and personal life, though I know I fall short most of the time. I consider it a great honor to be a part of the Psychiatry Section of the Christian Medical and Dental Association."

Dr. Jose Mathews writes:

"I was brought up as a devout Roman Catholic. In High School due to a direct assault on my faith by my biology teacher promoting Darwinism, I reluctantly found my faith destroyed. About the time I graduated from Medical School, I chanced to read some books ably defending the Christian faith, especially against Darwinism. Gradually I recovered my faith and found myself growing into a Biblical Christian. I accepted Jesus as my personal Savior and tried to integrate as best as I could my beliefs and my profession."

Sara Clark's Pastor writes: Sara is serving faithfully, not only as a member...but also as one of our Biblical counselors leading a Redemption Group which offers Biblical counsel in a group environment for those struggling with abuse, addictions, and trials of all sorts. I would be delighted for Sara to have the opportunity to network with other Christian psychiatrists and I hope that her involvement might even.....help us continue to mature our Biblical counseling ministries in the church.

Executive Committee for 2010-2012

Chair: Nadine Nyhus, MD of Cambridge, Ontario, Canada

Vice Chair: John Yarbrough, MD of Stockton, CA

Secretary-Treasurer: Sam Thielman, MD of Frankfurt, Germany

Past President: John Peteet, MD of Boston, MA

Resident Liaison: Esther Lee, MD of Los Angeles, CA

The CMDA Psychiatry Section Constitution Article V, Section 5 states that "any office may be filled by the executive committee when vacant." We wish to thank Dr. Rachel Ward for her time as our Resident Liaison and hope she is having a wonderful time as a new mom. Special thanks to Dr. Esther Lee for her willingness to step into this role.

Missing our Members

Recently some mail has been returned from addresses we have for members. If you know these folks, please tell them we miss them and to contact the Psych Section Office to update their information: Dr. Douglas Waldrep, Dr. Stephen Brannan.

REPORT FROM THE SEXUALITY TASK FORCE

At the 2010 APA Annual Meeting the CMDA Psychiatry Section struck a task force to consider proposed changes to the DSM in categories involving sexuality. This was in the context of being asked to endorse a letter of concern written by Focus on the Family. The changes of concern included:

- *creating a distinction between paraphilic disorders and paraphilias
- *changing "Gender Identity Disorder" to "Gender Incongruence"

As members discussed the letter at the APA it became clear that this was a topic that required more thought so the task force was struck to consider issues around the intersection of Christian theology and sexuality including these changing psychiatric diagnoses. The task force presentation noted that the proposed changes to the paraphilia categories could be argued to be more inclusive in that they are advocating a paraphilia "identifier" even if there is no identified patient distress or impairment. Likewise the change in pedophilia to pedohebephilia could be seen as more inclusive in that it considers sexual attraction to children of an older age to be part of the disorder.

Stepping back from the DSM, task force members noted that another issue relevant to the APA's posture in regard to sexuality is its stand against change therapy. How can the APA hold this position when it seems to violate "client-centered care?" And what is our response as Christians?

Our modern society at large has adopted same-sex sex as "natural." However, the Bible contains injunctions that call homosexual sex a sin. Thus, there is a dilemma and Christians are not agreed on whether or how these verses should be applied to today.

From an historical perspective, homosexuality as an alternate lifestyle is a unique phenomenon. As Yarhouse and Jones point out in Ex-gays? A Longitudinal Study of Religiously Mediated Change in Sexual Orientation, (IVP Academic, 2007, p. 34) "This is the first culture throughout history in which a substantial number of individuals have said of themselves, 'I am gay.' A number of historical factors appear to have contributed to this point in time when the emergence of a gay community was even a possibility." The sexual revolution was a necessary event in getting to where we are today. However, how do people go from saying homosexuality is a valid alternate lifestyle to outlawing change therapy? This is where one's a-priori assumptions come in. There are 2 key conflicting philosophical views of sexual orientation, the **ESSENTIALIST** and the **CONSTRUCTIONIST** views.

1. The basic essentialist view is that there are discrete TYPES of sexual orientation, heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual, and that these are "natural human kinds" that can be found in other cultures and throughout history.
2. Constructionists, in contrast, believe that the categories of heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual are terms "that reflect linguistic constructs that capture certain culturally derived meanings about sexual behavior." (Ex-gays? p29)

A strong form of essentialism begins with a premise that the three categories of sexual orientations are universal; that is they exist across all cultures and throughout history. Then, built upon this, is the premise that sexual orientation is a "real thing" or essence. Third, this essence is presumed to be at the core of one's very self as a human being and thus defines who one is as a person. Finally, a natural extension of this is that same-sex behavior is the rightful outworking of one's "real" essence. Same-sex behavior is a moral good of critical importance for those who experience same-sex attraction, if they are to fully self-actualize.

