

Top: State's graphic. Bottom: Google chart on new cases in Louisiana, with a high on July 26.

## Cases Rise, Governor Extends Phase Two

On July 23, Gov. Edwards signed orders and extending Phase Two and the Statewide Mask Mandate as Louisiana surpassed 100,000 known COVID-19 cases.

State officials put out a graphic highlighting the fact that Louisiana was first in the nation based on a July 26 high of 3,840 new cases.

The Gov. Edwards signed a renewal of the current proclamation extending Phase Two in the state, which includes the statewide mask mandate and additional restrictions, until August 7.

"Today, we are reporting 2,408 new cases, which means that the state has now surpassed 100,00 total cases. And of course, these are only the cases we know

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Courtesy photo

## Dr. Frick Honored for Scientific Achievements

The state psychological association has named leading international authority, Dr. Paul Frick, for Contributions in Psychological Science. The 2020 honor is given to an individual who has significantly increased knowledge of psychological concepts by scientific research and dissemination of findings.

Dr. Frick holds the Roy Crumpler Memorial Chair and is professor of psychology at Louisiana State University (LSU). Previously, he was Chair of Psychology at U. of New Orleans. His research investigates the many interacting factors that can lead children and adolescents to have serious emotional and behavioral problems, such as aggressive and antisocial behavior.

Dr. Frick was noted to be one of only four researchers from LSU who achieved an h-index over 100, based on the Google

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## Psychology Times Earns 1st in General Excellence at La Press

The *Psychology Times* earned the prestigious First Place in General Excellence in its division from the Louisiana Press Association and its Better Newspaper Competition for 2019-2020. The General Excellence honor is sought after by newspapers as a top award in the divisions. This year's winners were announced in late June.

The judges, representing the Nebraska Press Association, wrote that the *Times*, "Really knows its audience. Everything it does is with a purpose to serve its readers who are drawn to it by its title. This is a really fine publication."

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## Dr. Bonner Recognized for Psychology in Public Interest

Dr. McKay Bonner has been recognized as the 2020 recipient of the Award for *Psychology in the Public Interest* by the Louisiana Psychological Association, announced last month by the association officials.

The recognition is given to an individual who has made significant scholarly or practical contributions to the health and well-being of the general public through their work in psychology, said officials.

Dr. Bonner is an industrial-organizational psychologist

who has worked closely with the police in Northeast Louisiana for decades. She is the Public Safety Psychologist for several police, sheriff, and fire departments. For almost 20 years, she has conducted a variety of evaluations for pre-employment, fitness-for-duty, and officer-involved shootings. Dr. Bonner is also an Associate Professor at the University of Louisiana at Monroe and teaches in the Criminal Justice &

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Dr. McKay Bonner and husband, Asst. Chief Dr. Mark Johnson, at Taliesin West (Frank Lloyd Wright's home) in Scottsdale, AZ, sight-seeing before returning home from the Society for Police and Criminal Psychology's 2019 Conference in Scottsdale.



Courtesy photo



# Editorial Page – Opinions

## Time and Chance

by Julie Nelson

Some years ago, Archimedes and I splurged on a backyard lap pool, and Covid-19 being what it is, the pool has turned out to be a great investment, helping us cope with the self-isolation required to avoid the Russian roulette for those over 60.

Less fortunate, however, are the various and sundry creatures that accidentally wind up floundering and struggling to escape the watery death trap.

My Irish-Catholic father lived by and instilled the moral code that, "If you kill it, you have to eat it," for co-existing with other living creatures. So, with some mixture of altruism, concern for all life, and to avoid the idea of having to eat whatever dies in the pool, I spend 15 minutes a day rescuing various wildlife before I swim my hour of laps.

The most frequent victims are spiders. I've become an expert at liberating larger and larger plain, brown, garden-variety tree spiders that apparently fall or are blown from the trees surrounding the pool. At first they can spread their legs and actually walk across the surface of the water for a while. However, soon they have to resort to rolling themselves into a ball to continue to float. After that it's pretty much curtains.



The first few times I rescued a balled-up spider it shocked the hell out of me because they unfold to about four times their size. With practice I've been able desensitize myself so that now I can airlift a spider the size of a silver dollar over to the side of the pool, the thing riding comfortably and peaceably on the back of my hand. I've even chauffeured a mother spider out of the pool, her back covered with tiny babies, which makes her look rather vicious if you are seeing this for the first time. Getting those tiny babies out is a time-consuming nightmare so it's efficient to free the mother before she sinks.

The grasshoppers are the most fun to save because they go jumping off your hand like they've been shot out of a cannon. The frogs are sweet and passive. The beetles are the bread & butter victims, the epitome of resilience and calm. Neither the bees nor the ants inspire much sympathy in me—the bees will sting you as you're rescuing them—but it's better than finding them in your swimming suit during the workout.

Once a baby possum found its way into the leaf skimmer. Archimedes went straight to work to protect his woman. Striding confidently into the middle of the situation, he yelled "Stand back!" as he commenced to capture the thing with the leaf net, presumably imagining a danger for me similar to the Killer Rabbit. I was already "back," standing all the way on the other side of the pool. The baby possum would have had to swim across, somehow climb out—obviously the whole problem in the first place—and then decide to go after me, bent on revenge. I didn't point out the logic problem, being that I'm generally a fan of male protective instincts.

I've also encountered a suicidal lizard. Most lizards are goners by the time I find them but I once rescued a green-gray, striped lizard. It did an instant about-face and dove headfirst back into the pool. Once committed to a rescue, I seldom give up, so I fished the thing out again and walked it to a grassy area past the pool walkway. The lizard promptly scurried back and launched it self directly into the water again, sinking in a vertical, Christ-like position. I was left with no alternative at this point but to retrieve it a third time. So I walked the little lunatic across the yard, tossed it in the bushes, and pledged no more codependency in our relationship.

One other type of creature has a connection to the pool. Some days, as I'm swimming along, I turn to take a breath and catch a sideways glimpse of the sky. There, circling above me, are the vultures. They're checking to see if I am a floundering, struggling, dying animal. An eerie feeling—I'm thankful that they would have to kill me before they eat me.

Covid-19 and the backyard waters remind me of Ecclesiastes 9:11:

"I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all."

*[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](mailto:drj@drjulienelson.com), —she welcomes feedback.]*

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[psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com](mailto:psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com)

Publisher: Julie Nelson, PhD

Journalism Consultant:  
Robert Holeman,  
*Editor (Ret.), The Coushatta Citizen,  
Winn Parish Enterprise.*

Columnists/Reporters:  
Susan Andrews, PhD, Alvin Burstein, PhD

Cartoonist: Jake Nelson-Dooley,  
Johnny Hawkins

Photography: Mike Dooley, MBA  
Tom Stigall, PhD

Copy editor: Susan Brown

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## Corrections & Clarifications

Dr. Sam corrected our spelling of Mr. Alton Sterling's first name in the story on page 4. Dr. Burstein corrected a sentence in his review. Thanks for the assists and we regret any confusion caused.

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

Psychology Times  
Earns 1st in General  
Excellence, continued

Publisher Julie Nelson won second place and also third place in Best Investigative Reporting for her work detailing the overlap between the legal profession and the boards in the Baton Rouge Area, and also for an analysis and special report on healthcare in Louisiana and the lack of relationship to health outcomes in the state, titled "How do you save \$1 trillion?"

Nelson also took home a second place in the Sam Hanna Award for Best Regular Column.

The *Times* staff members achieved a second place in Community Service for their community awards project.

Nelson earned a third place in Best Single Editorial for her opinion piece on the medical profession and health results in Louisiana.

*Times'* technical assistant, Ms. Susan Brown, won recognition for Best Overall Website and Jake Nelson-Dooley won first and second places for his Best Web Projects.

*The Advocate* (Baton Rouge), the *Daily Comet* (Thibodaux), *The St. Tammany Farmer* (Covington), *The Gonzales Weekly Citizen* and *The Catholic Commentator* (Baton Rouge), and the *Loyola Maroon* (New Orleans) earned Newspaper of the Year honors in their respective divisions in the Louisiana Press Association competition.

In the Freedom of Information Competition, *The Times-Picayune* | *The New Orleans Advocate* was the winner, writing about New Orleans Police officer Chantelle Davis who had been promoted to sergeant in 2018, and touted by the New Orleans Police Department an exemplary example of female leaders. However, in 2017 she was "dismissive, arrogant, and disrespectful" when stopped for speeding. Davis claimed the right to privacy but the newspaper successfully argued for the public's right to know.

The coveted "Freedom of Information" award originally came from an idea that Gordon Nelson, long-time member of the Press Association and publisher of the *Coushatta Citizen*, and Bob Holeman, current *Psychology Times* journalism consultant, presented to the Louisiana Press Association in the 1980s. The late Gordon and Lynn Nelson owned and operated the *Coushatta Citizen*, and were parents of the *Psychology Times* publisher, Julie Nelson. Gordon and Lynn won the first Freedom of Information award almost four decades ago.

State Agency Heads Directed to Prepare for Possible Mid-Year Budget Cuts

Gov. Edwards Signs State Budget to Preserve  
Critical Funding During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Baton Rouge - On July 8, Gov. John Bel Edwards announced that he has signed the state's budget for the FY 20-21 operating year, preserving funding for critical health care, workforce and education services that are needed during the pandemic, especially as new COVID-19 cases rise again as school systems prepare to return to campus in the fall, according to the press release from the Governor's office.

Additionally, the Governor Edwards has ordered cabinet agencies to prepare for possible mid-year budget cuts by sequestering at least 10 percent of their budgets, which he also recommends for the judicial and legislative branches.

