

## *Lafayette Jury: "No Cause"* Judge Caldwell Reverses His 2017 "Reeks" Decision

Two lawsuits involving Dr. Eric Cerwonka have resulted in decisions in recent months.

In 2017 Cerwonka appealed the results of a decision by the state board that revoked his license. At a preliminary hearing for a Motion to Stay, Judge Michael Caldwell of the 19th Judicial District Court vacated and made void the Board's decision. Caldwell was reported to say, in a sidebar discussion, "I read the briefs and I read the pleadings. I just can't send this up to the Court of Appeals, the violations of Due Process are rampant."

However, in February Judge Caldwell reversed his 2017 decision.

This came after the Board's attorney, Ms. Amy Lowe, appealed to the State of

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## *Sad News*

The *Times* learned just hours before publication that the psychology community has lost one of our legends.

Dr. Janet Matthews passed away on Sunday. We share some information given to us by Dr. Lee Matthews on page 16.



Dr. John Fanning testifying at a previous Legislative Committee.

## April is Cell Phone Distraction Month

April is Cell Phone Distraction Awareness Month. Scholars, researchers, psychologists, attorneys, counselors and others are asked make efforts to advise the public about the realities of cell phone distraction, explains Dr. Theodore S. (Scott) Smith from the University of Louisiana Lafayette.

Dr. Smith is Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department and leads research in his lab, The Louisiana Applied and Developmental Psychological Sciences Laboratory, where he is interested in how cell phone distraction affects the learning process, not only in the classroom. He also looks at how applicable distractions may affect driving behaviors and eyewitness memory. Smith has authored *Cell Phone Distraction, Human Factors, and Litigation*, published by Judges and Lawyers Publishing and which is becoming a popular resource for legal professionals.

The impact of cell phone distraction while driving is emphasized each year in April by the National Safety Council (NSC). The NSC says that the first time since the Great Recession, the U.S. has experienced three straight years of at least 40,000

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### *Bills Being Filed this Week*

## Legislature to Convene April 8

The 2019 regular Legislative Session will convene at noon, Monday, April 8. Bills currently being prefiled include a variety of issues. Below are some of those with interests to psychologists.

HB 53 by Representative Moss sets requirements for youth suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, in-service training for school employees and services available to

students. Proposed law requires the governing authority of each public and approved nonpublic secondary school that issues student identification cards to have printed on the cards the phone numbers for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline hotline, the Crisis Text Line, and a local suicide prevention hotline. Proposed law is applicable to charter schools. Present law requires

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## Dr. Moore Top Vote Getter for State Psychology Board Seat

Dr. Michelle Moore received the top number of votes in the recent election to fill an upcoming seat on the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. The position is the 2019–2014 opening left by the normal completion of service by current Chair Dr. Jesse Lambert.

Dr. Moore received 111 of the 225 votes cast, of a possible 791 who received ballots. Dr. Gina Beverly received the next highest number of votes, 73. Drs. Lauren Rasmussen and Lisa Tropez-Arceneau received 35 and 24 votes respectively.

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## Psychologists Travel to Advocacy & Leadership Conference at APA

Four psychologists talked with members of Congress about legislation impacting the public and involving healthcare. Representing the Louisiana Psychological Association (LPA) were Drs. Alan Coulter, LPA President-Elect; Lucinda DeGrange, LPA Council Representative; Amanda Raines, Early Career Psychologist Representative; and Lacey Seymour, Louisiana Federal Advocacy Coordinator.

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Dr. Amanda Raines (L) with President of the American Psychological Association, Dr. Rosie Davis.  
(Photo courtesy Dr. Raines)



# Editorials and Opinions

## Please Don't Drink the Kool-Aid

by Times publisher, J. Nelson

H. L. Mencken, the famous journalist, humorist and political critic of the 1930s wrote, "The believing mind reaches its perihelion in the so called Liberals. They believe in each and every quack who sets up his booth on the fair-grounds, including the Communists. The Communists have some talents too, but they always fall short of believing in the Liberals." I wonder what he'd say about politics today.

The Mueller report, with the likely final conclusion that Trump did not, after all, collude with the Russians, winds up causing a shift in the perceptual frame for many in the progressive mindset, including a goodly number of psychologists, a group that has been shown to be not at all diverse. Rather, 94% of us sit firmly on the political Left.

A lack of Left–Right diversity, like all other types of group homogeneity, restricts problem-solving and innovation. Left leaning people, according to Eysenck, are tender-minded, and I've wondered if this accounts for the conflict avoidance that seems to plague us. (Bill McCown will straighten me out at the LPA convention if so—he's speaking on political hyper-polarization.)

Mueller surprised both the Right and the Left. The Right suspiciously expected fabrications. The Left expected hard evidence for impeachment. Mueller causes both sides to rethink, an unusual and lucky intervention if it holds. The FBI has egg all over its faceless actors and some in the media will have to cope with being preserved for posterity sounding like imbeciles. But all in all, a lucky intervention, I think.

None of this back and forth should be a concern to psychology. We are watching Rattlers vs Eagles, from Sheriff's Robbers Cave, the normal functioning of a system. Trump, as much as one may dislike him and his style, is a change agent. The system put him there, just like it put President Obama there. This time, with Mueller's Report,

the chips look like they will fall to the Right. But either kind of Kool-Aid is not good for psychology to be drinking.

Psychology's job is to get the best grip we can on a social process and climb up the mountain to the highest perch possible and have a good look around. But to gain this kind of objectivity we still need a good scrubbing.



In the March issue of *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science*, Malte Elson and others found that professional advocacy associations, including APA, put out policy statements that are suspect. They looked at policy statements about the effect of media on the public and found 91% lacked clarity and transparency, 62% overgeneralized, 79% exaggerated, 96% ignored diverse viewpoints, and 29% had non-credible sources.

Mencken also said, "The most dangerous man to any government is the man who is able to think things out for himself, without regard to the prevailing superstitions and taboos."

Psychology is dangerous like that—in a good way. But we've got a lot of our own business to be minding, so that the public receives good advice and looks to us with trust. And, so that trust is deserved.

[Julie Nelson is a licensed psychologist, journalist, and organizational consultant, and publisher of the Times. She also holds other various positions in the community. However, her opinions here are those of her own, and do not represent any group or association. She and the Times receive no compensation other than paid advertising. Email her at [drj@drjulienelson.com](mailto:drj@drjulienelson.com), —she welcomes feedback.]

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## Letters to the Editor

Dear Julie,

I served as the archivist with LCA some years ago. During that time, I had the opportunity to share photos with you because you could not be there that year. As a result, I receive, read, and enjoy subscriptions of *The Psychology Times*. I was deeply moved by your article about your father, journalism, and not forgetting. This article caused me to reflect on the responsibility of helping professionals. Sometimes our mission is clouded by politics, personal agendas, and other distractions. Thank you and your family for being agents of change and models of true social responsibility.

Sincerely,

Rashunda Reed, PhD, LPC, LMFT

## Corrections & Clarifications

We did not receive corrections for last month's issue.

Send your corrections to:  
[psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com](mailto:psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com)

# Letters to the Editor

## "... the importance of licensing boards..."

This is a response to the article written by Dr. Branaman "Court cases, market forces reshaping psychology," posted in the *National Psychologist* on November 19, 2018 and reposted on the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists website in February, 2019.

Dr. Branaman notes that the Federal Trade Commission has been focused on "increased competition to facilitate a 'free market' in the professions and has closely watched activities of professional associations and state regulatory boards. Market forces and court decisions have also 'chipped away' at the practice of psychology." The statement suggests that what is happening in Texas is a result of some mysterious process at a level out of reach of mere psychologists.

Dr. Branaman cites relevant court cases which have had major repercussions for the practice of professional psychology. He discusses the Serafine case in which the U. S. 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Serafine could describe herself as a psychologist for political purposes. He failed to mention that she initially lost in district court and that the Atty. Gen. of the State of Texas declined to appeal the decision of the Fifth Circuit Court. He also failed to mention that the Atty. Gen. was the only person who could make the decision to appeal that case and that person was the notorious Ken Paxton who has been under indictment for many years now.

In a rather passive voice, he argues that it is logical to conflate freedom of speech with the licensing of professionals such as psychologists. In other words, his point seems to be that Serafine made a valid point that restricting the use of the term "psychologist" to properly trained and appropriately licensed practitioners is a violation of non-licensed people's freedom of speech and also violates people's access to a free market. He attempts to strengthen his point by noting that licensing boards may be universally vulnerable to lawsuits. He cites some other court cases to bolster his argument.

