



View of Lake Charles from office of psychologist and neuropsychologist Dr. Larry Dilks, following Hurricane Laura. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Dilks)

21 Parishes in FEMA Disaster Area

Governor Renews Emergency Status from Hurricane Laura

Gov. Edwards renewed his State-of-Emergency proclamation on September 18, authorizing the Governor's office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness to continue to undertake all activities authorized to assist in recovery from Hurricane Laura.

The proclamation prohibits price gouging and allows the Secretary of the Department of Health to establish protocols and policies for certain facilities to receive evacuated residents at nursing facilities. Certain regulations are suspended and schools are allowed to substitute online instruction.

The proclamation also provides for unemployment compensation for some of those directly affected by flooding or due to the inability to get to their worksite in a disaster parish.

The proclamation also authorizes all departments and agencies as officers of the state to cooperate in actions that may be helpful in dealing with the effects of this weather event.

Cont pg 4

Legislature Calls Itself into Session

The Louisiana legislature called themselves into a special session that began on September 28 and which will end by October 27. The September 21 Proclamation lists 70 topics to be addressed, including items for replenishing Louisiana's Unemployment Trust Fund, addressing COVID-19 recovery efforts, supporting communities impacted by Hurricane Laura, and possible funding of certain devastated school systems.

However, at the top of the list are items about the expanded powers of government under emergency conditions.

The first topic relates to "...legislative procedures, powers, duties, and authority pursuant to the Louisiana Health Emergency Powers Act..." The second item refers to "... the power and authority of executive branch officers and agencies." Click here for the Proclamation.

Cont pg 3

Gov. Provides Phase 3 Details

On September 11, Gov. Edwards announced details of his move to COVID-19 to Phase 3. He said that some businesses will be able to increase their occupancy, and bars may reopen subject to certain restrictions, but only in parishes that do not have high incidence of illness and only if local governments choose to opt in.

The State Fire Marshal's office and the Louisiana Department of Health shares information with business owners via the Open Safely portal, located at opensafely.la.gov.

Cont pg 5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CMS Seeks Cuts for Psychologists
-Page 5

Tulane's Dr. Hoerger Finds Panic Clues
-Page 8

HBOT Research
-Page 10

Dr. Burstein Reviews *Secret Window*
-Page 12



Dr. Arnold James

Dr. A. James Honored in NO

New Orleans Mayor Latoya Cantrell has announced that Dr. Arnold James is a member of the distinguished group of New Orleans health care professionals

Cont pg 7

Science and Education

Dr. Dean Radin to Speak on Extrasensory Research and Overlap with Quantum Theory

The Louisiana Psychological Association will host Dr. Dean Radin, noted psychological scientist who explores extrasensory phenomena. Dr. Radin will speak virtually on November 7, about "Extrasensory Experiences in a Quantum Reality." He will review the current state of research findings regarding extrasensory phenomena, called psi research, as well as relevant controversies and new areas of investigation related to quantum theory.

Dr. Radin is Chief Scientist at the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS) and Distinguished Professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies. He earned a BS in electrical engineering (*magna cum laude*, with honors in physics), and then an MS in electrical engineering and a PhD in psychology from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Before joining the

Cont pg 13



Editorial Page – Opinions

Hurricane Stories

by Julie Nelson

Everyone in Louisiana has their hurricane story. Laura just cut a path through 21 parishes and all but leveled Lake Charles. Ask a New Orleans resident and they'll tell you their Katrina story. Ask someone from Alexandria, and you'll get a Rita story. Ask a Baton Rouge resident and you'll get a story about Gustav, or Andrew, or even Betsy.

Too late to evacuate and reasonably safe from falling trees, Archimedes and I wound up "riding out" hurricane Sally recently at our vacation home in the Florida Panhandle. Thinking that she would go from a category one to a tropical storm, we were caught flat-footed when Sally rebooted to a category two in the middle of the night like an adolescent refusing curfew.

The only real consequence was the week long outage. No lights, no Internet, no television. We conserved battery power for our iPhones and computers, so modern life froze. My addictions failed me. No access to work information or news or my favorite distractions—*Star Trek* and *Lucifer*.



By the third day Archimedes and I found ourselves in the undiscovered country. The noise and dizzy dancing of modern life quieted. Sally dragged in cool weather and we opened the windows. We drank coffee brewed over our campfire (gas stove). At sunset, sharing a bottle of Merlot, we watched the pink and blue sky fade. That's when Archimedes reminded me of his hurricane story.

He was 18 and happily working for "good money," \$2.20 per hour, on the oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico, when Camille headed to shore in 1969.

Evacuation activities on the rigs were in turmoil and he substituted in as a welder's helper. With no safety equipment, he suffered flash burn to his eyes. He was blinded, in pain, and exhausted when his crew dropped him off at a coastline hotel to wait for a ride from his friend Vernon Whitfield (his real name), who had been working at the shoreline.

While the hotel owner and all the guests evacuated, Vernon finally arrived, and announced that they had no transportation, his car had given out.

Archimedes, exhausted and in pain, decided to settle in for some rest and to weather Camille at the hotel. But Vernon, typically reserved and unobtrusive, refused to leave without him. After several rounds of arguing, Vernon's dogged determination won out. The two hitchhiked to New Orleans, then caught a bus to Baton Rouge, the entire time Vernon leading Archimedes around by the hand.

Two weeks later, the young men were eager to return to work and retrieve Vernon's car. It took them a full day to reach the coast—the roads were gone, completely washed out. Barges were wrecked on the beaches. Dead cows were sprawled in the trees. Camille made landfall as a Category 5.

Archimedes looked at me across the twilight of the room, and I knew what he was going to say next. The story never loses its impact for me.

"The hotel I had been planning to stay in was gone," he said. "All that was left was the slab."

[Julie Nelson is a licensed psychologist, journalist, consultant, and publisher of the Times. She also holds other 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. —she welcomes feedback.]

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Corrections & Clarifications

We did not receive any corrections or clarifications for the last issue.

Send your corrections to:
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Legislature Calls Itself into Session

continued

Gov. Edwards immediately voiced his concerns in a September 21 statement.

“At a time when our state is dealing with the COVID-19 health emergency, hurricanes, and one severe weather event after another, I am concerned that the Legislature has again called themselves into a month-long session with an agenda of 70 items. This session will occur at a time when the public will again be restricted in their access to the State Capitol and their ability to give needed public input.

“From the beginning of this emergency, I have relied on public health experts and the White House Coronavirus Task Force to guide Louisiana’s response to this historic emergency. Further, this response has been in line with the measures taken by our neighboring states that have unfortunately also been enormously impacted by COVID-19.

“Put simply, the measures we have taken in Louisiana are working and we are making significant progress. However, to abandon these efforts in defiance of the unanimous advice of the public health experts and the Trump administration would seriously jeopardize the lives of our people and the gains we have made. Further, it is important to remember our work in containing COVID-19 is far from done, as Louisiana still has the highest number of per capita infections in the country.

“I am hopeful that the Legislative leadership will significantly narrow the scope and the duration of this session so that they can do the work they deem necessary, while at the same time working in a bipartisan and cooperative manner to address our significant challenges in an honest and transparent manner. Louisianans have come too far to have all of our effective and life-saving work upended.”

In a September 28 editorial, *The Advocate* warned, “As with some of the other budgetary items on the expansive menu, it’s too soon to say if the body can make intelligent decisions when so many things, really almost everything, is in flux.

“Further, legislators should remind themselves that interfering with the complex machinery of emergency declarations means that lawmakers will be taking responsibility upon themselves, individually and as a body, in a situation where there is no pleasant alternative, only a choice among bad options.”

Regarding the special session, proposed measures have been submitted and are being reviewed this month. The Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists did not submit a new copy of their legislation, which they proposed earlier this year in the regular session. Sources indicate that the board is working on that legislation for 2021.

Very few bills have to do with psychology since the topics for the session are narrowed to emergency events. However, House Bill 33 and Senate Bill 12, which are duplicates, relate to emergency counseling in healthcare facilities.

Present law defines “mental health support personnel” to include psychiatrists,

psychologists, social workers, and volunteer crisis counseling groups.

