

Dialectical Tensions and APS

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The Founding of the Association for Psychological Science

Part 1. Dialectical Tensions Within Organized Psychology

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ABSTRACT—The founding of the Association for Psychological Science (APS) did not represent the first time a group of psychologists broke away from the American Psychological Association, the parent association of organized psychology in the United States. In fact, the history of organized psychology is replete with examples of splinter groups that sought to better represent the needs and interests of their specific constituencies. All of these breakaway efforts have occurred amid intradisciplinary tensions—the continual push and pull between unity on the one hand and autonomy on the other—that reflect some of the enduring challenges of the field. A historical examination of this dialectic provides a useful framework within which to understand the founding of the APS, its most recent instantiation.

The founding of the Association for Psychological Science (APS) did not represent the first time a group of psychologists broke away from the American Psychological Association (APA), which was for all intents and purposes the parent association of American organized psychology¹ (Camfield, 1973). The history of the APA is replete with examples of breakaway groups that sought to represent the needs and interests of distinct constituencies, either in opposition or as a supplement to the APA. Although it is to some extent an oversimplification, it can be said that most of the tensions and divisions have been between research and academic psychologists and those engaged in clinical practice (Dewsbury & Bolles, 1995). Breakaway efforts throughout the APA's history reflect some of the perennial challenges of our field—those of self-identity and the related challenge of maintaining an umbrella organization that meets the needs of an ever-diversifying and ever-expanding discipline.

These challenges may be viewed as reflecting a dialectic—a continual push and pull between unity on the one hand and fragmentation and autonomy on the other. There are obvious advantages to having a unitary voice and organizational structure for psychology. But the discipline of psychology is far from being a monolithic entity (Kimble, 1984; Spence, 1987), and certain constituencies at various times have found either increased unity or increased autonomy to be more advantageous. One can think of this as something of a cost–benefit analysis in which a tipping point is reached at the place where a particular constituency is better served by one or the other of these forces.

An understanding of how this dialectic has played out within organized psychology over its history may be helpful to understanding the significance of the

advent of the APS. This article is the first of two in a series that examines the founding of the APS; it deals with the history of these dialectical tensions.

These tensions reached a tipping point in the late 1980s, when events were set into motion that would precipitate the founding of the APS. Accordingly, the present research has been driven, both conceptually and literally, by a question that speaks to this issue of the tipping point: Reorganization was broached many times over the years, but a tipping point was reached in the late 1980s; what factors led to this tipping point? This tipping point and the events it triggered are the topic of the second article.

This research is based on data derived from primarily four sources: The APA Papers at the Library of Congress, the APA Archives, and the APS, which provided me with archival materials that will be formally preserved at the Archives of the History of American Psychology. In addition, I interviewed 17 individuals who were involved in the founding as well as the events that led up to the founding of APS.²

ORGANIZED PSYCHOLOGY AND THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

This story begins with the founding of the APA on July 8, 1892, as a learned society (Dennis & Boring, 1952; Fernberger, 1932; Sokal, 1992). From its inception, the APA's membership comprised subsets of individuals differing in terms of training, interests, and vocation. Michael Sokal (1992) has pointed out that, ironically, the APA did a great deal in its first decade to further the development of philosophy, and many experimental psychologists lamented the significant presence of philosophers in the Association. This was, at least in part, a reason that a prestigious group of experimental

psychologists, led by E. B. Titchener, formed a separate association called the Experimentalists in 1904 (Boring, 1938, 1967; Goodwin, 1985).

To be sure, Titchener's Experimentalists did not represent the first breakaway effort in the APA's history. Lightner Witmer (1867–1956), a charter member of the APA, was frustrated by the format of the annual meeting, which he considered inhospitable to experimental psychologists. In 1898, he led a vain attempt to form a separate and exclusive society for experimentalists (Goodwin, 1985). Presumably concerned that Witmer's proposal was tantamount to "an open strike" against the APA (Titchener, 1898, as cited in Goodwin, 1985, p. 386), Titchener moved to thwart its success. Nevertheless, Titchener that same year put forth a counterproposal to Witmer's idea, envisaging "informal friendly gatherings of experimentalists by personal invitation, at the leading laboratories, year by year, the inviter presiding" (Titchener, 1898, as cited by Goodwin, 1985, p. 386); his plan was realized 6 years later.³ Never formally incorporated, the Experimentalists "had accepted Titchener's will instead of by-laws"⁴ (Boring, 1938, p. 416). The group held informal meetings as Titchener had intended, every spring from 1904–1928, with the exception of 1918, the last year of World War I. Meetings were held on a rotating basis at various eastern laboratories (e.g., Cornell, Harvard, and Clark). The director of the hosting institution sent out invitations and organized the meeting, "often with much more help from Titchener than the host expected" (Goodwin, 2003, p. 2). Women were excluded, as it was believed that their emotionality prevented them from tolerating harsh intellectual exchanges (Goodwin, 2003). The basic structure of the meetings remained constant: the men discussed works in progress, conferred about difficulties, and considered feedback and suggestions (Boring, 1938; Goodwin, 2003).

Published proceedings of the meetings were sporadic and general, and no formal minutes were taken (Goodwin, 2003).

The APA membership grew at a rapid pace (see Figure 1), which alarmed the Council, who had conceived the society more narrowly. Although the formation of the American Philosophical Association in 1902 reassured members that philosophers would not dominate the association, a growing number of institutions (e.g. schools for the feeble-minded) began hiring psychologists (Sokal, 1992). After the turn of the century, the Council instituted a policy of exclusivity, continually tightening its membership criteria (Evans, 1992). This pattern continued, with little impact on growth, throughout the next two decades (see Figure 1; Fernberger, 1943). Nevertheless, despite these concerns, the Association played an important role for psychologists, providing annual meetings and a center of gravity for the discipline (Sokal, 1992).