He also discusses another development in Texas psychology. He points out that licensed psychological associates (LPA's) have filed lawsuits, which they lost, in an effort to win the right to "the independent practice of 'psychology'". He recognizes that this privilege has been reserved for doctoral level

professionals and even offers the opinion that the doctoral degree should be the standard for the practice of professional psychology.

What is his conclusion? He asserts, "... It now seems that licensing of individuals with masters level training in psychology is inevitable." He warns, "First, there will be increasingly sharp scrutiny of regulatory boards by the public, state legislatures and federal regulations. There may be individual or class-action suits." His final statement is "I expect greater challenges may come. Where we go from here remains to be seen."

This article appears to be an attempt to terrorize and demoralize psychologists nationwide and to convince

them that the deregulation of licensing boards is inevitable. Of course, if you take this to its logical conclusion, all professionals are at the mercy of market forces and the ravages of court proceedings without regard for the welfare of the public.

The article fails to articulate the importance of licensing boards and of the strict regulation of healthcare practice and other professions. Clearly, an erosion of the standards for healthcare practice would result in massive harm to the public. Dr. Branaman fails to note that regulatory boards were developed over the years to protect the public from improperly trained, unscrupulous, ruthless, unethical and destructive professionals, both in healthcare and other professions.

I recently became aware that the state of Texas is attempting to dismantle the Plumbers Licensing Board; however, the Plumbers are resisting this attempt on a massive scale. Such action by the State of Texas could endanger the health and

welfare of many and might lead to the deaths of innocent people for a variety of reasons.

The same thing holds for psychologists. If unscrupulous, ruthless, unethical, destructive and improperly trained "psychologists" are turned loose on the public, many deaths may result. Mental illness is life-threatening and many people die each year if their mental illness is not properly treated.

Psychologists in high leadership positions should be more concerned about the potential for harm to the public as opposed to the forces of the market. If these psychologists are concerned about potential lawsuits, then they should consider the possibility of lawsuits as a result of wrongful deaths.

**James (Pat) Thompson, PhD**  
Houston, Texas  
Licensed Texas & Louisiana  
Member, Louisiana  
Psychological Association



**"No, it's not about lost sheep. Something's got my goat."**



# Dr. Moore Top Vote Getter in Election for Board, continued

Dr. Moore will be recommended to the Governor by the Louisiana Psychological Association, as the top vote getter, sources said.

In a related story, current LSBEP member Dr. Leah Crouch will be resigning due to an upcoming relocation to Korea this May, as was announced at the most recent LSBEP meeting. Another election will be scheduled, reported Dr. Kim VanGeffen.

Dr. Michelle Moore has been a consistent figure in the psychology community and holds several prestigious positions including Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry, LSU Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA, Department of Psychiatry, Section of Psychology, and Training Director of Clinical Psychology Internship Program.

From 2016 to present her research and scholarship has included: Working with ReNEW Charter School Network to provide needed clinical services to students either in special education or seeking evaluations for possible special education services; Primary Investigator and Mentor, Asian-American Mental Health among Medical Students; and Primary Investigator, Collaborating with Community Partners Collaborating with other psychology faculty at LSUHSC to assess the effectiveness of utilizing professionals in the New Orleans community to train psychology interns on various specialty topics.

Her publications include "An Examination of an Interactive Substance Abuse

Prevention Program for High School Students," *Journal of Child and Adolescent Substance Abuse*; "Finding Your Voice Through Publications." *Louisiana Psychological Association*; and *Colorful Emotions: A Workbook to Help Children Express Their Feelings*.

She is a member of the American Psychological Association; Association of Psychologists in Academic Health Centers; Louisiana Psychological Association; Southeastern Psychological Association; and Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers.

"In my current role as Training Director for the internship program at LSU Health Sciences Center, School of Medicine," Dr. Moore said in her statement, "I have the pleasure of directly training students and trainees who are the future of our profession. Being in this position, I would bring a unique perspective to the Board from the graduate program applications we review, the training of psychology interns and fellows and how we are preparing individuals for independent practice. [...]"

And, "Our licensing requirements exist to protect the public and ensure that we are bringing ethically minded psychologists into practice in Louisiana. We also want the public to feel confident about the practice of psychologists across the state and for all of those currently practicing to have great respect for upholding their responsibility as a psychologist. As psychologists, we should always ensure that we have a seat at the table and are ready to have our voices heard."

## Judge Reverses His 2017 "Reeks" Decision continued

Louisiana First Circuit Court of Appeal to argue two of the due process matters: 1) the board used attorneys from the same law firm, and 2) the board's prosecuting attorney had been previously involved with Cerwonka in a child custody case and fee dispute.

In April 2018, the Court of Appeal agreed with Lowe and the matter was then returned to district court for further proceedings.

In another lawsuit, related to the LSBEP complaint, a husband and wife brought a civil suit against Cerwonka in the 15th Judicial District in Lafayette. The plaintiffs sought damages for injuries due to alleged sexual misconduct and malpractice by Cerwonka.

That trial ended in October 2018 when the Lafayette jury concluded that there was no cause of an injury to either the wife or the husband due to Cerwonka's actions.

However, the jury did find that "... Dr. Cerwonka was negligent, i.e., acting below the level of the ordinary employee, under similar circumstances by the members of his profession," in his treatment of the wife. No negligent acts were attributed to Cerwonka for the husband and the jury awarded no damages to either the husband or the wife plaintiff.

On January 29, 2019, shortly before Judge Caldwell gave his February decision, the attorneys for the couple who had filed the Lafayette civil suit, submitted a Motion and Order to File Amicus Curiae Brief—a Friend of the Court, with Judge Caldwell in Baton Rouge.

In the 36-page Brief, the attorneys for the Lafayette couple, Edward Walters, Jr. and J.E. Cullens, Jr., presented arguments and opinions against Cerwonka, including excerpts from the Lafayette trial and depositions.

Currently, the LSBEP is also waiting on another legal battle over time limits, which has been on appeal but apparently dormant since 2015.

The time limits case, Dr. Cerwonka's case, and another investigation of Dr. Alicia Pelligrin which was dismissed under the encouragement of the Board's general council, contributed in part to skyrocketing legal fees coming out of the Board's 2014, 2015, and 2016 complaints subcommittee.

According to public records the Board's escalating legal fees stemmed primarily from fees from the Board Prosecutor, held at that time by Mr. James Raines. Over 2015 to 2016, and into January 2017, Mr. Raines prosecuted 16 cases. Three of these 16 cases amounted to \$146,987 of fees from Mr. Raines.

The Board worked in closed meetings during 2018 to create reforms to its complaints subcommittee process. Mr. Raines no longer appears to be one of the Board's contract attorneys.



Dr. Michelle Moore (L) at an Early Career Psychologist training panel, with Dr. Sarah Gray. Dr. Moore recently received the most votes in an election for the state psychology board, an opening coming up this July.



# Psychologists Travel to Advocacy & Leadership Conference at American Psychological Association, continued

The psychologists also attended a black tie dinner honoring Louisiana Senator Bill Cassidy sponsored by the Psychology Political Action Committee, held in March in Washington, DC.

While in D.C. the psychologists helped lobby for legislation, said Dr. Seymour. These efforts included these topics:

- 1) to ensure access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment;
- 2) to pass the Medicare Mental Health Access Act, H.R. 884. The bill removes a roadblock that hampers and delays mental health treatment for Medicare beneficiaries by ending unnecessary physician sign-off and oversight of psychologists' services. Private sector health plans, the Veterans Health Administration, and TRICARE all allow licensed clinical psychologists to practice independently in all inpatient and outpatient settings. Medicare should, too; and
- 3) to pass the Mental Health Telemedicine Expansion Act, H.R. 1301. The Mental Health Telemedicine Expansion Act would make it easier for older adults to obtain mental health care in their own home by removing current-law restrictions on the use of telehealth services.

"Senator Cassidy has been a supporter of mental health legislation on both a federal and state level," Dr. Seymour told psychologists in a recent letter. "Since his election, Senator Cassidy has championed legislation that addresses access to mental health care for our most vulnerable citizens by removing barriers to care."

Senator Cassidy has promoted measure to helped access to services through integration of primary and behavioral care. Among his achievements, Senator Cassidy worked to design and pass the "Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Reform Act of 2016" and first advocated mental health reforms while he served in the House of Representatives.

In 2015, he introduced mental health reform legislation that became the template for the Mental Health Reform Act of 2016. He helped strengthen accountability at HHS by creating an Assistant Secretary of Mental Health and improved interdepartmental activities related to those with serious mental illness.