He will also issue an executive order to freeze hiring of state employees.

"Right now our budget is in a far better shape than we could have hoped just three months ago, with funding for critical services in place as we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and see case counts as well as hospitalizations rising," he said.

"I have directed state agencies to prepare for possible mid-year cuts and, we will continue working with the Legislature to make any

adjustments that may be necessary this fall," Gov. Edwards said. "While there are cuts in the budget, federal CARES act funding allowed us to avoid making them even more catastrophic. In addition, we were able to invest CARES act funding into programs for local governments, aid to businesses and direct payments to essential frontline workers."

The Governor also vetoed language that cancelled merit raises for classified state employees

Gov. Edwards vetoed a provision that impermissibly delayed pay raises for classified state employees and other provisions that sequestered funds appropriated to the executive branch, but not funds appropriated to the legislative and judicial branches.

He also vetoed more than \$9 million in new spending, as well as a provision contrary to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services guidelines that would negatively impact the Louisiana Department of Health and require the expenditure of more than \$10 million of state general fund plus \$32 million of federal funds.





# Cases Rise, Governor Extends Phase Two, cont'd

about. There are undoubtedly more,” Gov. Edwards said. “When you hit a milestone like this one and when you see death totals that are higher than they’ve been in months, as we did yesterday, it’s a reality check.”

“For anyone out there minimizing the seriousness of this situation, you are doing yourself and this state a terrible disservice. The same is true for anyone questioning the validity of the data that we’re using and releasing every day,” Gov. Edwards said. “COVID-19 is very prevalent throughout our state, and it is more widespread than ever before. We are certainly not where we want to be in Louisiana. I’ve extended Phase 2 with the mask mandate and other restrictions, but we are perilously close to having to make tough decisions that no one wants. This is why we have to follow the mitigation measures that are in place. We have to wear our masks, keep social distance, wash our hands frequently and stay home when we are feeling sick.”

The statewide mask mandate applies to all 64 parishes in Louisiana. However, parishes with a COVID-19 incidence of fewer than 100 cases per 100,000 people for the most recent two-week period for which data is available can choose to opt out of the mandate. Under the state’s policy, parish presidents in parishes with lower incidence rates do not have to opt out and may choose to keep a mask mandate in place.

The Louisiana Department of Health updates its incidence data every other week and at the time of the announcement, no Louisiana parish meets the standard to opt out of the current mask mandate.

The order requires face coverings for everyone ages 8 and older except for the following:

- Anyone who has a medical condition that prevents the wearing of a face covering
- Anyone who is consuming a drink or food
- Anyone who is trying to communicate with a person who is hearing impaired
- Anyone who is giving a speech for broadcast or to an audience

Anyone temporarily removing his or her face covering for identification purposes  
Anyone who is a resident of a parish without a high COVID incidence that has opted out of the masking mandate  
Masks are strongly recommended for children ages 2 to 7.

All bars, including those with food permits from the Louisiana Department of Health, will be closed to on-premises consumption. They can operate for curbside takeout or delivery service only.

The order also limits the size of social gatherings to 50 people indoors. Outdoor social gatherings are also limited to 50 people if individuals cannot avoid being within six feet of one another.

Experts warn of a mental health crisis due to the impact of Covid-19.

According to a report by *ABC News*, authored by Alexis Carrington, the impact of Covid-19 could include 20 additional firearm-related suicides per day.

In the July 7 report, the author wrote that a new study has found that there may be a 20 to 30% increase in firearms suicides due to the mental health impact of Covid.

"The uncertainty brought on by the pandemic has been impacting people's mental health and increasing feelings of anxiety and depression. The pandemic has also led to increases in gun purchases with an estimated 1.9 million additional guns sold during March and April 2020 compared to the same time period last year. Having access to a firearm in the home triples the risk of death by suicide."

"The study comes from the research arm of Everytown for Gun Safety, a non profit organization which advocates for gun control. Researchers at Everytown looked back at prior crises that led to massive unemployment, including the Great Depression of the 1930s and the Great Recession that ended in 2010."

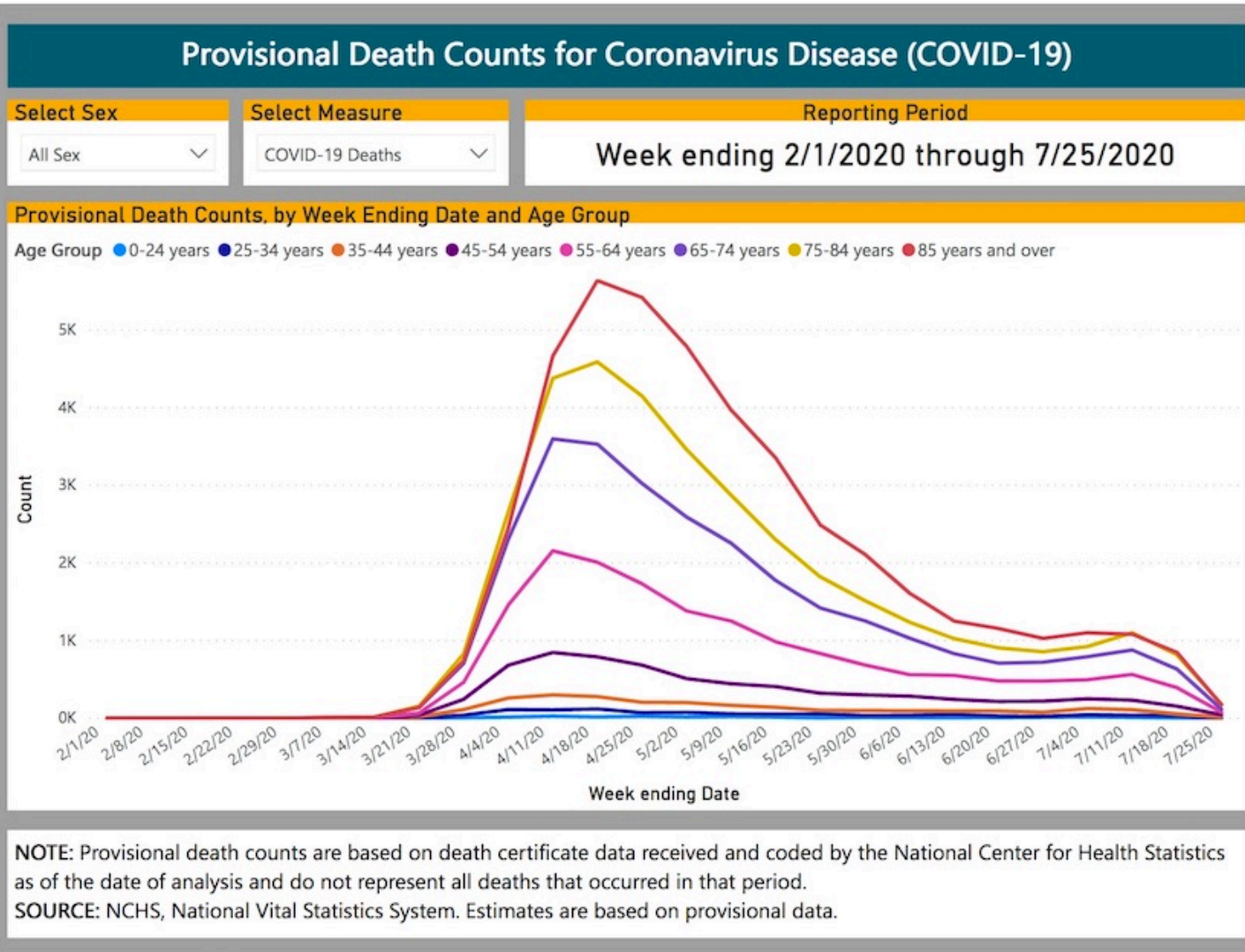
# Governor signs House Bill 251 into Act 180

Previous law provided for the Early Childhood Care and Education Network, through which the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) manages and oversees publicly funded programs that provide early childhood care or education. It also established the Advisory Council on Early Childhood Care and Education, which provided input and guidance to BESE and the state Dept. of Education on such programs.

The previous law, which terminated on March 31, 2020, created the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission to study and make recommendations relative to early childhood care and education issues.

Act 180 re-creates the commission and requires it to collect data, consider research and current practices, determine a sustainable infrastructure, identify opportunities for collaboration, determine a time frame and necessary funding to achieve affordable access to quality care and education for all children from birth through age four, and make recommendations on the incorporation of family child care providers into the early childhood care and education network.

Also requires is the commission to produce reports for the governor, legislature, state superintendent of education, and BESE and to establish a task force to identify and recommend funding strategies. commission's plan.



Center for Disease Control publishes this graphic showing comparison of mortality by age and over time for Coronavirus disease in the United States.



# Gov. Appoints Dr. Harness to LSBEP

On July 1 Gov. Edwards announced his appointment of Dr. Shannae N. Harness of Kenner to the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. Kenner is a clinical psychologist at Ochsner Medical complex–The Grove and was nominated by the Louisiana Psychological Association.

Dr. Harness earned her degree from Jackson State University in 2012, in the major of clinical psychology. She is listed with the National Registry of Health Service Psychologists and is a member of the American Psychological Association.

In her statement, Dr. Harness noted, "... In order to assist the Board, one of my goals is to be a catalyst for change by opening the lines of communication within this field during the process of licensure and the maintenance of competent psychologists. My role as a regulator in enforcing the laws, standards, and ethics code is to be transparent and timely in carrying out the matters of the Board ...

