

Tipping Point and Early Years

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The Founding of the Association for Psychological Science

Part 2. The Tipping Point and Early Years

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ABSTRACT—The founding of the Association for Psychological Science (APS) occurred in the context of long-standing dialectical tensions within organized psychology. It represents the most recent breakaway effort from the American Psychological Association (APA), psychology's parent association in the United States. Beginning in the 1970s, numerous APA committees deliberated the Association's structure, making recommendations designed to appease the various constituencies within the changing organization; all but the last of these proposals were ultimately rejected by the APA Council. In 1987, the Assembly for Scientific and Applied Psychologists (ASAP) formed to encourage APA reorganization, and in early 1988, the APA Council approved a reorganization plan; that plan was, however, rejected by the membership. In August 1988, the ASAP became the APS. The early years of the APS were shaped by challenges and successes that would lay the groundwork for the APS to become a prominent organization in the promotion of scientific psychology. An understanding of these events may provide insight into the nature of organized psychology and its future.

The founding of the Association for Psychological Science (APS) is the most recent of several instances in which a group of psychologists separated from the American Psychological Association (APA). Historically, organized psychology¹ has witnessed myriad splinter groups, as various constituencies deemed the APA unable to meet adequately their perceived needs. Most of the tensions precipitating these splits have been between research and academic psychologists on the one hand and those engaged in clinical practice on the other (Dewsbury & Bolles, 1995). The APA's internal efforts to alleviate such tensions have tended to focus on the Association's organizational structure.

All of the breakaway efforts throughout the APA's history reflect centripetal and centrifugal forces within the discipline, as organized psychology has struggled to represent itself under a single umbrella (Cautin, 2009, this issue). In the late 1980s, these dialectical tensions reached a tipping point, and a group of scientifically oriented psychologists concluded that their needs would be better served by forming a new organization outside of the APA. This article, the second of two in a series, considers the events that precipitated the founding of the APS and examines the early years of the organization. Research for these articles has been driven by a question that speaks to the issue of the tipping point: Although reorganization was broached many times over the years, what factors led to the tipping point reached in the late 1980s?

Beginning in the 1970s, various committees and task forces were convened with increasing frequency to address structural issues within the APA. None of these efforts, however, precipitated the founding of a new organization. In my research and in the interviews I conducted, I therefore tried to identify the organizational, financial, and

interpersonal factors that were involved, and to that end I presented a more detailed version of this question to most of the people I interviewed.²

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 of the APS, as well as the events that led up to it.³

ENDURING TENSIONS BETWEEN SCIENTISTS AND PRACTITIONERS

Although established as a learned society, the APA added increasing numbers of applied psychologists to its membership during its first few decades, largely because of the impact of World War I and the growing popularity of psychology (Camfield, 1992). During these early decades, applied psychologists often felt frustrated as their specific concerns were largely ignored by the Association; the APA's leadership justified its inaction by invoking the organization's mission statement, which did not include furthering the profession of psychology. As a consequence of repeated rebuffs, contingents of applied psychologists formed separate organizations during the 1930s in an effort to better serve the needs of practitioners (see Cautin, 2009, this issue).

World War II had an enormous impact on the field, as academic purists and applied psychologists alike joined forces in wartime (Capshew & Hilgard, 1992). This cooperative involvement in the war effort provided a centripetal force that ultimately underpinned the major reorganization of the APA in 1945, whereby professional interests came to share equal status with scientific ones. With the reorganization came a revised and expanded organizational purpose: "the advancement of psychology as a science, as a

profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare” (Wolfe, 1946, p. 3). Moreover, the Association’s organizational structure and administrative needs became more complex, as it was to serve a much larger and diversified membership. The reorganization established the Council of Representatives to serve as the legislative body of the Association; it also established a divisional structure that would serve the plethora of special interests among the membership and play a substantial role in the functioning of the organization (Wolfe, 1946). The reorganization was a watershed event in the APA’s history, as it marked the beginning of a shift in power in the organization. Over the ensuing decades, practitioners would gain increasingly greater presence and control. In a role reversal, many scientists would come to feel their own needs were now being ignored by the Association.

A number of factors contributed to the growing power and presence of practitioners within the APA. Professional psychology flourished after WWII, a fact reflected in APA membership statistics (Tryon, 1963) and later in the emergence of the professional school movement (Stricker & Cummings, 1992; Walsh, 1979). Consequently, psychologist-practitioners became increasingly invested in establishing their legitimacy and status as professionals as they competed with psychiatrists and their nonmedical counterparts. In this regard, practitioners were able to establish their own political advocacy network—initially outside of the APA—to address their particular concerns, which included licensure and certification as well as freedom of choice legislation. Eventually, practitioners secured leadership positions within the APA and were thus able to exercise increasing influence within the organization.

Though some scientists acknowledged the legitimacy of practitioners' concerns, many scientists resented the direction in which the organization was headed. And scientists objected to increases in dues, which they felt would fund guild issues that were of little or no relevance to them. Scientifically oriented psychologists perceived a diminishing emphasis on science and scientific standards in the APA, which they believed threatened the integrity of the discipline and changed the fundamental character of the Association (Cautin, 2009, this issue). As a result, scientifically oriented members were concerned that the APA was no longer an organization with which they could identify. In fact, data indicated that many new PhDs in the experimental field were choosing not to join the APA, and experimental psychologists represented the largest proportion of those resigning from the Association (Howard et al., 1986). And as more and more specialized psychological organizations emerged, scientific psychologists within the APA feared that there would be no center of gravity for scientific psychology. Concerned that the vitality of scientific psychology was at risk, some psychologists, particularly within the research and academic community, urged reorganization in order to attract scientific psychologists into the Association and better meet their needs once they joined.