Psychologist met with US Senator Bill Cassidy recently had a black tie fundraising event in Washington DC. Representing the Louisiana psychological Association were dr. Amanda Raines (L), Dr. Lucinda DeGrange (C) and Dr. Lacey Seymour (R). Senator Cassidy has been a supporter of mental health programs and services. (Photo courtesy Dr. Raines)

## Gov. Announces Work Training Program For Medicaid Recipients

Gov. Edwards announced the creation of a work training program for Medicaid recipients. He joined Dr. Rebekah Gee, secretary of the Louisiana Dept. of Health (LDH) and Louisiana Delta Community College Chancellor Dennis Epps to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to officially create a collaborative pilot work training initiative between LDCC in Monroe and LDH. The overall goal of the pilot is to develop a work training promotion program model that can be customized by communities across Louisiana.

"We are excited to be able to announce this pilot program that will build on the existing success of the State's Medicaid Expansion efforts," said Gov. Edwards. "It offers a practical and Louisiana-specific approach to connect expansion recipients to viable training opportunities that will lead to better jobs and better-earning potential. Creating a program that is helpful but not punitive is something we have consistently been working on. State lawmakers came together and spoke loud and clear on this issue. And with the recent court decisions against the faulty design of similar programs in other states, we are even more convinced that this is the correct path take. I want to thank everyone who has made this possible and especially Rep. Katrina Jackson and Representative Frank Hoffman for their leadership and guidance in this effort."

The pilot will include two LDCC campuses - the main campus in Monroe and the campus in the city of West Monroe. The first invitations to participate will be distributed this summer and will continue throughout the year. The pilot will be implemented in two stages, and the time participants will have to complete the program depends on which course of study they select. A total of five training programs will be offered:

Certified Nurse Assistant (CAN)/Behavioral Health Technician (239 Hours); Commercial Vehicle Operations (CVO) (160 Hours); Environmental Services Technician (120 Hours); Forklift & OSHA 10 (Wagner Special) (24 hours); Mortgage Documents Specialist (18 Hours)



# Argosy University Folds; APA Pledges to Support Doctoral Students Caught Up

Officials at the American Psychological Association said they will do what they can to support students at the 10 doctoral programs at Argosy campuses across the country following the closing of that university in March.

"With the mandated closing of Argosy University, the American Psychological Association has pledged to do everything it can as an accreditor to facilitate the transition of psychology doctoral students into other APA-accredited programs at the institutions standing ready to receive them," noted the press release by K. Mills on March 10.

Sources stated that Argosy has been struggling financially for some time. On February 27 the Washington Post reported, "Court documents attribute the missing money to the financial unraveling of Dream Center Education Holdings, a nonprofit group that acquired Argosy, South University and Art Institute campuses in 2016. The Los Angeles company struggled to turn the for-profit colleges into thriving nonprofit schools, and spent months trying to close and sell campuses to meet financial obligations. When it fell short, Dream Center in January entered into receivership, a form of bankruptcy."

The court-appointed receiver sent a letter to the Education Department showing cash flow where Argosy used \$4.2 million of financial aid funds to pay staff, \$2.1 million to pay vendors, and \$1.7 to fund operations, according to the Post.

Dr. Margaret Smith, now with the Chicago School at Xavier, said, "I previously taught for 10 years at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology at Argosy University Chicago and have been concerned since students reached out to me when the receivership occurred. It's been a highly traumatic experience for the doctoral students enrolled in the program, as well as faculty who've been there prior to it ever being Argosy, when they were a free standing program."

According to the APA press release, "The American Psychological Association has been working with programs, institutions and the Department of Education in an effort to ensure that psychology doctoral students affected by Argosy's alleged misdeeds are able to complete their degrees," said APA President Rosie Phillips Davis, PhD. "Our No. 1 concern is that these students and their teachers

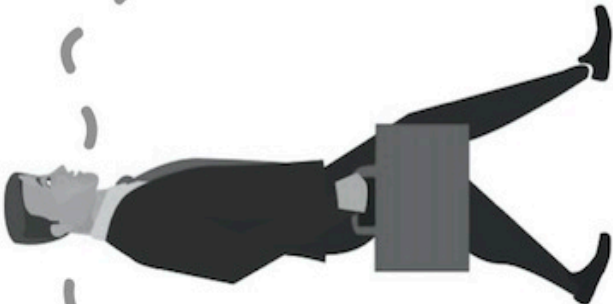
are not further penalized by the rapid demise and closing of the Argosy campuses. Some of these students were months away from graduating and entering the workforce to provide mental health care and other vital contributions to society. The top priority for the Department of Education and institutions around the country must be to ensure that the futures and the

investments by these students are not jeopardized."


Responding to calls and emails from affected students, faculty, and other concerned parties. APA established a Psychology Student Action Center ([psychstudentactioncenter@apa.org](mailto:psychstudentactioncenter@apa.org) and 202-336-6014) to direct members of the Argosy community to appropriate resources and created a [webpage](#) with referral information and FAQs.

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"My son has grown over the years, his professional development has been aided by the 'reminders' that Dr. Costelloe's testing and counseling revealed." - **Former client**

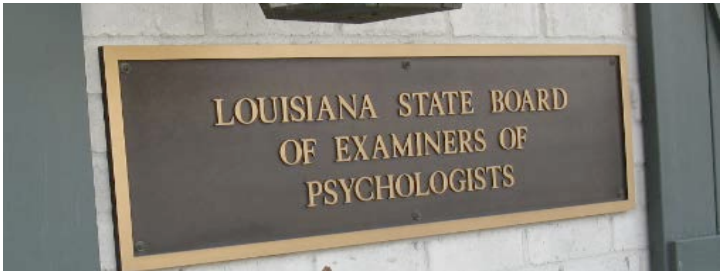


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# From the Minutes

## Selected Items from January and February Discussions of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists

### From Thursday, January 10, 2019, posted March 27

**1. Chapter 3 Training and Credentials: Applied Health Service Provider (HSP)/General Applied Psychology (GAP) -** Dr. Gormanous presented on this topic including a history, LSBEP’s current model and model options for moving forward in this endeavor. The members discussed this topic in depth and will continue to move forward looking at states that have implemented the Health Service Provider designation.

**2. Developmental Training Programs including but not limited to University of New Orleans –** Dr. Boggs presented this discussion, history and issues related to programs that are not currently accredited by the American Psychological Association, from which we frequently receive applicants for licensure, in order to ensure that an applicant’s training and credentials meet the statutory and regulatory requirements for licensure in Louisiana. The Board determined that the Developmental Psychology Program at the University of New Orleans (UNO) meets the criteria for this review. Ms. Monic was directed to follow up on the invitation to UNO [...]

**4. Proposed Rules: Continuing Education Requirements, Exemptions and Fees (LAC 46:LXIII.) 601, 603, 803, 805, 811, 905 and 4001) -** Dr. Crouch presented a newly revised draft following review of the November 30, 2018 oral comments as well as the written comments received with regard to Section 805 of the proposed rules; which revisions were further discussed and approved for amendment at the December 14, 2018 Regular Meeting of the LSBEP. The board thoroughly reviewed the revisions, Dr. Gormanous moved in favor of the changes and requested Attorney Newton provide a legal review of the revisions prior to filing. The motion passed unanimously.

**7. Policies and Procedures –** The board discussed the ensuing requirement to hold a public hearing related to its rules as well as the previous public hearings for oral comments held by the LSBEP. In an effort to provide consistency and fairness, Dr. Gormanous moved in favor of establishing hearing procedures by policy. The motion passed unanimously.

### From Friday, February 8, 2019, posted March 27

**Executive Director Report**

- The 2018 Audit has not been initiated due to short staffed;
- No Update in the matter: Nineteenth Judicial District; Parish of East Baton Rouge, State Of Louisiana, Division D, No.: 643,369: Glenn W. Ahava, Ph.D. v. LSBEP, on Appeal From September 18, 2015, Opinion and Order of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists;
- In the Matter Eric Cerwonka vs. Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists: On February 4, 2019 Judge Caldwell rendered his decision to

deny Cerwonka’s petition for review and affirm the February 10, 2017 Opinion and Order of the LSBEP in the matter P15-16-03C, which order resulted in the revocation of the license of Eric Cerwonka to practice psychology in Louisiana.

- Ms. Monic requested the board affirm her attendance at the next ASPPB meeting is in Santa Fe, NM April 11-14, 2019 and confirm that no other representatives of the LSBEP would be in attendance.

- Ms. Monic reported on her attendance at FARB 1/24/19 – 1/27/19 stating that it was very educational and there were valuable materials and “take-aways” from the experience including guidelines for assessing good moral character, guidance on ensuring consistency across rotating boards and developing rules and policies, our need to develop and work on an “elevator speech” when we have an opportunity or need to educate the public and/or legislators; and balancing anti- competitive regulations with the need to ensure competence and public protection;

**Liaison to Professional Organizations and Boards -** Dr. Gormanous also reported on his attendance at FARB, independent of the board and served on a panel of presenters at FARB “Three E’s and a Fee: Education, Examination, Experience” Dr. Gormanous reiterated what a valuable experience he thought the conference was for both Ms. Monic and board members.