"Another goal for my tenure on the Board is to promote diversity and encourage open dialogue about mental health issues that affect the under-served populations in Louisiana. This is a population that often does not present for help due to the stigma associated with treatment," Dr. Harness wrote. "Furthermore, many are often incarcerated due to lack of receiving mental health interventions. I would like to focus on bringing the mental health divide amongst people of diverse backgrounds and bring awareness to these issues when participating in rule making activities."

In related news, the Gov. also appointed several individuals to the Louisiana Emergency Response Network Board. The Network serves to defend the public health, safety and welfare by protecting the people of the State of Louisiana against unnecessary deaths and morbidity due to trauma and time-sensitive illness.

John P. Hunt III, M.D. of New Orleans has been reappointed to the Louisiana Emergency Response Network Board. Hunt is a surgeon at the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center Department of Surgery and will represent LSUHSC.

Chris J. Guilbeaux of Baton Rouge has been reappointed to the Louisiana Emergency Response Network. Guilbeaux is the deputy director of preparedness for the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and was nominated by the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.

Jimmy Guidry M.D. of Baton Rouge has been reappointed to the Louisiana Emergency Response Network Board. Guidry is the state health officer for the Louisiana Department of Health and will represent the Louisiana Department of Health.

And, Deidra J. Garrett M.D. of Lafayette has been reappointed to the Louisiana Emergency Response Network Board. Garrett is a pediatric general surgeon and will represent the Louisiana State Medical Society.

# Executive Order to Increase Importation of Drugs and Lower Prices for US Patients

On July 24, Pres. Trump issued an Executive Order aimed to open up importation of prescription drugs from other countries with the objective of lowering prices for patients in the US.

In the announcement Trump said, "Americans spend more per capita on pharmaceutical drugs than residents of any other developed country. Americans often pay more for the exact same drugs, even when they are produced and shipped from the exact same facilities," he said.

"One way to minimize international disparities in price is to increase the trade of prescription drugs between nations with lower prices and those with persistently higher ones. Over time, reducing trade barriers and increasing the exchange of drugs will likely result in lower prices for the country that is paying more for drugs. For example, in the European Union, a market characterized by price controls and significant barriers to entry, the parallel trade of drugs has existed for decades and has been estimated to reduce the price of certain drugs by up to 20 percent. Accordingly, my Administration supports the goal of safe importation of prescription drugs."

The Order directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law, take action to expand safe access to lower-cost imported prescription drugs.

These actions are to include the following:

- (a) facilitating grants to individuals of waivers of the prohibition of importation of prescription drugs, provided such importation poses no additional risk to public safety and results in lower costs to American patients, pursuant to section 804(j)(2) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FDCA), 21 U.S.C. 384(j)(2);
- (b) authorizing the re-importation of insulin products upon a finding by the Secretary that it is required for emergency medical care pursuant to section 801(d) of the FDCA, 21 U.S.C. 381(d); and
- (c) completing the rulemaking process regarding the proposed rule to implement section 804(b) through (h) of the FDCA, 21 U.S.C. 384(b) through (h), to allow importation of certain prescription drugs from Canada.

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State News

Dr. Frick Honored for Scientific Achievements, continued

Scholar Citations database. Worldwide, only 3,160 scholars reach this level.

Dr. Frick and his colleagues have focused on the importance of "callous–unemotional" traits in children and adolescents.

"We are still working to advance research on callous-unemotional traits," Dr. Frick told the *Times*, "especially in light of its addition to both the DSM-5 diagnosis for Conduct Disorder and the ICD-11 diagnoses of Conduct-dissocial and Oppositional defiant disorder," Dr. Frick said. "In the upcoming September issue of the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, we have a paper that will be the featured manuscript showing that CU traits predicts gun carrying and gun use in a crime in the four years following the adolescent's first arrest," he said.

The study will also be featured in *Am. J. of Psychiatry* 's audio podcasts found at <https://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/audio>.

"Also," Dr. Frick said, "our work to advance clinical assessment of CU traits has also been progressing, with the first papers being published on the reliability and validity of the CAPE 1.1., the Clinical Assessment of Prosocial Emotions, Version 1.1, which provides clinicians a way to assess the specifier. Finally, an open trial for our early

intervention for young children with CU traits has also recently been published," he said.

Last year, Dr. Frick and his international co-authors published an article in *Nature Reviews*, and pointed out that society pays a heavy price for its failure to diagnose and treat conduct disorders.

Conduct disorder is associated with an exceptionally high costs for individuals and society, noted the authors of the the report. "The health and personal burden of it is seven times greater than that of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, a much more widely known disorder. While it is likely that children diagnosed with ADHD may also show signs of conduct disorder, very few will be diagnosed or receive treatment for it. Conduct disorder is also associated with a greater health burden than autism."

"Despite the fact that it is associated with a very high personal, familial, and societal burden, conduct disorder is under-recognized and frequently goes undiagnosed and untreated. Unfortunately, the longer this goes on, the more difficult it is to treat. It truly exemplifies the old saying that 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.' Also, many treatments that are being used in the community have not

proven effective," Frick previously said to *LSU News*.

Authors noted that "Conduct disorder (CD) is a common and highly impairing psychiatric disorder that usually emerges in childhood or adolescence and is characterized by severe antisocial and aggressive behaviour. It frequently co-occurs with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and often leads to antisocial personality disorder in adulthood. CD affects ~3% of school-aged children and is twice as prevalent in males than in females."

"Callous-Unemotional Traits and Risk of Gun Carrying and Use During Crime," authored by Emily Robertson, MA, Paul J. Frick, PhD, Toni Walker, MA, Emily Kemp, BS, James Ray, PhD, Laura Thornton, PhD, Tina Wall Myers, PhD, Laurence Steinberg, and PhD, Elizabeth Cauffman, PhD, can be found in *AJP in Advance* (doi: 10.1176/appi.ajp.2020.19080861)

Authors note, "This study demonstrates the importance of considering callous-unemotional traits in gun violence research both because callous-unemotional traits increase gun carrying and use in adolescents and because the traits may moderate other key risk factors. Notably, the influence of peer gun carrying

and ownership may have been under- estimated in past research for the majority of adolescents by not considering the moderating influence of callous- unemotional traits."

Another study, "Parent-Child Interaction Therapy Adapted for Preschoolers with Callous-Unemotional Traits: An Open Trial Pilot Study," is published in *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*.

"The Clinical Assessment of Prosocial Emotions (CAPE 1.1): A Multi-Informant Validation Study," was recently published in *Psychological Assessment*. This study examined the validity of the Clinical Assessment of Prosocial Emotions, a newly developed clinician-rating measure of CU traits in children and adolescents.

The "Public Significance Statement" for the research noted, "This study provides empirical support for a new interview-based method for assessing limited prosocial emotions (e.g., a lack of guilt and empathy) in children with conduct problems (e.g., aggressive and disruptive behavior). This is important because existing clinical tools for assessing limited prosocial emotions have been limited to questionnaires alone despite the important role of clinical interview data in the formulation of psychiatric diagnoses."

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courtesy photo

Research team members at the 2019 convention for the Society for the Scientific Study of Psychopathy in Las Vegas, Nevada.

From left to right: Toni Walker, Emily Kemp, Paul Frick, Emily Robertson, and Tatiana Matlasz.



# Dr. Bonner Recognized for Psychology in the Public Interest, continued

Psychology Departments, is a reviewer for the *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, and authored or co-authored many journal articles and book chapters.

Dr. Bonner and her husband, Assistant Chief of Police at University of Louisiana at Monroe, Dr. Mark Johnson, serve on the Advisory Council of the Northeast Delta Crisis Intervention Team, known as CIT, covering 12 parishes in the northeast part of the state. She and her husband have now trained over 1300 individuals, mostly in the law enforcement field, through a combination of more than 100 classes, ranging from 4 hour continuing education classes through the 40 hour complete CIT class. Johnson recently finished his EdD in

Curriculum and Instruction, specializing in Law Enforcement training and evaluation.

The nominating psychologist said, "During the events following the tragic death of George Floyd there have been calls for radical police reform, perhaps even wholesale police abolition. Louisiana has a heritage of excessive police behavior and much to overcome. Yet some of us see this as a moment to apply the solutions that Dr. Bonner has been advocating throughout our state and beyond for a long time. We see an opportunity for hope in the midst of our current despair.

"For over 16 years Dr. Bonner has been working quietly, working intensely to provide evidence-based training to prevent police misconduct and to minimize police use of deadly or inappropriate force. This work has occurred at an organizational and at a tactical level. At an organizational level she and her team have analyzed systemic and institutional conflicts that result in disparate use of deadly or inappropriate behavior. They have subsequently worked to change specific dysfunctional cultures or systems associated with excessive applications of police use of force and of cultures of racism associated with citizen abuse by first responders. Interventions like this by nature do not get publicized. They are confidential. Who wants their region, their own jurisdiction, their town, most of all their police to be labeled and singled out? But change seems effective and reasonably long term, perhaps a source for a bit of optimism in the present American confusion."

The nominating psychologist continued, "At a more tactical level Dr. Bonner and her colleagues' work has developed theory-based training to address common situations involving crisis intervention that police and other first responders frequently encounter. Mental illness is one of these problems. Racism is another. This work is not unique, but I believe it is uniquely effective. There are numerous programs in the country for police and first responders that address race, class, and poverty. Many more attempt to train providers about general mental health issues. But the data shows that



Dr. McKay Bonner and Dr. Mark Johnson

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## Dr. Frick Honored for Scientific Achievements, continued

Dr. Frick is a leading international authority in child and adolescent diagnosis and behavior and his work focuses on the pathways by which youth develop severe antisocial behavior and aggressiveness. He has published over 180 manuscripts in either edited books or peer-reviewed publications and he is the author of 6 additional books and test manuals. He has been Distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychology at the University of New Orleans, and was named the recipient of the Robert D. Hare Lifetime Achievement Award by the Society for the Scientific Study of Psychopathy.