Tensions between scientists and practitioners intensified through the 1970s, precipitating a variety of committees that sought to address potential structural remedies. Amid increasing politicization, leaders from the scientific community called for a federation—a decentralized governance structure that would enable separate interest groups to function with relative autonomy. None of the federation models proposed during this time were accepted; in fact, there was strong resistance to such a model on the

part of many who believed it contravened the need for psychology to speak with a unitary voice. A less extreme proposal was crafted by a 1978 blue-ribbon commission chaired by Dorothy Eichorn and Kenneth Clark, which suggested that the Council be subdivided into two Sections: one for practice and one for research (Commission on the Organization of APA, 1980). The plan was tested for a short period but was subsequently abandoned when it became clear many psychologists were attending both Sections (Fisher, 1988b). Despite these many fruitless attempts to address structural issues within the APA as a means of relieving the tensions between the two major constituencies, there was a sense on the part of many psychologists that reorganization would be necessary. A brief chronology of the events that transpired is presented in Box 1.

TASK FORCE ON THE STRUCTURE OF APA

In August 1984, the Council voted to create the Task Force on the Structure of APA (TFSAPA). Its charge was as follows:

to study the structure of the American Psychological Association and make recommendations on an organizational structure directed to the alleviation of structural problems within the current organization that have developed as the result of growth and change in both the quantity (numbers) and the diverse interests of its 60,000 members. (Abeles, 1985, p. 639)

The Policy and Planning Board appointed the nine members of the Task Force, with the approval of the APA President and the Board of Directors. TFSAPA members were to reflect the wide range of interests of the APA membership; Jack I. Bardon (1941–1993), a school psychologist, was named Chair of the TFSAPA (Abeles, 1985).⁴

Early on, the Task Force reaffirmed the stated objectives of the APA and decided on specific assumptions that would guide its deliberations and subsequent proposals. While acknowledging that psychology is not a monolithic entity, it agreed that a common bond unites the discipline's diverse subfields: psychology's scientific base. TFSAPA members further acknowledged that proposals for structural change had been advanced over the past four decades as the goals and concerns of the Association's two major constituencies had increasingly diverged and conflicted. Recognizing that most of the changes in the APA's organizational structure had happened incrementally in reaction to urgent problems and concerns, the Task Force maintained that current circumstances in the APA necessitated the discontinuation of such a piecemeal approach:

Changes in the balance between the scientific and practitioner components in APA have now reached a critical point that creates a different context for consideration of structural changes in the organization and makes it more likely that systematic and wide ranging changes are likely to be accepted. (Task Force on the Structure of APA, 1985, p. 1)

The group asserted that any structural change should confer benefits on each of the organization's constituencies and should "enhance the role of groups that historically have not fully participated in the science and practice of psychology" (p. 3).

Nevertheless, the Task Force insisted as follows:

[a] compromise position will be necessary in which some aspects of constituent goals and aspirations will be gained, while others will require modification.

Without such agreement, even the best of proposals cannot succeed in

overcoming barriers to change within the existing organizational structure. (Task Force on the Structure of APA, 1985, p. 3)

Over the course of its existence, the Task Force would present various iterations of its proposals, continually responding to the concerns and criticisms from various factions within the organization.^{5,6} One of its early proposals called for the creation of four distinct societies: The Society for Health and Human Service Providers, The Society of Scientific Psychology, The Society of Applied Psychology, and the Society of Psychologists in the Public Interest. These societies, which were intended to represent the different functions that psychologists serve, would supplant the Council of Representatives. Members would be required to join at least one society but could join others if they desired (Mervis, 1986a). The societies were intended to have as much autonomy as possible in dealing with their own matters, such as dues, membership criteria, and organizational structure. In addition, there would be a Board of Directors modeled on the United States Senate, with each society represented equally regardless of the size of its membership, to moderate disputes between or among societies. Discussion of this plan in the Council was lively and contentious, as members voiced a range of concerns, including questions about the role of divisions and state associations⁷ and the capacity of the discipline of psychology to “speak with one voice” (Mervis, 1986a, 1986b).

A later proposal by the Task Force called for two separately incorporated Assemblies⁸: one for science and one for practice^{9,10} (Task Force on the Structure of APA, 1986). Although the number of Assemblies would be fixed for 3 years following their formation, new Assemblies could be formed upon petition of 20% of the APA

membership. Each APA member would “be required to join one and only one Assembly as a voting member,” and would be able to join the other Assembly as a nonvoting member if the proper dues were paid (p. 4). A Joint Assembly Coordinating Committee (JACC), consisting of four members from each Assembly, would be established to handle inter-Assembly concerns. “In matters requiring vote of the JACC, each member will have a weighted vote proportional to the size of the Assembly represented” (p. 6). A Board of Trustees would be formed to oversee the corporate activities of the Association (Task Force on the Structure of APA, 1986). In addition to the APA officers, remaining seats on the Board would be equally divided between the Assemblies, “each with a vote proportional to the size of the Assembly represented” (p. 8). Empirical support for this two-Assembly proposal would come from the work of Joseph Lee Rodgers (1988), who assessed the structural relationships between APA divisions by using membership overlap statistics in cluster and multidimensional scaling analysis models. His most reliable finding was that there are two substructures within the APA: one related to practice (what he termed the “health care cluster”) and another related to academic psychology (the “academic cluster”).¹¹

This proposal provoked two major reactions (Hakel, 1987). One came from the scientist-practitioner community, many of whom were torn over whether there should be a third assembly, as some felt the need for a home of their own.¹² Rachel Hare-Mustin, of Division 12 (Clinical Psychology), for example, suggested that “there should be a middle assembly, and we could call it APA” (Fisher, 1986b, p. 4).

Another reaction was a polemic signed by several leaders of the practice community and sent to the APA Board of Directors. These practitioners were “incensed”

over what they perceived to be a “stupid expenditure of sorely needed association funds diverted to these reorganization purposes” (Hakel, 1987, p. 7). The letter went on to compare attempts to reorganize with apartheid, as reorganization would presumably reassert the power of the scientist minority. Moreover, the writers were “outraged” by what they perceived to be a lack of representation of their constituency on the various boards and committees discussing reorganization, including the TFSAPA. The authors of this letter made it clear that although no proposal thus far had been “*remotely acceptable*...without our vocal efforts on *behalf* of reorganization, no reorganization will ever happen” (Hakel, 1987, p. 7).

