style admirably captured the spirit of the times.

Traces of these bewildering racial exchanges continue to crop up in John Travolta's character in *Saturday Night Fever* (1977), in Warren Beatty's political figure in *Bulworth* (1998) incorporating rap and hip-hop into his campaign rhetoric, and in Clinton's being anointed as the first Black president. There were apparently coded messages in his eating and sexual habits.

Various explanations and rationalizations have been put forth to account for Imus's self-destruction, but a pair of these, no less significant for their being elusive, are admiration and envy. In some warped sense the freedom of Black entertainers to diss (disrespect) gays and women with impunity is an enviable power. White shock jocks would never aspire to become Black or dress Black or pass as Black, but they do want to access the perceived potency of Black entertainers and to don their aggressive verbal style. As the adoption of Black slang is still a way of being hip, cool, and sexy, it is no doubt intended both as a token of macho credentials and an oblique tribute. Imus initially dismissed his lapse as merely "rapping," but the ensuing brouhaha amounted to a kind of racial outing (Imus quoted in Randy Kennedy, "Hey, That's (Not) Funny," *New York Times*, 15 April 07).

When he rapped on "hos," it was understood he meant whores, but "nappy-headed" is more ambiguous. The dictionary associates nappy with nap, i.e., downy or kinky hair, but also includes the English term for diaper. This stirs post 9/11 associations with a southern congressmen's disparagingly label of turbans as diapers. From TV clips, I don't recall the Rutgers team as wearing headbands, so the epithet would be purely racial, though at least one player was white. At most, there may have been some carry-over of collective anxiety about Islamic terrorists. It is also true that the country has been reeling from an epidemic of apologies coming from people like Paul Wolfowitz and Alberto Gonzales. But Don Imus was the first to suffer consequences, perhaps as the delegated scapegoat for the group in the face of an intense media feeding frenzy.

These reflections on the place of the Imus affair in the 2007 emotional life of America are intended to encourage additional psychohistorical discussion of popular culture.

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Thirty Years of the International Psychohistorical Association

David R. Beisel
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In 1978 at the "First Annual Convention" of the International Psychohistorical Association (IPA) there were skeptics who thought the "annual" might be premature. They wondered if after the delivery of the backlog of the psychologically oriented papers if there would be a need for a second conference. Thirty years later the IPA continues its work with its annual meetings in Manhattan.

As chair of the First Convention's I was too busy to think much about the prospect of failure. I organized things as in a jazz improvisation, underestimating the hurdles to be overcome and what an overwhelming amount of work was involved. Fortunately, I had the help and support of many energetic, enthusiastic, and talented colleagues. In addition, I was encouraged by pioneering psychohistory panels and papers I had witnessed at the American Historical Association meetings since 1970 and at the first-ever psychohistory conference held in the fall of 1976 outside of Atlantic City at Stockton State College, followed by Adelphi University psychohistory meetings a year later.

As an academic I was familiar with annual meetings of the American Historical Association and other professional groups. Knowing they'd always met at one hotel or another, I thought along similar lines, retaining The Holiday Inn on Manhattan's West 57th Street as the least expensive option. The convention fee – $25 as I recall – was just enough to cover expenses.

Like traditional scholarly conferences we had rigid schedules, wore professional attire – ties and suits for men, pants suits or dresses for women. Our

founder, Lloyd deMause, insisted on "strict time limits of twenty minutes per presenter" and I deferred to his judgment. Toward the end of each presentation, students I recruited held up large signs reading: "Five minutes," "Two minutes," and "Time!" Group disussion was also restricted. Howard Stein's "Judaism As a Group Fantasy," an extremely controversial and energizing paper, created a furor and colleagues were frustrated by our time restraints.

The rigid restrictions had multiple functions. Beyond keeping us on schedule they contained some very powerful feelings. The convention's Our Group Process Analysts – John Hartman and Alice Eichholz – suggested at the final Group Process session on the last day that our collective fantasy was of the "Bar-Mitzvah-Boy-in-a-Suit" on his very best behavior.

Hartman's "Bar-Mitzvah-Boy" image was quite apt since some felt and acted as if we were in a race to achieve respectability. My essay for *The Journal of Psychohistory's* "Special IPA Convention Issue" – distributed to participants – was called "From History to Psychohistory: A Personal Journey." It detailed my own struggles with accepting the premises and approaches of psychohistory and offered a path for others to do the same, as related to me by various colleagues through the years.