ORGANIZED PSYCHOLOGY AND WORLD WAR I

WWI contributed to psychology's progress, both as a science and profession (Camfield, 1992). Largely through the mobilization efforts of APA President Robert Yerkes (1876–1956), psychologists demonstrated that psychological science had great utility. At the annual meeting of Titchener's Experimentalists on April 6, 1917, 2 days after the United States had declared war, Yerkes secured support for the idea of promoting psychology's relevance to military service (Camfield, 1992; Yerkes, 1918). Wanting to enlist the support of the entire profession but realizing that Titchener's group was controversial, Yerkes decided that he would next appeal directly to the APA Council as APA president, without mention of The Experimentalists (Camfield, 1992):

...Our knowledge and our methods are of importance to the military service of our country, and it is our duty to cooperate to the fullest extent and immediately toward to increased efficiency of our Army and Navy. ...We should act at once as a professional group as well as individually. (Yerkes, 1918, p. 86)

Yerkes ultimately secured the support of the Council, which authorized the appointment by Yerkes of chairmen to serve on 12 committees created to facilitate the war effort.

Many of these subcommittees would become subcommittees of the psychology committee of the National Research Council, which was formed to “organize and, in a general way, supervise psychological research and service in the present emergency” (Yerkes, 1918, p. 94). Ultimately, psychologists, expressly authorized by the military, were actively involved in several significant programs during WWI, most notably those of personnel selection and intelligence testing; almost 2 million men were tested (Camfield, 1992; Samelson, 1977).

Psychologists’ war service had affirmed the importance and validity of psychological testing methods, and as a consequence, testing became very popular.⁵ Indeed, educators and businessmen acted swiftly to assimilate these new procedures to achieve their own objectives (Samelson, 1977). Wartime publicity of psychologists’ testing efforts engendered great enthusiasm in the public, and in effect, “psychology had been ‘put on the map’” (Yerkes, 1949, as cited in Samelson, 1977, p. 280). The academic standing of psychology improved as well, as evidenced by the increase in jobs, students, and resources. APA membership grew rapidly, nearly tripling between 1920 and 1930 (see Figure 1; Camfield, 1992).

EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE SCIENTIFIC BASE

The success of psychologists' efforts during WWI posed a threat to the scientific base of the association. Although applied interests were visible in the APA, the dominant core of the association, which was committed to advancing a purely academic scientific psychology, certainly did not encourage them. Much to the dismay of the APA, a small contingent of applied psychologists, led by J. E. Wallace Wallin (1876–1969) and Leta S. Hollingworth (1886–1939), established the American Association of Clinical Psychologists (AACP) in 1917. One of its stated objectives was to “aid in establishing definite standards of professional fitness for the practice of psychology” (AACP, 1918, as cited in Routh, 1994, p. 169). Above all, the formation of AACP was an attempt to establish a means by which the public could identify legitimate applied psychologists, as opposed to the “charlatans” who proliferated in the wake of WWI (Benjamin, 1977, p. 726).

Establishing professional standards and legitimacy were valid objectives for applied psychologists. Indeed, at this time, the field of clinical psychology was relatively immature and largely undefined (Cautin, 2006): There was no licensing or certification within the field, and thus anyone could refer to himself or herself as a “psychologist” (Routh, 2000). Nevertheless, the APA resisted assuming such responsibilities because they were inconsistent with the objectives of the organization and because doing so might “lower its standards and weaken its claim to scientific status” (Samelson, 1992, p. 124).

Unsurprisingly, the formation of the AACP prompted an ad hoc meeting of the APA, which “was characterized by a rather acrimonious debate, the majority of the speakers being bitterly opposed to the formation of another association, which they

regarded as separatistic [*sic*] in nature and a threat to the prosperity of the parent association” (Wallin, 1961, as cited in Routh, 1994, p. 18). Disputes between the AACP and the APA continued until 1919, at which time it was agreed that the AACP would be supplanted by a Clinical Section within the APA (Routh, 1994; Symonds, 1946). This was a strategic decision, as excluding practitioners from the organization would involve “hand[ing] over control to others, most likely state legislatures, who might create rules for everybody, including APA members” (Samelson, 1992, p. 124). As part of the compromise, the APA would undertake the task of certifying psychologists involved in applied work (Routh, 1994).

Certification Effort

In 1921, the APA Council appointed a Standing Committee on Certification of Consulting Psychologists to devise certification procedures for consulting psychologists; Frederic L. Wells (1884–1964) was named its chairman (Boring, 1922; Fernberger, 1932; Routh, 1994). Among other proposals, the committee recommended that a Section of Consulting Psychologists be formed for those certified by the committee. The use of the term “clinical psychology” with respect to certification would be discontinued because “it is not representative of the functions of the section contemplated” (Boring, 1922, p. 74). All current members of the Clinical Section would rightfully be members of the new section so long as they paid the requisite \$35 fee. Others could seek certification by submitting to the committee’s review of their qualifications (Boring, 1922). In 1926, a Committee on Certification Policy, chaired by Margaret Floy Washburn (1871–1939), was appointed to “study the effectiveness of the entire plan of certification and to ascertain the sentiment of the Association with regard to certification” (Fernberger, 1927,

p. 141). A mail vote indicated a strong preference among the membership to continue certification. Accordingly, the Committee on Certification Policy recommended that certification be continued. However, in defiance of the committee's recommendation, the APA Council of Directors dismissed the committee and eliminated certification in 1927 (Samelson, 1992). In the 1926 report of the Standing Committee, Frederic L. Wells expressed dismay and doubt regarding the Association's commitment to practice issues:

The constituted objects of the Association are scientific, and this places it at a partial disadvantage in the maintenance of professional standards. ...It is an open question whether the corporate resolution of a scientific group such as this one, without strong personal or professional interests at stake, can be counted on for effective opposition to the energy and resources which would be mustered by a colleague charged with misconduct and his professional life to fight for. One can see in this an argument for the organization of the psychological profession into a group distinct from the present one. (Fernberger, 1927, p. 149)

The committee only ever certified 25 psychologists (Routh, 1994). Notwithstanding the seemingly high standards required for certification⁶ (Fernberger, 1932), this vain attempt to establish a certification program reflected above all the priorities and power of the APA Council (Samelson, 1992); it also foreshadowed the myriad breakaway efforts of the 1930s.