The Task Force was not only challenged with devising an acceptable plan for various groups with very different agendas, it had to negotiate in the face of staunch politicization and, oftentimes, blatant hostility. This is not to suggest that there was no hostility on the part of the scientists or scientist-practitioners. Anecdotally, it has been communicated to me that there was unfortunate behavior on both sides. And it is important to note that the authors of the letter quoted above were a vocal minority among the leaders of the practitioners; there were a number of leaders who were more even-handed in their approach. This letter, however, reflects the level of emotional intensity in the debate over reorganization.

The contentiousness of the debate notwithstanding, the committee persevered and in a May 1986 letter to the Policy and Planning Board and the Board of Directors, Jack Bardon wrote the following warning:

There no longer is, if there ever was, a status quo, APA *will* reorganize. But its choice is between a deliberate reorganization to include science, practice and

public welfare, or the strong possibility of an APA representing only practitioner interests and either the dissipation of psychology's scientific base to other organizations, or the increasing likelihood of the formation of a separate national scientific psychology organization outside of APA, competing for scarce resources and public awareness. (Fisher, 1986a, p. 4)

The TFSAPA's final report that they submitted to the Council reflected a multitude of changes that were made in an effort to appease various constituencies. The essence of the final Bardon Plan was a federation model involving two to five semiautonomous assemblies that were not separately incorporated.¹³ APA members would be allowed to join as many Assemblies as they wished but would be allowed to vote in only one. Members could choose to join none of the Assemblies. A Board of Trustees, including the APA officers, would be established "to carry out the corporate affairs of the Association including its fiscal management, administration, and policy implementation...Each Assembly [would] have one seat on the Board of Trustees. The remaining seats [would] be determined by an apportionment ballot. All APA members [would] apportion 1–10 votes among the Assemblies" (Scarr, n.d., p. 4). There would be no central legislative body, but rather a Judicial Council established to settle disputes between or among groups. The Judicial Council would consist of 9 members appointed by the Board of Trustees (Scarr, n.d.).

DEFEAT OF THE BARDON PLAN: THE TIPPING POINT

The final report of the Task Force was brought to Council in February 1987, where it was narrowly defeated by a roll call vote: 56 for, 63 against, 1 abstention (Fox, 1987). The actual vote was not on the plan itself, but rather on whether to ask the Task

Force to develop bylaws that would implement the plan. The failure of the Bardon Plan felt like a betrayal to some of its supporters, as the vote precluded the membership from ever voting on the plan. (S. Hayes, personal communication, February 21, 2008).

In the wake of the Bardon defeat, about 40 members of the Council, who were scientists and scientist-practitioners who favored reorganization, convened the following evening to discuss how to pursue their mutual interests (J. Spence, personal communication, January 9, 2008). It was at this meeting that the Assembly for Scientific Psychology was formally established. The name was changed almost immediately to the Assembly for Scientific and Applied Psychology (ASAP) to acknowledge the importance of scientist-practitioners in this constituency¹⁴ and because the acronym ASAP conveyed a sense of urgency around reorganization (Hayes, 1987). The ASAP was a grassroots organization that served to “coalesce the presence of scientifically-oriented psychologists within APA, to press for reorganization of APA, [and] to serve as a magnet if APA failed to provide an adequate home for scientifically-oriented psychologists” (ASAP Pro-Tem Board, 1987).

ASAP ORGANIZES

The Assembly’s first official meeting took place in May 1987 at a leadership conference for APA divisional leaders. The purpose of this meeting was to formally organize the Assembly. To this end, bylaws were written, an agenda was developed, and pro-tem officers were elected: Charles Kiesler (President), Steven C. Hayes (Secretary-Treasurer), and Dick Campbell, Lucia Gilbert, Judith Goggin, and Virginia O’Leary (Members-at-Large).

A formal membership drive was scheduled for the fall and election of officers was set for the spring. The major thrust of the agenda was recruitment. To this end, an introductory letter was written and a membership brochure was designed during the summer of 1987. Both were to be sent to leaders of a select group of divisions and other groups (e.g. Society for Neuroscience, Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology, and the Psychonomic Society) asking for support as members or as organizational affiliates. Assembly leaders also perused the list of Fellows of Divisions 1 through 10 looking for potential signatories (O’Leary, 1987a). A coordinated mailing was planned for the beginning of August “in order to create pre-convention momentum” (O’Leary, 1987a), as organizers prepared for the next formal ASAP meeting, to be held at the upcoming annual APA convention. Assembly leaders arrived at the convention with 20,000 brochures, 5,000 membership applications, and 5,000 stickers (O’Leary, 1987b). Individual ASAP members and officers were designated to work the social hours of various divisions in a sustained, coordinated effort (O’Leary, 1987b).

GROUP ON RESTRUCTURING OF APA

Immediately following the defeat of the Bardon plan, the Council voted to create the Group on Restructuring of APA (GORAPA). Its charge was to propose a restructuring plan as well as to provide projections regarding its budgetary implications¹⁵ (Fox, 1987). The APA President¹⁶ appointed the members of the committee.¹⁷ Logan Wright, who had been APA President in 1986, was appointed Chair of GORAPA. He was particularly equipped to be chair of this committee, as he was both a practitioner and a strong advocate for reorganization. Ultimately, he would become a major force in the founding of the APS.¹⁸

As one person I interviewed described it to me, the GORAPA plan reflected the fact that groups with very different agendas were represented on the committee. These agendas were manifest in the staunch polarization that characterized the committee and its process. In fact, over the life of the committee, three private practitioners resigned,¹⁹ and a fourth authored a minority report in which she described the GORAPA process as “most difficult,” maintaining that “most GOR members became (more) entrenched in partisan politics in very unbecoming ways” (Walker, 1987). Difficulties notwithstanding, however, the committee’s purpose above all else was to preserve the unity of psychology’s umbrella organization:

Our future will proceed along one of two vectors. The first leads the family of psychology – with its highly respected science, growing professional sophistication, and enviable record of public interest – back together. The other leads to dissolution with weakened influence and the prospect of increased

competitiveness. It is with the goal of unity that we offer the following plan.