Not only was our work beginning to encounter opposition from historians in general, the IPA in particular was being criticized by the newly formed "rival," American-Historical-Association affiliated Group for the Use of Psychology in History (GUPH), which was engaged in its own quest for respectability, part of which took the form of defining itself as the "responsible" psychohistorians as against the IPA. Although a few of us joined GUPH and maintained simultaneous membership in both organizations, many on "our side" seemed to be acting out an interpretation of our own, one advanced and endorsed by IPA's influentials, that "All groups split" and that we were therefore powerless to do anything about it. (The argument was often couched in terms of the psychohistory of early psychoanalysis.) Whatever the many reasons for our tendency to reject the valid criticisms from non-psychological historians and GUPH alike – that is, to give in to our anger and other impulses and abandon mature bridge building – we seemed all too ready to reenact one of psychoanalysis's most self-defeating early traumas, somehow "validating" ourselves in a similar if awkward and self-defeating way.

Through the years I have been to all the IPA convention except when I have had to take time off for heart and gall bladder surgeries. This gives me more perspective than most participants. Reflecting on thirty years of a group's life means paying attention to what is forgotten, known, and suppressed. It is a time to illuminate and celebrate, as we pursue our goal of teasing out the realities amidst the fantasies.

Nothing's perfect under the sun of course, and some of us hoped for far too much from, and for, the IPA, so like all groups, it was bound to let us down. Predictably, each convention heard us making the same self-castigating complaints: "We're doing something wrong." "Why aren't there more women in attendance?" "Why aren't there more black members?" "Where is Mary, Jay, or Alice? They were here last year, why not this year?" We'd periodically emerge from that collective trance when somebody would step forward (it was often Mel Kalfus) to remind us that the IPA was the only organization they knew which expected perfect attendance year-on-year.

Several other tensions emerged, waxing and waning in importance, under the surface, unresolved. They included tensions between the more inclusive Big Tent psychohistorians and the more limiting Little Tent psychohistorians, with a few "Lean To" psychohistorians thrown in, some of great influence, who'd listen attentively and then announce that the only real psychohistory was the kind they were doing.

A second tension existed between those who stressed critically analyzed well-researched papers of detailed scholarship based on authenticated sources and those whose papers tended to be less laden with redundant proofs, more theoretical, creative, and freewheeling, prone (as some saw it) to leaps of untenable logic. Big Tent psychohistorians struggled to make room for them all. What made that a little more possible was the return of "Bar-Mitzvah-Boy-in-a-Suit" when Bernard Flicker moved our Third Convention to City University of New York's Lehman College. Virtually every convention since has been held at an institution of higher learning such as the CUNY Graduate Center, Fordham Law School, and New York University.

Early on we found ways of driving people away, then wondered why the size of the IPA always remained about the same despite our regularly attracting new members. Ignoring the fact that stasis is something of a normal process for all groups (one million people take up golf every year, one million abandon it) it must be said that our complicit silences and rationalizations allowed acting out in ways that offended many good people. At one convention two so-called group analysts, for example, met the moderate criticisms and suggestions offered by well meaning people by repeatedly saying to them, "You want to be fed!" (Five or six founding members along with an unknown number of first time attendees left after that one.) Claiming, for example, that we're student-friendly then scheduling student panels in such a way as to ensure that not a single person would show up for them. (The students never returned.) Humiliating conference participants in public by telling them they needed psychotherapy. Or repeating or implying the mantra that non-psychological historians, and other scholars, are stupid or inadequate. (Why would any of them come back?)

Still, most conventions saw most people enjoying good papers and good fellowship most of the time, and the examples I've given, while accurate, may be considered unfortunate if isolated anecdotes. Yet, over the long haul and taken together I think they've exacted their toll. Merely dismissing them with the phrase, "All groups are imperfect" cannot erase their consequences nor should they be ignored as a real part of the IPA narrative.

Some of my continuing journey from history to psychohistory has been a fascinating lesson in the ways psychological insight can be used to avoid psychological insight. Whenever someone wanted to get to the bottom of what was happening, the question was often dismissed with the rationalization that psychohistory automatically produces adverse affects in others, and that it isn't for everyone – particularly academics – and that the academic scholars who reject us have always rejected us, and that we don't need those who don't want us.

A glance at the affiliations of almost all first-year convention attendees shows instead an overwhelming connection to colleges and universities. It raises the issue of who's been doing the rejecting, and despite the continuing criticism, skepticism, and unfair open hostility that psychological history still sometimes provokes; successful bridge building is still possible.

It seems to me that our organization has also been living some interesting fictions, neither mentioned nor critically examined. One is the word "International." Our many valued international members have made excellent contributions over the years, but we need to ask how "international" is a society that in thirty years has never met abroad and only once outside the safety of New York City?