Associate Membership Status

The APA tried to include and at the same time control the growing number of practicing psychologists. To this end, the Council established an Associate membership class in 1925. To be an associate member, one had to hold a PhD in psychology or be

engaged in primarily psychological work. In contrast, for member status, one had to have “published research beyond the doctoral dissertation” (Fernberger, 1927, as cited in Samelson, 1992, p. 127). Associates did not have the right to vote, hold office, or take the floor at annual meetings (Samelson, 1992). Franz Samelson (1992) has noted that adding the associate class moved the character of the APA from “that of a self-proclaimed scientific elite group in the direction of that of a mass organization” (p. 127). Nevertheless, the APA leadership was pleased that it was able to incorporate the practitioners while not compromising the association’s membership standards. For some, however, the accommodations made in this effort were untenable: In 1929, 2 years after Titchener’s death, the Experimentalists reorganized into the Society for Experimental Psychologists (SEP; Boring, 1938, 1967; Goodwin, 2005).

The new SEP represented Titchener’s group in “spirit, purpose, and accomplishment” (Boring, 1938, p. 418), maintaining informal meetings and a relatively narrow definition of experimental psychology,⁷ which excluded mental tests, educational psychology, and abnormal psychology from the field. There were noteworthy differences, however. The SEP was a more formal organization, adopting bylaws and an official name. It also discontinued the exclusionary policy regarding women, at least in theory (Goodwin, 2003). And, modeling itself on the “academy plan,” the SEP limited its membership to a small number (not to exceed 50) of notable experimental psychologists (Boring, 1938, p. 418), thereby discontinuing Titchener’s practice of inviting promising young graduate students.

Ultimately, some younger experimentalists, feeling shut out of this forum and dissatisfied with the APA, would engage in what S.S. Stevens (1974) referred to as the

“youth-fired rebellion organized in 1936” (as cited in Benjamin, 1977, p. 542). They proposed the formation of a Society of Experimenting Psychologists, a name clearly intended as an insult to the Society of Experimental Psychologists (Benjamin, 1977). The group, whose name was eventually changed to the Psychological Round Table (PRT), provided an informal forum for reporting on and debating current research; work already published was not discussed (Benjamin, 1977). The PRT evidenced some of the undemocratic principles characteristic of Titchener’s Experimentalists (Benjamin, 1977; Goodwin, 2003): Membership in the PRT was by invitation only and restricted to young men actively engaged in research (women were not invited). In fact, in an effort to prevent “the accumulation of dead wood,” members were excluded once they reached the age of 40⁸ (Wendt, Note 3, as cited in Benjamin, 1977, p. 543). The PRT was considered extremely productive, for it not only provided the opportunity for members to stay current within the field, but also served as a laboratory for new ideas. In fact, as Benjamin (1977) observed, many of its members claimed that the PRT meetings contributed to the emergence of American cognitive psychology.

THE 1930S AND CENTRIFUGAL FORCES WITHIN ORGANIZED PSYCHOLOGY

As the APA made continual efforts to control the composition of its membership, professional psychology continued to flourish. Many independent organizations proliferated in the 1930s as a growing number of practicing psychologists and those interested in social issues continued to feel their needs unmet by the APA. Although the bylaws of the APA designated “the advancement of psychology as a science” as the

organization's central purpose, about a third of the APA membership was employed outside of research and academia (Samelson, 1992).

During the 1920s, many state and regional psychological associations were formed to enable professional psychologists to confer on issues of common interest. The New York State Association of Consulting Psychologists, the largest of the state associations, united with several other state psychological organizations in 1930 to form the Association of Consulting Psychologists (ACP). The ACP was the first national organization for practicing psychologists (Benjamin & Baker, 2004). In 1933, it published a code of ethics, and in 1937 it established what was likely the first journal dedicated to professional psychology: the *Journal of Consulting Psychology*.⁹ Despite its efforts to engage professional psychologists from other regions of the country, the ACP remained largely a New York organization (Benjamin & Baker, 2004).

In 1937, many of these professional groups, including the ACP, merged to become the American Association for Applied Psychology (AAAP), and the Clinical Section of the APA disbanded (Routh, 1994); many of the leaders and members of the AAAP were also members of the APA. The AAAP established a formal affiliation with the APA beginning in 1938, demonstrating that its establishment was not meant as a secession from the APA, but rather as a complement to it (Paterson, 1940). Clearly, however, the APA itself was not meeting the needs of a growing constituency of applied psychologists.

WORLD WAR II AND CENTRIPETAL FORCES WITHIN ORGANIZED PSYCHOLOGY

With competing psychological organizations abounding in the late 1930s, there was a threat that APA would not remain psychology's umbrella organization. As it would happen, however, WWII represented a major centripetal force that would lead to a reformulated and (at least seemingly) unified APA. Academic purists and applied psychologists joined forces in a professional effort to serve their country during wartime. And Robert Yerkes again capitalized on these circumstances to persuade the separate societies within the discipline to unite under one reformulated umbrella organization: the APA (Wolfle, 1946).

Prior to 1945, the APA was a relatively simple organization dominated by the interests of academic scientific psychologists: It was run by the voluntary services of its members and primarily focused on its annual conventions and scientific journals (Capshew & Hilgard, 1992). The reorganization of 1945 marked a turning point in the Association's history, and one can see the beginning of a major shift in the balance of power between the Association's basic scientists and its practitioners. As will become clear, this disparity in power would only grow over the subsequent decades.

The APA's new charter identified its mission as "the advancement of psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare" (Wolfle, 1946, p. 3), and thus academics could no longer dismiss practitioners' concerns as not being relevant to the Association's objectives. Also, with the reorganization came a much larger and more bureaucratically complex institution; an appreciation of this complexity is important in understanding how power shifted within the organization.

The new bylaws established a Council of Representatives as the legislative body of the APA (Wolfle, 1946). The composition of The Council would carry strong

implications for the organization's agenda and policies. Despite much controversy¹⁰ (American Psychological Association Policy & Planning Board, 1959; Doll, 1946), a divisional structure was established, with divisions playing a major role in the functioning of the organization (see Dewsbury, 1997). In addition, the new bylaws recognized state associations and allowed for their affiliation with the APA. This would also have important implications for the balance of power in the organization, as state associations became more and more representative of practitioners' interests and concerns; in 1957, state associations secured direct representation on the Council (Crawford, 1992).¹¹ By that time, the Council was comprised of representatives from each of the divisions, geographical districts and the state associations. The Association's officers and six additional elected members of the Council composed the Board of Directors, which was the "administrative agent" of the Association; all matters brought to the Council were vetted by the Board (Wolfle, 1946, p. 5). The complexity of the new APA meant that the voluntary services of members would be insufficient to run the organization; a Central Office staff was therefore established.