(Group on Restructuring APA, 1988, p. 2)

Throughout its deliberations, the GORAPA committee repeatedly confronted three major issues: weighing the benefits of cost efficiency versus “liberal membership involvement in governance at considerable cost” (p. 1), balancing minority and majority interests, and determining the role of divisions in a newly structured APA. In the end, the committee felt that “a structure which provides separate islands of autonomy within an overarching APA governed democratically according to the principle of one person, one vote creates the greatest possibility for future cooperation” (Group on Restructuring APA, 1988, p. 2).

In December 1987, the GORAPA committee officially adopted its plan by a vote of 11 to 3 (Group on Restructuring APA, 1988). The GORAPA plan called for up to five relatively independent and separately incorporated Societies;²⁰ the GORAPA plan also recommended that particular divisions or other organizations be “invited to be the convenors of the founding Societies” (p. 8).²¹ Societies could, among other things, establish their own goals and bylaws, establish their own governance structure, collect their own dues, hold their own meetings and conventions, and own and publish their own journals. They would also have a great deal of autonomy with regard to advocacy activities.²² Societies would be able to terminate their relationship with the APA. The plan included a 50-seat Legislative Assembly that would enact APA-wide policies such as training and ethical standards, APA-wide membership and fellowship standards, and accreditation standards and practices. Legislative Assembly members would be elected by and from the Societies, with each Society having an equal number of seats on the

Assembly. However, Assembly delegates' votes would "be weighted in accordance with the proportion of votes garnered by their respective Societies on the last apportionment ballot" (p. 14). The plan also called for a Board of Directors that would have financial responsibility for the Association and would play a critical role in resolving disputes between Societies or within the Legislative Assembly (Fisher, 1988a). It would consist of the Officers of the Association (nonvoting), the Chief Staff Officer (also nonvoting), and the Presidents, Presidents-Elect, and Past Presidents of each Society. Society members' votes on the Board of Directors would be weighted "in accordance with the apportionment vote accorded their units by the membership on the last apportionment ballot" (Group on Restructuring APA, 1988, p. 11).

Dissention among the GORAPA committee members tended to center around a few critical issues. Some who were ultimately not supportive of the final plan maintained that various components violated the "one-person, one-vote" principle, thereby undermining the attempt to provide fair representation. In his resignation letter to Logan Wright, Wilbur Morley wrote the following:

The most serious breach of proportionate representation occurs in the proposed adjudication body where there is no intent to assure that a view held by a majority of the membership will prevail. There it is possible even probable that a small interest group will have absolute veto power. The principal [*sic*] is also distorted in the model proposed for the Board of Directors which has weighted vote but is disproportionate in that each unit regardless of size is represented by an equal number of people...[T]he model proposed is one in which the only APA-wide decision-making power is vested in two small groups which are not

proportionately representative of the membership interests...I very much regret that the plan is neither sound nor equitable, and consequently is not one with which I wish to be identified in any way. (Morley, 1987)

The final GORAPA plan reflected the consensus of the group that a compromise would be needed in order to balance majority and minority interests:

Those on GOR who perceived themselves as representing a minority or soon to be minority constituency wanted some governance bodies to be organized along senatorial lines and some to be representational. Those who saw themselves as representing majority or soon to be majority interests insisted on designing bodies in which majority views would prevail throughout the structure. In the final GOR plan, the principle of one person, one vote is honored rigidly at all level[s] of proposed governance²³...Although these bodies most typically have equal numbers of representatives from the various constituencies (so that the goal of diverse voices to deliberate a matter can be met), votes that must be recorded are weighted according to the one person, one vote principle... (Group on Restructuring APA, 1988, p. 24).

Another controversial issue was whether the APA should have an overarching deliberative body:

The scientists and some scientist/practitioners wanted only a Board of Directors and no overarching deliberative body. This position was predicated on a belief that the societies needed to run almost all of their own affairs and that this possibility would inevitably be eroded by the presence of a powerful, large deliberative body. The practitioners and some scientist/practitioners wanted a

large deliberative body with robust policy making authority...(Group on Restructuring APA, 1988, p. 23).

According to the GORAPA committee's final report, the proposed Legislative Assembly represented a reasonable compromise by combining "the features of a Senate and of a House of Representatives" (p. 24). For some, however, these terms were unacceptable. In her minority report, Lenore Walker (1987) wrote the following:

[the absence of an overarching deliberative body does not] provide for the opportunity for delegates to get beyond party politics...It is not a democratic assembly. It cannot create its own legislation...and must only follow the dictates of the units or the Board of Directors, which is composed of unit leaders.

Everyone I interviewed—GORAPA members and nonmembers alike—agreed that the final GORAPA plan was the product of a series of compromises. As such, it was controversial and described to me variously as "gutless," "a monster," and "toothless," though some were less negative. No one knew how it would have worked in practice. More important perhaps, many insisted that apart from the merit of the plan itself, they were "fighting for the symbol"—that is, the symbolic value of the plan's acknowledgment of the need for autonomy for the various groups (M. Brewer, personal communication, January 5, 2008).

Many pages could be written describing the machinations on all sides that took place before the February council vote. In the end, as several sources reported,²⁴ by virtue of a backroom deal that offered concessions to practitioners, the Council approved a slightly amended version of the plan, 76 to 41, voting to send the bylaws to the membership "with a recommendation to approve" (Fox, 1988, p. 522).

ON POLITICS AND PERSONALITIES

The politicization of the APA was clearly a major force in precipitating the events that led to the founding of the APS. Moreover, it was the general ugliness of the tone of many of the discussions and negotiations that helped to create what Bonnie Strickland referred to as “the perfect storm” (B. Strickland, personal communication, February 5, 2008). Generally speaking, there was a severe lack of trust between the two major constituencies, leaving each side feeling transgressed and betrayed on numerous occasions. Oftentimes, such feelings led to the use of inflammatory language and political maneuvering that served to decrease the chances of conciliation.

Scientists, now in the minority within the APA, were dependent on the practice leaders to sacrifice some of their power but felt that they were unwilling to do so. There is some irony here, as the practice community that had seen its agenda items neglected by the Council for decades was now taking a similarly indifferent stance toward the academics’ issues. Many practitioners insisted on majority rule, opposing any sort of federation. It is true that some practitioners were in favor of reorganization, and many more open to considering it. But others, it seemed, wanted to impede reorganization. There is an oft-repeated story in which a leader of the practice community is described as telling two advocates of reorganization, “we will club you like baby seals” (e.g., S. Scarr, personal communication, January 15, 2008). In fairness, it must be noted that the practitioner in question denies that this exchange occurred.