**1. ASPPB, Board Nomination; Fellow Nomination and Ming Fisher Award Nomination –** Ms. Monic advised the board of the call for nominations from ASPPB. Dr. Gormanous recommended

that Ms. Monic take a look at the candidates eligible to be nominated for the Ming Fisher Award for consideration by the LSBEP for nomination. The board discussed the matter and agreed to review her recommendations for consideration at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

**4. Inquiry from Aimee Elrod @ CredentialMed RE Medical Psychologists -** The board reviewed and discussed this inquiry from Ms. Elrod regarding conflicting statements regarding the licensure of Medical Psychologists on LSBEP’s Online Verification page vs. LSBME’s Online Verifications page. The Board reviewed the issue and by motion of Dr. Gormanous, unanimously agreed in favor of sending a letter to LSBME requesting their requirements for a Medical Psychologist to retain their license with the LSBEP for the renewal of their license to practice medical psychology with LSBME. The board further approved Drs. Boggs and Gormanous to facilitate the letter.

**5. Proposed Rules: Continuing Education Requirements, Exemptions and Fees (LAC 46:LXIII.) 601, 603, 803, 805, 811, 905 and 4001) -** Dr. Crouch again presented this matter and reported on her work with Ms. Monic and Ms. Newton, provided correspondence with the Louisiana Psychological Association on their recommendations for revisions, and suggested other options for facilitating the provision for the board review of continuing professional development. The board thoroughly discussed this matter and

affirmed their desire to continue to work on revising Chapter 8 to facilitate this provision. Attorney Newton was directed to work with Dr. Crouch on a new draft for board review.

**8. Health Service Provider and General Applied Psychologist designations -** Dr. Boggs reported on her research and status in developing revisions to the Louisiana licensing requirements. The board discussed the matter. Dr. Boggs recommended that the board continue to revise the process in light of recent judicial opinions, to avoid anti-trust issues, and to ensure compliance with statutory requirements. Dr. Henke moved in favor of proceeding as recommended. The motion passed without objection.

**University of New Orleans – Laura Scaramella, Ph.D. Chair, Dept. of Psychology and Elliott Beaton, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Graduate Coordinator and Director of the Stress, Cognition and Affective Neuroscience (SCAN) Laboratory** presented at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the Developmental Psychology Program at the University of New Orleans (UNO).

By motion of Dr. Boggs, the board unanimously approved and directed Ms. Monic to put out a call for interested psychologists to be vetted for inclusion on a **board approved evaluator list**. Specifically noting a need for psychologists with proficiencies in evaluating: psychological, neuropsychological, forensic, substance abuse, fitness for duty and psychosexual issues.



Dr. Jesse Lambert is the outgoing member on the state psychology board, finishing his five-year term this June. Here he speaks with Executive Director Jaime Monic at a board meeting.



# Legislature Convenes— Bills Being Filed

continued

BESE to adopt guidelines for in-service training of school employees in suicide, and the board is to identify suitable programs and requires coordination with LDH in identification of such programs.

HB 193 by Rep. Bacala revises procedures relative to students investigated for making threats of violence or terrorism. The present law provides relative to a student reported to a law enforcement agency for a threat of violence or terrorism and provides for a judicial hearing on whether the student should undergo a mental health evaluation. Present law requires the law enforcement agency to file a petition with the appropriate judicial district court for a mental health evaluation. The proposed law instead provides that if the law enforcement agency determines that the threat is credible and imminent, it shall report it to the district attorney, who may file such a petition.

HB 211 by Rep. Horton limits the number of hours per day of certain behavioral health services reimbursable by Medicaid. "CPST services" means community psychiatric support and treatment services and "PSR services" means psychosocial rehabilitation services. The proposed law limits Medicaid reimbursement for behavioral health providers who furnish CPST and PSR services by providing that the following types of providers shall be limited to a maximum combined total of 12 reimbursable hours of CPST services

and PSR services per provider, per day, regardless of the number of patients seen by the provider for those services: (1) Psychologists. (2) Advanced practice registered nurses. (3) Physician assistants. (4) Licensed clinical social workers. (5) Licensed professional counselors. (6) Licensed marriage and family therapists. (7) Licensed, certified, or registered addiction counselors.

HB 237 by Rep. Chad Brown prohibits discrimination by health insurance issuers in the individual market and small and large group market based on health status, from imposing any preexisting condition exclusion with respect to the plan or coverage. And the proposed law requires a health insurance issuer to include mental health and substance use disorder services, including behavioral health treatment, and preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management.

HB 248 by Rep. Chad Brown provides for parenting coordinators in child custody proceedings. Present law (R.S. 9:358.1) authorizes the court to appoint parenting coordinators in certain child custody cases for one-year terms and apportion the cost between the parties. Proposed law authorizes the appointment of parenting coordinators prior to entering a judgment establishing custody and extends the initial term of appointment to up to two years. Present law (R.S. 9:358.2) prohibits the

appointment of a parenting coordinator in family violence cases unless there is good cause shown. Proposed law instead allows the court to name a parenting coordinator when there has been domestic abuse or a history of perpetrating family violence if the parties consent after consultation with an attorney or domestic violence advocate. Present law (R.S. 9:358.3) provides the qualifications for parenting coordinators and requires three years post degree experience and 20 hours of continuing education every two years. Proposed law changes present law to five years post-licensure experience and 10 hours of continuing education and further extends the qualifications to include Louisiana attorneys.

HB 296 by Rep. Hoffmann provides for the training of peace officers and first responders with respect to interacting with Alzheimer's and dementia patients. Proposed law requires the bureau of emergency medical services and the Council on Peace Officer Standards and Training to create a dementia training program in cooperation with the Department of Health. Provides for the creation of an initial training program and updates to the continuing education program.

HB 320 by Rep. Simon provides for student access to applied behavior analysis providers in schools. Present law prohibits a public school governing authority from denying student access to behavioral health service providers at school during school hours if requested by the student's parent or legal guardian. Proposed law adds "applied behavior analysis providers" to present law definition of "behavioral health service provider" in order to allow access to such providers for students in school upon the parent's request. In addition, proposed law requires public school governing authorities to make their policies available to the public, that behavioral health evaluations include recommendations for applied behavior analysis services. Provides that present law and proposed law shall not supercede present law relative to the licensing of behavioral health services providers or any regulation of the La. Dept. of Health related thereto or present law relative to the practice of behavior analysts.

HB 336 by Rep. Lyons adds certain school-based psychologists and social workers to those providers exempt from behavioral health provider licensing requirements—the Behavioral Health Services Provider Licensing Law. Proposed law retains present law and also exempts from behavioral health services licensure requirements an individual who provides school-based health services through a public school governing authority and who meets both the following criteria: (1) He is a certified school psychologist or a licensed master's social worker. (2) He is enrolled in the La. Medicaid program under the



Industrial-organizational psychologist Dr. Mkey Bonner (L) husband Sgt. Mark Johnson, and Ms. Michelle Faust, LCSW, (R) at a conference on violence prevention. Bonner and Johnson have served as Co- Coordinators for the Northeast Delta Crisis Intervention Team and supported peace officer training. A bill has been filed for officer education to help them understand people with dementia.



# Legislature Convenes— Bills Being Filed

continued

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment program.

HB 541 by Rep. Cox amends the Post-Conviction Veterans Mentor Program for incarcerated veterans. With regard to the purpose of the program, those veterans who are eligible and willing to participate in the program could serve as mentors for military to civilian transition services programs or to first-time offenders housed in a parish jail, and could serve as parish jail HiSET tutors. The secretary of DPS&C is to establish the Post-Conviction Veterans Mentor Program for incarcerated veterans, and adopt regulations and guidelines as it deems necessary for administration of the program. If the offender is granted parole and released, the offender shall be required to participate in all programs and services available to veterans that are determined to be necessary for the offender by the committee on parole and comply with other requirements specified in proposed law.

SB 19 by Senator Boudreaux. Present law authorizes the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners (LSBME) to regulate perfusionists, medical psychologists, genetic counselors, and polysomnographic health professionals. Proposed law provides that the LSBME, in addition to any other requirements established by regulation, shall require an applicant, as a condition of licensure to submit a full set of fingerprints, in a form and manner prescribed by the board, permit the board to request and obtain state and national criminal history record information on the applicant, and pay, in addition to all other applicable fees and costs, such amount as may be incurred by the board in requesting and obtaining state and national criminal history record information on the applicant.