In 2017, he was named the Editor-in-Chief for the prestigious *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, the official

journal of the International Society for Research in Child and Adolescent Psychopathology, a multidisciplinary scientific society.

Dr. Frick's research has been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the John T. and Catherine D. MacArthur Foundation. In 2008, he received the MacArthur Foundation's Champion for Change in Juvenile Justice Award for the state of Louisiana. He has been the editor of the *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, is past president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Psychopathy. He has an Honorary Doctorate from Orebro University in Orebro,

Sweden in recognition of his research contributions in psychology. He is also Professor in the Learning Sciences Institute of Australia at Australian Catholic University.

Selection for awards were made by members of the Louisiana Psychological Association's awards committee composed of Drs. Mike Chafetz, Beth Caillouet Arredondo, Brian Mizuki, Kim VanGeffen, and Laurel Franklin.

The nominating psychologist said, "Dr. Frick has brought a rich and inspired analysis to psychology and is one of the great minds in our field. His research exemplifies what it means to advance psychology for the benefit of the larger society."



# Dr. Bonner Recognized for Psychology in the Public Interest

## continued

they are not particularly effective and don't do much good over the long term. Perhaps this is because they too often teach generalities rather than train specific skills for high risk situations. They may succeed in raising awareness but do not impart lasting behavioral changes because they do not apply discrete knowledge to risky, emotionally charged situations and back it up with practice and continued training."

Dr. Bonner is a regular participant and presenter at the Society for Police and Criminal Psychology, an eclectic professional organization that encourages the scientific study of police and criminal psychology and the application of scientific knowledge to problems in criminal justice.

Bonner has also presented at the professional conferences of the Society of Police and Criminal Psychology, the American Psychological Association, and Professional Training Resources, Inc. Examples include, *A Successful Rural Multijurisdictional CIT Program: A Quantitative & Qualitative 10 Year Review*, presented at the 2017 APA Annual Conference; "Recruiting and hiring minorities into policing, with international considerations," in *International Journal of Crime, Law and Social Issues*; "The Intersection between law enforcement and persons with a mental illness," in *Crime, Punishment, and the Law*; and "Doing more with less: The advantage of reserve officers in law enforcement," in *Innovations in Police Volunteering*.

Dr. Bonner has taught multiple courses at the North Delta Regional Police Academy, including courses such as Emotionally Disturbed Persons–Mental Illness, Deescalation, Stress Management, Cultural Diversity, and Police Survival.

The nominating psychologist said, "Dr. Bonner's and her colleague's work has been different because it trains police and first responders to think through these necessary specifics. She addresses unusual situations, but situations that might not be unusual to first responders.

"Evidence shows that they reduce the use of deadly and inappropriate police actions by giving participants opportunities to learn and to think through and rehearse. They do not provide miracles, but they help us come closer to where we all want to be as a society.

"She, her husband, a former detective, with a great deal of 'street credibility,' and colleagues can reach the people, the fellow officers, the paramedics, the fire personnel, the prison guards and correction personnel, that most of us academics just cannot. They can, have, and will continue to be able to address racism, culturalism, classism, and inequalities because they have an authenticity gained through years of experience and a much-earned trust."

In a recent *Times* interview about Police Psychology, Dr. Bonner said that not only

do psychologists need to stick to their scientific base of facts, but to be truly helpful and comprehensive, psychologists must learn the culture and work environment law-enforcement personnel.

"We must learn and understand the culture and environment that they work in," she said. "We cannot leave our office, open a book, lecture to them for two hours on mental illness, and expect it to make a difference. We must spend time with them, go on ride-alongs –at midnight, experience some of their training classes. We must understand them, how to talk to them, the best methods for them to learn..." she said.

"Psychology has much to offer. However, we cannot dabble in research and training with law enforcement," she warns. "We must be committed and remember our roots of scientific research and competencies. That is how we can make a difference. And, it is an extremely worthwhile endeavor."

Selection for awards were made by members of the Louisiana Psychological Association's awards committee composed of Drs. Mike Chafetz, Beth Caillouet Arredondo, Brian Mizuki, Kim VanGeffen, and Laurel Franklin. The committee accepts nominations from the community at-large.



The family visiting the sights at the Grand Canyon.

Left to Right: Coco, Lila-Anne, Mkay and Mark.

courtesy photo



# Am Psychological Assn Holds First Ever Virtual Annual Convention

For the first time in its history the American Psychological Association is holding its annual conference online. The event is being conducted the first week in August, however attendees can engage in training at their own schedule.

"Making a transition to a fully virtual convention is not a small task, and the presenters and division leaders have worked hard to make their sessions engaging and accessible. With more than 3,000 sessions to visit, we think you will find not only great possibility, but great flexibility," note the organizers.

Promotional materials highlight main stage speakers as, "Engage with prominent leaders in psychology as they share ideas and new findings that inspire action and change."

These main stage speakers include:

Stacey Abrams, Political Leader, Non-Profit CEO & Serial Entrepreneur. Also, Jeanette Betancourt, EdD, from Sesame Workshop and Senior Vice President for U.S. Social Impact

Alfiee M. Breland-Noble, PhD, MHSc from The AAKOMA Project, Inc. and is founder and board president. She is the host of *Couched in Color*.

Tarana Burke is also a main event presenter. She is Executive Director from the 'Me Too' Organization.

Keynote speakers include Anthony Barnhart, PhD from Carthage College. he will speak on the topic "Magic in the Lab: Psychological Insights from Magicians."

Dawn D. Bennett-Alexander, JD, from University of Georgia, will present on "Practical Diversity: The Only Thing Left."

Stéphane Bouchard, PhD, from University of Quebec in Outaouais, will speak on "Technology is Changing the Face of Psychotherapy of Anxiety Disorders."

Thema Bryant-Davis, PhD, from Pepperdine University, is presenting on "Liberation Psychology: Decolonizing Our Response to Racial Trauma."

Ramani Durvasula, PhD, from California State University — Los Angeles, will speak on, "Gaslighting and Grief: Talking About Narcissism and Narcissistic Abuse."

Thomas Gilovich, PhD, Cornell University, will present, "We Don't Need Social Media to Feel Bad About Ourselves."

Jonathan Haidt, PhD, of New York University, is scheduled to speak about, "Three Really Bad Ideas for Raising Happy and Successful Children."

## Stress Solutions

by Susan Andrews, PhD

### Tapping Reduces Cortisol by 43%

That is what Dr. Peta Stapleton on Bond University in Australia found when she replicated Dawson Church's 2012 cortisol study. In the original study, Church et al examined salivary cortisol levels in 83 subjects who were randomly assigned to either an emotional freedom technique (EFT) group, a psychotherapy group (SL for Sympathetic Listening) or a no treatment group (NT). The EFT group had a 50-minute session of tapping with a certified EFT coach. The NT group waited 50 minutes in the waiting room and the SL group had a 50-minute session with a licensed therapist. Cortisol was assayed just before and 30 minutes after an intervention. Emotional distress was assessed using the Symptom Assessment-45 to measure the subject's level of anxiety and depression. The EFT group measured a significant decrease ( $p<0.03$ ) in mean cortisol level (-24.39%) compared to a decrease of -14.25% in the SL group and -14.44% in the NT group.

Dr. Stapleton replicated the original Church study almost exactly. However, her results were even more dramatic. The EFT group reduced cortisol after 1 hour of EFT by 43%. There were 53 subjects in this study randomly assigned to one of the three groups. The Symptom Assessment-45 was again used to assess psychological distress. Salivary cortisol assessment was performed 30 minutes before the intervention and 30 minutes after.

Cortisol is considered to be an important biological marker of stress. EFT or acupoint stimulation is shown to be an effective method to reduce stress-related cortisol in a person. In an experimental situation, this is "interesting" and often that is all that happens with a reader who has an interest in stress reduction. In a real life situation, however, where someone has a history of not dealing well with stress, finding a short, easy to apply method that reliably reduces the amount of cortisol circulating in their body, the importance cannot be over-stated.

Creating a list of people who have a history of "not dealing well with stress" is an important first step. These are people who for some reason tend to hold the stress producing situation in their minds and continue to think about it, such as people who are more likely to have anxiety disorders like GAD or PTSD. The list should also include people who because of their physical condition, such as being pregnant, do not want to maintain high levels of cortisol in their blood.

An important second step as clinicians is for us to introduce them to various techniques to help them reduce their stress related cortisol. The Tapping Solution is possibly NOT the best technique. That remains to be seen. However, it is surely experimentally proven to reliably reduce cortisol and it is easy to do.

It might make a good tool for your therapy box if you see and treat people with anxiety.

Stapleton, P., Crighton, G., Sabot, D., and O'Neill, H.M. (2020). Reexamining the effect of emotional freedom techniques on stress biochemistry: A randomized controlled trial. Psychol Trauma.doi: 10.1037/tra0000563 (epub ahead of print.)

Church, Dawson, Yount, G., and Brooks, A.J. (2012). The effect of emotional freedom techniques on stress biochemistry: A randomized controlled trial. J Nerv Ment Dis., 10, 891-6.



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.



# Connecting the Dots: Validity Testing and the SSA

[Editor's Note: Since 2011 the *Times* has been following the news of advancements in psychological science regarding assessments in disability evaluations and the response by government authority in the Social Security Administration to these advancements. In this review we look back at our reporting on these issues. We've also included some of the award-winning political cartoons by *Times'* cartoonist, Jake Nelson-Dooley that accompanied with some of our reporting.