James McGaugh, who served on the Bardon Task Force, conveyed his consternation regarding the failure of the Bardon Plan:

J.M. I thought that people were rational; I really did. I thought that this was a rational thing and if I went back and talked to people I'd get them to understand that preserving science within APA was a very important thing for science as well as for APA and that people would see that federalism was a decent and a rational and appropriate way to go and everything could be preserved. What I didn't understand was that the forces of opposition actually hated science; they looked on us as their lackeys and there was to be no negotiations.

R.C. Can I ask you what makes you say that?

J.M. Because they said it.

(J. McGaugh, personal communication, January 8, 2008)

/text/Indeed, GORAPA members acknowledged that structural reorganization alone would be insufficient to ensure cooperation among the organization's various constituencies:

[N]o structure alone can guarantee mutual assistance. Such assistance can only be the product of a mentality which sees the wisdom of alliance over competitive struggle and is willing to act out of faith in one's fellow psychologists to actualize it. (Group on Restructuring APA, 1988, p. 2)

THE CAMPAIGN

After the Council approved the GORAPA plan, the campaigns for and against reorganization intensified. A strong, organized opposition to the plan was operating largely from within the state associations and practice-related divisions (Interdivisional Group Against Re-Organization, personal communication, June 22, 1988). By this time, the ASAP had more than 1,000 members; 12 different APA divisions and several other

psychological organizations had also chosen to be ASAP affiliates. The Assembly was building momentum. Its first newsletter, *As Soon As Possible*, edited by Steven Hayes at the University of Nevada-Reno, was issued in January 1988. Leaders in support of the GORAPA were trying to maximize their chances for success. To that end, they engaged in what one leader referred to as a “military operation” (Scarr, 1988). Telephone trees were implemented, and division and organization leaders received informational materials that explained why major structural change was necessary, described the major elements of the GORAPA plan, and provided high-profile endorsements of the merits of reorganization (APA Presidents for Reorganization, personal communication, 1988).

All the while, the recently established Science Directorate, run by Alan Kraut, assisted in the campaign for reorganization by “providing mailing labels, developing written materials, and assisting in mass mailings” (Hayes, 1988, August, p. 2). Alan Kraut’s office advanced money for these expenses and then was reimbursed by the Divisions, the ASAP, or other organizations involved (A. Kraut, personal communication, April 16, 2008). As a consequence, certain groups of practitioners lodged complaints to the APA Board of Directors about possible impropriety with regard to the use of APA funds in the course of the reorganization battle. At the same time, complaints of impropriety and conflict of interest were lodged against a few board members as well. Practitioners petitioned the Board of Directors:

[to] conduct and make public an accounting (including the source, amounts, and expenditures) of all funds by both the “pro” and “con” groups in the re-organization election; conduct an evaluation of the role of the Science Directorate, its funds and personnel in the same election process; [and] evaluate the propriety

and possible conflict of interest of Board members in such actions as supporting the formation of a competing organization while participating as APA Board members. (Interdivisional Group Against the Re-Organization Plan, personal communication, June 22, 1988)

A formal fact finding mission ensued in which all APA offices were required to complete a multipage questionnaire documenting their involvement in the reorganization battle. To my knowledge, no punitive actions resulted from any of these complaints. This serves, however, as another illustration of the charged environment in which reorganization efforts took place.

Critical Issues and Setbacks

Passage of the reorganization plan constituted a serious challenge, as a bylaw amendment requires a 2/3 positive vote of the membership. Proponents pushed for the ballots to be mailed on or around April 15th, ensuring that those in the academic community would receive them at their institutions. There were accusations of delay tactics on the part of certain opponents on the Board of Directors, who were alleged to have tried to delay the mailing in order to dilute the academic vote. After considerable discussion a compromise was reached to mail the ballots on May 7, 1988.

Another critical issue was whether pro and con statements would accompany the ballots. Historically, proposals accompanied by such statements were largely doomed (R. Fowler, personal communication, March 7, 2008), and thus proponents were concerned when they learned that statements would accompany the ballots. Proponents began to consider contingency plans when they learned that Stanley Graham had rescinded his support of GORAPA. Graham was an influential practitioner, who, at the urging of

Logan Wright, had been in the process of creating a group called “Practitioners for Reorganization” (M. Hakel, personal communication, January 18, 2008). But Graham became “convinced by some very bright people that we were giving away the store” (S. Graham, personal communication, August 25, 2008). When Graham changed his mind, he took with him what was seen as the crucial support of a core group of practitioners.

Contingency Plans

At this time, many reorganization proponents were preparing to attend the annual Southeastern Psychological Association convention in New Orleans, LA. Upon hearing of Graham’s change of heart and the growing opposition to reorganization within the practice community, many others agreed to go to the convention to attend an ad hoc meeting, organized and chaired by Logan Wright, during which contingency plans would be discussed. Wright “knew [reorganization] was going to fail” and began strategizing about the group’s next steps (B. Strickland, personal communication, August 21, 2008). It was here that many ASAP members faced what one person described to me as, “the reality of having to create a new organization” (M. Hakel, personal communication, January 18, 2008). It was described to me as an emotionally intense meeting in which the idea of divorce was invoked (V. O’Leary, personal communication, February 8, 2008). At the same time, others felt energized and enthusiastic about the prospect a new group (B. Strickland, personal communication, August 21, 2008). In addition to formulating an agenda for the organization, its name was chosen—the American Psychological Society (APS).

In May, at Bonnie Strickland’s home in Massachusetts, about half a dozen ASAP members, including Steven Hayes, Kathy Grady, Virginia O’Leary, Logan Wright, and

Milton Hakel, gathered to write a new set of bylaws that would essentially transform the ASAP into the APS were reorganization to fail. During the following month, the ASAP membership elected its officers: Janet Spence (President), Charles Kiesler (Past-President), Steven Hayes (Secretary-Treasurer), and Milton Hakel and Virginia O’Leary (Members-at-Large). The new bylaws were approved by the ASAP membership in July of 1988.

