

PIONEERS

Peggy Bennion Papp

Birth date and location

Peggy Papp was born in 1923 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Educational background

Peggy earned her MSW at Hunter College, School of Social Work, New York City.

Contributions to the field

Gender-focused research and dialogue have long been at the center of attention in the marriage and family therapy field. The origin of these discussions can be traced back roughly 35 years to a time when the pioneers of family therapy started to question the gender assumptions inherent in our society. In the 1970s, Peggy helped call attention to the number of publications that blamed mothers for every kind of problem. Mothers were blamed for schizophrenia, incest, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, just to name a few. Peggy has continued to be a key participant in this evolution of ideas about gender and power, and often took part in the initial debates, and continues to do so today. She is an internationally renowned therapist and author of numerous articles and books on family therapy, including *The Process of Change*, considered a classic in the field; co-author of the landmark book, *The Invisible Web: Gender Patterns in Family Relationships*; and editor of *Couples on the Faultline: New Directions for Therapists*. She has presented extensively in the U.S., Europe, South America, China and Israel. She is recognized for her many innovative contributions to family therapy, including family sculpting and the use of themes and belief systems. She was the recipient of the AAMFT's Lifetime Achievement Award and has been honored by the American Family Therapy Academy for her pioneering work on The Women's Project for Family Therapy (with Marianne Walters, Olga Silverstein and Betty Carter).

Influences leading to interest in family-based interventions

Peggy and Olga Silverstein began a program using paradox in 1974, working with families of symptomatic children (Minuchin and Fishman, 1981).

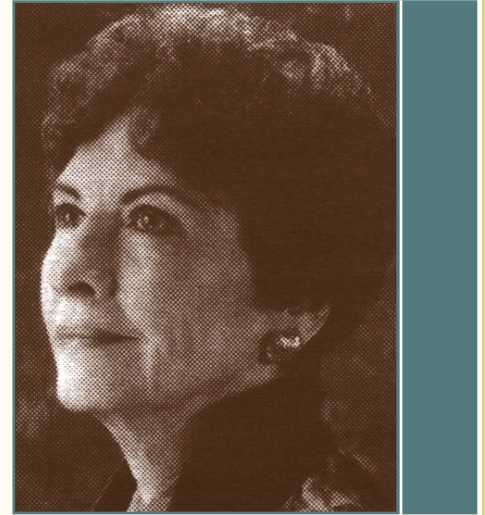
How this work is being carried on today

Peggy is currently a senior faculty member of the Ackerman Institute for the Family, and founder and director of Ackerman's Depression and Gender Project. In this project, a model was created that recognized the role gender plays in depression.

A multi-dimensional treatment approach is practiced that takes into account the biological, psychological, cultural and interpersonal aspects of depression. The family is seen as an essential part of the recovery and is involved in the treatment process. In addition to her Ackerman affiliation, Peggy has a private practice in family therapy in New York City.

Some information courtesy of the Ackerman Institute for the Family, New York, NY. Also from Family Therapy Magazine, July/August 2002.

Reference: Minuchin, S., & Fishman, H. C. (1981). Family therapy techniques. Harvard University Press.



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