This newly reformulated APA restored a semblance of unity to the field of psychology, but this unity was more apparent than real. As E.G. Boring (1949) noted, "whatever happens to us, APA is going to remain a huge organism with two heads, a professional and a scientific" (as cited in Capshew & Hilgard, 1992).

DIALECTICAL TENSION AND THE BALANCE OF POWER WITHIN THE APA: 1945–1970S

As will become clear, the two-headed organism Boring described would see significant changes in the decades to come. WWII had an enormous impact on

psychology and on professional psychology in particular. As factors internal and external to the APA increased the power of the practice community, the divergence of the agendas of the Association's two major constituencies would become increasingly problematic.

WWII, Professional Psychology, and Changing Demographics

Wartime not only provided the opportunity for the discipline of psychology to demonstrate its practical value, but the casualties of war produced an unprecedented need for psychological services. More and more psychologists began marketing their expertise to a receptive public, building momentum for what was becoming a fast-growing and bona fide profession (Benjamin & Baker, 2004).

This rapid professionalization of the discipline post-WWII was documented in a 1963 paper by Robert Tryon. Tryon offered evidence of the degree of professionalization taking place in psychology. He tallied the occupations of a sample of psychology PhDs for the years 1940, 1959, and 1962. Table 1 illustrates the trend toward more and more professionalization, with 1962 being the first year that PhDs in nonacademic positions outnumbered those in academia. Tryon further noted that not all psychologists working in academic occupations were doing so within departments of psychology; in fact, two thirds of PhDs worked outside of psychology departments.

Tryon (1963) also illustrated the degree of professionalization within the field by showing the relative expansion of those APA divisions that include the greatest numbers of professionals. Figure 2 displays summary data from Tryon's table in which he showed membership totals for 1948 and 1960 for the APA divisions. He divided the divisions into three categories: the most heavily academic divisions, those most professional, and a middle category of those whose memberships contain significant numbers of both

academics and professionals. His summary comparisons revealed that the most academic divisions increased by 54%, whereas the more professional increased by three times as much (176% and 149% for the academic/professional and the professional categories, respectively). Tryon also cited the increasing fragmentation of the field as evidenced by an expanding number of APA divisions. He wrote, “To the outsider, the annual convention is a veritable Tower of Babel, with many concurrent sessions of the many divisions” (Tryon, 1963, p. 134).

The rapidly increasing professionalization of psychology was a fact reflected in the changing demographics of the APA membership. These changes did not go unnoticed by the organization’s scientific community, whose powerbase was diminishing with each successive decade.

Dissatisfaction of Scientific Community

As practitioners gained power and presence within the APA, scientifically-oriented psychologists were becoming increasingly disaffected. Their dissatisfaction pertained to many aspects of the Association’s structure and functioning. One particular source of frustration, however, was the annual convention. A prominent group of experimental psychologists was becoming more and more irritated with what they perceived to be an inappropriate and inadequate forum for discussing their work. According to Dewsbury and Bolles (1995), a further provocation was the decision by the APA in 1959 to exclude the use of slides at that year’s convention. Bill Estes recounted the following:

More than any one incident or action, that decision alarmed the experimental psychologists, who saw it carrying the message that the APA was entering a rapid

process of dissociating itself from the support of the scientific portion of the convention. (Dewsbury & Bolles, 1995, p. 223)

A group of prominent experimentalists in 1959 established the Psychonomic Society. Its primary goal was to provide a relatively informal venue in which to discuss experimental findings and communicate scientific information. Similar in nature to the SEP and PRT, the Psychonomic Society was to function as a scientific society in ways its founders felt had been abandoned by the APA.

The Albee Commission: 1966–1967

More and more scientifically oriented psychologists would grow disaffected, as demographic and structural changes within the APA and developments outside of the organization served to augment the power of the practice community. In this regard, a 1966 Commission¹² chaired by George Albee (1921–2006) is worth mentioning. In addition to advocating a Division of State Associations (Division 31; Albee, 1968), the Albee Commission led to a significant change in the allocation of representatives on the Council. Now each APA member had the opportunity to allocate 10 votes to the divisions and state associations of his or her choosing. Seats on the Council were distributed proportionally to the number of votes received, with only those divisions receiving at least 1% of the votes cast receiving seats.

Before the Albee Commission, a division's seats on the Council were determined as a function of division members. This formula included a “damping down” factor, which may best be understood by example:

...there is one representative when the members of the Association who are members of the division is 0.5–0.99% of the membership of the Association

(excluding associates), but only 6 representatives when the division contains 11–15.99% of the members of the Association. (Eichorn, 1967, p. 7)

The new method established by the Albee Commission eliminated this damping-down factor; this procedure favored the growing majority of practitioners.

The 1970s: A Golden Age for Practitioners

The Professional School Movement

For several reasons, the 1970s may be considered a Golden Age for psychologist-practitioners. The professional school movement greatly contributed to the momentum of the growing practice community. It primarily grew out of the concern that the traditional scientist-practitioner model of training was graduating too many psychologists inadequately trained to do clinical work (Stricker & Cummings, 1992). An alternative model of training was thus proposed, along with a new degree—the PsyD—both of which were affirmed at a training conference in Vail, CO, in 1973 (Korman, 1976). The first free-standing professional school of psychology was established in CA in 1970, and within a decade, there were almost 30 in operation (Cummings, 1979). The number of doctorates granted by these programs would steadily increase and by 1997 would outpace those granted from traditional programs (Benjamin & Baker, 2004).