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A short while later, the results of the APA general ballot on the GORAPA became known: 43% percent of those voting endorsed the plan. Not surprisingly, the vote reflected the professional–nonprofessional split in the overall APA membership. The members of the ASAP subsequently met at the annual APA meeting that year, and by a 97% positive vote, ASAP became APS (“Here We Go! APS Approved by 97% Positive Vote,” 1988).²⁶ This new voice for psychological science was embraced by many prominent scientific psychologists as a necessary and significant event. In a letter to Logan Wright, B.F. Skinner (1989) wrote that the professional majority had not guaranteed science an important role in the Association. He declared, “[...]a fresh start is therefore needed. The American Psychological Society seems to be the natural next step in the furtherance of psychology as a science.”

APS Organizes

At its first executive meeting, held in October 1988 in Houston, the Board discussed the organization’s objectives, including science advocacy. This item is noteworthy because it distinguishes the APS from many other scientific psychological organizations in existence, such as the Society for Neuroscience, the Society for Research

in Child Development, and the Psychonomic Society, all of whose main objective is the exchange of information rather than advocacy of science as a matter of policy.

At this time, the APS was run completely by volunteers (A. Kraut, personal communication, April 16, 2008). The APS Newsletter was edited by Steven Hayes. Other administrative functions—membership, convention, and publishing—were run out of the office and home of Logan Wright, in Norman, OK. One of the bathtubs in Logan Wright's house served as a filing cabinet for membership files (B. Strickland, personal communication, February 5, 2008).

On August 7, 1989, Alan Kraut assumed the newly established position of Executive Director of the APS. On that same day, the APS opened up its office in Washington, DC. According to Kraut, the purpose of the office was to “develop an organizational presence for APS among national policy makers” (“APS Washington Office Opens,” 1989, p. 2). He said that he wanted “to make APS part of any national decision that bears on scientific psychology” (“Alan Kraut is Hired as First APS Executive Director,” p. 2).

Early Structure and Challenges

The APS became home to psychologists representing a wide range of subdisciplines. A number of APA divisions almost immediately became organizational affiliates while maintaining their status as APA divisions. A 1990 study of this phenomenon by Joseph Lee Rodgers (1990) demonstrated the empirical basis of some form of bifurcation of the structure of organized psychology: cluster analysis showed that 11 of the 13 divisions that became organizational affiliates of the APS were from the academic cluster. This stands in contrast to the finding that 11 of the 13 APA divisions

that had “no intention of joining” (Rodgers, 1990, p. 84) were from the health care cluster. He explained, “The APS has more than ideological and conceptual legitimacy; it has a clear empirical basis within the structure of the profession of psychology” (Rodgers, 1990, p. 84).

At the same time, it was decided early on that there would be no divisional structure within the APS, which “has always held to the notion of a general psychological association” (A. Kraut, personal communication, August 22, 2008).²⁷

In the beginning, administrative matters challenged the fledging organization. The original DC office was located in a seedy part of town. Alan Kraut recounted that on at least one occasion registration forms were stolen before the office received them, and memberships went unrecorded. When he became Executive Director, the Logistics Office in Oklahoma sent a floppy disk that contained the organization’s first database. There was initially some celebration of the rapidly growing membership until it was discovered that a software bug recorded a new member every time the “enter” key was pressed, and so hundreds of those initial members were really phantom members (A. Kraut, personal communication, April 16, 2008).

Early Accomplishments

The membership was indeed growing, however: within less than a year, it had reached over 5,000. Over 1,000 members attended the APS’s first annual convention in Alexandria, VA (“The First Convention: 1,000 Strong,” 1989). Attendance exceeded expectations to such an extent that there was a change of venue only months before the occasion. George A. Miller gave a keynote address, entitled “The Place of Language in a Scientific Psychology.” James McGaugh, the founding Director of the Center for the

Neurobiology of Learning and Memory at the University of California at Irvine and APS President-Elect at the time, also gave a keynote address, entitled “Significance and Remembrance: The Role of Neuromodulatory Systems.”

The APS held its first Summit on Scientific Advocacy in January 1989 in Norman, OK. It was organized by Logan Wright and Joseph Lee Rodgers and funded by the NIMH. In attendance were representatives from about 50 psychological organizations. A major goal of the summit was “shaping the APS program of science advocacy and science policy,” including the ways in which the APS might collaborate with other psychological societies in an effort to advance its scientific advocacy agenda (“APS Organizes ‘Summit Meeting’ On Psychology’s Research Base,” 1989, p. 2). Alan Kraut described the first summit as a “coming out party” for the APS rather than an event that resulted in significant policy-related progress (A. Kraut, personal communication, April 16, 2008).

The second summit, held the following year in Tucson, AZ and organized by Milton Hakel and Bruce Overmeir, was far more substantive in its agenda, and many more organizations were invited. Alan Kraut recalled that “the range of invitees represented the diversity within our discipline – everyone from neuroscientists studying at nearly the molecular level to I/O and survey researchers” (A. Kraut, personal communication, April 16, 2008). Notwithstanding this diversity, participants recognized important common bonds within the field and thus championed the development of a broad based research agenda for psychology. Out of this commitment came the Human Capital Initiative, which provided a framework for such an agenda and sought to help federal agencies set funding priorities (“Human Capital Initiative: Report of the National

Behavioral Science Research Agenda Committee”, 1992). The Human Capital Initiative defined six domains of “critical national importance”: productivity in the workplace, schooling and literacy, the aging society, drug and alcohol abuse, health, and violence in America (“Human Capital Initiative: Report of the National Behavioral Science Research Agenda Committee”, 1992). It also discussed how psychology’s scientific knowledge and methods could be brought to bear on each of these issues. At this second summit, participants also agreed on the need for a separate Behavioral and Social Sciences Directorate at the National Science Foundation; subsequent efforts were fruitful, as the establishment of directorate was announced in October of 1991.