An important issue for the church is that there is a lack of explicit ownership of the philosophical assumptions that underpin essentialism and a lack of discussion of evidence from the behavioral sciences that would support such a philosophical stance. Many authors and researchers just assume it to be true. It is striking that the Kinsey Reports, a driving force in the sexual revolution, would not support an essentialist view of sexual orientation. Kinsey reported that homosexual attractions and behaviors occur on a continuum and that men who do not consider themselves homosexually oriented experience some same sex attraction.

Constructionists note that the conflation of homosexual orientation and sexual identity does not leave room for those who choose to understand themselves primarily in light of something other than their sexual orientation, such as who they are "in Christ." Mark Yarhouse (Homosexuality and the Christian, Bethany House, 2010, Ch. 2) challenges the church to step up to the plate by encouraging an exploration of the presuppositions underlying the "gay script" offered in our society and to offer an alternative script that roots identity primarily in Christ.

Warren Throckmorton and Mark Yarhouse have developed a nuanced framework for change therapy (www.sitframework.com) that has been endorsed by the American Psychological Association, the organization that outlawed change therapy before the APA did. The presentation concluded with a challenge to members, "Who better than us to become equipped to offer change therapy to those who seek it?"



PEOPLE in the NEWS

In May, **Dr. Rosa Lewis** attended the American Psychiatric Convention in Hawaii, to help in the booth of the Psychiatric Section and offer her expertise in Spanish. There were visitors from all over the world, and many opportunities to share faith and hope in Christ. Rosa has been helping in the booth for several years and everyone loves her and we wish to thank her again!! We also wish to thank **Drs. Ford and Heather Shippey**, CMDA members in Honolulu for opening their lovely home overlooking the ocean for a Psychiatry Section Social. Also we thank **Dr. Albert Gaw** for speaking at our Banquet and pressing on in spite of the Polynesian dancers overhead.

The Psychiatry Section was well-represented at **CMDA's Women in Medicine & Dentistry (WIMD) conference** held in September in Scottsdale AZ. About 120 women physicians including 17 medical students attended. **Dr. Nadine Nyhus** presented two lectures, "The Power and Stealth of Trauma in Mental Health," and "When Forgetting What Lies Behind Does NOT Help Us Press Onward in Christ." We got great feedback on the professional and personal value of her talks. **Dr. Kerry Williams**, who is completing child & adolescent psych fellowship at Brown, also attended. I (**Leslie Walker**) was one of the conference co-chairs, and will be taking over as WIMD chair in April 2012. Our next national meeting is Sept 27-30, 2012, at Sawmill Creek Resort in Huron OH, on Lake Erie west of Cleveland. We would LOVE to see more women in the Psych Section attend and participate. The majority of the attendees are primary care docs who are very interested in psychiatry topics because they spend so much of their time treating psychiatric illness. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested in speaking in 2012, or in September 2013 in Dallas. ~**Leslie Walker MD** (leslie.s.walker@case.edu).

There was a small but warm gathering of CMDA members at the **58th Annual AACAP** meeting in Toronto on Thursday, October 20, 2011. Present were **Robert Wilson**, who practices in Erie, PA, and his wife **Kim Wilson**, **Doug Murphy** who practices in rural California, **Julie Sadhu** who is newly on faculty at Northwestern in Chicago, and **Paul Glaser** who practices at the University of Kentucky. We enjoyed Greek Mediterranean Seafood at Volos restaurant and discussed topics such as how to bring up faith issues that would help our patients and their families, and what the Bible has to say about bringing up children. God blessed our gathering. Missed especially was long time attendee Dr. Allan Josephson. ~report by **Paul Glaser**.

Notes we have received:

....**From Dr. George Harding IV**: Loma Linda School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry and the General Conference of Seventh Day Adventists were pleased to offer "Heal One Mind, Heal the World", a conference on Emotional Health and Wellness, in the month of October. Presenters included Dr. Harding, Dr Harold Koenig of Duke Univ., Ken Pargament, PhD of Bowling Green Univ., Dr. Jorge Rodriguez of the World Health Organization, and David Williams, PhD of Harvard.

... **From Dr. John Raney**: This year the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) held their annual convention in Phoenix, Arizona from November 4th to 6th. It featured some great speakers including, Dr. Nicholas Cummings, a past president of the American Psychological Association. He is also the co-editor of Destructive Trends in Mental Health. This ground breaking book, which is endorsed and contributed to by other leaders in the field including two other past presidents of the American Psychological Association, informs its readers that "faulty -- even false -- science" has been used by "special interest groups" to "promote political agendas" and that "ideology trumps science at the highest levels in a supposedly empirically based professional organization."

