I attended AGPA Connect (the annual meeting of the American Group Psychotherapy Association) 2020 in New York City. What I was most interested in at the conference was how racial-cultural events in groups and corresponding factors that influence us in groups. The American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA) is an organization that promotes the development and dissemination of group psychotherapy practices and research. The organization is organized by the American Group Psychotherapy Association.

What issues do you think the conference should bring attention to? We are committed to being accountable to each other in the learning we must do. We are committed to being inclusive of the diverse perspectives of members. The round table provided the members with more of an opportunity to share other experiences in group and sharing to help other group therapists do the same.

Karen Eberwein, President-Elect, summarized the results of the survey of our membership (2014); worked with other board members to develop the 2019 code of ethics and the 2020 bylaws. Karen has done an excellent job in communicating with the general membership of our organization. As you likely know, the Act prohibited the practice of medicine, surgery, and other healing arts by non-licensed persons. It is not required to be a member of AGPA to attend the conference, and the conference does not offer any CEUs. We highly encourage you to eat what sounds good and enjoy lunch in nice weather. Before Courtney got promoted, she and I used to have lunch together at least once a month. She would often ask me about my clients, and I would tell her about the challenges they faced. Despite the difficulties, I always felt grateful for the opportunity to help others.

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Leadership

A look at the past 30 Presidents of MAGPS offers additional measures of our racial and gender history. Here is a look by decade summary. You can track the details on our website.

Past Presidents (by race and gender)

1960s: Eight people; 7 white men and 1 white woman served as Presidents of MAGPS that first decade.
1970s: Seven people served as Presidents, 6 white men and 1 white woman served.
1980s: Five people served as Presidents, 4 white men and 1 white woman (who also served in the 1960s).
1990s: Seven people served as Presidents, 6 white men and 1 white woman (same people as in the 1980s).
2000s: Four people served as Presidents, 3 white men and 1 white woman.
2010s: Four people served as Presidents, 1 black woman and 3 white women.
2020s: One President and one President-elect, both white women.

In summary, these are mostly sixty-year history MAGPS has 39 Presidents (22 men and 17 women). Of the 39 Presidents, 15 (38.5%) were black/BPOC (13 men and 1 woman). Twelve of 39 (30.8%) have been white women.

Twenty-five white men served as Presidents of MAGPS in the first 30 years. Two white women, Beverly MacGown and Lisa Lobenhoffer were elected during those early decades.

For the first time in 1996, a BPOC man, Tony Raymond, and a BPOC woman, Nina Brown, served as Presidents of MAGPS. Two more BPOC men (Roger Notter and Ping Meng/Hu) were elected President between 2009-2010.

There are no black men on the website information. The purpose of this article would be the obvious trends to be included. White men have taken over the leadership of MAGPS from black men. This drift to same racial mirrors the increased participation of women in the psychotherapy professions. Although there is no recorded data on sexual orientation, it is noted worth noting that, unfortunately at least, mostly of Presidents have identified as heterosexual, and the exception is all who have identified as heterosexual in the conference on “Multiracial Identities.”

As mentioned above, there were Presidents for the first 40 years of MAGPS history. The 1990s marked the election of the first BPOC President. Since 2000 two BPOC men represented 22% of the total of the time Presidents. The time span a right stop in the earlier decades.

Conference Programs (also on the website)

A review of the information describing the history of Spring and Fall conferences sponsored by MAGPS provides another measure of how slowly the organization has been in a BPOC minority. We can consider the history of the two meetings:

In 1959 MAGPS sponsored a conference titled “Black, Eccentric, and Crazy” presented by [first name not available] Adams. This lecture is the first conference to be independent — and the only such event in the first 40 years of MAGPS.

Between 1980 and 2010 MAGPS organized 10 conferences — only the Fall Conference has been cancelled due to COVID-19. The conferences (1980-2000) were directed by black or other presentations focused on topics related to GPPS’ mission of educating and training group psychotherapists.

Only four conferences were directed by BPOC professionals and focused on issues of sexual identity in the past 30 years. In 2006 Nina Brown, the first BPOC female President of MAGPS, co-directed a conference on transgender identity and gender in psychology.

A mission conference was presented by the Anti-Racism Task Force. In 2018, Alexis Abernathy, a BPOC leader in AGPA, was elected President.

The mission of the Anti-Racism Task Force is to provide recommendations to the MAGPS Board to address systemic racism in our organization and the mental health field as a whole. Our task is to use education, dialogue, outreach, and personal growth accountability to be a voice for change within our group therapy community.

The Anti-Racism Task Force was formed in 2018 by the Board to address systemic racism in our organization and the mental health field. This committee was created to identify and address systemic racism within our organization and the larger mental health field.

Our mission is to address systemic racism in our organization and the mental health field. MAGPS is committed to addressing systemic racism and is dedicated to creating a more inclusive and equitable environment for all members of our community.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at newsletter@magps.org. We are here to support you and encourage ongoing dialogue and growth within our community.