The proposed law provides that the Louisiana Department of Health may include the availability of no-cost or reduced-cost counseling or mental health support services offered by members of the clergy, religious organizations, or other nonprofit organizations when providing information about and referrals to mental health support personnel to address the psychological responses to the public health emergency.

The proposed law requires that, during the COVID-19 public health emergency or any other contagious or infectious disease for which a state of public health emergency has been declared, an inpatient healthcare facility provide patient or resident access to members of the clergy for prayer, mental health support or religious counseling, the sacraments of Holy Communion, Anointing of the Sick, and Last Rites, and other such customary religious services that would normally be offered to patients or residents if the healthcare facility was not subject to a declaration of a state of public health emergency.

Psychology Board Opens Nominations

The Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP) is calling for nominations for a seat opening next July, when current Chair, Dr. Amy Henke, will complete her term, in June 2021.

In a message to licensees, Executive Director Jaime Monic wrote that the self-nomination period opens on October 2 and ends on November 1, 2020.

Nominations will be opened at the Board’s Long Range Planning Meeting scheduled for November 19, 2021, a public meeting. A 30 day, electronic election will follow, noted the announcement. The election period will begin following the opening of the nomination forms. Notices will be sent via email, through online voting. The election period will remain open for 30 days.

Those accepted to run must be a U.S. citizen and resident of Louisiana; have rendered service, teaching, training, or research in psychology for at least five years; have held a doctoral degree in psychology from a school or college as defined in La R.S. Title 37, Chapter 28 for a period of five years, and shall be licensed with the LSBEP for a minimum of five years.



State & National News

21 Parishes Approved Governor Renews Emergency for Hurricane Victims

Continued

On September 13, FEMA approved three additional Louisiana parishes for Individual Assistance due to Hurricane Laura, bringing the total number of parishes where residents are eligible for aid to 21.

Federal FEMA assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans for uninsured property loss and other programs to help people and businesses recover from Hurricane Laura.

People who sustained losses in the designated parishes of Acadia, Allen, Beauregard, Caddo, Calcasieu, Cameron, Grant, Jackson, Jefferson Davis, LaSalle, Lincoln, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Rapides, Sabine, St. Landry Vermilion, Vernon, Winn and Union.

Some additional parishes are still under review.

Individuals can apply for assistance. Register online at <http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov> or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA.

"People all across Louisiana were impacted when Hurricane Laura brought its strong winds ashore, knocking out power and causing massive destruction," said the Governor.

"Already FEMA has registered more than 140,000 households in Louisiana, paying out more than \$89 million to survivors of Hurricane Laura, including more than \$59 million for housing assistance and almost \$30 million for other needs assistance."

Federal FEMA assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans for uninsured property loss and other programs to help people and businesses recover.

Hurricane Laura made landfall in Cameron Parish on Thursday, August 27, with 150 mph sustained winds.

Laura was one of the strongest hurricanes to hit the United States and the worse storm for Louisiana since the 1856 "Last Island Hurricane."

Twenty-six deaths have been attributed to Hurricane Laura. Property damages have been estimated at approximately \$9 billion.

If some you know needs shelter, text LASHALTER to 898-211 for information about where to go or call 211.



Office of Lake Charles psychologist and neuropsychologist Dr. Larry Dilks following the destruction brought by Hurricane Laura.
(Photo courtesy of Dr. Dilks)

KFF Finds 53% of US Adults Stressed by Coronavirus & Economic Concerns

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic problems have negatively affected many people's mental health and created new barriers for people already suffering from mental illness and substance use disorders," report authors at the Kaiser family foundation (KFF).

The research team was led by Nirmita Panchal, collected data in July. They found that 53% of US adults said that their mental health has been negatively impacted due to worry and stress over the coronavirus. Researchers noted that this was significantly higher than the 32% they found in March 2020.

"Many adults are also reporting specific negative impacts on their mental health and wellbeing, such as difficulty sleeping (36%) or eating (32%), increases in alcohol consumption or substance use (12%), and worsening chronic conditions (12%), due to worry and stress over the coronavirus."

Authors concluded that, "As the pandemic wears on, ongoing and necessary public health measures expose many people to experiencing situations linked to poor mental health outcomes, such as isolation and job loss."

The researcher cited other conclusions noting that research links social isolation and loneliness to poor mental health. The data from late March shows that "significantly higher shares of people who were sheltering in place (47%) reported negative mental health effects resulting from worry or stress related to coronavirus than among those not sheltering-in-place (37%)."

"In particular, isolation and loneliness during the pandemic may present specific mental health risks for households with adolescents and for older adults. The share of older adults (ages 65 and up) reporting negative mental health

impacts has increased since March. Polling data shows that women with children under the age of 18 are more likely to report major negative mental health impacts than their male counterparts."

Authors also point out that job loss is associated with increased depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. These problems may lead to higher rates of substance use disorder and suicide. "... data shows that more than half of the people who lost income or employment reported negative mental health impacts from worry or stress over coronavirus; and lower income people report higher rates of major negative mental health impacts compared to higher income people," noted the KFF researchers.

"Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly one in five of U.S. adults (47 million) reported having a mental illness in the past year, and over 11 million had a serious mental illness, which frequently results in functional impairment and limits life activities. In 2017-2018, more than 17 million adults and an additional three million adolescents had a major depressive episode in the past year.

"Deaths due to drug overdose have increased more than threefold over the past 19 years (from 6.1 deaths per 100,000 people in 1999 to 20.7 deaths per 100,000 people in 2018).

In 2018, over 48,000 Americans died by suicide, and in 2017-2018, nearly eleven million adults (4.3%) reported having serious thoughts of suicide in the past year.

The authors state that during this unprecedented pandemic, it is reasonable to predict that mental health issues and substance abuse are exacerbated.

Governor Provides Phase 3 Details

continued

In place until October 9, the newest order notes that restaurants, churches, salons, spas, gyms and other businesses will be able to open at a maximum of 75 percent of their occupancy, with social distancing in place. Bars will remain closed to on-premises consumption in parishes with high incidence of COVID as evidenced by their test positivity rate. Parishes with a positivity rate of 5 percent or lower for two consecutive weeks may opt-in to open bars for on premises consumption, under the restrictions in the Governor's order.

"When re-opened, bars will be able to open at 25 percent capacity, up to 50 people, indoors for customers seated for tableside service. They may have no more than 50 customers outdoors, socially distanced, seated for tableside service. No live music will be allowed. All drinks must be ordered at the table and delivered by bar staff to the table. Sale and service of alcohol at bars, when they reopen, must end at 10 p.m., with all patrons cleared from the building by 11 p.m. When re-opened, no one under the age of 21 is permitted in any bar. [...]

"The statewide mask mandate will stay in place under the new order. Masks have proven to be a key mitigation measure in the fight against the spread of COVID-19. The more Louisianans who wear masks, the more Louisiana businesses can stay open."

The order continues the recommendation that those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 stay at home unless they must leave for an essential activity, such as getting food or medical care.

"We have seen some improvement in decreased COVID-like illness, new COVID cases and hospitalizations in recent weeks,"

said the Governor, "as our strong mitigation measures are working. That said, I want the people of Louisiana to know that moving into Phase 3 does not mean that COVID is no longer a problem for us because in fact it is. That's why it is incumbent upon all Louisianans to follow the guidance, wear their masks and avoid going out when they are showing symptoms," Gov. Edwards said.

"We all want to see a return to normalcy, but it is going to take all of us working together to get us there. There are still some looming factors that could come to bear on the fragile gains that we have made including students returning to schools at all levels, the outcome of the Labor Day weekend and the displacement of thousands of residents by Hurricane Laura from an area that had among the highest case counts in the state. If we see a spike in cases, we may be forced to go back to a more restrictive Phase 2."

On September 17, Gov. Edwards implemented new federal guidance to expand nursing home visitation, allowing nursing homes to conduct outdoor visitation with social distancing. Nursing homes located in parishes with no more than 10 percent test positivity and without any new COVID cases among residents and staff in the last 14 days can allow indoor visitation.

