

2025 WCPG

World Congress of Psychiatric Genetics
Dimensions of Translation



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APRIL 2025 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER: PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hello everyone.

It's hard to know how to start this message to you all. But I think the things I want to focus on today are about community building and the importance of persevering in the work we do – as acts of resistance against fascism.

Since my first "President's Message", things – internationally – have changed in some dramatic ways. Fascism is on the rise around the world. We all have students and colleagues in the US and elsewhere who are – legitimately – afraid for their personal safety because of their identities. And given the deep connection between fascism and anti-science attitudes, even if we are fortunate enough to not be immediate targets because of our identities, current circumstances present an existential threat to all of our work. Since the inception of the PGC, the work of this community has been – in large part – funded by the NIH, which as we all know, is currently in a state of turmoil and grave uncertainty. At this point, I don't think any of us are able to predict what will happen from here. And as individuals we have little influence over it. However, as a community that prioritizes listening to and supporting each other, we can do more. We have more power collectively than as individuals. Community is a critically important tool of resistance against fascism – indeed, fascism thrives by creating an environment of fear, where community breaks down because we cannot be sure who to trust. It is for this reason that we and the PGC have been hosting community conversations – to try to provide forums for us to connect and support each other and build a stronger community to protect us all from the effects of the changes that are happening. If you've not yet been to one of these events, please keep your eye out for announcements about the next ones and join us to provide support for others and/or to receive it yourself. I have found these events to be directly helpful in giving me a sense of collective experience, shared understanding, and energy to keep fighting.

I am sharing these thoughts because when faced with the kind of devastating onslaught of upsetting news that we have been subjected to lately, we can end up feeling hopeless and/or helpless and paralyzed, and even question the point of what we are doing. In case anyone is feeling anything like that I wanted to share some thoughts from Dr. Neil Lewis Jr. (a behavioural scientist and associate professor of communication at Cornell) that I came across a while ago on BlueSky that helped me so I wanted to share with you all.

Dr. Lewis was reflecting on how the fact that science is being attacked is evidence that it (that is, science) matters. He talked about how for academics, our job is: "to create and share knowledge that improves the lives of people around us" and that the academy is "responsible for *making* the

kinds of citizens that make democracy flourish." He pointed out that "The knowledge that is created and shared, and the methods for creating and sharing that knowledge pose existential threats to tyrannical rule." I found it helpful to have the framing that even just doing our work is an act of resistance.

If you're interested in building community as an act of resistance, please look into joining one of our [committees](#), joining one of our existing [interest groups](#), or starting a new interest group if there is one you would like to see that doesn't yet exist. Also, please look at renewing your membership [here](#). While I will look forward to hopefully seeing many of you in [Cancun, Mexico in October 2025 for our next WCPG meeting](#), I would ask you to look carefully at your travel routes - many countries have recently issued travel advisories for the USA, through which some flights to Mexico connect. Please try to make alternate connections as appropriate.

Depending on your status as a person living in the US, I appreciate the difficulty that you may now be facing with leaving/re-entering the country. Please know that we are monitoring the situation carefully and would love to hear from you with any creative ideas you may have about how we might address this situation.

In solidarity,

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