SB 78 by Sen. Martiny. Present law provides for student behavioral health services to be provided during school hours if requested and paid by a student's parent or legal guardian. Proposed law retains present law and adds "behavior analyst" to the definition of "behavior health provider" and "evaluator." Further includes "applied behavior analysis" in

the definition of "behavioral health services."

SB 107 by Senator Gatti proposes that any benefit payable to a sheriff or deputy sheriff which provides coverage for temporary or permanent disability to all sheriffs or sheriff's deputies who suffer an injury or disease arising out of and in the course and scope of their employment shall include coverage for post traumatic stress injury. Proposed law provides that the following definitions shall apply to benefit payable to a sheriff or deputy sheriff: (1) "Post traumatic stress injury" means those injuries which are defined as "post traumatic stress disorder" by the most recently published edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders by the American Psychiatric Association. (2) "Psychiatrist" shall have the same meaning as it is defined pursuant to present law. (3) "Psychologist" shall have the same meaning as it is defined pursuant to present law. Proposed law provides that any sheriff or deputy sheriff who is diagnosed by a psychiatrist or psychologist with post traumatic stress injury, either during employment or thereafter, shall be presumed, prima facie, to have a disease or infirmity connected with his employment.

SB 139 by Sen. Gatti provides for the "Louisiana Healthy Workplace Law" which prohibits workplace bullying or harassment. Proposed law provides for the following purposes: (1) To provide legal relief for employees who have been harmed, psychologically, physically, or economically, by deliberate exposure to abusive work environment; (2) To provide a legal incentive for employers to prevent and expeditiously respond to abusive mistreatment of employees in the workplace.

SB 160 by Sen. Boudreaux provides for definitions regarding opioid addiction, its treatment and those healthcare professionals certified to conduct such treatment. Proposed law provides for the responsibilities of the licensing boards for nurse practitioners and physician assistants to become certified to administer medically-aided treatments for those addicted to opioids. Proposed law provides for the outline of treatment offered for opioid addiction through the program sanctioned by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



Senator J.P. Morrell was an early supporter of ABA legislation and the BA Board. More bills are being filed this session to allow children to receive services at their schools.

## LPC Board Publishes New Rule for Telehealth, Teletherapy

The Professional Counselors (LPC) Board of Examiners has published a new Rule for "Telehealth" that establishes minimum standards for the delivery of mental health counseling, psychotherapy, and marriage and family therapy services using technology-assisted media. The Board notes that "Teletherapy references the provision of counseling and psychotherapy services from a distance which is consistent with the same standards of practice as in-person counseling settings."

The Rule notes that Teletherapy is "... a method of delivering mental health counseling, psychotherapy, and marriage and family therapy services as prescribed by R.S. 37:1101 and R.S. 37:1116 using interactive technology-assisted media to facilitate prevention, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental, emotional, behavioral, relational, and addiction disorders to individuals, groups, organizations, or the general public that enables a licensee and a client(s) separated by distance to interact via synchronous video and audio transmission.

"The board recognizes that safe and effective practices in teletherapy require specific training, skills, and techniques and has set forth the following regulatory standards to ensure competence and safety. This Rule shall not be construed to alter the scope of practice of any licensee or authorize the delivery of services in a setting, or in a manner, not otherwise authorized by law. Nothing in this Section shall preclude a client from receiving in-person counseling, psychotherapy, and marriage and family therapy services after agreeing to receive services via telemental health.

The Board specifies that "Teletherapy shall be delivered in real-time (synchronous) using technology-assisted media such as telephonic and videoconferencing through computers and mobile devices. The use of asynchronous modalities (e-mail, chatting, texting, and fax) is not appropriate and shall not be used for teletherapy, except in a crisis to ensure the client's safety and stability. Licensees shall provide services consistent with the jurisdictional licensing laws and rules in both the jurisdiction in which licensee is physically located and where the client is physically located. Licensees providing teletherapy services to clients outside of Louisiana must comply with the regulations in the state in which the client is located at the time of service. The licensee shall contact the licensing board in the state where the client is located and document all relevant regulations regarding teletherapy. [...]



# April is Cell Phone Distraction Month continued

roadway deaths. This is a 14 percent increase from 2014. Overall, this escalation of roadway injuries is the most dramatic seen in 53 years, said the Council.

Every day at least nine Americans die and 100 are injured in distracted driving crashes, according to the Council. Cell phones, dashboard touchscreens, voice commands and other in-vehicle technologies pose a threat to people's safety. An NSC survey of the risky things drivers do while on the highway, found that 47 percent of people either text manually or work through voice controls, while driving.

Louisiana State University cognitive psychologist Dr. Melissa Beck also conducts research for "inattention blindness" that affects us when we are driving. Working with simulators at the Civil Engineering Department, Beck and her associates have published results of her studies in this area. She directs the Beck Visual Cognition Lab at Louisiana State University Psychology Department, where she and her researchers uncover the ways that visual attention and memory work or don't work in various situations.

For Cell Phone Distraction Month, Dr. Smith also explained the serious issues of cell phone distraction in education. "While much emphasis has been placed on cell phone distraction and driving," Smith said, "it is recognized that cell phone distraction affects both young and older students in the classroom."

Technology has been advantageous to education since students can respond quickly through online formats, collaborate in real time regarding homework, and obtain references instantly, says Smith. But there are many issues now recognized.

"The assumption that students may disengage from their cell phones when entering a classroom is incorrect. Often students will utilize your cell phones in order to text,

resending receiving emails, and other tasks during classes. Multiple studies have indicated that as many as 90 to 95% of college students use their phones to send text messages during class on a constant basis," Dr. Smith said.

"An effort to reduce or eliminate cell phone use in the classroom and at high school or college level has been difficult. Often students become physically and emotionally attached to their phones, perhaps reflective of addiction, and find themselves very socially awkward and fervently uncomfortable when they do not have their cell phones in their physical presence."

"Another argument against technology in the classroom evolves around the discomfort that students have when other students are using their cell phones. Some student report being uncomfortable listening to a lecture when other students are texting or performing other activities not related to learning," said Smith.

At the same time, Dr. Smith points out that there are numerous arguments in favor of technology in the class. "It's been recommended that teachers may incorporate social media in daily teaching lessons, use clickers to quiz students during lecture, and encourage students to identify resources online during lecture, as opposed to having stagnant lectures limited to verbal talks."

"Indeed, the argument for and against technology in the classroom will be ongoing."

Finally, Dr. Smith reminds everyone to remember the potential harm related to cell phone distraction and driving. "This research has consistently indicated drivers pull their attention away from road conditions while driving, further prompting unsafe practices."

He hopes that readers will consider the wide range impact of technology on their daily lives, including education and performance of daily tasks such as driving.



Dr. Chris Leonhard, Professor at the Chicago Professional School Xavier, speaking to an attendee at a previous meeting of SEPA in New Orleans. Dr. Leonhard is a Health Psychologist.

# Primary Care Assn Points to April as Minority Health Month

April is National Minority Health Month According to the Primary Care Association, the causes of health disparities is complex and interwoven, and include poverty, lack of education, racism, and discrimination, lack of options for physical activity or healthy eating, tobacco use, barriers to accessing care, provider shortage areas, lower quality of medical services and many others.

"Socioeconomic status is one of the most powerful predictors of all cause mortality," says Dr. Chris Leonhard, Professor, Chicago Professional School at Xavier, and health psychologist.

"New Orleans is a startling example of this," Leonhard said. "Life expectancy at birth in the Tremé where the average household income in 2010 was about \$26,000 is 55 years, while in Lakeview, the average 2010 household income \$75,000, and life expectancy at birth is 80 years. Some of this disparity relates to difficulties in accessing health care services, but behavioral health factors also figure prominently. Heart disease, stroke, diabetes, accidents, HIV disease, and homicide, to name just a few mortality factors where disparities exist, are all well known to respond favorably to behavioral health intervention and prevention."

Durand "Rudy" Macklin, Director, Louisiana Department of Health Bureau of Minority Health Access and Promotions, noted to the editors at Primary Care Association, "As a long time champion of the power of prevention, I recognize that health does not only occur in the doctor's office and the hospital. It occurs where we live, where we work, where we learn, where we play, and where we pray."

"I believe that prevention offers the greatest opportunity to improve the health of Louisiana's families now and for decades to come," said Macklin. "I also believe that prevention is the key to building a stronger and more sustainable health care system. Minority Health Month allows us to raise our voices about the importance of prevention."





# Louisiana Researchers at SWPA in April

[Editor's Note: We reported on researchers in our March issue and this article continues that report.]