Also on September 17, the Governor adjusted the order slightly regarding alcohol sales.

"Following discussions with restaurant and hospitality industry leaders, Gov. John Bel Edwards today altered his Phase 3 order to allow the on premises sale and consumption of alcohol until 11 p.m. at restaurants, casinos and bars in parishes that are eligible to opt in to reopen bars. However, all bars must still close by 11 p.m."

CMS Seeks Cuts to Fees of Psychologists; Supervision of Testing by Nurses, PAs

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) are proposing a new rule impacting the 2021 Medicare physician fee schedule, which will likely result in a 10.6% reduction in payments to psychologists providing services to Medicare beneficiaries, according to the American Psychological Association (APA) Office of Health Care Financing.

APA said that the reductions are proposed in order to offset higher values for next year's outpatient evaluation and management (E/M) services. E/M services, which are typically a 15 minute, face-to-face with the patient, and decision-making of low complexity.

APA reported that CMS is also proposing to increase the values for some psychotherapy codes (90791, 90832, 90834, and 90837) but this will not be enough to offset the losses for psychologists.

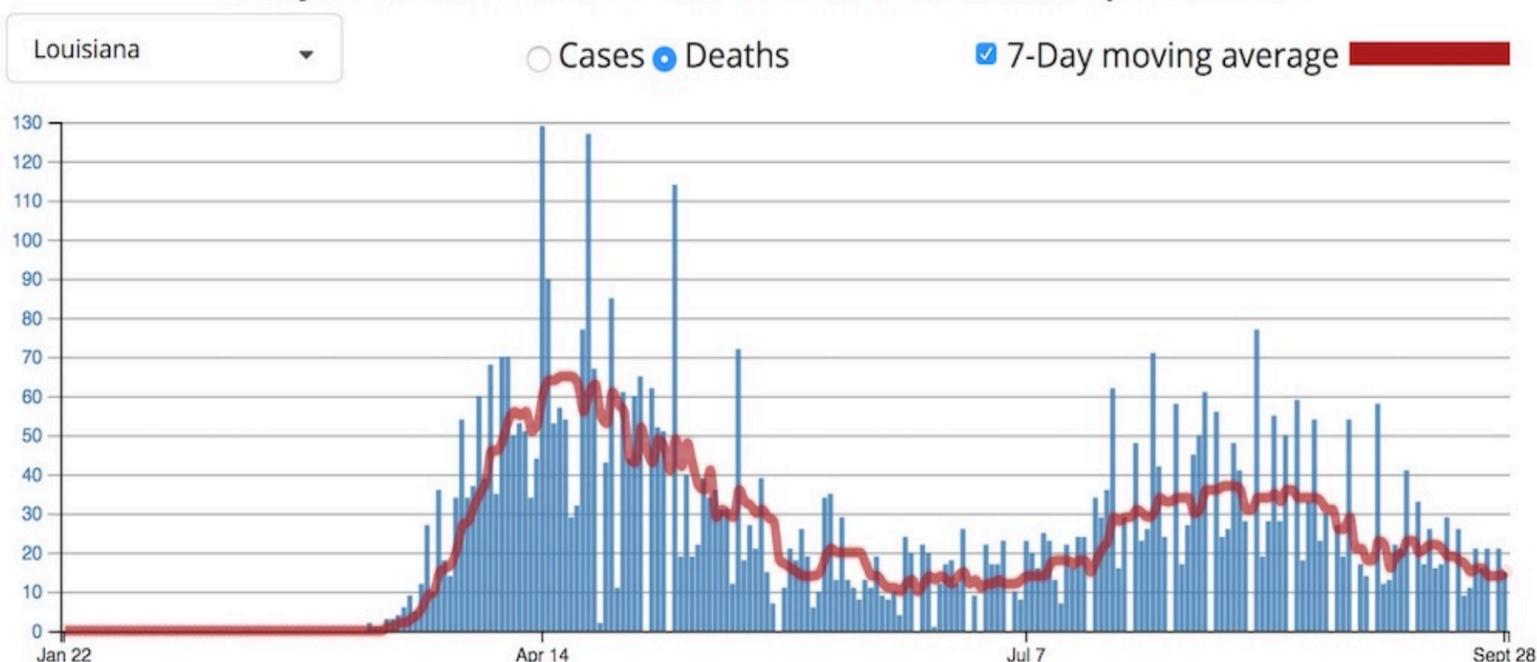
These payment cuts stem from the agency's legal requirement to maintain a neutral budget from one year to the next, said APA.

APA is also partnering with a coalition of healthcare providers asking Congress to work with CMS on a solution that will allow the increases for E/M without cutting payments to other providers, said officials.

CMS is also proposing that non-physician practitioners (nurse practitioners and physician assistants) be allowed to supervise diagnostic testing including psychological and neuropsychological testing, if the state law and their scope of practice allows.

"APA is adamantly opposed to this proposal and is reaching out to CMS for more information—e.g. circumstances under which such supervision could occur and what types of tests would be involved," said APA officials.

Daily Trends in Number of COVID-19 Deaths in Louisiana Reported to CDC



Update through September for Louisiana by Center for Disease Control.

State & National News

Behavior Analyst Board Reduces Fees During Coronavirus

The Behavior Analyst Board published an Emergency Rule to implement a temporary reduction of licensing certificate renewal fees.

The Declaration of Emergency published in the September *Louisiana Register* noted, "In order to assist the public during this crisis, the board has approved a temporary reduction of renewal fees for Licensed Behavior Analysts and State Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts."

This Emergency Rule is the Louisiana Behavior Analyst Board's response to the disruption of normalcy experienced by the citizens of Louisiana due to COVID-19. Proclamation No. JBE 2020-33 and Proclamation No. JBE 2020-41 declared a stay at home order posing a threat to the public health, safety, and welfare of Louisiana citizens.

"Temporary reduction of license and certificate renewal fees effective November 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, due to COVID 19 disruption of normalcy shall be as follows: 1. annual renewal fee for licensed behavior analyst due by December 31, 2020—\$200.00; 2. annual renewal fee for state certified assistant behavior analyst due by December 31, 2020—\$125.00."

Regular fees are \$400 and \$250.

President Trump Treated for Covid with Experimental Drug

Less than 24 hours after he was diagnosed with Covid-19 this week, President Trump was allowed to take Regeneron's antibody therapy, under the compassionate use clause for experimental medications.

In late September Regeneron officials had announced results showing that the synthetic antibodies reduced viral load.

In a study of 275 people, patients with increasingly higher baseline viral levels had correspondingly greater reductions in viral load at Day 7. The reduction in viral load compared to placebo were as follows: -Viral load higher than 105 copies/mL—50-60% reduction compared to placebo, viral load higher than 106—95% reduction, and higher than 107 —99% reduction. Among the first 275 patients, approximately 56% were Hispanic, 13% were African American and 64% had one or more underlying risk factors for severe COVID-19, including obesity (more than 40%). On average, patients were 44 years of age.

Donna Edwards and Louisiana First Foundation Host Global Human Trafficking Summit

In a September 16 press release, Gov. Edwards commended First Lady Donna Edwards and the Louisiana First Foundation for convening its first virtual global summit to address human trafficking and raise awareness about this horrific crime. Recently, First Lady Edwards brought together leaders from the Vatican, first spouses from across the United States, and a host of national and state leaders in the anti-human trafficking sector for the Virtual Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Summit, according to the release.

"I'm incredibly proud of the work Donna is doing to raise awareness about this incredibly serious problem," said Gov. Edwards. crime in Louisiana, around the country and the world."

Participants included: Bishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Science and Pontifical Academy of Social Science in Rome; First Lady Yumi Hogan of Maryland; First Lady Marty Kemp of Georgia; First Lady Cecilia

Abbott of Texas; Deputy Director Bill Woolf from the United States Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime; Dept. of Children and Family Service Secretary Marketa Walters, former Commissioner of The Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control Juana Lombard; Office of the Governor Children's Cabinet Executive Director Dr. Dana Hunter; Jessica Milan-Miller, director of Gingerbread House Child Advocacy Center and Father Jeff Bayhi, Catholic Priest and Founder of Metanoia Manor, which is a safe-haven for victims of human trafficking.