### Evolving Psychological Sciences

The Social Security Administration (SSA) and their departments of disability determinations (DDS) at the state level contract with psychologists to conduct examinations. During the last years, mental disorders have accounted for 33 percent of social security disability and 60 percent of social security disability for the those who receive benefits from SSI, Social Security Insurance.

Over the last decades, psychological science regarding medical-legal evaluations has been evolving. Psychologists' roles in the legal areas have grown along with their research efforts. In a 2011 article for *Psychological Injury and Law*, Dr. Michael Chafetz wrote, "The roles of psychologists and neuropsychologists in forensic cases have been growing exponentially since the 1970s ..." He explained that forensic psychologists have significantly outpaced the roles of psychiatry in the courts. He wrote that this appears to be due to the scientist-practitioner training, including hypothesis- testing and statistical classification methods, that "place psychologists in the forefront" of a courtroom's requirement for facts.

Consulting in legal cases has driven psychologists' research about the accuracy of claims of disability, aspects of malingering or what is known as "faking bad."

Dr. Chafetz is one of the top researchers in this area, and has had his work published in a string of scientific journals, which, along with other accomplishments, earned

him the title of Distinguished Psychologist from the Louisiana Psychological Association. He has also presented his findings by invitation at the American Psychological Association and other conferences. He is licensed in two states and board certified in clinical neuropsychology.

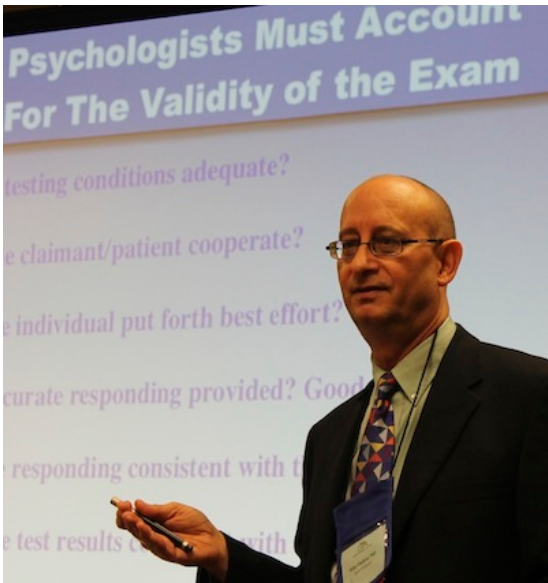
An important topic in medical-legal evaluations, one of Chafetz' areas of expertise, is malingering. Malingering is shown to fall between 30 percent and 64 percent when compensation is involved. Chafetz and others have predicted that malingering rates in Social Security examinations are likely to be between 42 percent and 45 percent.

In one series of research articles Chafetz and colleagues demonstrated that base-rates of malingering in Social Security claims came to 41.8 percent. This is higher than the 30 percent that is typically found in legal cases.

In one study, the rates of malingering were found to be highest when claimants were seeking federal benefits, followed by state, and were lowest in private cases. Researchers have also found that the degree of malingering is "dose dependent," the higher the reward the higher the degree of malingering.

Chafetz' numerous research studies, published in peer-reviewed journals including *The Clinical Neuropsychologist*, *Psychological Injury and Law*, and *Applied Neuropsychology*, describe a set of complex psychometric analyses.

Motivation and personal goals are central to claimants' behavior in the exam and



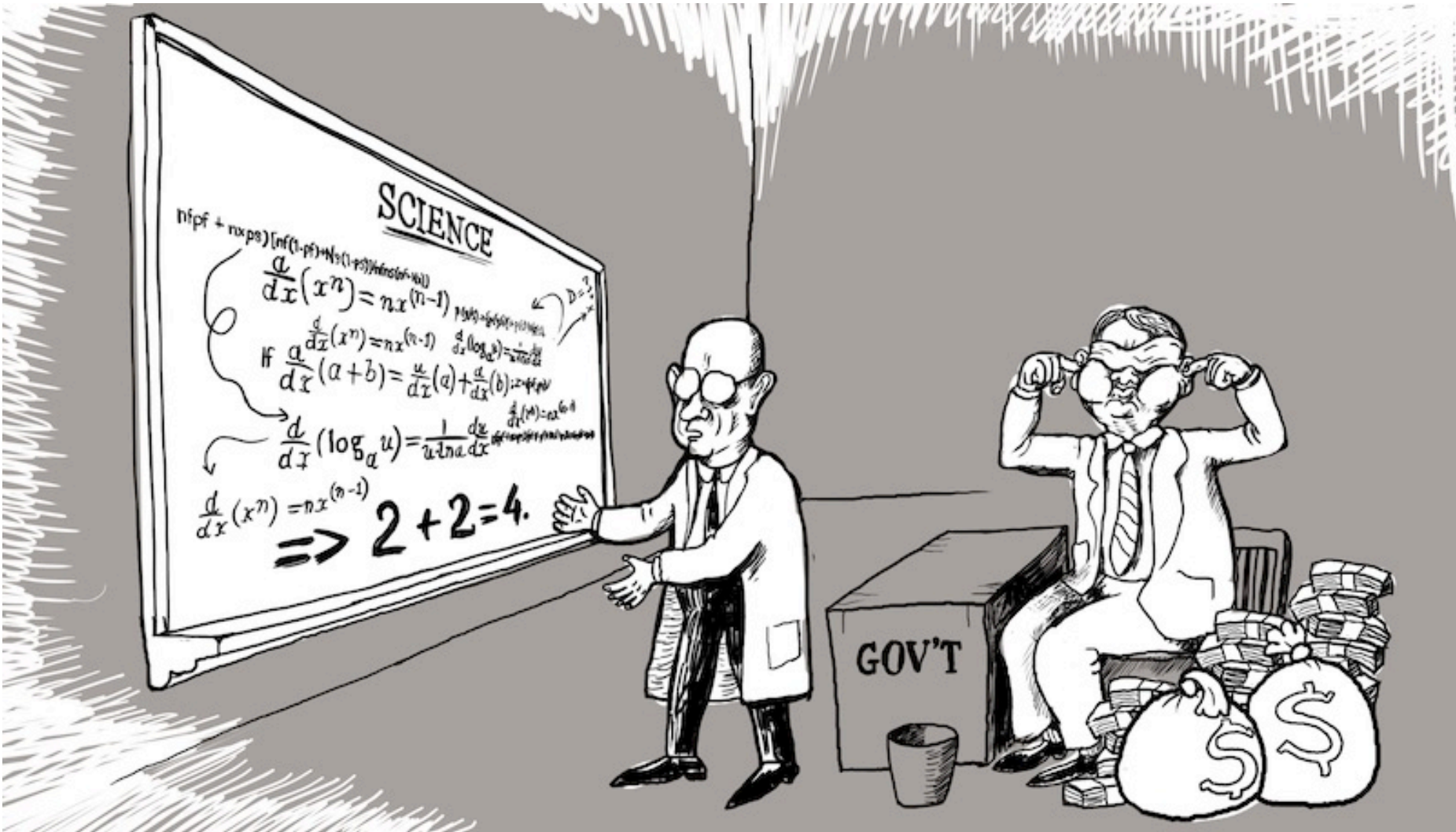
Dr. Chafetz working to educate others.

accuracy of results. He and colleagues studied three groups of individuals, all with lower IQ scores. One group was striving to regain custody of children, one group hoping for employment, and one group seeking disability benefits. The benefit seeking group had high rates of malingering, while the other groups did not, demonstrating tests of malingering can help psychologists gauge poor effort, even with individuals who have low IQs.

Dr. Chafetz and colleagues are producing scientific innovations that cast doubt on some of the procedures and policies of Social Security Administration (SSA).

The SSA does not provide for tests of malingering or faking. If research results are correct, the SSA may be giving benefits to a subset of individuals who are not truly disabled, improper payments reaching into the billions of dollars.

Cont next pg





# Dots: Validity Testing and the SSA, continued

However, SSA does not conduct this type of research or fund researchers who do. Chafetz and his collaborators work on these questions without compensation.

## U.S. Senator Tom Coburn Takes Science’s Flag

In 2013, a U.S. Senator known for confronting government waste and inefficiency, Oklahoma’s Dr. Tom Coburn, took up the banner for psychological science when he challenged the Social Security Administration’s anti-scientific approach to detecting malingering in its disability claims. Senator Coburn had help in understanding the science behind these complex issues from Dr. Chafetz.

In a January 2013 letter from Senator Coburn to national SSA Commissioner Michael Astrue, Coburn asked the SSA to reverse its decision to defund psychological tests that detect malingering.

Coburn wrote, “... the agency's decision stands in stark contrast to current scientific research and findings, which support the use of SVTs [symptom validity tests] to identify malingering in psychological evaluations. In fact, there is broad consensus within the medical community that malingering is a problem and must be addressed.”

Coburn noted in his letter to Commissioner Astrue, “Translating these base-rates of malingering to benefit payments is alarming.”

Coburn also said that the potential for waste could reach \$68 billion.

“Considering only adult beneficiaries asserting mental disorders and using the widely accepted figure of 40 percent malingering in medicolegal cases,” Coburn wrote, “SSA paid approximately \$20.02 billion in SSI and SSDI benefits in 2011 for claims based on malingered mental disorders alone. If one considers that ‘disability,’ which is defined as an inability to work, can be feigned no matter what the illness, then the agency spent approximately \$68 billion (or 40 percent of \$170 billion in total net benefit payments) in 2011 on disability beneficiaries who were likely malingering.”