Louisiana researchers are presenting at the Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) conference on April 5–7 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They will join in the conference theme of, "Psychology: From the Lab to the Labyrinth: Bridging the gap between the highly controlled conditions of the laboratory and the uncontrolled conditions of the real world."

Excerpts from researchers' abstracts are included below.

The Lake Charles Research Group is also presenting several projects. This group includes Burton Ashworth, Lacy Hitt, and Grishma Poudel from the University of Louisiana Monroe.

Also in the Lakes Charles research group are Lawrence Dilks, Kimberly Hutchinson, and Billie Myers from Lake Charles Memorial Hospital, Sandra Viggiani from Lake Charles Clinical Trials, and Reshmi Maharjan.

Their presentations included the following:

"A Pilot Study to Augment Decision Making Process in Choosing an Academic Major." The purpose of this study was to examine whether engagement with an advisor reduces student discomfort when choosing an academic major for higher education. One hundred thirty high school students from Northeast (NE) and Southwest (SW) Louisiana public schools participated in the project.

The effect sizes found in students from both SW and NE High Schools suggest that the impact of advising is an important factor in assisting students with determining an academic major when moving into higher education.

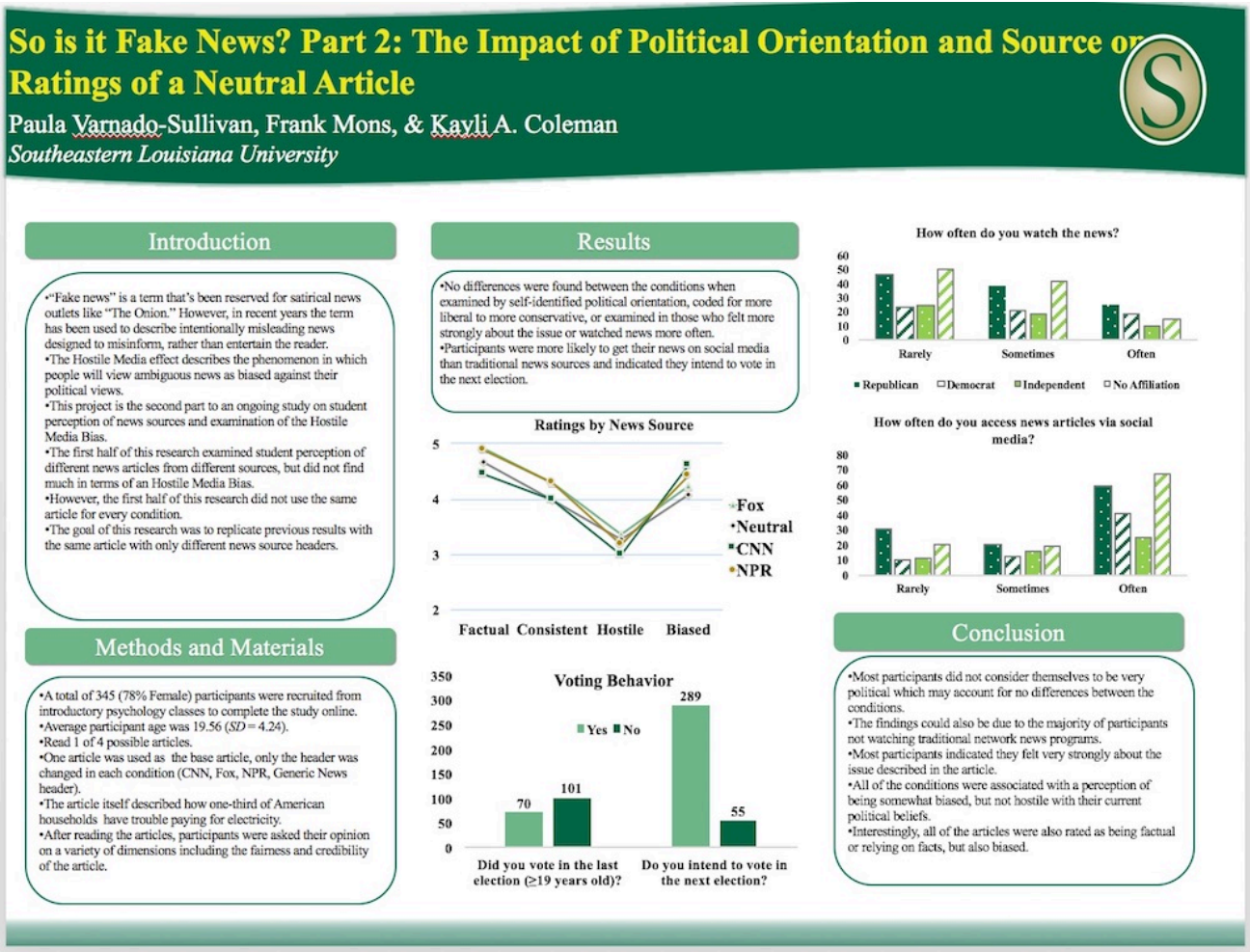
The researchers from the group are also presenting, "Discriminant Validity of Attention & Concentration Exercises."

Cognitive rehabilitation is defined as a systematic and functionally oriented service of therapeutic activities and therapy focuses on regaining the independence of the individual's physical and mental status.

The researchers design of this study was to assess the convergent validity between four different attention and concentration exercises and existing validated instruments. Researchers conducted Factor Analyses to assess the internal consistency of attention and concentration exercises, administered one week apart.

The results suggest the four exercises may have a positive influence on patients undergoing cognitive rehabilitation.

A final presentation will be, "Assessment for the Reliability of



Dr. Paula Varnado-Sullivan, Professor and Graduate Program Coordinator, Psychology Department at Southeastern Louisiana University, shared this poster of their presentation having to do with fake news. She and her team used a neutral article and changed the masthead to reflect FOX News, CNN, and NPR. Dr. Varnado-Sullivan said she was struck by the number of students who were ambivalent about the concepts.

Attention and Concentration Exercise." Cognition refers to our ability to make sense of the environment. Cognitive processes depend on attention and concentration factors. Attention operates by modulating information processing in a goal-consistent manner. Concentration is a sustained performance task with the purpose of achieving a desired level of focus. There is a direct relationship between attention, concentration and cognitive rehabilitation.

The effect sizes suggest cognitive therapists serve the patient better by administering difficult exercises. While both exercises, the easy and difficult elicit favorable results, difficult components seem to exert a higher therapeutic effect on the traumatized brain. While it may seem more appropriate to use very easy tasks with persons experiencing traumatic brain injury, to maximize return to baseline, it may be wise to administer difficult tasks in smaller increments to reduce anxiety or frustration.

Yong Dai, Professor and Chair at Louisiana State University Shreveport, and Qing Zeng from U. of Texas, will present, "Self-esteem of High School Seniors: A National Survey."

Using a national survey of students in 12<sup>th</sup>-Grade, this study examined the self-esteem of high school seniors. With the sample being large, current, and nationally representative of the population, the conclusions drawn from this study should help us to obtain a current picture of the situation concerning the self-esteem of American high school seniors.

The most interesting finding of this study is that compared to gender and race, religious involvement appears to have the largest impact on how adolescents evaluate

themselves. The more religiously involved, the more likely the adolescents tend to evaluate themselves in a positive way. This finding seems to point out that most religious institutions teach people to have positive images of themselves, and such positive teaching may help to increase adolescents' self-esteem.