"Human trafficking is a very real problem that is widespread and sadly, it happens more often than we would like to think and often very close to home, said Mrs. Edwards. "I implore everyone not to turn a blind eye from this insidious crime but to learn more about how to recognize the signs and potentially save a victim's life."

If you suspect that someone may be a victim of human trafficking, please call the U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1 (888) 373-7888 or Text "BeFree" to 233733.

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Dr. Arnold James Honored as Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholar, continued

who have been named as Clinical Scholars by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the nation's largest philanthropy dedicated solely to health issues.

According to the press release, Team emPOWER NOLA, includes Dr. Maurice Sholas, Dr. Lauren Teverbaugh, Dr. Arnold James, and Licensed Master Social Worker Rhonda M. Jackson, who make up RWJF's Cohort 5. Their proposed project is, "Training Community Leadership of Naturally Occurring Social Networks to Improve Access of Children Suffering from Trauma to Mental Health Services." This prioritizes working with New Orleans youth that have lived through profoundly traumatic events.

The cohort seeks to develop interventions that heal, and partnerships that promote, trauma-informed spaces to treat and support children living with trauma. For this effort, RWJF awarded a three-year \$432,000 grant to emPOWER NOLA, to design and implement the project.

Dr. Arnold James is a native of Columbia, SC and has practiced clinical psychology in New Orleans for nearly 30 years. He received his Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology, Master of Public Health and bachelor's in Psychology from the University of South Carolina. His training also includes post-doctoral studies in psychoanalytic psychotherapy as a fellow with the New Orleans – Birmingham Psychoanalytic Society. He is currently employed with the Southeastern Louisiana Veterans Health Care System. He is a former assistant

professor of psychology at Tulane University Medical Center and previously served as a visiting professor at Davidson College (NC) under the Knight Foundation Faculty Fellowship.

According to the announcement, the New Orleans City Council called for the New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board (CYPB) to create the Childhood Trauma Task Force to develop a comprehensive plan to reduce the occurrence and impact of trauma on children and families within the city of New Orleans.

Research conducted by the Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies as cited by a task force for the City of New Orleans, surveyed 5,000 youth between 2012 and 2018. It found a startling prevalence of youth living through severely traumatic events. One in 5 had witnessed a murder; one in 3 witnessed domestic violence; four in 10 had seen someone shot, stabbed or beaten; and, more than half had someone close to them murdered. The existing institutions to treat and support children living with trauma are fragmented. Strongly cohesive naturally occurring social networks (NOSN), that have decades of history in the various communities of Orleans Parish, serve a strong healing purpose for people historically disenfranchised from traditional mental health and social supports.

The team proposes to increase the cultural competence of New Orleans' fragmented

mental health treatment network and empower communities to be more effective at accessing resources to support their children by partnering with NOSN organizations, including social aid and pleasure clubs as well as charter school system mental health professionals. Through this approach, the emPOWER NOLA project team is poised to address the two recommendations via the ingenuity of local talent – who are culture bearers themselves – with the structure and reach of the Clinical Scholars Program.

"I want to congratulate Team emPOWER NOLA, the 2020 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars New Orleans Cohort, on receiving this grant. When we design a New Orleans that truly puts children's interests first, we create a New Orleans that shows love to all of her people," said Mayor Cantrell.

The press release noted that the mission of emPOWER NOLA is to empower formal and informal community leaders, and help them gain the tools to identify children in need and suffering from community and personal traumas, and to create and promote access to culturally competent care. Improved mental health for the current generation of children is not just morally essential, it is critical to the continued existence of the rich culture of the city. We are committed to equity in the culture of health in New Orleans, because that is required to nourish the community and its many unique customs and traditions.



RWJF Clinical Scholars, left to right: Dr. Lauren Teverbaugh, Dr. Maurice Sholas, Dr. Arnold James, Ms. Rhonda M. Jackson, MSW. (courtesy photo)

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars Program is a leadership opportunity for practitioners from diverse fields of health care. Interdisciplinary teams of health care providers collaborate to tackle complex health problems in their communities and build a Culture of Health nationwide.

Tulane's Dr. Michael Hoerger Finds Major Issue with Panic Attacks in Google Internet Data Sources

by Barri Bronston, *Tulane News*

A team of researchers at Tulane University used Google search data to examine trends in mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, and based on that search, say panic attacks could be affecting millions.

The study was led by Michael Hoerger, an assistant professor of psychology in the Tulane School of Science and Engineering, and published in the journal *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*.

The team used Google Trends to analyze an extensive list of mental health-related terms that people searched for before and after the World Health Organization issued a pandemic declaration on March 11, 2020. They found a major jump in searches related to anxiety, panic attacks and treatments for panic attacks, especially remote and self-care techniques, in the weeks following the pandemic declaration.

“Our analyses from shortly after the pandemic declaration are the tip of the iceberg.” Google Trends allows individuals to examine longitudinal population-level variation in the relative frequency with which people use specific Google search terms. Data are updated in real time and can be examined worldwide.

“Although by no means a ‘window into the soul,’ people’s search terms reflect relatively uncensored desires for information and thus lack many of the biases of traditional self-report surveys,” the study says.

“Google Trends analyses have been used to predict important societal outcomes, such as disease transmission, voting behavior and key economic indicators, and it can also be used to forecast population mental health symptoms and need.”

Panic attacks are characterized by an intense fear and sense of feeling overwhelmed, according to the National Institutes of Mental Health. During a panic attack, people may have a rapid heartbeat, sweat profusely, shake, or experience shortness of breath.

Researchers did not find an uptick in searches for depression, loneliness, abuse and suicidality. But they cautioned that their findings do not necessarily mean that people aren’t experiencing these mental health issues.

Instead, Hoerger said, the data may provide insight into what

might be a foreboding of a much larger problem. He described it as a “mental health tsunami” related to unanticipated death, burnout and unemployment.

“Our analyses from shortly after the pandemic declaration are the tip of the iceberg,” Hoerger said. “Over time, we should begin to see a greater decline in societal mental health. This will likely include more depression, PTSD, community violence, suicide and complex bereavement. For each person that dies of COVID, approximately nine close family members are affected, and people will carry that grief for a long time.”

Researchers said continued monitoring of Google Trends may reveal other mental health issues over the long term and not detected in this analysis. “These findings and continued surveillance can guide public mental health initiatives across multiple ecological levels that can mitigate the psychological toll of COVID-19,” the study says.

Besides Hoerger, who is also on the faculty of the Tulane Cancer Center, the research team included Laura M. Perry, Hallie M. Voss and Sanjana Easwar, students in the Tulane Department of Psychology.



Dr. Hoerger
(courtesy photo by Sally Asher)

Sarah Alonzi of the Department of Psychology at Loyola University and James Gerhart of the Department of Psychology at Central Michigan University.

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Mini-conference & Virtual Year-Long Event

The Louisiana School Psychological Association Announces Conferences

The Louisiana School Psychological Association is planning a mini-conference on November 6 and a full virtual conference from September 2020 to August 2021, according to the announcement from Brandon Wilks, LSPA President-Elect and Conference Chair.

The mini-event will take place from 8:00 am–4:00 pm, at the Doubletree by Hilton, 1521 West Pinhook Road, Lafayette, November 6. However, updates or changes will be posted on the association website given the changeable Covid environment.

"The LSPA Executive Committee (EC) has the health and safety of its members, guests, presenters, communities, and their families at the forefront of thoughts when planning and executing this in person gathering," wrote Wilks.

"As per the results of the Special Executive Council Meeting in May, the EC will be reviewing data and guidelines from the Lafayette community, state, CDC, and WHO to determine if the Mini-Conference will take place," noted Wilks in the announcement.

The keynote speaker for the November 6 mini-conference will be Flint Smith, speaking on "Teleassessment & Teletherapy Guidelines."

Also presenting will be April Dunn, discussing Bulletin 1903 Revision, Reevaluation Pilot: LDOE.

"Necessary Components of Parent Training," will be presented by Dr. George Hebert.

Also provided will be information regarding "Addressing Critical Shortage through a Pilot Program with Distance Learners."