Coburn had been investigating both errors and inefficiencies in SSA. In a review of outcomes from administrative law judges, Coburn’s subcommittee found that up to 25 percent of the judgments involved “insufficient, contradictory or incomplete evidence.” Backlogs, delays, and overload are considered to be some of the reasons for the poor quality outcomes.

In September 2012, Coburn and the Congressional subcommittee had asked SSA officials why they rejected tests for malingering. The SSA said it was because there is no test that “conclusively establishes a claimant’s credibility.”

But in his January letter Coburn countered this argument, saying that all psychological tests have limits to their use, but that that doesn’t negate their value as evidence. Coburn pointed out that administrative law judges require this evidence in order to make their decisions, and that all tests, including those for malingering, can provide evidence. He said that the SSA decision to defund



*Dr. Chafetz (L) preparing for a presentation at a previous conference. Dr. Jim Van Hook is at the right. Dr. Chafetz has led scientific researchers in several areas to gain a better understanding of symptom validity testing and its use in psychological assessment.*

tests for malingering runs counter to the SSA policy of requiring evidence for decision-making.

“SVTs are emphatically supported by the scientific community,” Coburn noted, “and are an important tool for the examining psychological evaluator. In my opinion, SVTs should be required in disability determinations to help determine if an individual truly qualifies for benefits.”

“At the same time,” Coburn wrote, “SSA cites no authority for its policy change. Further, since SSA does not track the number of SVTs requested each year or the total amount spent on them, the agency has no idea of its inability to measure the impact of the fraud occurring under its own roof.”

In February 2013, the Inter-Organizational Practice Committee, a group representing the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology, Division 40 of the American Psychological Association, the National Academy of Neuropsychology, and the American Board of Professional Neuropsychology, sent a letter of support and thanks to Senator Coburn for his position with SSA.

The authors of the letter wrote, “Results of SVTs alone do not automatically indicate that someone is attempting to obtain benefits fraudulently, but they speak directly to the validity of psychological and neuropsychological assessment results.” The authors indicated that it is well understood that simple judgment and observation are inadequate for knowing who is malingering. They pointed out that for psychologists ignoring the existing large body of research on the matter could constitute “unethical and irresponsible practice...” They also say that two of their associations, “... have issued strongly worded practice guidelines stating that the failure to use validity testing in a medicolegal context is considered substandard practice.”

## Inspector General Shakes Its Finger at SSA

In 2013 the Office of Inspector General (OIG) of the SSA began investigating the situation and Dr. Chafetz presented the research to the OIG that April. In September the OIG's investigation found that the SSA policy prohibiting test for malingering ran counter to good science and practice.

In the Congressional Response Report, the Office of Inspector General pointed to flaws in the agency’s prohibition against using psychological tests of malingering in disability claims. These flaws could account for over \$20 billion per year in adult mental disorder claimants alone.

In the report, investigators noted that the SSA runs contrary to scientific and medical consensus, other federal agencies such as Veterans Affairs, and standard practice in the private insurance sector, when it refuses to allow the use of “Symptom Validity Tests” (SVTs) in its disability determinations.

Authors of the “Congressional Response Report:” said, “The Social Security Administration’s Policy on Symptom Validity Tests in Determining Disability Claims,” concluded: “While SSA does not allow the purchase of SVTs for its disability determinations, we found that medical literature, national neuropsychological organizations, other Federal agencies, and private disability insurance providers support the use of SVTs in determining disability claims.”

A lukewarm response from the SSA, authored by Mr. Gary Hatcher, CPA and CGFM (Certified Government Financial Manager), was included in the comment section of the report. Hatcher noted a number of objections, writing that the SSA was different from other agencies and that—



# Dots: Validity Testing and the SSA, continued

–“We believe that tests cannot prove malingering, ...” He wrote that the agency has provided comments and listings from medical literature about the “shortcomings of SVTs at the staff level,” but he did not clarify. He wrote that “as resources permit” the agency plans to study the issue.

To reach their conclusions, OIG investigators interviewed representatives from the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology and the National Academy of Neuropsychology, noted the report. OIG also compared the SSA prohibition of these tests to other government agencies, the Veterans Affairs and the Railroad Retirement Board, and also three private insurance industry representatives. The OIG listed numerous publications authored by Chafetz and also several which included Drs. Kevin Bianchini and Kevin Greve, also from New Orleans.

The OIG concluded that SSA stands out in its unwillingness to allow the use of these tests in appropriate situations, writing, “Medical literature indicates there is consensus in the medical community that SVTs are useful in determining the validity of disability claims ...”

After reviewing customary practices in a variety of different agencies, all of which note their goal is to look at all relevant information in making a judgment, the OIG concluded that the SSA was the only agency that rejects the use of SVTs as an additional source of information.

“Unlike these other entities, SSA does not allow the purchase of SVTs in its disability determinations because it stated these tests have limited value in proving malingering,” noted the OIG authors. “However, medical literature and national neuropsychological organizations assert that SVTs are relevant in disability determinations. Other Federal agencies,

such as VA and RRB, allow the purchase of SVTs in their disability determination processes. In addition, the three private disability insurance providers we contacted also support the use of SVTs in determining disability claims.

In his comment letter representing SSA, Mr. Hatcher noted a number of objections. He wrote that there was a difference between clinicians using SVTs and “adjudicators.” He also wrote, “We believe that tests cannot prove malingering, as there are no tests that conclusively determine the presence of inaccurate patient self-reporting. We do not give greater weight to a test than to other symptom validity factors.”

He also wrote that there are differences between the SSA and other agencies that lead to differences in appropriateness for the tests, but did not clarify these specific differences. “The finding that SVTs are useful in making disability determinations for private disability insurance providers or for other Federal agencies does not mean that SVTs would have the same usefulness to our disability programs,” he wrote, “considering our policies on making disability determinations and the practicalities of administering a large national disability program. We would have extreme difficulty developing criteria that require the results of SVTs in some cases, but not in others.”

Hatcher noted that there are differing opinions about SVTs but did not list research regarding that issue. He noted, “Due to differing opinions on the use of SVTs, and whether they add value to our disability programs, we plan to seek impartial, external expertise to evaluate our policy on the purchase of SVTs, as resources permit.”

“In addition,” he wrote, “we plan to seek external expertise on psychological tests from the Institute of Medicine to include an examination of published research and

studies on SVTs, including those published by Dr. Chafetz. Our goal is to determine the effectiveness and costs of requiring and purchasing SVTs under our disability programs, as well as their applicability to anyone who claims they are disabled.” But Hatcher did not explain why more studies are needed.

Hatcher concluded by saying, “We provided technical comments and listings from medical literature on the shortcomings of SVTs at the staff level. We have no further comments.” The OIG encouraged the SSA to move forward with its plans.

**Institute of Medicine Sides with Psychological Science**

Nearly two years later, after conducting its own, separate investigation, the Institute of Medicine (IOM, now the NASEM) authors sided with psychological science saying that not only should psychological testing be routinely performed in many types of Social Security Disability claims, but that the use of symptom validity testing in particular is needed when there are questions of credibility.

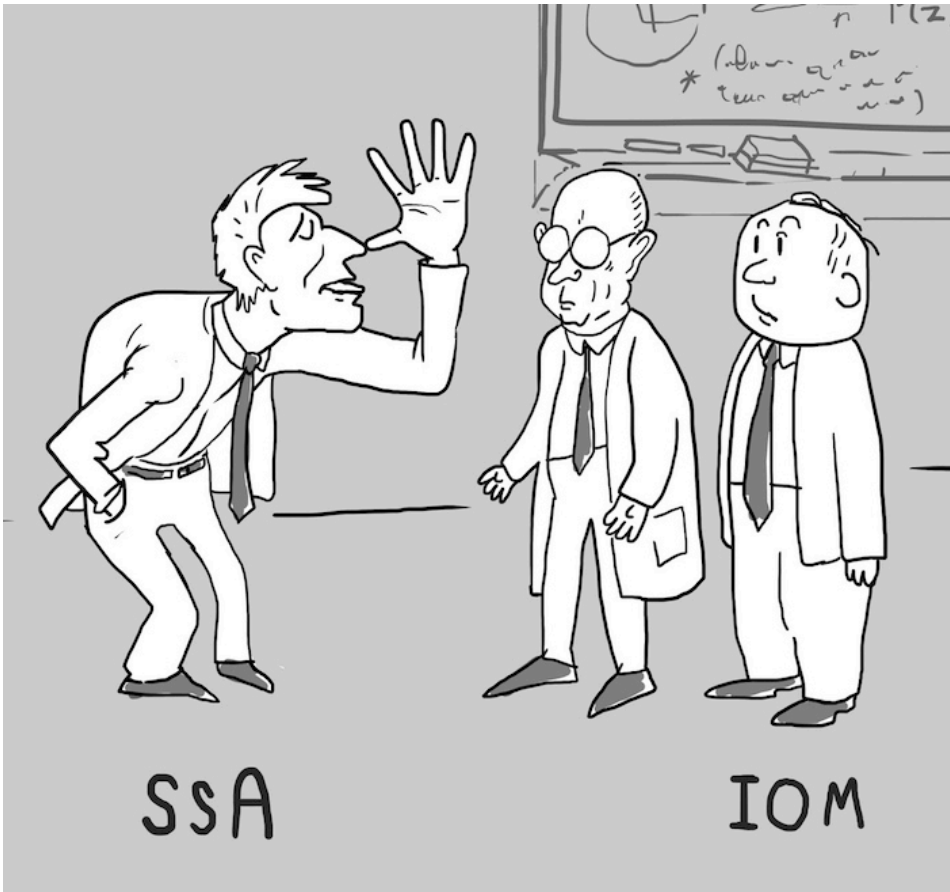
In the April 10, 2015 IOM report, titled *Psychological Testing in the Service of Disability Determination*, authors recommended the use of standardized psychological tests, administered and interpreted by psychologists, for mental disorders and whenever somatic complaints are not fully supported by physical test results. They also recommended the use of SVTs when needed for accuracy. Their recommendations included the following:

1. The SSA should require psychological testing for “all applicants” when claims relate to either a) mental disorders unaccompanied by cognitive complaints; or b) claims where “somatic symptoms are disproportionate to medical findings.” Statements of validity should be included, which “could include” symptom validity tests.
2. The SSA should require standardized cognitive testing for “all applicants” when claims do not include objective, medical evidence. Again, a statement of validity should be included, and could include performance or symptom validity testing.
3. The SSA should require that testing be performed by “qualified specialists properly trained in the administration and interpretation of standardized psychological tests.” The IOM says the specialist must be licensed or certified to administer and interpret psychological tests.
4. The SSA should conduct research to investigate the “accuracy and consistency of SSA’s disability determinations with and without the use of recommended psychological testing.”
5. The SSA (in collaboration with other agencies) should evaluate the impact of these recommendations on its outcomes, including backlogged cases, time delays, number of appeals, accuracy, and “Effect on state-to- state variation in disability allowance rates...”
6. The SSA and other agencies should support a program of research to “investigate the value of standardized assessment, including psychological testing, in disability determinations.”





# Dots: Validity Testing and the SSA, continued



## SSA Thumbs Its Nose at Psychological Science and Institute of Medicine

In March 2016 the Social Security Administration published a new section on “When Not to Purchase a Consultative Examination,” effectively ignoring the Senate Committee, the Office if Inspector General, the Institute of Medicine, and psychological science.

In their new procedure, “DI 22510.006” in the Program Operations Manual System, the authors instructed examiners, “Do not purchase symptom validity tests (SVT) to address symptom evaluation or issues of potential malingering as part of a CE.” The wording goes directly against the requests by authorities for the SSA to integrate symptom validity testing into it procedures on a regular basis.

The Program Operations Manual System (POMS) full description was as follows: “D. For issues of potential malingering. Do not purchase symptom validity tests (SVT) to address symptom evaluation or issues of potential malingering as part of a CE. Tests cannot prove whether a claimant is malingering because there is no test that, when passed or failed, conclusively determines the claimant’s motivation. Malingering requires a deliberate attempt to deceive.”

The guidelines state two exceptions: “The Office of Disability Programs may approve rare exceptions to this prohibition on a case-by-case basis (for example, testing ordered pursuant to a court

order).” And, if the SVT is already part of a record, it can be included.

## Administrative Law Judges Caught in Middle

Another serious and related problem with the Disability Determinations system was the massive backlog of legal reviews that builds up during these years that must be considered by the Administrative Law Judges.

In 2011, through the U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Sen. Coburn was studying problems with backlogs in disability appeals.

Appeals had risen from 12,000 in 1999 to 817,000 in 2012, according to the U.S. Budget Office.

The increase had to be processed by Administrative Law Judges (ALJs) who were struggling with extremely high case loads causing years long wait times for decisions. Coburn’s research found errors rates of 25 percent and insufficient evidence in decisions by ALJs. Some judges approved appeals simply because they did not have time to study the case, according to a report by the Cato Institute.

Evidence from SVTs would help, Coburn and others said. The ALJs sought out Dr. Chafetz for help.

An ALJ association press release noted: “Establishing the validity of the evidence is the cornerstone of any accurate disability determination. The American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology (AACN) has recently sponsored an expert guidance article to help SSA with the rationale and transition for a change to proper validity assessment in disability examinations. The article promotes the shift from self-report, which is often unverifiable, to objective validity assessment, which can provide consultative examiners, DDS reviewers, and ALJs with the proper tools for more accurate disability determinations: ...”

The ALJs also sought help from industrial-organizational psychologist, Leaetta Hough, PhD, a nationally recognized expert. She conducted a scientific study and work analysis of the ALJ problem. Hough and her team found that, while the SSA considers that a case can be reviewed in 2.5 hours, the actual time required is much longer, an average of 7.0 hours.

The news report on the ALJ Association website noted: “A number of significant findings were reached by the study, including that it takes 7 hours to adjudicate an average size case (650 pages) if a judge reads all the evidence and follows all regulations, rulings and policies of the Social Security Administration. Our findings completely refute the agency’s contention that it only takes 2.5 hours on average to adjudicate a case.” Some cases are more than 1,000 pages, they noted. “Given the importance of each decision, both to the claimants and the trust fund (each case has a value of \$350,000), spending sufficient time to reach a correct result is an imperative.”

In January 2020, the ALJs appear to be fighting for their jobs. According to their website news, the SSA has proposed a rule to remove Administrative Law Judges as independent adjudicators and make them employees who answer to SSA managers. The ALJ association spokesperson notes that the SSA “wants total control over its decision-makers.”

Dr. Susan Glanville speaks with Dr. Chafetz at a previous psychology convention in Baton Rouge.





# A Shrink at the Flicks

## *Parasite*

### A Review

by Alvin G. Burstein

*Parasite*, a South Korean film, premiered at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival, becoming the first South Korean film to win the *Palme d'Or*. It went on to win four awards at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Academy Awards (the Oscars), winning Best Picture, Best Director, Best Original Screenplay, and Best International Feature Film—the first non-English film to win the Best Picture award. Subtitles make it accessible world-wide.

It is a piece of work, hard to describe. A mashup of *Beverly Hillbillies*, *Tobacco Road*, and *Upstairs/Downstairs*. Slapstick humor, teenage romance, gore splatter and trenchant social commentary dazzle.

The title? There are at least three levels of parasitic involvement. The husband of the housekeeper of an elite, sumptuous mansion's has been hiding from creditors for years in a bunker hidden deep under the house, living on food stolen with his wife's complicity.

New owners, a couple, their teenage daughter and hyper-active four-year old son, are losing the daughter's college student prepping her for college entrance exams. The tutor persuades an old friend, the son of a dirt-poor, hard-scrabble family to take his gig, using fake credentials.

The new tutor, learning how gullible the rich and naïve parents are, embarks on a scheme to have his sister, pretending to be an art therapist, work with the owner's son. Hiding their identities, the two conspire to have their parents usurp the roles of the rich family's chauffeur and housekeeper.

The poor family pretend to be unrelated, and using fictitious credentials, rake in lots of money. The parasites are on easy street.

It is an obvious irony that the wealthy family can be seen as parasitic too. Their way of life depends on the labor of the less fortunate.

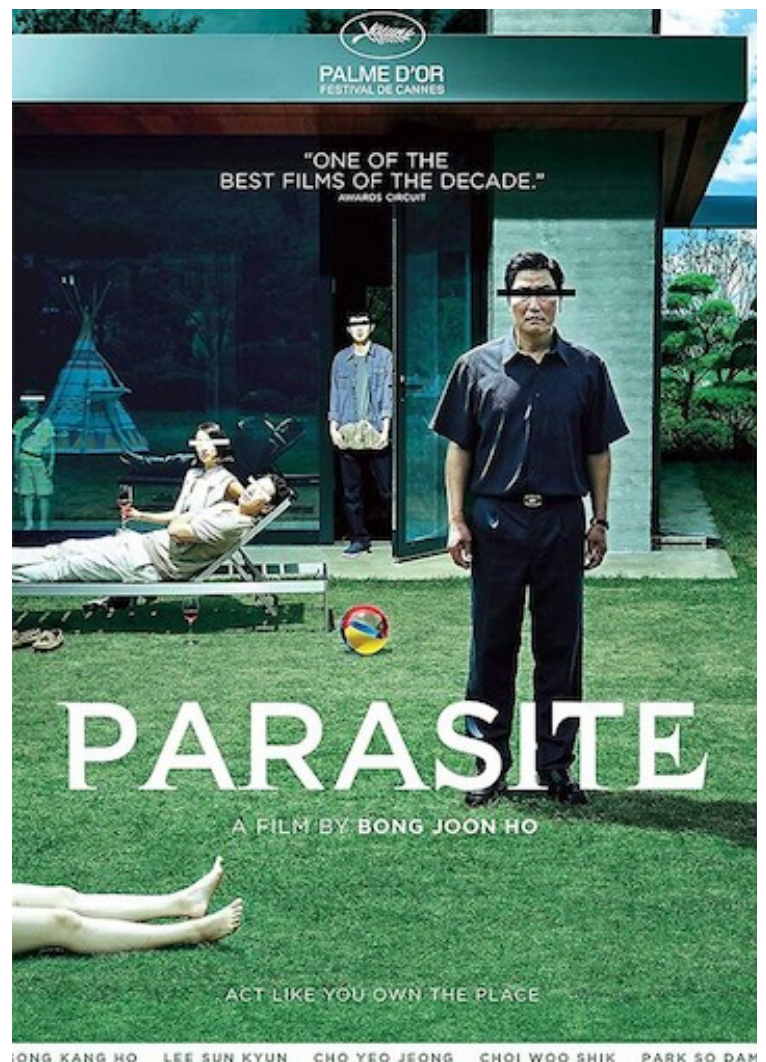
Guest Columnist,  
Dr. Alvin Burstein

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.



When the wealthy family leaves for a weekend at the seashore to celebrate the birthday of the young son, the imposters take over the house, freely feasting on the up-scale goodies that surround them.