....**From Dr. Leslie Walker**: Have you ever attended a national CMDA meeting? Please consider attending from April 26-29, 2012, at Ridgecrest NC (near Asheville). The full workshop schedule has not been announced, so there may be other Psych Section members speaking, but we know already that **Jarry Richardson MD** and **Leslie Walker MD** will be part of the Human Trafficking sequence: "Mental and Emotional Wounds of Sex Trafficking: Challenges and Hope for Recovery." Please let the Psych Section Office know if you'll be there, so we can connect by email once we know a time for Section members to meet for a meal and fellowship.

- *“Of all the psychiatric disorders, the depressive disorders have been most closely correlated with ordinary spiritual experience.” Dan Blazer, M.D., Ph.D.*

Christians often question whether depression represents a lack of faith in need of prayer, a disorder of the brain in need of medication, or a negative cognitive set in need of therapy. Christian psychiatrists need to help clarify the relationship among faith, disorders of mood and various interventions for depression.

Throughout most of history spirituality, depression and healing and were closely intertwined. Since the Enlightenment, the competing theories of Freud, behaviorists and biological psychiatrists have contributed to the current fragmentation of our profession’s perspective on depression as a disorder affecting the whole person.

In recent years medicine and psychiatry have shown greater interest in spirituality: Twelve Step spirituality is widely valued. Palliative Medicine includes spiritual care. Psychoanalysts better understand faith. Research has burgeoned into religion and health outcomes. (Most of over 100 studies show less depression among the more religious and an inverse relationship between religiosity and suicide risk). Mindfulness has become mainstream. Courses, papers and books on spirituality and health are proliferating.

Christianity and psychiatry share a number of commitments: to promoting a solid identity, realistic hope, meaningful activity, strong relationships, a mature moral life, self-awareness, balance between autonomy and relationship to authority, choice, connection to a larger context and a recognition of gaps in our human understanding. At the same time, they differ in emphases, approach and in social function: Christians focus on relationships to God and others, understanding suffering, experiencing joy and needing transformation. Believers emphasize the benefits of faith over pursuing freedom understood as autonomy. Psychiatry aims to treat and prevent mental disorders, rather than enhance one’s relationship to God.

Fruitful opportunities to collaborate exist in the areas of diagnosis (distinguishing spiritual experience from pathology), integrated treatment (incorporating spiritual approaches such as CBT, forgiveness, spiritual direction, etc.), and in delivery of care (through believing providers, links with chaplains in secular institutions, and ties between mental health professionals and churches/pastors).

Individual clinicians are concerned with their patients’ existential struggles in areas such as identity, hope, meaning/purpose, morality, and autonomy in relation to authority – struggles which require spiritual answers. Depressed individuals often experience worthlessness, loss of identity, hopelessness, meaninglessness, guilt and feelings of rejection, or ultimate aloneness – feelings which can benefit from spiritually oriented approaches.

Spiritually oriented interventions include CBT, mindfulness, humanistic, psychodynamic, interpersonal, meaning centered, and forgiveness promoting, positive psychology and spiritual direction based psychotherapy. One way to understand how these apply in the treatment of depression is to identify which existential concern(s) each spiritually oriented therapy addresses.

Christians approaching depression can usefully ask five questions:

1. Where is the problem - in my perspective on the world, or in the story of my faith?
2. Do I let God comfort me?
3. Have I asked God to heal me in the specific ways that I’m broken?
4. How can I participate in God’s healing of me, through the disciplines of abstinence and of engagement?
5. And finally, have I thanked God, and found joy in gratitude for his grace?



Join us at the **2012 APA in Philadelphia PA**

May 5-9, 2012

Concurrent with the 165th American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting.

Sunday, May 6th –Social

Monday, May 7th – Breakfast Meeting and Academic Meeting

Tuesday, May 8th –Breakfast Meeting and 50th anniversary Banquet

Wednesday, May 9th – Integration Seminar

All meetings will be at the Hilton Garden Inn Philadelphia City Center
1100 Arch Street | Philadelphia, PA 19107

For registration information, visit www.cmda.org/psychiatry.

Calling all Members and Past Presidents:

Share your remembrances of the Psych Section. In this New Year, we have a lot to be thankful for, especially for our members who allow this ministry to continue. Let's come together as the community of CMDA and give thanks for 50 years of service!

Once these are collected, we will be able to encourage and share them with the entire CMDA Psychiatry Section at our 50th Anniversary Celebration.

Email or write Sherri today at pscmda@bellsouth.net

...Think of all the wonderful things He has done for you." - 1 Samuel 12:24