Amber Boykin, will facilitate COVID-19 Roundtables.

President elect Wilks requested nominations for School Psychologist of the Year award and the Will Bergeron Memorial Scholarship to Laura Mcaciaszek, Immediate Past- President. Deadline for nomination submission is October 16, 2020.

According to the announcement an extended virtual conference conducted from September 2020 to August 2021, is in place and will provide 20 or more hours of approved continuing professional development credits.

Topics and presenters include the following: Using the NASP Excellence in School Psychological Services (ESPS): Andria Amador & Amber Boykin; Ethics and School Psychology: Laurie Klose; Intensifying Academic Interventions: Robin Codding; and Evidence Based Social Skills: Keith Radley & Evan Dart.

Also included will be Psychotherapy for Trans and Gender-Nonconforming Youth: Lee Purvis; History of School Psychology: Tom Fagan; Consumer-Friendly Reports: Kelli Henson; Cultural Competence: Anna Long; and Hot Topics in Special Education & Section 504 Law: Wayne Stewart.

"All who register and pay for the Mini-Conference will be refunded if the EC decision is made to cancel the Mini-Conference or if government guidelines prevent the Mini-Conference from being held," said Mr. Wilks. See the LSPA website for more information.

Stress Solutions

by Susan Andrews, PhD

One Simple FDA Approved, Non-Drug Therapy That Reduces Stress AND Blood Pressure

RESPeRATE is actually the first medical device that has been clinically proven to lower blood pressure AND stress. And, if you don't have high blood pressure, it is still a very effective and easy to use method to reduce your cortisol levels and relieve tension due to stress.

What is RESPeRATE? It is a small device that was originally designed for pilots and other people that needed to reduce their blood pressure but could not afford to take medication because of their job or other health issues. This gadget is like a "breathing coach" because all the work of reducing stress and blood pressure is done by helping you reduce and calm your breathing such that you spend 5 to 10 minutes a day (or more) in slow gentle breathing.

RESPeRATE does the work of matching your breathing and then gradually slowing it down and lengthening your respirations until you get into a "therapeutic range." Once you reach that range, it keeps you there with a soft chiming to signal intake of air and exhalation.

The kit contains the RESPeRATE device, an elastic belt that goes around your diaphragm and plugs into the device, and earphones to allow you to hear the gentle tones that signal the timing of your breathing. The cost is minimal, and the company allows for it to be purchased in 3 easy installments.

Many of our patients promise that they will practice breathing techniques for relaxation, but we all know how easy it is for such promises to be put off until tomorrow. RESPeRATE helps with the routine of doing the breathing exercise and it is a pleasant 10 minutes that can easily become a habit. The same benefit can be gained by the "doctor" who prescribes the method.

It is fair to say that breathing is one of the most important exercises one can do for your health – physical and mental. The research indicates that daily use for 3 to 4 weeks is all it takes to significantly reduce blood pressure. The stress reduction and improved sleep are "side-effects." Check out the website for more information on how to order and for information on the "Clinical Proof." www.resperate.com



Dr. Susan Andrews is a Clinical Neuropsychologist, an award-winning writer/author (her book Stress Solutions for Pregnant Moms, published in 2013, has been translated into Chinese,) and 2016 Distinguished Psychologist of the Louisiana Psychological Association.

Research News and Some Surprising Findings

by Drs. Susan Andrews and Paul Harch

After completing our 10-year research project on the effectiveness of treating mTBI, Persistent Postconcussional Syndrome (PPCS), and PTSD with Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT), we (Susan Andrews, PhD and Paul Harch, MD) published the major findings in *Medical Gas Research*¹ in the March 2020 issue.

Dr. Harch, an acknowledged world leader in hyperbarics, in the Department of Medicine, Emergency and Hyperbaric Medicine Section, LSUHSC in New Orleans, conceived of the study, registered the study with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and was responsible for obtaining funding².

Neuropsychology played a major role in gathering the outcome data to show how HBOT improves cognitive function even in the chronic phase of mTBI patients.

It is our hope, Dr. Harch as the principal investigator and Dr. Andrews as the neuropsychologist, that HBOT will soon become more available as insurance and Worker's Compensation groups begin to approve it.

There are many important findings from the long-term study reported in the *Medical Gas Research* publication. However, for this news article, we want to focus on some of the findings that were surprising and particularly relevant to psychologists.

It's time to rethink our definition or basis for "deficit."

One of the most important findings from the two studies actually challenges a fundamental principle or standard upon which the entire field of neuropsychology has relied. In order to diagnose a Neurocognitive Disorder, neuropsychology relies on finding "cognitive deficits." In fact, the DSM 5 diagnostic criteria require: 1) evidence of significant cognitive decline from a previous level of performance in one or more cognitive domains (such as, memory, attention and concentration or executive function) or 2) a substantial impairment in cognitive performance, preferably documented by standardized neuropsychological testing. Deficits have traditionally been operationally defined as a T score below 40, which is equivalent to a standard score below 85. If literally followed the first criteria is difficult to satisfy since neuropsychologists rarely have premorbid comparison testing, and the second criteria is only achieved for the more severely injured. From the



Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy chamber being used by Navy personnel. (courtesy photo, US Navy)

perspective of a referring clinician this is the biggest problem when they receive a report after referring a patient for neuropsychological testing.

The recruited subjects in the first phase of the research included 30 military veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan Wars with mild TBI and Persistent Postconcussion Syndrome (PPCS). Many of these men also suffered from PTSD and depression. In the second phase experiment, 50 military and civilian subjects with mild TBI and PPCS completed the full protocol (23 in the HBOT group and 27 in the Control Crossover Group that also received HBOT). The FDA required that we screen out active PTSD in the second phase of the study and stratify the two groups for amount of depression. The recruited subjects came in complaining of continuing cognitive problems, depression and anxiety, and post-concussion symptoms. They all reported that they were not completely "back to their normal" (pre-injury level) from before they were injured.

Once recruited, all subjects received a full battery of neuropsychological tests before and after treatment with hyperbaric oxygen therapy, including measures of IQ, learning and memory, measures of complex attention, executive function, language, perceptual-motor function, depression, anxiety, sleep, and Quality of Life.

The first surprise was that the baseline testing revealed that most of the subjects were essentially "average" – not deficient – in the bulk of the cognitive domains tested (see Table 1). The mean scores before treatment ranged from 94 for delayed memory for the 30 military subjects to 111 on Full Scale IQ and Visual Working Memory Index for the Phase II Control Crossover group. In fact, had these subjects been tested before they were recruited, most of them probably would not have been included in the study by the current definition of deficit or impairment.

Even more surprising was how much each group gained in standard scores after the hyperbaric oxygen treatments (full protocol of 40, 1 hour treatments). The biggest cognitive gain was seen in the Delayed Memory Index (DMI) from the WMS-IV across all three sets of subjects who received HBOT. The military subjects showed the greatest gains, however, most of the military subjects experienced blast concussions compared to blunt concussions of the mostly civilian two groups in the Phase II research. In addition, many of the military subjects had experienced more than one such concussion, and also had PTSD scores 50% higher than the Phase II subjects. The military gains were almost a full standard deviation, while the civilian mTBIs each gained 10 to 11 points into the High Average range and

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Table 1. Pretest – Posttest (Amount Change) mean standard scores on IQ, Memory and Complex Attention for 80 subjects

	30 military	23 1 st Tx group	27 2 nd Tx group
WAIS-IV FSIQ	98-112 (+14)	106-112 (+6)	111-117 (+6)
WMS-IV DMI	94-109 (+15)	102-113 (+11)	108-118 (+10)
WMS-IV VWMI	96-108 (+12)	104-111 (+7)	111-115 (+4)

Research News and Some Surprising Findings, continued

by Drs. Susan Andrews and Paul Harch

generally reported that they felt more “back to their preinjury normal.”