Advocacy

Another important force emerged in the early 1970s, when leaders in the practice community began organizing politically, initially outside of the APA, to advocate on behalf of their constituency. According to Cummings (1979), it was the omission of psychologists as providers under Medicare and Medicaid that provided impetus for the political organization of professional psychologists. In response to this exclusion, the

Council for the Advancement of the Psychological Professions and Sciences (CAPPS) was independently incorporated in 1972 by Rogers Wright, Nicholas Cummings, and Ernest Lawrence, who formulated a governance structure for the new organization and devised plans for subsidizing its efforts (Pallak, 1992; Wright, 2001). In 1974, a second independent lobbying organization, the Association for the Advancement of Psychology (AAP), was established with the support of the APA. Their mission statement was as follows:

[to] promote human welfare through the advancement of the science and profession of psychology by the promotion of the interest of all psychology; by the representation of psychology before public and governmental bodies, by seeking out and contributing to the passage of important social and psychological issues in current legislation and to advocate to the legislative, judicial and executive branches of government the ethical and scientific views of the American Psychological Community. (Association for the Advancement of Psychology, 1977, p. 1, as cited in DeLeon, O'Keefe, VandenBos, & Kraut, 1982)

In 1976, the AAP merged with the CAPPS (under the name AAP and with an annual subsidy from the APA) to represent to Capital Hill the interest of all psychologists (Pallak 1992).

In addition, by the mid-1970s, there was growing enthusiasm within the APA for taking a more active role in issues of public policy. Doing so was seen as critical both because it would have the effect of buttressing the profession and because psychology had “something to offer” the public (Pallak, 1992, p. 249):

...At our conventions and in our journals, we pride ourselves on our...presentations and...research. Unfortunately, very few decision makers ever hear what we have to say. ...We do not spend the time and the effort necessary to convey effectively the importance of these developments to our public leaders, to those who will ultimately decide whether these discoveries will be incorporated into the mainstream... (DeLeon, 1977, as cited in Pallak, 1992, p. 249)

This perception would lead to increased APA involvement with policy issues in myriad ways (see Pallak, 1992). Thus, this decade witnessed the emergence of strong and effective political and organizational structures that were established to promote advocacy on behalf of the psychologist-practitioner community.

Statutory and Regulatory Status

By the end of the 1970s, professional psychologists had achieved a previously unseen level of legal recognition and status. It was during this time, for example, that psychologists were formally recognized as independent mental health service providers by an unprecedented number of federal and state laws and programs (Dörken, 1979). By 1977, all 50 states and the District of Columbia had legislation licensing or certifying practicing psychologists, and a *National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology* was established in 1975 to provide a listing of licensed/certified psychologist-practitioners. Psychologist-practitioners made considerable strides with respect to freedom of choice legislation, which provides individuals access to covered services from qualified psychologist-practitioners without the need for a referral or supervision of a member of another profession. By 1979, 26 states had enacted such legislation. In addition, a growing number of states had recognized psychologists as

expert witnesses (Dörken, 1979). Professional psychologists had achieved a new measure of legal validation and protection, and professional advocates would continue to labor to address the concerns of their constituency.

Practitioners' Concerns

The concerns of private practitioners centered on issues of status and autonomy. There was a growing need for practitioners to be involved in the formation of public policy and to participate in legislative and political action as they sought parity with psychiatrists and competed with other nonmedical providers of mental health services who had entered the marketplace.

Changing demographics alone would have been insufficient to create the events that precipitated the founding of the APS. Rather, these events were lent momentum by efforts on the part of a group of practitioners, who assembled an organized, powerful and politically astute leadership to push their agenda. This leadership had already formed outside of the APA in the context of the CAPPs and AAP, and now it looked to the APA for even greater support of its advocacy agenda. Here they were frustrated, for although they had achieved a greater professional balance on the Council, the Board was still dominated by academicians, and practitioners believed this was the reason their agenda items were continually assigned low priority. In 1972, the Committee of Concerned Psychologists was formed. Its self-declared aim was to “capture the APA presidency and to elect professional psychologists within the APA” (Cummings, 1979, p. 13). This group sometimes referred to themselves as “The Dirty Dozen”; their activism often involved bitter wrangling with APA leadership, and at least a few of them considered the term “dirty” to refer to the group’s willingness and ability to do “whatever it took” to push

their agenda, just as they felt the academic leadership had done for decades (Wright, 2001). This political network was highly successful, and in 1977, for the first time, a practitioner, Ted Blau, was elected to the APA Presidency. He was the first in a series of APA leaders who were private practitioners. These developments affected the scientific community because of what they meant practically and, even more so, symbolically.

Scientists' Concerns

Traditionally, the APA Presidency had been the embodiment of scientific values within the APA, and those elected to that office were expected to have made significant scientific contributions. In response to the fact that private practitioners were being elected to the APA Presidency, Stuart W. Cook, in a 1988 interview with Steven Hayes, remarked as follows:

it struck at the emotional basis of people's identification with APA [...] It was surprisingly late that people began to feel that APA was not necessary. The dues, the fractionation -- that would not have been enough. It was the change in the symbolic character of the organization. (cited in Hayes, 1988, October, p. 7)

Many scientists lamented the direction of the APA with regard to scientific values. Steve Hayes described, as an example, an empirical study of educational methods that had yielded unequivocal winners and losers. The APA nevertheless recommended that all methods used in the study receive continued funding. Steve Hayes elaborated, "[...] one of them was like a self-esteem based intervention, just telling the kids they are doing wonderful no matter what. It drove their self-esteem up, but their academic performance actually went down" (S. Hayes, personal communication, February 21, 2008).

In the minds of many, the APA had become a guild. Its leadership and agenda largely represented the practice community. In fact, a 1974 membership questionnaire indicated that the APA activities rated most important were guild issues, such as professional ethics, supporting policies and legislation benefitting professional psychologists, and disseminating knowledge to the profession (Boneau, 1976). Moreover, many scientists resented the increasing dues, as they felt their monies were funding guild issues, which were of little or no relevance to them.

In an attempt to address this concern, the Council in August 1985 approved a proposal from the practice community that would assess all members of the APA who provide health care services an additional \$50 in annual dues (Abeles, 1986; B. Welch, personal communication, April 18, 2008). This special assessment would fund advocacy efforts. A new Office of Professional Practice (OPP) was established to implement its initiatives (Abeles, 1986; Fox, 1987). Many scientists worried about the increased power and influence the special assessment would confer on the practice community. Indeed, its avowed highest priority was to bolster the state associations. It brought in more than \$1.5 million a year; some saw the OPP as a serious threat within the organization (Fowler, 1992).

