

Chronology of Significant Events in Division 45 History: First 10 years

Prepared by Frederick Leong and based on Lillian Comas-Diaz's upcoming article.

In celebration of our Division's 20th anniversary, President Toy Caldwell-Colbert has asked me to prepare a 2-part article for FOCUS outlining the significant events in the history of the Division for the last 2 decades. This is part 1 of the series and will focus on the first decade. As you know, until recently Martha Banks has been our Society's Historian but she has now transitioned into the role of one of our Council Reps. While we transition to a newly appointed Historian, Toy had asked me to prepare these articles since I am guest editing a special issue on the History of Racial and Ethnic Minority Psychology for our division journal, Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology.

For that special issue, I had invited Lillian Comas-Diaz to prepare the article on the history of Division 45. She has graciously agreed to allow us to use excerpts from her article to prepare this chronology. I should point out that in a Newsletter article like this one, it is impossible to acknowledge individually the hundreds of Society members who have made important contributions to the accomplishments of the Division as Executive Committee members, members of different committees and task forces, etc. Therefore, I encourage you to "read between the lines" in reviewing this chronology and keep in mind these individuals. Finally, I do want to acknowledge the assistance of Erica Chu in assembling some of the photos and Arpana Gupta for helping me select the excerpts from Lillian's article.

1963

In response to explore training and employment problems encountered as a consequence of race, the Council of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) set forth an impetus for the APA board of directors to establish the Ad Hoc Committee on Equality of Opportunity in Psychology (CEOP).

1968

During the annual APA convention, the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) representative to the Council of Representatives, Charles W. Thomas, brought forth a "challenge to change" that would hopefully address APA's inadequacy in meeting Black Americans needs. In addition the national chairman of ABPsi addressed the APA Council. In response APA worked with ABPsi and the Black Students Psychological Association (BSPA) to establish the Commission on Accelerating Black Participation in Psychology.

1969

Chester Pierce and James Comer, two Black psychiatrists were instrumental in having the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) develop a distinct organizational unit to promote the development of mental health programs for minority groups. As a result the NIMH established the Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) in five disciplines: psychiatry, psychology, social work, sociology, and psychiatric nursing.

July 1973

The National Conference on Levels and Patterns of Professional Training in Psychology was held in Vail (a.k.a. the Vail Conference). It was the first national psychology conference where ethnic minority

issues achieved some prominence. Attention was given to such issues as the civil rights movement, women's rights, the gay and lesbian rights movement, the Vietnam War, and the Watergate scandal. In addition affirmative action programs and the identification, recruitment, admission, retention and graduation of ethnic minority students were implemented. Thus the attendees also recommended the formation of the APA Board and Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs.

1974



APA supported the Minority Fellowship program, with Dalmas Taylor as its first director and James Jones as its second director. This program has allowed many people of color to enter the field of psychology and provided them with mentorship.

1977

The director of the APA Minority Fellowship Program, Dalmas Taylor, submitted a proposal to the NIMH Center for Minority Group Mental Health in order to organize a conference for ethnic minority psychologists.

1978

As a result of the above development, in 1978 there was a national conference on Expanding the Roles of Culturally Diverse People in the Profession of Psychology and this was renamed The Dulles Conference.

1979

APA Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs is established with Esteban Olmedo as its director.

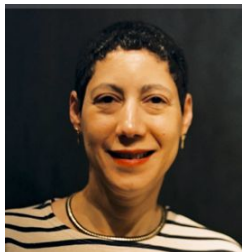
1980

The Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs (BEMA) is approved by the APA membership

1982

The Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs (BEMA) Task Force on Minority Education and Training is established.

1984



Lillian Comas-Diaz arrived at the American Psychological Association to direct its Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs. In addition the Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs (BEMA) Task Force on Communications with Minority Constituents is set in motion.

August 1986

The Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs (BEMA) Task Force on Communications with Minority Constituents, chaired by John Moritsugu, created the impetus for the organization of the Society. In fact, the Council of Representatives voted to establish the Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues (Division 45) during annual APA convention. Esteban Olmedo served as the first president, Lillian Comas-Diaz was the Treasurer, John Moritsugu served as Secretary, and Melba Vasquez represented the division at Council.



1987

Division 45's first executive committee was formed. Chalsa M. Loo



and John N. Moritsugu became co-presidents and the rest of the elected Executive Committee consisted of Lillian Comas-Diaz who was Secretary-Treasurer, Melba Vasquez was Council Representative, Dalmas Taylor became President-elect, Lisa Porche-Burke, Teresa LaFromboise, Charles Pine, and Hortensia Amaro were Members at Large. Esteban

Olmedo served as past founding president. Also the first Division 45 Convention Program was established.

1991

President Teresa La Fromboise, worked on streamlining administrative and committee procedures. The Task Force on Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual concerns spearheaded by Eduardo Morales helped the Society take a stand against the Armed Forces' policies on gays and lesbians. In addition Angela Ginorio chaired the task force on women which became the committee on Women of Color. These two committees reaffirmed relations between the Society and its two closest allies: Division 35, Psychology of Women, and Division 44, the Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Issues.



1993



Amado M. Padilla (1991-1993) who was president for two consecutive terms established the Publication and Communications Committee which planned for the development of an official division journal. President Vera Paster (1993-1994), founded the mentorship program known as "Links and Shoulders" hoping that young psychology professionals could benefit from those who had weathered before them.

1995



President Gordon Nagayama Hall (1994-1995) strived to emphasize systemic representation of ethnic minorities within APA. He supported Dick Suinn's run for APA president. This was a pivotal accomplishment as since that time only two persons of color had been APA presidents.