When the data from the first experiment with military subjects was first published in 2011³, there was a letter to the Editor by Wortzel et al⁴, who commented that our neuropsychological improvements were “dramatically larger than can be explained.” This comment was apparently based on the fact that the literature shows no decrement in intellectual functioning following mild TBI⁵. However, it has now been demonstrated in multiple Department of Defense (DoD) HBOT TBI.

studies that the comorbidity of PTSD amplifies the improvements seen with HBOT in TBI. Our military subjects had the highest average PTSD score of all of these studies, nearly 50% higher than the DoD subjects.

We recognize that it has been considered a “fact” that IQ is not usually affected by mild TBI. However, the data disputes that “fact.” One reason for why it seems that IQ is not affected by mTBI is that most neuropsychological data is generated after an injury and there is often only one time point tested. Improvement can be seen occasionally when two time points are available (like relatively soon after the accident and one to two years after the brain has had time to recover.) In addition, large decrements in global intellectual function, i.e., IQ, that falls outside the “normal” range, are only likely to be seen in more serious injury.

People who have been injured often complain of not being “back to normal.” However, if their IQ or memory or attention is in the normal or average range when tested,

the subject is not considered to have a loss of function. This often leads to the injured person’s complaints not being considered valid and therefore, they often do not receive the treatment they actually could still benefit from. One implication for the future is that some good way of determining “back to normal” needs to be considered.

Post-Concussion Symptom Inventories are Good Predictors of Outcome

The FDA required the use of the Neurobehavioral Symptom Inventory (NSI), which is a post-concussion symptom inventory, as our primary outcome measure for the second phase of the experiment. Two of the largest improvements for the subjects were on the NSI and memory. There was a huge decrease in headaches for the group receiving HBOT. The study demonstrated an approximately 85% improvement in headache, along with improved sleep, energy level, irritability and mood swings. Headache is one of the most debilitating post-concussion symptoms that often keeps people from being able to return to work.

At the time of the first phase of this research, many of the returning Iraqi and Afghanistan military were so distressed that they were committing suicide. A very important finding of the Phase I study was a significant reduction in suicidal ideation among the subjects.

Beyond the surprising findings of “deficits” in the “normal” range, increases in “from an Average IQ to a High Average IQ or

more”, a major reduction in suicidal ideation, and greatly improved Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and anxiety, the important conclusion was that this study confirmed 30 years of animal and human experience, demonstrating significant improvement in PPCS with the 1.5 atmosphere oxygen dose. This dose of HBOT has been applied in multiple other randomized trials with similar results. Collectively, the body of data meets criteria for American Heart Association Level I Class A evidence for efficacy of HBOT in mTBI PPCS. It is now time for widespread application of and reimbursement for HBOT treatment of mTBI PPCS with or without PTSD.

¹ Paul G. Harch, Andrews SR, Rowe CJ, Lischka JR, Townsend MH, Yu Q, Mercante DE. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy for mild traumatic brain injury persistent postconcussion syndrome: a randomized controlled trial. *Med Gas Res.* 2020; 10 (1): 8-20.

² This study was supported by U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command Fort Detrick, No. W81XWH-

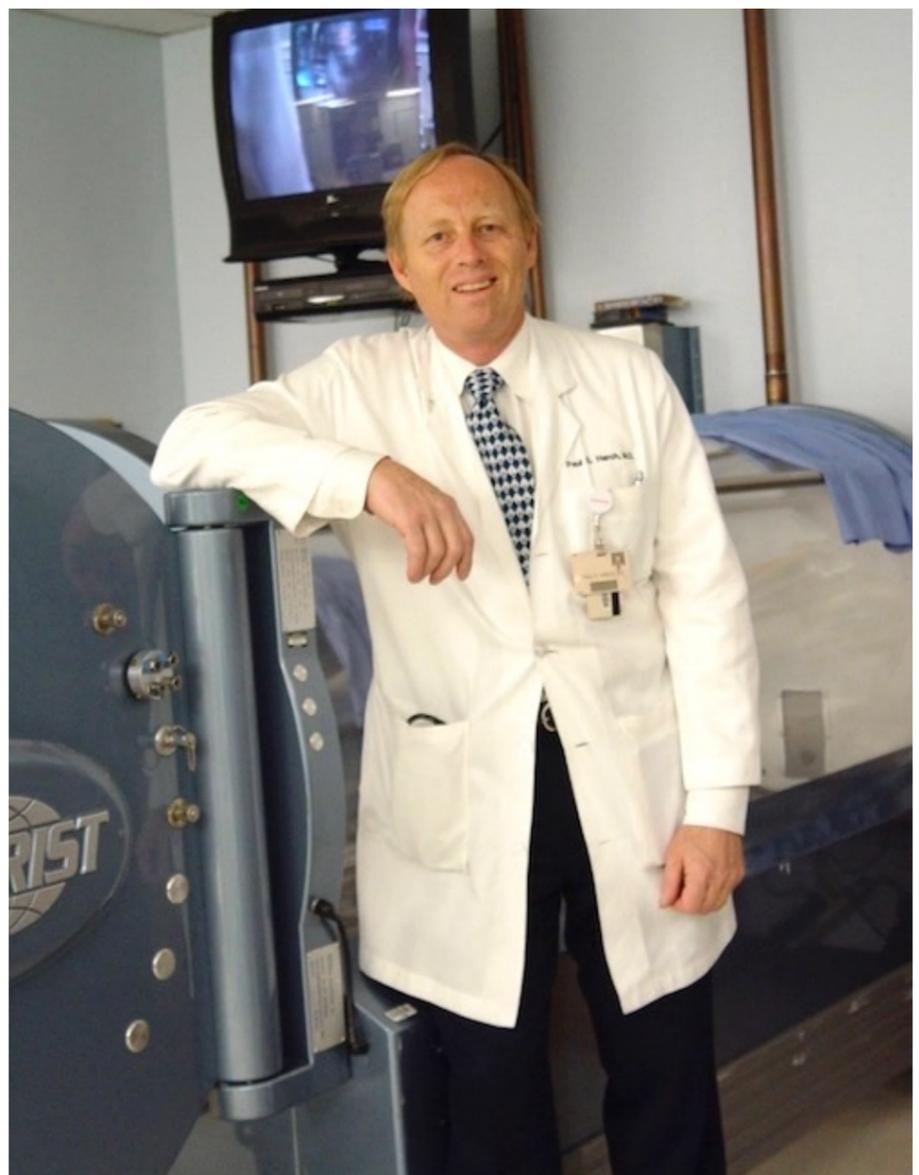
³ Harch, Paul G., Susan R Andrews, Edward F. Fogarty, Daniel Amen, John C Pezzullo, Juliette Lucarini, Claire Aubrey, Derek Taylor, Paul Staab, and Keith Van Meter. (2011). A Phase I Study of Low-Pressure Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for Blast-Induced Post-Concussion Syndrome and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. *Journal of Neurotrauma*, 28-1.

⁴ Wortzel et al. (2012). A Phase I Study of Low-Pressure Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for Blast-Induced Post-Concussion Syndrome and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Neuropsychiatric Perspective. *J of NT*, 29-14.

⁵ Belanger et al., 2005 (a meta-analytical study that could only report general findings across nine cognitive domains.)

Dr. Harch (Right) as the principal investigator and Dr. Andrews as the neuropsychologist, hope that HBOT will soon become more available as insurance and Worker’s Compensation groups begin to approve it.

(courtesy photo)



A Shrink at the Flicks

Secret Window: A Review

by Alvin G. Burstein, PhD

With conventional movie theatres still COVID risky, and having subscribed to a new dish based media provider, I have a plethora of movie options. A horror flick based on a Stephen King story and starring Johnny Depp tempted me, despite its age—it is a 2004 release—and it turned out to be rife with interesting psychological implications.

Spoiler alert: Facilitating the exploration of those implications will involve reducing the suspense for the first time viewer, but then, the film has been around a while, and its implications reward reflecting on.

The protagonist, played by Depp, is an established writer, Mort Rainey. He has an agent and has appeared in the iconic *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. The film opens with a flashback of his discovery of his wife *in flagrante delicto* with a friend. The movie then fast-forwards six months to show Rainey having left his erring wife in possession of their connubial home. He is living in a backwoods shack, manifestly depressed by his impending divorce, wearing a tattered bathrobe, disheveled and unshaven, unsuccessfully struggling with writer's block.