There were increasing doubts that the APA could serve the needs of its scientifically oriented members. And a 1985 Report by the APA Committee on Employment and Human Resources (Howard et al., 1986) offers data that substantiates this concern. The report indicated that “those who were not employed in health-service-provider subfields represented 36% of APA Members and Fellows but 54% of those individuals resigning from the association” (Howard et al., 1986, p. 1325). The report

also indicated a declining proportion of PhD graduates joining the APA, across nearly all subfields, but the lowest rates were among those in experimental, comparative, and physiological psychology. The future of scientific psychology felt at stake. Again, Stuart Cook recalled, “Sometime ago a colleague told me ‘I’ve given up on APA’...In a special sense people did not withdraw from APA, they felt APA withdrew from them.” (Hayes, 1988, October, p. 8). As it was, the APA could no longer be considered a home to many; something had to change.

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO REORGANIZE APA: 1970S

Ever since reorganization efforts began in the early 1940s, there had been discussions about the type of organizational structure that would best accommodate the various constituencies. A persistent focus of these discussions had been the idea that the APA reorganize as a federation, with a decentralized structure allowing for distinct interest groups to function with relative autonomy (Singleton, 1977). Beginning in the early 1970s, such committees were convened with greater frequency, as tensions within the APA became increasingly palpable. Although none of these committees’ recommendations were ultimately adopted, a brief review of them serves to illustrate dialectical tensions within the organization.

/h2/Policy and Planning Board: 1972

/text/In 1972, the Policy and Planning Board, chaired by Stanley E. Seashore, published its 5-year report, containing the Board’s appraisal and recommendations regarding the organization’s structure and function. While noting that the APA membership had grown eightfold since its 1945 reorganization, the report identified a variety of concomitant problems within the Association, most notably the conflicting

interests of its increasingly diverse membership and its unwieldy legislative process.

These difficulties, according to the Board, “[made] anything but impotent compromise inevitable” (American Psychological Association Policy and Planning Board, 1972, p. 3).

The Board concluded as follows:

Despite the growth, strength, and effectiveness of the Association during recent years, it seems . . . that with the present organizational form, the Association can look forward to an erosion of its capabilities, alienation of a significant proportion of the membership, divisive rather than collaborative segmentation of the membership, and loss of capacities to respond to changing environment [*sic*].

(American Psychological Association Policy and Planning Board, 1972, p. 7)

In an effort to address these concerns, the Board recommended that the APA become a federation of autonomous societies; that is, a “diversified, decentralized association of member organizations each formed according to its dominant member needs and interests” (American Psychological Association Policy and Planning Board, 1972, p. 1). Although not the first attempt to decentralize the APA, the Policy and Planning Board’s proposal was the most explicit yet to emerge (Singleton, 1977).

Before acting upon these recommendations, the Council appointed an ad hoc Committee of Council, chaired by Robert D. Wirt. One of its tasks was to solicit membership reactions to the Policy and Planning Board’s report from representatives of the divisions and state associations (McKeachie, 1973). Only 13 divisions and 14 state associations responded to this committee’s request—a relatively low response rate attributed by the committee to a “lack of concern for the implications of the report” (Ad Hoc Committee of Council, 1973, p. 1). In fact, only two divisions and three state

associations responded in favor of the federation proposal. The Wirt Committee concluded, “perhaps with modifications, ... the current structure of APA makes possible all of the desirable features which the P&P report says a psychological organization should be measured against” (Ad Hoc Committee of Council, 1973, p. 5). At its December 1972 meeting, a representative of the Policy and Planning Board informed the Council that the committee recognized “that the idea for a federation is essentially dead, that there is a wish for psychology to speak with a unitary voice, but how to provide for it in inventive ways is still an unresolved problem” (McKeachie, 1973, p. 312). The committee’s recommendations were ultimately not adopted.

To be sure, not all constituents would abandon the idea of radical change within the APA. For example, in late 1973, the Division of Experimental Psychology (Division 3) sent a memo to the Board of Directors and the Council recommending that the Policy and Planning Board’s proposal for a federation remain on the agenda for the forthcoming Council meeting in January 1975 (Division of Experimental Psychology, 1973).

Ad Hoc Committee on APA Reorganization: 1972

At the same time that the Policy and Planning Board’s 1972 proposal was rejected, the Council created an ad hoc Committee on APA Organization, chaired by James Deese, to “present a proposal that would create an organizational structure more responsive to the will of Council” (Ad Hoc Committee on APA Organization, 1973, p. 1). The Deese committee recommended the establishment of four major boards, representing the major roles assumed by psychologists: researcher, practitioner, teacher, and contributor to public policy. At least one third of the membership of each board would be elected by the Council from among the members of the Council itself. Moreover, in an

effort to ensure continuity, it was recommended that the Board of Directors be supplanted by an Executive Committee of Council, which would be elected by the Council and would consist of the officers of the Association and eight members selected by the Council, two from each of the major boards. In 1974, the Council rejected the committee's recommendations, although the Board of Directors sent the report to the Policy and Planning Board for review (Ad Hoc Committee on APA Organization, 1973; Horai, 1978; Singleton, 1977).

Ad Hoc Committee on APA Structure, Policy and Planning Board: 1975

In response to this request, the Policy and Planning Board created an ad hoc Committee on APA structure, chaired by George W. Albee. After discussing the various sources of tensions within the APA, the committee concluded, "Professionals and scientists, and social activists as well, need each other to serve as scientific, professional, and social consciences to each other and to maintain a dynamic tension which is a condition of growth" (Ad Hoc Committee on APA Structure, 1974, p. 2). Accordingly, it flatly rejected the notion of a federation, advising that the more desirable course of action was to identify practicable solutions to internal conflicts within the existing structure. To this end, the committee offered suggestions expressly designed to appease scientists, who had largely been responsible in the preceding years for the federation movement.¹³ It was recommended, for example, that members be allowed to allocate a portion of their dues to particular programs of their choice. At its January 1975 meeting, the Council voted "to express support and approval of the spirit of the report, without mentioning specifics" (Conger, 1975, p. 637).

