



SCPS Newsletter - SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PSYCHIATRIST
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<https://www.socalpsych.org/southern-california-psychiatrist-march-2026/>





President's Column

by Patrick Kelly, MD

March signals the emergence of spring, a time of new growth and change. It also marks Women's History Month—a time to honor the contributions of women who have shaped our world, our profession, and our communities. In psychiatry, the significance of this celebration runs particularly deep. We work in a field that has been profoundly shaped by women, from the pioneering psychoanalysts who challenged the male-dominated orthodoxies of the early twentieth century to the clinicians and researchers who today lead some of our most important work in trauma, child development, and health equity. And yet, as Dr. Vanessa Markgraf reminds us in this month's newsletter, women continue to be underrecognized and underdiagnosed even within the conditions we treat.

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Masking and Makeup: Autism Spectrum Disorder in Women

by Vanessa Markgraf, MD, MS

If you were to close your eyes and think of a patient with autism, what would you see? Usually, people conjure images of a young boy with an insatiable interest in dinosaurs, trains, or both. Since its origins as a condition separate from schizophrenia in 1911, autism was believed to be a condition mostly experienced by men (NE Rosen, 2021). In the 1940's Dr. Hans Asperger described a milder form in which patients had strong language but persistent social challenges, known as Asperger's Syndrome. Next, Dr. Ole Ivar Lovaas, a clinical psychologist and UCLA professor, was credited with founding Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) intervention for autism. Incidentally, Dr. Lovaas was also a strong proponent of the extreme male brain theory, in which young boys were deemed to be "too masculine" based on an exaggeration of analytical systemizing and decreased "female traits" such as empathizing and social reciprocity (S Baron-Cohen, 2002).

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Common Factors and Methodological Issues in Psychotherapy Research

by Alex Lin, MD

I gave a presentation to the PGY-2 residents at the Olive View – UCLA residency on common factors last year. Given national events, it may seem a bit quaint to focus on a subject that might be considered somewhat academic, but I found the material sufficiently interesting that I wanted to share it with SCPS members.

"Common factors" was first used by Saul Rosenzweig in 1936. He asked, "[W]hat do these [presumably diverse] therapies actually have in common that makes them equally successful?" For the sake of answering this question, he assumed that all therapies are equally successful when competently performed.

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Family Members in the Therapeutic Journey

by Jesus Zaragoza, MD

The topic of mental health among children and adolescents continues to draw major attention and rightfully so when considering the consequences of unresolved mental illness in these groups. In the most up to date data as reported by NAMI, approximately 16.5% of youth in the US ages 6-17 experience a mental health disorder per year. When these young individuals go without treatment, they are more likely than other groups to face underperformance in school, unemployment, homelessness, poor physical health outcomes, and suffer from higher rates of substance abuse and incarceration. Additionally, the need to address mental health issues in young Americans becomes even more important when considering that suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people ages 10 to 24.

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SCPS Members Presenting at APA - San Francisco

The Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association will take place in San Francisco, May 16 – 20, 2026 in San Francisco, California.

Please see the list of SCPS members who will be presenting this year.

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SCPS Presents

Private Practice 101

ONLINE: Wednesday, March 18 | 7:30pm - 9:00pm

with presenters:

Voluntary Contributions
Catherine Casalegno, MD and Victoria Huang, MD



Each year SCPS invites dues exempt Life Members to make voluntary contributions to the organization. SCPS is sincerely grateful for the generosity and dedication of our longstanding Life Members and offers up sincere thanks and appreciation. Please see the list of Life Members who voluntarily contributed to SCPS in 2025.

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January Council Highlights

by Roderick Shaner

Meeting Date: January 8, 2026

Next Meeting: February 12, 2026, 7:00 PM (Zoom)

President's Report – Dr. Kelly

- **Career Day:** Dr Kelly described excellent presentations by SCPS discussants and dynamic interactions with attendees at the event last month and others agreed. Council members discussed opportunities for increasing attendance in the future including augmenting direct content with residents through email or other social media, increasing engagement with SCPS by all residency directors, and encouraging the Program committee to consider having multiple Career Day locations per year in the future, perhaps with one in LA County and one in the IE.
- **Bylaws Committee Report:** Dr. Kelly presented the Bylaws Committee's motion for Council to recommend an amendment to the Bylaws procedure for filling unexpected vacancies in the treasurer-elect position.



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Southern California Psychiatric Society

P.O. Box 10023, Palm Desert, CA 92255

SOCALPSYCHIATRIC@GMAIL.COM