The picture of depression is classic, and its links to oral conflicts and ambivalence unmistakable. Rainey gorges on junk food, swills booze out of a bottle, and has fallen off his no-smoking wagon. Ambivalence is highlighted, and not as a nice, if inaccurate, term for negative feelings. Rainey misses his wife and continues to yearn for her at the very same time, very same moment, that he is enraged by her betrayal. The quasi-solution to the conflict is redirecting that murderous anger away from her and towards himself, the basis for his depression.

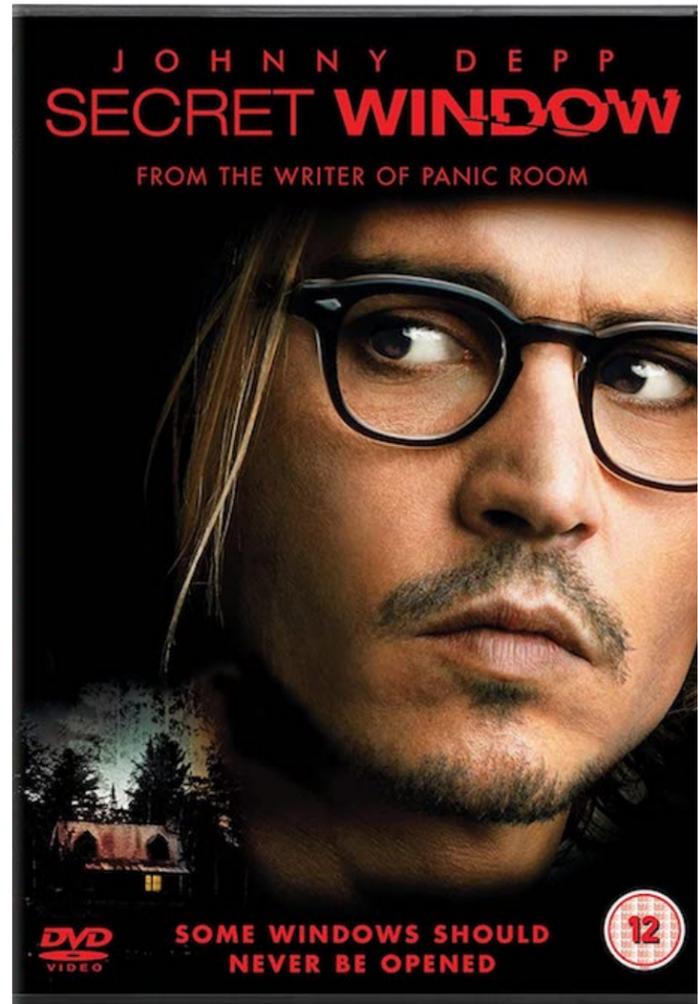
Guest Columnist,
Dr. Alvin Burstein

Burstein, a psychologist and psychoanalyst, is a professor emeritus at the University of Tennessee and a 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



courtesy photo

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.



As the story unfolds, Rainey is confronted by an amateur writer, John Shooter, who accuses Rainey of having plagiarized a novel written by Shooter. Rainey attempts to brush off his claim, pointing out that his story was published in *EQMM* years before Shooter claims to have written his story.

Undeterred, Shooter gives Rainey three days in which to produce a copy of the magazine containing the original, making ominous threats that resonate with his name, and with his grim appearance that includes wearing a broad-brimmed black hat.

Along with his eponymous last name, the black hat is another heavy-handed hint of impending evil. Good guys wear white hats, and bad guys....

Unsettled by Shooter's threats, and more so by the discovery of his pet dog's mutilation and murder, Rainey appeals to the local sheriff and later to a private detective for protection. Rainey goes to his wife's home to attempt to find a copy of the magazine in question, only to find the house destroyed by arson. The plot continues to darken, Rainey's private detective, along with a witness to the Rainey-Shooter confrontation are found dead, and like the pet dog, mutilated. Rainey receives a copy of the magazine in question from his agent, whom the P.I. had contacted, but the critical pages have been cut out.

The crisis mounts. Rainey is back at his shack staring at Shooter's hat and begins talking to himself, trying to make sense of these events. In another heavy-handed development, there are soon three Rainey's exchanging views. One of them puts on Shooter's hat and—here is the spoiler—it becomes clear that Rainey suffers from what the psychiatric Diagnostic and Statistical Manual would call dissociative identity disorder, and what psychoanalytic theorists would call vertical splitting, disowned identities. Rainey is also Shooter, Jekyll meeting Hyde as it were.

In the windup, Rainey's estranged wife appears, along with her lover. Rainey, now owning his anger, kills both and buries them in the field that the secret window overlooks, planting a cornfield over their graves.

Months later, the sheriff visits a rejuvenated Rainey to remind him that that he is still a suspect. Rainey grins as he continues to dine on corn on the cob.

The light-hearted mockery of the ending is a tip of the hat, a signal not to take the story too seriously. But its highlighting of psychological issues is both striking and of interest.

Science & Education

Dr. Dean Radin to Speak on Extrasensory Research and Overlap with Quantum Theory

continued

IONS research staff in 2001, Radin worked at AT&T Bell Labs, Princeton University, University of Edinburgh, and SRI International, where he worked on a classified program of psychic espionage, now commonly known as StarGate.

Dr. Radin is author or coauthor of over 300 scientific, technical, and popular articles, four dozen book chapters, two technical books, and four popular books including the Scientific and Medical Network's 1997 book award, *The Conscious Universe* (HarperOne, 1997), *Entangled Minds* (Simon & Schuster, 2006), the 2014 Silver Nautilus Book Award, *Supernormal* (Random House, 2013), and *Real Magic* (Penguin Random House, 2018).

His 100+ academic articles appear in peer-reviewed scientific journals ranging from *Foundations of Physics and Physics Essays* to *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, *Psychological Bulletin*, and *Psychology of Consciousness*. He was featured in *New York Times Magazine*. His 500+ interviews and talks have included presentations at Harvard, Stanford, Princeton, Columbia, Cambridge (England), Edinburgh (Scotland), The Sorbonne (Paris), University of Padova (Italy), and University of Allahabad (India).

"While at Bell Labs," he said, "I began to publish some of my psi experiments. Then I discovered the Parapsychological Association and later the Society for Scientific Exploration, and I presented my work at their annual meetings. I was delighted to find groups of scientists who

were as interested in these phenomena as I was, and the contacts I made eventually led to appointments at Princeton University, University of Edinburgh, University of Nevada, Interval Research Corporation, and SRI International. At the latter facility, I was a scientist on a top secret US government project conducting research on psychic phenomena."

"I am now Chief Scientist at IONS, and I've spent the majority of my professional career doing what the 4-year-old Dean described as being jet propelled -- probing the far reaches of human consciousness using the tools and techniques of science. Very few scientists are publicly engaged in research on this perennially interesting topic. This is not because of a lack of interest, as skeptics sometimes suggest," he explains. "The vast majority of scientists I've spoken to are fascinated with psi, and national surveys we've conducted show that over 90% of scientists and engineers have personally experienced one or more psi phenomena. But science, like any social enterprise, has strictly enforced rules of what is and is not acceptable to talk about. Despite the aspirations of academic freedom, the reality is that it's not safe for one's scientific career to publicly pursue controversial topics (in any domain, not just psi)."

In his book *Entangled Minds: Extrasensory Experiences in a Quantum Reality*, Dr. Radin summarizes the evidence for different categories of ESP.

"...after a century of increasingly sophisticated investigations and more than 1000 controlled studies with the combined odds against chance of 10^{104} to 1, there is now strong evidence that some psi phenomena exist."

He reviews the research on dream psi, Ganzfeld psi, conscious detection of being stared at, unconscious detection of distant intention, unconscious detection of being stared at, dice psychokinesis, and random number generation (RNG) psychokinesis.

Psi research attracts an unusually passionate group of skeptics and Radin deals with this in his writings by careful scientific designs and corrections for various biases.

The challenge includes the fact that overall the effect sizes for psi phenomena are often very small, even though consistent. An example is the random number generation research, or RNG. The effect is often so small that it takes modern technology to capture it.