CONCLUSION

Deep-rooted conflicts among the APA’s major constituencies reached a tipping point when the Council defeated the Bardon Plan in February 1987. At that time, the ASAP was formed to organize and mobilize reorganization supporters and to develop a course of action. At the same time, the APA created a new group, the GORAPA, to take up the issue of the Association’s organizational problems and craft a structural solution. The Council approved the GORAPA plan in February 1988, and it was subsequently sent to the membership, which rejected it. On August 12, 1988, the ASAP became the APS. In its early years, the APS lay the groundwork to become a prominent organization in the promotion of scientific psychology.

The founding of the APS, including the events that led up to it, occurred in a context of long-standing dialectical tensions that have played a role in the evolution of psychology as a field (Cautin, 2009, this issue). An awareness of this dialectic may have implications for the future in two respects. First, it remains to be seen whether what Carol

Tavris (2003) calls the “scientist–practitioner gap” has become too wide for the gravitational pull of unity to close again. This gap could begin to close, for example, as the result of a backlash against what Scott Lilienfeld (2007) has described as “psychological treatments that cause harm,” and this has something of a parallel in the move toward evidence-based treatments in medicine. Or, it may not close at all, and this likewise has important implications for the future of psychology.

Second, this dialectic may have implications for the evolution of scientific psychology itself. An examination of the program of the 2008 APS convention reflects a striking diversity of topics and subdisciplines—so much so that a nonpsychologist might not recognize them as components of the same discipline. In that vein, James McGaugh has spoken of the balkanization of psychology; in fact, at his institution—University of California at Irvine—there are many psychologists but no psychology department (at least in the traditional sense), which he says works perfectly well (J. McGaugh, personal communication, January 8, 2008). At the same time, John Cacioppo (2007) has described our discipline as a hub science—referring to work that indicates that psychological scientists have influenced the progress of research in many other fields. Certainly, this observation implies the idea of psychology as a reasonably cohesive field and that it serves as a core for the research of related fields.

Looking to the past, we have seen the push and pull of unity on the one hand and autonomy on the other play out within organized psychology, which witnessed various splinter groups over the last century. In the late 1980s, a tipping point was reached that led to the events that precipitated the formation of the APS.

Looking forward, one must wonder how these dialectical tensions will play out in scientific psychology. Certainly, the interplay among scientific subfields described here is qualitatively different from the long-standing tension between science and practice of which the founding of the APS is an instantiation. The underlying aims of scientific advancement may well serve to hold together the increasingly disparate subfields, and the APS as an organization may facilitate this. I would nevertheless suggest that an awareness of this general dialectic between unity and autonomy and its influence in the past might offer useful lessons as scientific psychology grows into the 21st century.

Acknowledgments—Based on an invited address, “The Founding of APS: A New Voice for Psychological Science,” presented at the 20th Annual Convention of the Association for Psychological Science, Chicago, IL, May 24, 2008.

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

²The original question was as follows: “There had been several committees, commissions, and task forces over the decades preceding the founding of ASAP/APS that addressed the issue of APA reorganization, most whose recommendations were not adopted. It seems that a tipping point was reached in the late 80s—absent this tipping point, the failure of the GOR plan would have been just another unsuccessful attempt at reorganization. What factors—organizational, financial, and interpersonal—led to this tipping point?”

³An effort has been made to record this story, to the extent possible, in the words of the people who lived it. 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 roles in these events for them, because they also have a compelling story that should not be left out here.

⁴The other members of the TFSAPA included Lorraine D. Eyde, James L. McGaugh, Morris Goodman, Frances D. Horowitz, Stephen F. Morin, Esteban L. Olmedo, Lyman W. Porter, and David A. Rodgers (Abeles, 1985). In 1986, James L. McGaugh would resign to accept the position of the APA’s Chief Scientific Advisor (Task Force on the Structure of APA, 1986).

⁵Although not a focus of the present article, it is important to note that in addition to the practitioner, scientist, and scientist-practitioner groups, other factions exist within the

Council of Representatives (e.g., public interest, state associations, women, and minorities), each of which voiced their respective concerns regarding reorganization.

⁶From its formation, the TFSAPA made concerted efforts to solicit comments from various groups within the Association: divisions, state associations, Council members, Council coalitions and caucuses, and boards and committees. These groups, for example, were formally invited to speak out at the TFSAPA's day-long open hearing in June 1985 and at an Open Forum held for the APA's general membership at its annual convention in August 1985. In March and May 1986 the Task Force held meetings with "key leaders in APA who are informed about issues and could help the Task Force sort things out to increase the chance of moving ahead" (Task Force on the Structure of APA, 1986, Appendix D, p. 2). Two TFSAPA workshops were held at the May 1986 Division Leadership Conference. During the summer of 1986, each of two working groups—scientific/academic and state association/practitioner—reported to the TFSAPA's August 1986 meeting, sharing their respective recommendations (TFSAPA, 1986).

⁷David Rodgers, a TFSAPA member, commented that the plan involved a "shift from a grouping by people to a grouping by functions...State associations don't fit directly into this plan because they are composed of people. But the plan also provides for a consortium of groups, each with ties to some central office organizational structure, within which participants can decide how best to organize themselves. People will continue to join divisions, to address certain professional needs, and state associations, to meet certain geographical needs. But those needs will be different than those met within a particular society" (Mervis, 1986b, p. 10).

⁸Separate incorporation would have enabled the practice Assembly to “engage in unlimited lobbying without endangering the tax status of the APA” or the other Assembly (Task Force on the Structure of APA, 1986, p. 5).

⁹In the August 1986 report, the two Assemblies were named: Assembly for Scientific, Academic, and Applied Psychology, and Assembly for State/Health and Human Service Psychology. These names reflect slight modifications to a previous version: “By adding ‘applied’ to one assembly and by making the title of the State/Health and Human Service Psychology reflect interest in psychology rather than psychologists, we hope that the continuum from pure science to practice permits those in the middle to decide which assembly is the better one in which to exercise voting privileges” (Task Force on the Structure of APA, 1986, p. 3).

¹⁰The TFSAPA had also proposed a three Assembly model, with the third being an Assembly of State Associations. However, this plan was dismissed because of the potential “for minimizing the impact of professional concerns through the dissipation of energy and resources, and division of interests of two groups with overlapping professional interests” (Task Force on the Structure of APA, 1986, p. 3).