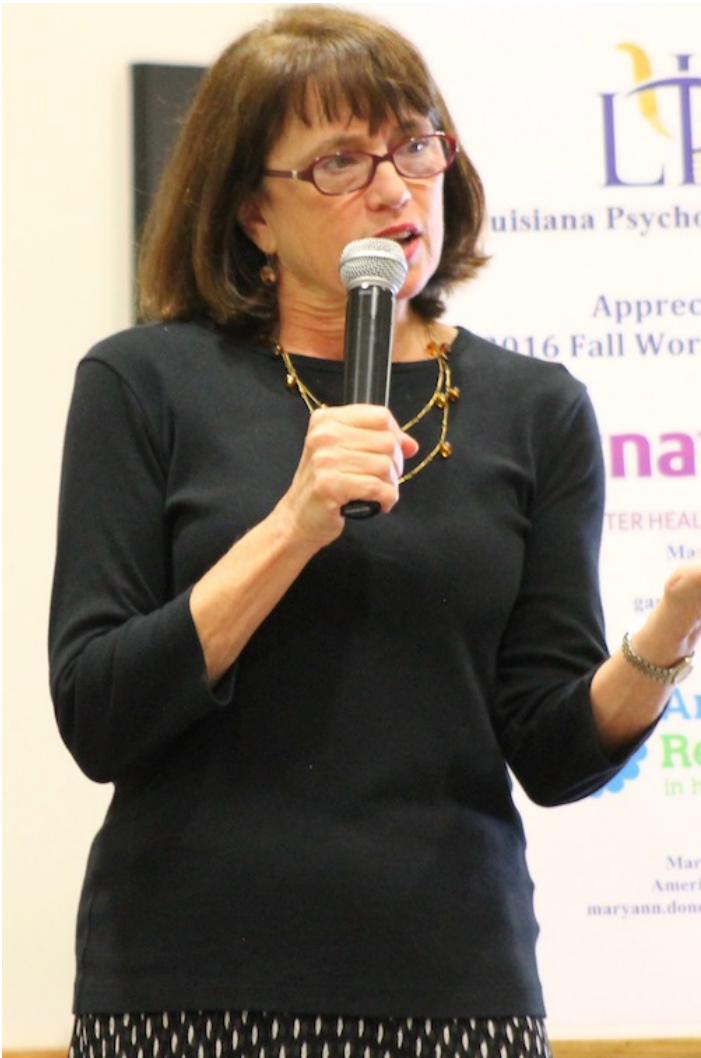
Kevin Yaudes, Assistant Professor at McNeese State University, and Haden Cooley from McNeese State University are presenting "What Traits Predict Individual and Team Performance?: A Pilot Study."

To date, few studies have examined a wide range of traits as possible predictors of success in athletes. The purpose of this pilot study is to investigate which psychological traits predict success in a competitive individual or team environment.

Traits under investigation are Organizational Citizenship Behavior, task and ego orientation, defined as a predisposition to judge success by norm referenced values and/or self-referenced values respectively, and achievement goal orientation. Participants will complete a competitive task as individuals and as a team.

This pilot data will provide valuable information regarding the impact of these specific traits on performance in an individual and team setting. The results of this research will inform the direction of planned research regarding these traits in a sport setting. These traits will be examined as predictors of athletic success across a number of sports, as defined by statistics commonly used to assess success in each sport.





Dr. Paula Zeanah (above) and Dr. Hung-Chu Lin at ULL organized the first ACE Summit.

First ACE Summit Held

Dr. Paula Zeanah, licensed psychologist an Endowed Chair in Nursing at the College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions, and Dr. Hung-Chu Lin, Professor of Psychology, both at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette worked to organize the first summit of its kind in Louisiana, the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Summit.

The summit took place March 28-29, 2019, at the River Oaks Conference Center in Lafayette, Louisiana.

The summit was funded through the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund and co-sponsored by the statewide ACE Initiative, ULL's College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions, Department of Psychology, and the Picard Center.

The theme was "Promoting a Culture of CARE (Collaboration, Advocacy, Research, Education) for Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect in Louisiana." Goals for the attendees included to:

- Understand the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACES) in Louisiana;
- Describe the current status of efforts to educate professionals and communities;
- Identify opportunities for collaboration among established, emerging, and future community-based efforts to build resilience and prevent child abuse and neglect;
- Recognize evidence-based strategies to identify and intervene with children who have experienced trauma, abuse and neglect.

Dr. Zeanah presented, "State of ACEs in Louisiana," with Anna Bales, MPH, Bureau of Family Health. "ACEs Basics: Understanding the Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences," was presented by Lisa Donze – Jacobs, LCSW, from Mercy Family Center, and Cynthia Suire DNP, MSN, RN UL Lafayette. Invited speakers included Chandra Ghosh Ippen, Associate Director of the Child Trauma Research Program at the University of California, San Francisco and the Director of Dissemination for Child-Parent Psychotherapy, and Colleen A. Kraft, MD, FAAP, current president of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Stress Solutions

by Susan Andrews, PhD

What do Obesity, Chronic High Stress, Heart Disease, Diabetes, Hypertension, and Depression have in common?

IF you guessed **Sleep Deprivation**, my hat's off to you. And, IF you get 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night, raise your hand high. While there is no “magic number” of hours that we should sleep, it is now firmly established that you cannot lose weight if you do not sleep a solid 7-8 hours a night. Research says the average American misses 200-300 hours of needed sleep each year. This is known as a sleep debt.

Studies suggest that healthy adults have a basal sleep need of 7 to 8 hours every night. Where things get complicated is the interaction between the basal need and sleep debt. For instance, you might meet your basal sleep need on any single night or a few nights in a row, but still have an unresolved sleep debt that may make you feel more sleepy and less alert at times, particularly in conjunction with circadian dips, those times in the 24-hour cycle when we are biologically programmed to be more sleepy and less alert, such as overnight hours and midafternoon.

Cortisol is not the only factor that inhibits weight loss but it is a big one. Some physicians are willing to flatly state that you cannot lose weight if you do not get to bed early and get a solid 7 or 8 hours. What getting a good night's sleep can do for you:

- A good night's sleep has a positive effect on your blood pressure, meaning that for most of us it goes down at night. If your hours of sleep are interrupted or too short, your blood pressure may never fall low enough.
- Insulin resistance is reduced by good sleep. Dr. Michael Breus, a psychologist and sleep specialist, emphasizes the fact that even short-term sleep loss (being awake for approximately 36 hours) can cause blood glucose levels to be higher than normal.
- A routine schedule for sleeping will help your body keep its internal biological clock running smoothly. You will be more alert, with good reaction time and physical ability, in other words, less accident prone.

Psychologists can help by exploring the sleep habits in the patients they are treating. A study in the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine, looking at adults with insomnia, found that more than 85% of the study sample who completed 3 or more sleep-focused treatment sessions were able to nod off faster and stay asleep longer. A 6- month follow-up revealed that those patients who had 3 or more sessions spent significantly less money on health care and had fewer doctor visits – compared to the 6 months before their therapy sessions focused on sleep habits. The weekly therapy sessions included relaxation exercises and education on topics such as activities to avoid doing 2 hours before bedtime (like exercise, heavy meals, and smoking). Now, the focus of ways to improve your sleep are adding the need to put your cell phone or other blue light generators down 30 minutes to an hour before bed.



Dr. Susan Andrews, Clinical Neuropsychologist, is currently Clinical Assistant Professor, LSU Health Sciences Center, Department of Medicine and Psychiatry, engaged in a Phase III study on HBOT and Persistent PostConcussion Syndrome. In addition to private clinical practice, Dr. Andrews is an award-winning author (Stress Solutions for Pregnant Moms, 2013) and 2016 Distinguished Psychologist of the Louisiana Psychological Association.



# A Shrink at the Flicks

## Us: A Review

by Alvin G. Burstein, PhD

Jordan Peele's follow-up, *Us*, to his highly acclaimed *Get Out* shares its predecessor's blend of horror and comedy, but is more thought provoking. Race is not a critical focus for this second film. *Us* left me thinking about the relationships among horror, terror and the surreal. The ethical questions it raises are not about race, but about cloning, raised by invoking the ages-old eerie fascination with doppelgangers. That it intends to provoke moral unease is evidenced by the opening reference to Jeremiah, 11:11. There Jeremiah, the angriest of the biblical prophets, thunders, "Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them." In other words, "God is not forgiving." That is a view alien to contemporary Western religion.