RNG studies rely on the baseline generation of pure randomness. Engineer Robert Jahn at the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research Laboratory published 12 years of experiments on his team's investigation of this type of mind matter interaction. The experiments involved 100 volunteers who attempted to mentally influence the output of RNGs.

The RNG is an electronic device that generates thousands of completely random

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(courtesy photo)

Dr. Radin to Speak on Extrasensory Research

continued

bits of information, like flipping a coin with heads or tails. In the Princeton Laboratory, participants attempted to influence the generator to shift the average to higher or lower than chance.

"They estimated that the magnitude of the psychokinetic affect was approximately equal to one bit out of 10,000 being shifted away from chance expectation" he notes. "While this may seem like a tiny effect, over the entire database this resulted in odds against chance of 35 trillion to 1."

Radin reports that an attempt to replicate the work did not reach significance, but then he and another psychologist conducted a meta-analysis of all known RNG studies. After correcting for missing data he found the overall effect was small in magnitude but associated with an odds against chance of 50,000 to 1.

He describes another type of RNG experiment where the generator is placed near a group of people who are asked to participate in a task for highly focused attention, such as a group of people meditating or an intense ritual. Throughout the early 2000s, studies strongly suggested that focused group mental activity was associated with unusual recordings in RNG data.

Engineer William Rowe, Radin explains, conducted formal tests investigating the subjective and objective results of these types of group efforts. The tests matched correctly the observers'

impressions in the RNG outputs. When the group could impact the RNG data, these results were associated with warm or close feelings of togetherness, with emotional content that tended to draw people together, and when personal involvement was more focused toward the group goal which was deeply engrossing, reported Radin. In contrast, negative results were associated with people working alone, involved in objective or analytical task, where there was low personal involvement, or with a boring task.

Another area that Radin reports on is the pre-sentient dream experience. Research on dream psi is conducted with a pair of individuals. One volunteer is the receiver and spends the night in the dream lab. The other volunteer agrees to act as a sender. The receiver goes to sleep in a soundproof, electromagnetically shielded, and otherwise safeguarded room to ensure that the participants aren't responding to any ordinary communications or signals.

The receiver's brain waves and eye movements are monitored throughout the night. When the technician sees that the receiver enters REM sleep, the sender is notified. The sender, who has been assigned a random picture, attempts to transmit the image to the receiver. The technician wakes the receiver and asks him or her to describe their dream.

In 2003, a team of British psychologists reviewed all the

dream psi studies that were conducted under controlled conditions, a total of 47 experiments. They concluded that the overall hit rate was 59.1% rather than the expected 50% by chance. While the 9.1% may seem small on practical levels, explains Radin, it is associated with an odds against chance of 22 billion to 1.

Radin also reviews dice throwing. Findings of 52 investigators over a half century with some 2500 people attempting to mentally influence 2.6 million events and including controls, show a small but consistent effect.

"While the overall effect was small in terms of absolute magnitude," Radin writes, "it wasn't due to dumb luck. The odds that the dice studies were due to chance alone were 10^{96} to one. By contrast, the results of control experiments were well within chance expectation."

"After examining these phenomena through the lens of science for over 40 years, I've concluded that some psychic abilities are genuine. This means there are important assumptions within the prevailing scientific worldview that are seriously incomplete. I've also learned that most people who confidently claim to have 100% reliable psychic abilities are mistaken, sometimes innocently and sometimes fraudulently. Spontaneous psi effects can be startling and in some cases

transformative, but hardly any form of human conscious behavior is 100% reliable, especially subtle consciousness-related effects like psi."

Dr. Radin has even taken on what is considered the central mystery of quantum mechanics.

This mystery begins with the classical experiment called the two slit experiment. If researchers shine monochromatic light on a barrier with one slit, they see a simple stripe on the background.

But if researchers use a barrier that includes two slits, so that the light can pass through the two openings, it registers on a background in an "interference pattern," with many stripes. It is thought that the light passes through both slits, creating two waves whose ripples then interfere with one another.

But if researchers "spy" on the light, this profoundly changes what happens in the experiment. When the researchers place a detection device in the apparatus to see which slit the light has traveled through, the interference pattern vanishes, and two separate stripes emerge. The wave pattern it is said to collapse. Leave the detector device in the

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Dr. Radin has taken on what is considered the central mystery of quantum mechanics.

Published in Quantum Biosystems in 2015, "Psychophysical interactions with a single-photon double-slit optical system," seems to be causing discussion in the scientific community.

(courtesy photo)



Dr. Radin to Speak on Extrasensory Research

continued

apparatus, but unplug it, and the interference, wavelike pattern returns.

Into this conundrum Dr. Radin jumped, substituting conscious meditators for the detection devices.

He and his team conducted six experiments "using a single-photon double-slit apparatus to test von Neumann's notion that the quantum wavefunction or interference pattern is 'collapsed' by what he called a psychophysical interaction." His team asked individuals to direct their attention toward or away from the optical system and they found evidence supportive of an interaction that "appears to 'steer' the wavefunction to either reduce or to sharpen interference fringes."

Published in *Quantum Biosystems* in 2015, "Psychophysical interactions with a single-photon double-slit optical system," seems to be causing discussion in the scientific community.

One of the downsides for Dr. Radin's choice of research is he often called to defend the scientific experiments against skeptics who are passionate about the nonexistence of psi phenomena. This criticism includes objections about the often small effects size.

"The charge on the electron is also very small," Radin points out. "But so what? This confuses the magnitude of an effect with its existence. In any case, many modern psi experiments test randomly selected college sophomores and other unselected participants. As a result, the weak effects often observed in the laboratory are probably due to the fact that the people being tested aren't talented in the skills of interest."

One example of a very talented psi individual, described in *Entangled Minds*, is Joseph McMoneagle, a remote viewer in the US Army's formally top-secret project, StarGate.

McMoneagle had been repeatedly tested numerous times in double blind laboratory experiments and had been known to have the ability to describe objects at a distance sometimes in spectacular detail, explains Dr. Radin.

In one experiment, all that McMoneagle knew was that a person he had met would be visiting a technological site., It was somewhere that could be reached within an hours drive around

Silicon Valley in Northern California, but the range of possibilities of this type of facility in Silicon Valley is the enormous, explained Radin. As it turned out, the target that the person arrived at was a particle beam excelerator, and that's exactly what McMoneagle drew.

"Where are also, of course, reprehensible con artists masquerading as psychics and charging huge sums for their services," Dr. Radin said. "These classes of so-called psychics are easy targets for skeptics, who wrongly assume they are representative of everyone who claims psychic abilities. There is a huge anecdotal literature about psychic phenomena, but the evidence that convinced me was not only the results of my own experimental studies, but analyses of the cumulative empirical evidence collected by qualified scientists under well-controlled conditions, and published in peer-reviewed scientific journals," he said.

"There is always room for scholarly debate about these topics, and I know a number of informed scientists whom I respect who hold different opinions and interpretations. But I've also learned that those who loudly assert that there isn't *any* scientifically valid evidence for psychic abilities, or worse, that these phenomena are impossible, don't know what they're talking about.

"For example, my bio page on Wikipedia fails to mention any of the scientists who have endorsed my work, including two Nobel Laureates. Nor does it mention that in 2018 I was one of 35 invited speakers at a major international science conference sponsored by Merck KGaA, of Darmstadt, Germany, which included 5 Nobel Laureates and other prominent mainstream scientists. I am also a jury member of two European-based prizes for advancements in biomedicine; in one case the prize is 1 million Euros, and in the second case it is 300,000 Euros.

"My interest in psi phenomena was not motivated by having psi experiences," Dr. Radin said. "It was instead sparked out of an intuitive sense that the mind is far more mysterious and powerful than we know. Through education and experience I've also come to appreciate that these experiences are not just curiosities. They're also responsible for most of the greatest inventions, artistic and scientific achievements, creative insights, and religious epiphanies throughout history. Understanding this realm of human experience thus offers more than academic interest -- it touches upon the very best that the human intellect and spirit have had to offer."



NATIONAL NEWSPAPER WEEK October 4 – 10



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