Ad Hoc Committee on the Organization of APA, Board of Scientific Affairs

In response to continued disaffection on the part of the APA's research and academic community, the Board of Scientific Affairs (BSA) appointed Richard Thompson to chair an ad hoc Committee on the Organization of APA.¹⁴ This committee's primary charge, according to Thompson (1977b), was "to develop a set of recommendations for the minimum alterations in the current organization and functioning of the APA that will satisfy the needs of the academic-research members and at the same time be acceptable to the major interest groups in APA" (p. 1).¹⁵ The committee's recommendations were based on three assumptions: that a unified APA was necessary and advantageous; that the proposal should embrace the "senatorial principle", which holds that the major functions of the APA (i.e. research, practice, social action), regardless of the proportions of psychologists engaged in them, should be equally represented in the Association's governance; and that any proposed organizational structure must enable major interest groups to manage their own problems without having to invest resources on matters irrelevant to their purposes. The Thompson committee called for the creation of four semiautonomous assemblies representing the major functions of psychologists: practice, research, public service, and instruction. Each assembly would be free to establish its own dues and governance structure and to publish its own journals. The committee also recommended the creation of a Board of Trustees to be the "directoriate" of the organization, which was to be composed of three members from each of the assemblies (Ad Hoc Committee on the Organization of APA, 1978). Each member would have to apply and belong to at least one assembly, although membership in more than one assembly would be permitted.

In the spring of 1978, the APA Board of Directors received the final report of the ad hoc Committee on the Organization of APA. By this time the Board had also received two other proposals for reorganization—one from then President-elect Nicholas A. Cummings (Cummings, 1977, 1978), the other from the Division of State Psychological Affairs (Division 31; Division of State Psychological Affairs, 1977). All three proposals were circulated through the APA governance. In response, the Board of Directors, at its June 1978 meeting, voted to appoint a Blue Ribbon Commission “to consider in depth the issues involved in the question of reorganization, as noted in various current reports” (Conger, 1979, p. 482).

Commission on the Organization of APA

Chaired by Kenneth E. Clark and Dorothy Eichorn, the 1978 Blue Ribbon Commission on the Organization of APA evaluated various reorganization proposals and drafted a blueprint of its own. In its assessment efforts, the Commission cataloged both the specific dissatisfactions that prompted calls for structural change and the concerns engendered by the possibility of reorganization. The Commission next determined specific criteria by which the various proposals were to be judged. Their view of an adequate organizational model was as follows:

[to] enable major interest groups to pursue more actively, and with increased responsibility, programs vital to their interests [, ...] provide an arena for the resolution of real conflicts between or among major interest groups [... and] provide a forum for dealing with matters of common interest and pursuing the agendas of constituencies whose concerns are not the particular province of any substantive interest group. (Commission on the Organization of APA, 1980, p. 9)

In addition, the commission maintained the following:

[an acceptable model would] make membership in APA more attractive to all psychologists [, ...] involve changes likely to be approved by the membership [... and] be sufficiently flexible to permit either a) evolution to meet further changes within American psychology... or b) orderly retrenchment. (Commission on the Organization of APA, 1980, p. 9)

The Commission ultimately rejected the federation and assembly models as too profoundly decentralized, noting that there was “too much risk in total dissociation” with assemblies and that there was too much “overlap in subsocieties” with federations (p. 12). At the same time, it dismissed the idea that the existing governance structure should be continued, noting evidence of great dissatisfaction and actual and potential attrition.

Accordingly, the Commission proposed, *inter alia*, that the Council be subdivided into two Sections¹⁶—one for research-academics and the other for professionals.¹⁷ Sections would meet separately to discuss their own agendas. This bifurcation would presumably obviate the need for representatives to be present for discussions of items that were of little or no concern to their constituencies. Moreover, the Commission observed, “the effect of requiring all representatives to be present at all debates reinforces the view of some that they ‘don’t belong’ in this Association” (p. 10). According to the Commission’s proposal, the Council of Representatives would remain the legislative body of the organization, and would meet in full to deal with issues of mutual concern. This was done on a trial basis, but it was abandoned in January 1984 because many Council members were attending both Sections and literally casting half-votes in each;

the entire process was slowed by redundant debates on issues of general interest (Fisher, 1988).

The five committees described here represent only a subset of the groups that worked through the early 1980s to address in one fashion or another the APA's governance structure; none of these groups produced any real or lasting change. Despite this apparent stasis, the push for reorganization would only intensify.¹⁸

In August 1984, the Council voted to create the Task Force on the Structure of APA (TFSAPA). Its charge was to study the organization of the Association and make recommendations to alleviate structural problems; Jack I. Bardon was appointed chair (Abeles, 1985). In February 1987, the TFSAPA submitted its final plan to the Council, where it was narrowly defeated (Fox, 1987). The rejection of the Bardon plan represented a tipping point that would set into motion events that would precipitate the founding of the APS, the topic of the second article in this series.

CONCLUSION

Over the course of the last century, organized psychology has witnessed various secessionist efforts, as distinct groups of psychologists sought to create new organizations more able to meet their particular needs. Early on, some experimentalists were dissatisfied with the direction taken by the APA and felt that nonexperimental concerns were paramount. Led by E.B. Titchener, a group of psychologists consequently founded The Experimentalists. In 1917, tensions emerged around the issue of the professionalization of psychology, as a contingent of practicing psychologists formed the AACP to advocate for standards in practice, an objective that conflicted with the APA's mission of furthering psychology as a science. In 1959, the Psychonomic Society was

founded, largely as a reflection of frustration on the part of a group of prominent experimentalists who felt that the APA was no longer sufficiently committed to the advancement of psychological science. This article has examined a number of other such events as well: Each of these events reflects the continual push and pull of both centrifugal and centripetal forces within the discipline. These forces have been evident in events internal to the workings of the APA as well, as numerous committees formed to examine the structure of the organization, with the presumed goal of alleviating tensions among constituencies that often had conflicting needs and goals.

