



Chair's Corner

Department History Part One

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LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER, PART ONE

Our department's recent move to temporary quarters for the projected year-long 7th floor remodeling project provided the impetus for us to open long-closed books, sort through photos and files, and, piece-by-piece, determine which documents were of sufficient historical import to be kept for posterity. This overwhelming sorting and culling caused me to reflect on the history of psychiatry at UMass. I thought you might enjoy reading some of the highlights of our evolution as a department. Any inaccuracies in this article are solely due to deficiencies in my own research. I would appreciate your emailing me with corrections. This article will cover the eras of our first three department chairs. I hope to provide a second installment in a coming newsletter.



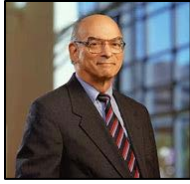
The Mason Years (1970-1976)

During the years between the medical school's founding in 1970 and the hospital's opening in 1976, Edward Mason, Chair of Psychiatry at St. Vincent's, served as our acting chair. If you've ever wondered how our offices came to be on the seventh floor, this is because ours was the last department to be organized in the new hospital. J. Edward Prunier, who had run the Worcester State Hospital (WSH) Outpatient Clinic from 1959-1967, served as the Director of Residency Training at WSH from 1967-1976 when he was succeeded by David Myerson.



The Walzer Years (1977-1981)

From 1977 until his departure to lead the Boston Children's Hospital Psychiatry Department in 1981, Stanley Walzer was the first "permanent" chair of the brick and mortar Department of Psychiatry. Under Walzer, the Worcester State Hospital psychiatry residency program, which had been training psychiatrists for many many years, "came down the hill," to form the UMass Psychiatry Program. The residency director, David Myerson, came with it, served as Vice Chair and then Interim Chair, remaining in the department until 1984. Myerson was the scion of a family strongly identified with Boston psychiatry. His dad was the famous Boston neuropsychiatrist, Abe Myerson, who had been both Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard and Chair of Neurology at Tufts. David's brother, the psychoanalyst Paul Myerson, was Chair of Psychiatry at Tufts. William Vogel, who had worked as an MHW at Worcester State Hospital in the 1950's before becoming a psychologist, taught the WSH psychiatry residents their family therapy and came with David from the state hospital to teach the new UMass residents as well. One of the illustrious graduates of our residency program in the Walzer years was Howard Goldman, MD, PhD, who would go on to become Assistant Director of the NIMH and the Editor in Chief of Psychiatric Services. 1977 saw the birth of our Public Sector Division. In 1978 Northampton State Hospital became our first DMH hospital partner. The following year, Jeffrey Geller was recruited as director of the Psychiatric Resource Unit at Northampton State Hospital. In 1991 Ted Lawlor, MD, served as the first UMMS medical director of Northampton State Hospital, where he would serve until the hospital's closure in 1993. When 8 East opened in 1979, there were already psychiatric units at St. Vincent's and Worcester Memorial Hospitals, but 8 East was conceptualized as a partner unit to the Worcester Area Community Mental Health Center (now known as CHL). It was in 1980 that our Ambulatory Psychiatry Clinic opened in offices on the 7th floor adjacent to our administrative offices. In Walzer's final year, our 5-bed inpatient child psychiatry unit opened. Yes, we did have a child psychiatry inpatient unit on 5 West for 10 years until its closure in 1991. With Walzer's departure, David Myerson became our interim chair from 1981 until 1982, when Aaron Lazare was recruited from MGH to serve as the second "permanent" chair.



The Lazare Years (1982-1989)

In 1982, the year Aaron Lazare was recruited as chair, Worcester State Hospital, now our longest running DMH professional services contract, joined our departmental family. Aaron recruited many of our current senior faculty members: Mai-Lan Rogoff, who became the director of the Student Counseling Service when it was transferred from Family Medicine to Psychiatry in 1983 and would go on to become Associate Residency Training Director and Student Affairs Dean; Jeffrey Geller, who returned to UMass after his two-year stint in Pittsburgh, to become the first Director of Public Sector Psychiatry; Peter Metz, who arrived in 1983 and would serve as Director of Pediatric Consultation Liaison Psychiatry, inaugural Director of our Child and Adolescent Psychiatry fellowship program on its founding in 1988, and later as Division Director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; Paul Barreira, who joined the department in 1984 as Adult Psychiatry Residency Director, a role he would hold until 1995; Lionel Hersov, who came from England to serve as inaugural Division Director of Child Psychiatry in 1984; Paul Appelbaum, who established our Law and Psychiatry Division in 1984 and would serve as Department Chair from 1992-2005 and the A F Zeleznik Professor of Psychiatry from 1985-2005; Russell Barkley, who created our ADHD research program in 1985; Yours Truly (SB), recruited to the new Westborough State Hospital contract in 1986 and created the Neuropsychiatry Program in 1987; Kenneth Appelbaum, who joined the Forensic Psychiatry faculty in 1988 as inaugural Director of the Forensic Psychiatry Fellowship program; Tom Grisso, who joined the Forensic faculty that same year; and many others.

It was during Dr. Lazare's tenure as chair that the Emergency Mental Health Service was established in 1984. That same year and replacing Jonathan Rothman, MD, Lewis Cohen, MD, led the Liaison Service followed by Linda Peterson, MD, who was awarded the department's first NIMH grant, for the study of biological predictors of violent suicide attempts. Within a year, plans were announced to open a second inpatient unit, the Psychiatric Treatment Center (PTC, predecessor of the PTRC) though the unit would not open for several years. Westborough State Hospital (WSH) joined the department in 1986 to be followed within a few years by Medfield State Hospital and Quincy Mental Health Center, both of which would then go on to merge with WSH. The Westfield Area Community Mental Health Center, later known as the Westfield Center for Adults and Families, became a partner as well.

When Dr. Lazare went on to become the Acting Dean of the Medical School in 1989, plans had been announced for the construction of a large new neuropsychiatric inpatient unit and research institute as part of the medical center and we were anticipating further tremendous growth. Ultimately these plans would evolve to become the Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute located on the grounds of WSH. By the end of the Lazare years, our departments public sector, child psychiatry, and research missions had been firmly established and many of the faculty Aaron recruited would remain in leadership positions for many years. Paul Barreira, who in addition to serving as residency training director had served as interim medical director of WSH and interim DMH Area Medical Director, accepted the role of interim chair as Aaron moved downstairs to the dean's office.

I hope to continue this history in a subsequent issue with Looking Over My Shoulder, Part Two!