Their revelry is interrupted by a visit from the former housekeeper, who persuades them to let her go to the basement for something she has forgotten. They admit her, and sneaking after her, discover her husband. A battle royal ensues, with fights over a cellphone recording that reveals the interlopers' scheme. Blood flows freely. The original housekeeper and her husband, badly injured, are left hidden in the basement.

The owners return unexpectedly because of flooding rains, but the interlopers manage to conceal themselves. The mother, in her housekeeper role, remains at their home, while the father and two children sneak out of the mansion, returning to their slum dwelling, only to find it flooded and uninhabitable.

The wealthy family plans a spontaneous, but elaborate birthday party the next day, making a point of inviting the supposed chauffeur the tutor and the art therapist to attend.

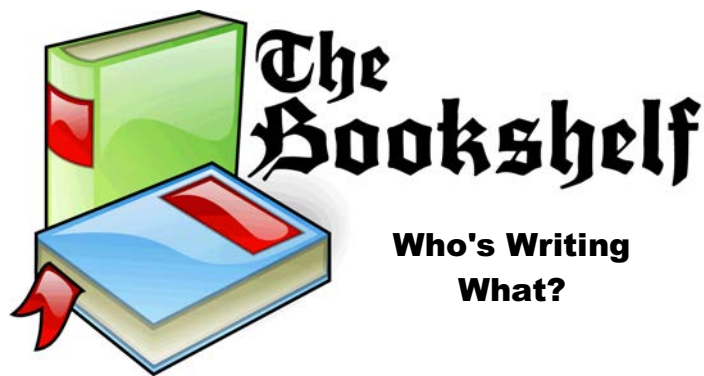
The climax of the party is a melee. The original housekeeper's husband escapes from the basement bunker, stabs the pretended art therapist to death as she presents her student with a birthday cake, and is in turn killed by the supposed housekeeper. The replacement chauffeur kills the wealthy husband but manages to escape to the hidden bunker, taking the place of the original parasite.

In the aftermath, the poor family's mother and her son are convicted of murder and sentenced to jail. He requires brain surgery to deal with the injuries he received during the melee.

When he is discharged, he learns that the mansion has a new owner and that his father is still hiding in the concealed bunker—doing well as a parasite. He makes plans—unrealistic ones—to make a lot of money and re-unite his family by becoming the owner of the mansion.

It is quite a movie. Did I say “Slap stick humor, teenage romance, gore splatter and trenchant social commentary dazzle?” They really do.





# Evaluation and Treatment of Neuropsychologically Compromised Children

edited by  
Darlyne G. Nemeth and Jana Glozman  
Academic Press, 2020

*Evaluation and Treatment of Neuropsychologically Compromised Children: Understanding Clinical Applications Post Luria and Reitan*, published by Academic Press, 2020, is the newest work of Dr. Darlyne Nemeth who teamed up with Dr. Janna Glozman to create a volume that outlines the interwoven contributions from two great psychological scientists from two sides of the globe.

The volume is a wide ranging view of multiple topics including history, theory, research, assessment methods and practical clinical techniques, case studies, and innovative pilot programs. The work covers differences in executive functioning for children and how to perform assessments for youngsters, while blending the qualitative and quantitative tools that are part of modern neuropsychology.

Underneath the richly detailed chapters, *Evaluation and Treatment* may be also a letter love from two disciples of two great psychologists, Alexander R. Luria, from Russia, and Ralph M. Reitan, from the United States.

Co-editor and contributor Darlyne Nemeth, PhD, MP, has a broad-spectrum practice at the Neuropsychology Center of Louisiana (NCLA). She has authored or co-authored *Helping Your Angry Child*, *Living in an Environmentally Traumatized World: Healing Ourselves and Our Planet*, and *Ecopsychology Advances from the Intersection of Psychology and Environmental Protection*. With co-author Dr. Tracy Olivier, she published *Innovative Approaches to Individual and Community Resilience: From Theory to Practice*, which earned the Prose Award. Nemeth has been a local and national leader in neuropsychology and is active in numerous state, national, and international societies.

Co-editor and contributor Janna Glozman, PhD, is leading researcher and Professor of Psychology at Moscow State University, Russia and Research Director of the Center of Developmental Neuropsychology, Moscow, Russia. She is the author and editor of more than 500 publications and 45 books. She is in charge of organizing the international Luria Memorial Congress every five years. She founded a new branch of neuropsychology, the neuropsychology of communication, and published books on the topic in Russia, Great Britain, and the United States Point pointing to the inter-relationships between communication and personality disturbances.

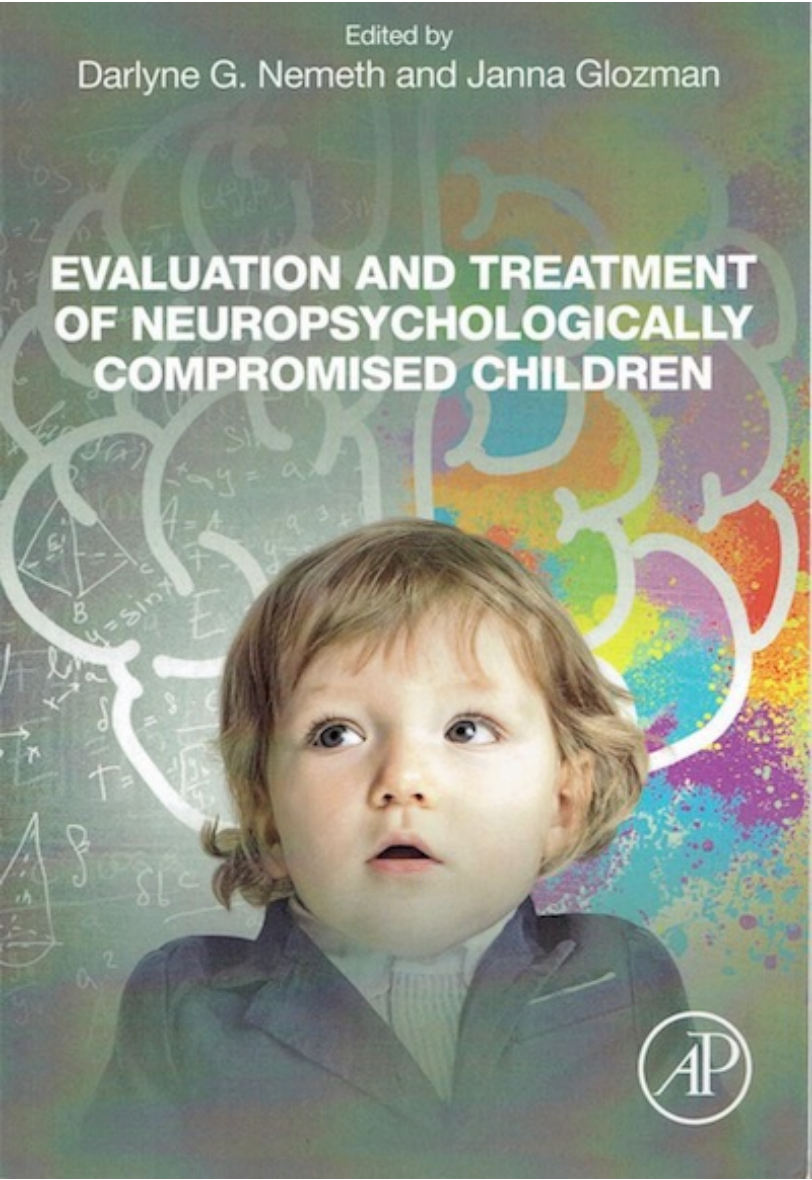
In *Evaluation and Treatment of Neuropsychologically Compromised Children*, the esteem and affection that Nemeth and Glozman have for the men who created the neuropsychology field and set the bar of science and practice for generations, clearly shines through. Nemeth and Glozman share personal anecdotes about their relationships with Luria and Reitan as they explain the scientific foundations of both and how these two traditions have been blended together to create modern neuropsychology theory and practice.

Nemeth and Glozman discuss developmental neuropsychology in both Russia and America, diagnostic cases, various matters and learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorders, autism spectrum disorders and traumatic brain injuries, along with other topics.

Understanding who needs neuropsychological assessment is discussed by Glozman and contributor Dr. Arthur Horton Jr. outlines the Reitan clinical interpretation.

Nemeth and Kayla Chustz discuss the executive functioning dysregulation profile and contributing authors look at how children can benefit from various types of early interventions. Speech and language issues are covered in several chapters in the book is rich with case studies and examples.

In a chapter by Drs. Judy Kuriansky and Darlyne Nemeth, the two cover issues about rehabilitation for children who live in an environmentally traumatized conditions, bridging to matters of trust,



safety, energy, self-esteem and various other topics having to do with trauma.

Also covered is the issue of helping children both in evaluation and treatment when they have a complex medical conditions such as pediatric cancer. A chapter on using medication and when it may be helpful is provided and includes matters and sleep disorders, seizures and epilepsy, obsessive-compulsive disorders, constipation another disorders frequent in children and families seeking assistance.

Also included are case studies with practical applications and innovative treatment ideas such as the Build-a-Brain pilot program created by Nemeth's colleagues at the Neuropsychology Center of Louisiana in Baton Rouge.

Familiar names to the Louisiana community include Kayla McKenzie Chustz from the Neuropsychology Center of Louisiana in Baton Rouge, Dr. Tracy Olivier from the Pediatric Development and Therapy Center, our Lady of the Lake Children's House; Neuropsychology Center of Louisiana in Baton Rouge, and Dr. Fernando Pastrana Neuropsychology Center of Louisiana at Gretna.

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