These various tensions reflect a broader dialectic between unity and autonomy that has challenged the ongoing attempt to organize the discipline of psychology under a single umbrella. An understanding of this dialectic, particularly as it has played out between the interests of practitioners and scientific psychologists, provides a useful framework within which to appreciate the APS and its founding.

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Fig. 1. APA membership statistics (Data from www.apa.org/archives/yearlymembership.html).

Fig. 2. Professionalization in relation to membership growth of APA divisions (Adapted from Tryon, 1963).

¹It should be understood that references to “organized psychology” in this article refer exclusively to the discipline of psychology in the United States.

²An effort has been made, to the extent possible, to relate the perspectives of the people who participated in these events. This was somewhat more difficult in the case of those who represented the interests of practitioners, because I was less successful in arranging conversations with them. For that reason, I did my best to present their role in these events for them, because they also have a compelling story that should not be left out here.

³Goodwin (1985) explored potential reasons for the 6-year gap between the time Titchener articulated his plan for a new group (1898), and the time he implemented it (1904). Goodwin notes that although Titchener’s avowed reason for waiting was his concern for the unity of the new APA, he was not discouraged in 1904, when a significant number of his colleagues expressed serious concern over what the new group would do to the APA. Goodwin argued that Titchener’s growing sense of isolation among his peers and his increasing concerns over the status of experimental psychology were important factors in his 1904 decision.

⁴Goodwin (1985) noted that, Titchener's well-known battles with the APA notwithstanding, many experimentalists within APA at that time were dissatisfied with the Association's ability to meet their needs.

⁵Samelson's (1977) analysis casts doubt on the apparent usefulness of psychological testing during WWI, arguing that the screening out of unfit men, although perhaps of some use, was certainly not a "vital contribution" to the war effort (p. 282). He noted, in fact, that Yerkes more often spoke of what the tests could have done, rather than of what they had actually done. Moreover, following Armistice, the Army swiftly discontinued the intelligence testing of its servicemen, suggesting that it was not very certain of its value. Thus, the net result of wartime psychological testing may be summarized as follows: "if psychology had not in fact contributed to the war, the war had contributed to psychology" (Camfield, 1969, as cited in Samelson, 1977, p. 280). Samelson also described the unfortunate price for this recognition, namely the unfair labeling of particular groups of individuals as mentally deficient.

⁶During the period between WWI and WWII, many applied psychologists had master's degrees (Farreras, 2005), whereas according to Fernberger (1932), "the basic requirement [for certification] is a doctoral degree in psychology, education or medicine or equivalent qualifications" (p. 47).

⁷The SEP considered animal psychology to be a part of experimental psychology, in contrast to Titchener's "immutable conservatism, which held that experimental psychology is only a psychology of consciousness" (Boring, 1938, p. 417).

⁸Ironically, as Benjamin (1977) noted, many PRT members later became elected members of the SEP.

⁹It exists today as the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*.

¹⁰Almost from the very beginning of the establishment of the divisional structure, attempts were made to minimize the proliferation of divisions: In 1946, Edgar Doll, representing the Committee on Division Organization, proposed the reduction of the number of divisions from 18 to 8 (Doll, 1946). In 1948, Kenneth W. Spence and Clarence H. Graham, two of the founding members of the Psychonomic Society, attempted to remove the Division of Experimental Psychology (Division 3) from the APA (Dewsbury & Bolles, 1995). In 1954, the Policy and Planning Board proposed a reduction in the number of divisions from 17 to 6 (American Psychological Association Policy and Planning Board, 1954). None of these efforts was successful. In many ways, the controversy over the APA's divisional structure is a microcosm of the dialectical tensions within the organization as a whole.

¹¹Since the 1945 reorganization, state associations were represented on the Council by the Conference on State Psychological Association, which was effectively abolished in 1957, when state associations secured direct representation. This Conference was created to promote the success of the state associations and to speak on their behalf to the APA. The number of state associations almost quadrupled in size between the time of its formation and its termination (Eichorn, 1967).

¹²At this time, disagreements over the appropriateness of APA activities had been “focused upon representation on Council and, thus, ha[d] become linked with two interrelated problems – division proliferation and the increasingly unwieldy size of Council” (Eichorn, 1967, p. 1). The Council of 1966–1967 consisted of 129 voting members. Several futile attempts had been made toward resolution of these issues.

Indeed, the Board of Directors had discussed close to 30 different proposals dealing with the composition of the Council and its voting methods. The outcome of these discussions was the establishment of a special Commission on the Composition of Council, the members of which were appointed by the President from among members of the Council (Eichorn, 1967).

¹³Although its suggestions were intended to address directly scientist dissatisfaction, the committee also considered practitioner concerns. The central concern of practitioners, according to the report, was the “APA’s unresponsiveness”; the report further noted that practitioners “regard[ed] Boards [and committees] as graveyards for professional issues” (Ad Hoc Committee on APA Structure, 1974, p. 4).

¹⁴The APA’s academic-research coalition initially asked Richard Thompson to assume this responsibility; however, the BSA provided the official authorization and requisite funding (Thompson, 1977b).

¹⁵As a member of the 1976 Policy and Planning Board, Thompson was an ardent supporter of the idea that the APA reorganize as a federation, and he wrote a dissenting statement to the Board to that effect (Thompson, 1977a). Referring to this statement, Thompson nevertheless told his BSA committee, “my personal response at that time ...is not meant to constrain us” (Thompson, 1977b, p. 1).

¹⁶They were called Section A and Section 1, as opposed to A and B or 1 and 2, so as to avoid the implication of hierarchy (A. Kraut, personal communication, September 17, 2008).

¹⁷That only two sections be established was considered an initial step to be re-evaluated after an initial trial period. The model permitted an increase of up to four sections (Commission on the Organization of APA, 1980).

¹⁸In fact, data from a 1986 APA Opinion Survey indicated that changes to the APA's governing structure were desired by a majority of the membership. Seventy percent of survey respondents felt that some sort of change was necessary. Of that 70%, 40% felt a major overhaul was warranted, whereas 30% preferred minor changes. Very few respondents wanted no change or indicated they didn't care. Seventeen percent of respondents said they did not have sufficient information to have an opinion. The response rate for this survey was 74%, three times higher than that of elections, evidencing the saliency of this issue (Howard et al., 1987).