A second fiction is that everyone fully understands that the IPA and the Institute for Psychohistory exist as separate entities. Despite all the energy spent in pointing this out, people still conflate the two, often calling IPA "deMause's group." This is partly because the organization was originally his idea and partly because of his prominence in it. Yet Lloyd deMause has rightly insisted from the beginning that the Institute be kept scrupulously separate from the IPA and has always resisted the call that IPA membership, like most other professional organizations, carry with it a subscription to a scholarly publication, namely *The Journal of Psychohistory*. His position is reasonable considering his journal is part of his Institute, not the IPA. Why both remain synonymous in many people's minds then, or how the notion continues to be erroneously promoted, have never been looked into, yet from the IPA's standpoint it's important to do so. The fantasy that Institute and IPA are one, and the fiction that everyone fully understands they are not, may be counter productive given the realities that there's more to psychohistory than the Institute, more even than the IPA, and that claims made for the Institute's far-flung network of international branches, which, some feel exist mostly on paper, may tend to work against the IPA's best interests.

A third fiction is that all the provisions of the IPA Constitution continue to be respected and carried out. I remember with great admiration Henry Lawton's prodigious efforts in constructing and writing our constitution and the many hours founding members spent in discussing its form and substance. It's distressing to see parts of it so often abrogated, misused, and casually forgotten without causing so much as a ripple of concern.

In the end these faults and peculiarities may not matter much. The Association has provided a

sense of belonging for many isolated scholars and, importantly, a venue for those of like mind to meet regularly to present their findings. Our convention – our centerpiece – has become something of an institution, we expect it to magically appear and reappear this year and the next.

In thinking about our past accomplishments, it's clear that what's never been said or what's been dismissed, what's consciously and unconsciously forgotten, along with the pretenses we've been living with all, need mentioning since we claim to be in the reality business. Calling things by their real name and acknowledging some of what's gone wrong means nothing less than trying to write an intellectually and emotionally honest IPA narrative. If it's mundane to say that our self-defeating ways need to be examined if they're ever to be remedied, it's no less true. Maybe they deserve to be discussed elsewhere in a variety of places including the next International Psychohistorical conference.

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Organizing International Psychohistory

Paul H. Elovitz
Clio's Psyche

On the eighth of June in 1978, there was extraordinary excitement at the first International Psychohistorical Association (IPA) convention held at Manhattan's Coliseum Holiday Inn. There was a sense of history in the making as a mostly youthful group of scholars met to apply psychoanalysis and other varieties of psychology to history and society. My recollection is that Harvard professor emeritus William Langer, who had called for psychohistory in his 1957 American Historical Association Presidential Address, wrote to give his blessing to our endeavor. Some attendees were veteran psychohistorians but most were fairly new to the field.

My own introduction to psychoanalysis and psychohistory had occurred while I was a faculty member at Temple University in 1968 even before I finished my doctoral degree. I felt close to the planners of the conference as a Contributing Editor of the *Journal of Psychohistory* and Co-chair of the Saturday Workshop Program of the Institute for Psychohistory.

Lloyd deMause, chairman of the organizing committee, inaugurated our first meeting early in the morning. His credentials to be the founding IPA president were impressive: he was a veteran psychohistorian who had authored the path-breaking essay, "The Evolution of Childhood," and founded the Institute for Psychohistory, the Psychohistory Press, and the *Journal of Psychohistory*. Many listened with rapt attention to his every word and welcomed his ideas, such as the IPA becoming a self-analytic group.

The idea of Group Process Analytic sessions at the end of each day seemed brilliant and worked quite well at the inaugural meetings of our group. It was in the hands of John Hartman, a most serious scholar of group processes. He had already published on the subject and had taught group process at Harvard and then the University of Michigan. As co-leader he wisely chose Alice Eichholz for reasons beyond two heads being better than one: amidst female conversation in the ladies' room and elsewhere Alice could pick up seemingly throw-away comments expressing fantasies and feelings. (It is noteworthy that women were only two of the 35 listed presenters.)

In those early years of my own psychoanalytic training and personal and group analysis, I was learning about the difference between my conscious thoughts and my unconscious fantasies and feelings. At the Institute for Psychohistory we had carefully read Bion, *et al*., learning that there is plenty of craziness within groups and that groups often choose their most disturbed member as leader. Yet, in those first meetings, I saw little evidence of this. Overwhelmingly, we were just so happy to be there, soaking up psychohistorical knowledge and comradeship. At the time I was learning new things in almost every session, as well as finding lots to disagree with—further enlarging my knowledge. (I assiduously took notes