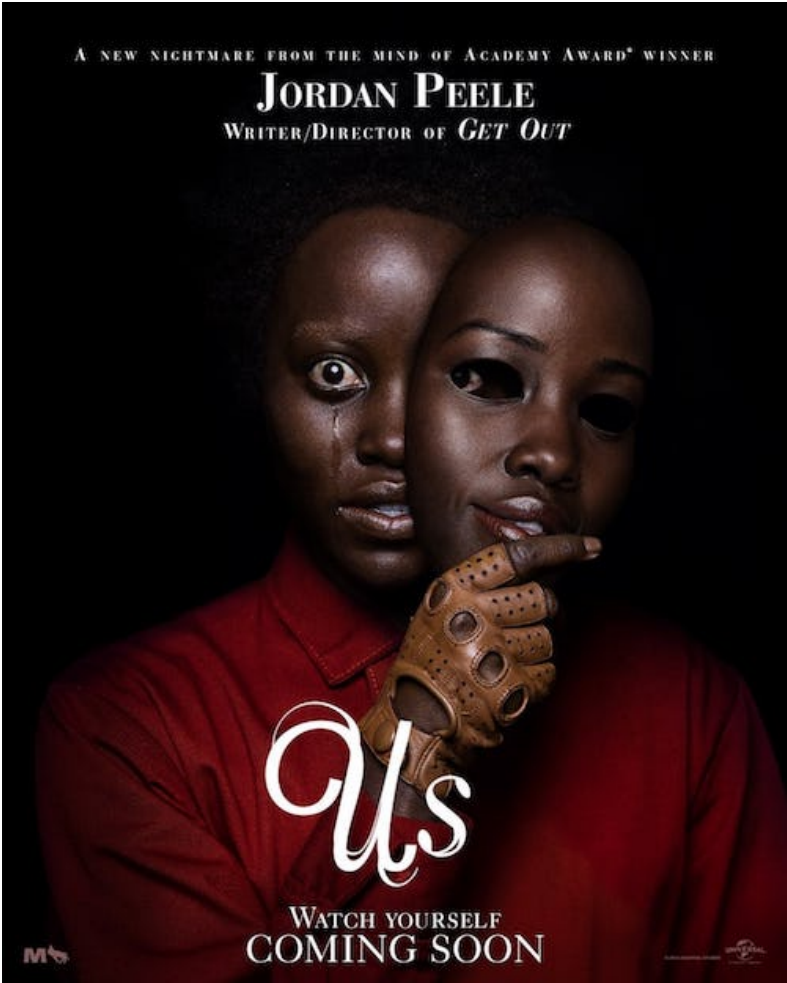
Horror flics present the audience with scenes that are shocking, on the edge of repellant, but do not directly impact the viewer. Terror, on the other hand, is an internal state, panic on steroids, anxiety exploded into a meltdown of the ability to function. Why is the genre a huge money-maker in the entertainment biz? The psychoanalytic pioneer, Otto Rank, argued that the experience of being born is overwhelmingly traumatic. One is pummeled out of uterine placidity, a cushioned function like today's near self-driving autos, into a new space of glare and clatter, gasping, for the first time,

Guest Columnist,  
Dr. Alvin Burstein

Burstein, a psychologist and psychoanalyst, is a professor emeritus at the University of Tennessee and a former faculty member of the New Orleans-Birmingham Psychoanalytic Center with numerous scholarly works to his credit.



He is also a member of Inklings, a Mandeville critique group that meets weekly to review its members' imaginative writings. Burstein has published flash fiction and autobiographical pieces in e-zines; *The Owl*, his first novelette, is available at Amazon. He is, in addition to being a movie fan, a committed Francophile, unsurprisingly a lover of fine cheese and wine, and an unrepentant cruciverbalist.



for breath. Absent verbal capacity to record, this unspeakable terror remains buried in our minds, emerging only in highly attenuated forms. Horror flics, like rollercoasters, provide a way of playing with terror, a form of catharsis. Surrealism is the label for the plastic arts or literature that deliberately violate logic and physical laws. Salvador Dali's melting clocks and Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* come to mind. Surrealism plucks at the strings of terror, forcing us into a struggle to understand, to defy confusion, to defuse the threat of incomprehension.

To explain this surreal film would be a contradiction in terms. I can label some of its disparate elements, in addition to the elements named above. There are opening references to realities like the existence of myriad abandoned tunnels under our continent and the 1968 happening of six or seven million Americans literally joining hands across the continent. There is also a reference to a fictional failed government effort to clone humans for military purposes. There is a bloodied prophet holding a ragged sign containing a reference to the prophet's jeremiad. There are cages full of laboratory rabbits. There are dopplegangers trying to stab to death their originals and, later, forming a human chain across Santa Cruz. And there is a fairground Hall of Mirrors with a marquee bearing the words *Find Yourself*.

I don't think it's a spoiler to add that the plot unfolds when the protagonist, as a young child, strays from her family, enters the hall of mirrors, and falls down that rabbit hole. And a final question: Is *Us* a surreal mockery of Jeremiah's ranting, or a jeremiad directed at us?





**SAVE the DATE**

**71st Annual Convention  
Louisiana Psychological Association**

**PSYCHOLOGY:  
Making a Difference**

**June 14 & 15, 2019  
Sheraton Galleria  
Metairie–New Orleans**



# Up Coming Events

## Annual Mindfulness Day April 13 in Baton Rouge

The annual Mindfulness workshop will be held Saturday, April 13 from 8 am to 5 pm at the Tam Bao Meditation Hall, in Baton Rouge.

This year's topic is "Practical Approaches to Mindfulness-Based Interventions, A Day of Mindfulness for Mental Health Professionals."

According to workshop organizer, Dr. John Pickering, the focus of this year's workshop will be on the practical implementation of mindfulness. Local clinicians with years of experience in mindfulness interventions will discuss how they have directly applied these therapeutic techniques to mental health and substance abuse disorders. Opportunities will be provided for meditation practice.

In this workshop, participants will become familiar with the basic contents of a mindfulness program including the use of meditation and body scan. They will also become familiar with recent research on the use of mindfulness in treating substance abuse disorders and be able to define psychological flexibility from Acceptance and Commitment Therapy perspective and how mindfulness-based interventions affect psychological flexibility. Attendees will be guided through several periods of meditation to help develop and deepen their own meditative practice.

"Mindfulness, a practice associated with 2 1/2 millennia of Buddhist psychology, has become an increasingly popular concept in psychotherapy and counseling literature over the past three decades as more and more professionals have become aware of it and incorporated meditation and mindfulness approaches into their personal lives and therapeutic repertoires. Several empirically supported therapies, such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBRT), Dialectic Behavior Therapy (DBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) have included a significant mindfulness component as part of their therapeutic regime."

Dr. John Pickering, psychologist, has been one of the organizers for this yearly event for many years and has explained in other articles about the program.

"Previous workshops have included topics about use of mindfulness interventions in psychotherapy, introduction to various evidence-supported therapies based on mindfulness, neuropsychological mechanisms involved in mindfulness, and the use of meditation to enhance therapists' attention, presence and empathy."



Quyen Ho (Thich Dao Quang) is the Zen Buddhist monk who teaches at the Mindfulness Day.

The popularity of Mindfulness as a therapy method and technique has grown in recent years, as evidence for its effectiveness and research findings have been helped understanding, explained Pickering. There are several short periods of guided meditation led by a Zen Buddhist monk throughout the day.

Contact Dr. Pickering for information and registration through the Meditation Hall or at 7510 Highland Road in Baton Rouge, 70808.

## Dr. McCown to Speak on "Snowflakes and Deplorables" at LPA

Bill McCown, PhD, Associate Dean for Research and Coordinator, Psychology Department, College of Business and Social Sciences, University of Louisiana at Monroe will speak on "From Snowflakes to Deplorables: Psychological Ethics in the Age of Hyper-Polarized America," the 2019 Annual Convention of the Louisiana Psychological Association, to be held in June 14 and 15 at the Sheraton Galleria in New Orleans-Metairie.

"Psychologists are trusted to maintain ethical principles that guide our professional behavior. Yet today, adherence is sometimes difficult because of political divisiveness that psychologists may encounter," notes McCown. "Whether liberal or conservative, psychologists increasingly interact with people whose core values appear antithetical to their own. Unexpected ethical dilemmas may arise involving religious and political affiliations, lifestyle issues, science and empiricism, basic human rights, and many more complex areas." In this ethics presentation Dr. McCown will highlight ways to use the Science of Psychology to be more ethical, more effective psychologists.



Dr. Bill McCown, Associate Dean for Research and Coordinator, Psychology Department, College of Business and Social Sciences, University of Louisiana at Monroe will speak on "From Snowflakes to Deplorables: Psychological Ethics in the Age of Hyper-Polarized America," the 2019 Annual Convention of the Louisiana Psychological Association.





Dr. Janet and Lee Matthews at a previous training conference in New Orleans. The two psychologists attended many professional functions together.

## Dr. Janet Matthews Dies March 31

Long time member of the Louisiana and national psychology community, Dr. Janet Matthews passed away March 31. She is survived by her beloved husband of 53 years, Dr. Lee Matthews of Kenner.

Her accomplishments in the field were many and included being a Professor at Loyola University New Orleans, serving on the Board of Directors for the American Psychological Association and as President for two Divisions, serving as immediate past Associate Editor of *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*. She served as President of the Southwestern Psychological Association, was honored for lifetime contributions to Southwestern Psychological Association and was named as Louisiana Psychological Association's Distinguished Psychologist. These are only a few of many achievements.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend the Celebration-of-Life at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 1001 West Esplanade Ave, Kenner, LA on Saturday, May 4, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. with visitation beginning at 10:30 a.m. Interment will be private. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Christ the King Lutheran Church, 1001 West Esplanade Ave, Kenner, LA 70065.

The family invites you to share your thoughts, fond memories, and condolences online at [www.lakelawnmetairie.com](http://www.lakelawnmetairie.com)

[Editor's Note" A memorial article on Janet Matthews will follow in our next issue.]

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