¹¹The structural relationships among the APA divisions had been previously addressed by Dorothy Adkins (1954, 1973), who, as Rodgers (1988) noted, was limited by the methodology of her time (i.e., factor analysis).

¹²A component of a 1986 APA membership opinion survey (Howard et al., 1987) assessed respondents’ preference for a two- or three-assembly model of reorganization. The two-assembly model, proposed by the TFSAPA, called for a separate assembly for practitioners and one for scientists and academics. The three-assembly model called for

separate assemblies – one for scientists, one for scientist-practitioners, and one for practitioners (Note that this is different from the three-assembly model proposed by the TFSAPA). “When asked to choose between a two- or three-assembly model[,]...more than twice as many survey respondents favored the two-assembly model” (p. 770). Although the two-assembly model was preferred by scientists (62%), scientist-practitioners (41%), and practitioners (53%) alike, it was least favored by scientist-practitioners, 28% of whom preferred a three-assembly model (as compared to 21% of scientists, and 16% of practitioners).

¹³“Initially, two to five Assemblies [would] be established for scientist/academic, scientist/practitioner, health care practitioner, state, and public interest areas. Assemblies [would] name themselves” (Scarr, n.d., p. 4).

¹⁴Despite the Assembly’s intention to incorporate scientist-practitioners—indeed, about half of its founders were scientist-practitioners (“ASPP Forms,” 1988)—a group of psychologists formed the Assembly for Scientist-Practitioner Psychologists (ASPP) a few months following the creation of the ASAP. Its members maintained that the “attempt to reorganize APA into ‘science’ and ‘practice’ groups has resulted in the neglect of scientist-practitioners who have an interest in both. We believe that this neglect is detrimental to those many aspects of APA where science and practice interact and which represent a unique strength of American psychology” (Boll, Lambert, & Perry, 1987).

¹⁵Reuben Silver, representative of New York, first proposed the creation of such a group. However, he had called for the group to be composed solely of members from the Council, a stipulation that was ultimately not heeded (Fox, 1987).

¹⁶The APA President at the time was Bonnie Strickland. She appointed the GORAPA members, who were actually selected by Logan Wright (B. Strickland, personal communication, August 21, 2008).

¹⁷There are conflicting lists of GORAPA members; I feel fairly confident that I have assembled the most reliable list from the available data. The following names are listed as GORAPA members in the APA Proceedings (Fox, 1987): Logan Wright (Chair), Nancy C. Anderson, Jack Bardon, Thomas Boll, Marilyn Brewer, Lorraine Eyde, Milton Hakel, Clive Kennedy, Arthur Kovacs, Nadine Lambert, Wilbur Morley, Sandra Scarr, Nathan Stockhamer, Lenore Walker, and Rogers Wright. Dalmas Taylor and James McGaugh were chosen to serve as alternates (Fisher, 1987). Stanley R. Graham, Stephen Morin and Lyman Porter were also members, although their names are not included on the Proceedings' list of GORAPA members. Bonnie Strickland was an ex-officio member of GORAPA.

¹⁸In fact, according to Bonnie Strickland, the founding of the APS would not have happened without Logan Wright's organizational and strategic skills (personal communication, August 21, 2008).

¹⁹These were Nathan Stockhamer (June 1987), Rogers Wright (October 1987), and Wilbur Morley (December 1987).

²⁰“The founding Societies, if organized, [would] represent the following major substantive interests: [a] the advancement of scientific and applied psychology; [b] the advancement of the practice of psychology; [c] the advancement of the integration of science and practice; [d] the advancement of psychology in the public interest; and [e] the advancement of psychology through state and provincial organizations” (Group on

Restructuring APA, 1988, p. 8). The categorization of Societies in the GORAPA plan is similar to the breakdown of Assemblies recommended in the final Bardon plan.

²¹The GORAPA committee proposed that the ASAP be the convenor of the Science and Applied Psychology Society, that the Committee for the Advancement of the Practice of Psychology be the convenor of the Practice Society, that Divisions 9, 35, 44, and 45 be the convenors of the Public Interest Society, that the ASPP be the convenor of the Society representing the integration of science and practice, and that Division 31 and the State Leadership Conference be the convenors of the Society representing the state and provincial organizations (Group on Restructuring APA, 1988).

²²Limited to activities “not inconsistent with APA-wide policies, procedures, and advocacy efforts” (Group on Restructuring APA, 1988, p. 10).

²³One notable exception to this was the proposed Adjudication Commission, which would consist of set of members who would sit on Review Panels. Although each Society would nominate an equal number of persons to compose the set, “litigants would be free to choose their own nominees to advance their interests in responding to a dispute” (Group on Restructuring APA, 1988, p. 24).

²⁴None, however, who would agree to attribution.

²⁵Effective January 1, 2006, the organization’s name was changed from the American Psychological Society to the Association for Psychological Science in an effort to affirm the scientific base of the discipline as well as to better represent the organization’s growing international membership (Wargo, 2006).

²⁶Joseph Lee Rodgers’s (1988) work on the empirical foundations of the bipartite substructure of the field of psychology came into play in a very practical sense in these

events: “The figure from that article – Figure 3, showing the cluster analysis results – was put up on the overhead by Milt Hakel in the moments before the vote was taken to start APS, and I think it was actually on the overhead as the vote was being taken. Milt’s goal was, of course, to show empirical support for the legitimacy of thinking of the two different substructures” (J. L. Rodgers, personal communication, August 29, 2008).

²⁷By the initiative of Logan Wright, Bonnie Strickland, and George A. Albee, the American Association of Applied and Preventive Psychology (AAAPP) was founded in 1990 to “protect and advance the interest of scientist-practitioner psychologists.” The group was to place the “traditional values of organized practicing psychology (the integration of science and practice; the true integration of public interest and practice)” at the top of its list of priorities (AAAPP Board, n.d.). It soon became an organizational affiliate of the APS, although many had hoped that it would become a division of the APS (B. Strickland, personal communication, August 11, 2008). George A. Albee was the AAAPP’s first president.