



Dr. Greg Gormanous and Dr. Phil Griffin (back) listen at recent psychology board meeting. Dr. Gormanous has since decided to step down as Executive Director, which he assumed in July.

LSBEP Attorneys in Damage Control?

Board May Have Botched Time Limits on Complaints

The state psychology board investigations subcommittee may have been violating psychologists' rights when officials ignored a one-year time limit known by the legal term "prescription."

The time limit is spelled out in the psychology practice law and states that disciplinary proceedings are to be "commenced" within one year.

The board also made behind-the-scenes decisions that may have resulted in the tabling of the time-limit issue at its September 18 board meeting, avoiding an open, public discussion of the topic.

The debate over the time limit revolves around the section of the psychology practice act under R.S. 37–2353 (C) (5), that directs the board to, "Conduct hearings upon complaints concerning the disciplining of a psychologist; provided that, notwithstanding Chapter 1-A of Title 37 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, no disciplinary proceeding shall be commenced more than one year after the date upon which the board knows or should know of the act or omission upon which the disciplinary action is based."

The Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP) investigations subcommittee, called the Complaints Committee, appears to review some complaints for more than one year, according to several sources.

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Psych101: Teaching the Theory of Everything –Human

While not in the same space-time dimension as theoretical physics, psychology, the science of human behavior, aims to explain just about everything there is to explain about humans. The topic has universal appeal to young adult humans who crowd onto college campuses each fall.

Mary Livingston, PhD, Professor in the Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Department at Louisiana Tech in Ruston, explained that in Louisiana, courses in psychology are regularly

chosen as one of the mandated social studies. "In the state," she said, "everyone is required to take six hours of social science, as a general educational requirement." And psychology is often one of them.

The LaTech department instructs approximately 900 students in its introductory psychology classes alone, over its two quarters in the fall. Livingston helps lead the faculty team that trains doctoral candidates in teaching skills. Teaching

is a required skill set for the developing psychologists and professors in the graduate psychology program, she told the *Times*.

Gilda Werner Reed, PhD, a top-ranked teacher by Princeton Review, instructs classrooms of psychology students at the University of New Orleans students. She believes these courses are important for the lives of young people. "They have personal relevance to students who can see

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Each year, psychology is the fourth or fifth most popular undergraduate major across the country. Above: Dr. Gilda Werner Reed, a top-ranked teacher by the Princeton Review, in one of her many psychology courses at the University of New Orleans. (Photo by Nannette Aline.)

Editorial Page – Opinions

Why Not Use Psychological Science Instead? *by J. Nelson*

From a group dynamics viewpoint, the continuing problems at the LSBEP show that somewhere over the last years, the group problem-solving functioning began to falter, and we see the results across several performance indicators. People are even complaining that they didn't receive their licenses. I got two instead of one.

I'm a little sad that Greg Gormanous won't be taking a crack at helping us, but I view his decision to pass on this challenge as a wise move for him. Disappointment about Greg leaving is replaced by my optimism about Ms. Jaime Monic returning, proof positive that there is a god.

Watching "hide the thimble" at the last board meeting was fascinating. I had gone there to cover what I thought was going to be a hearing, or part of one. Instead I got lots of group dynamics, including multiple executive sessions (secret talks), the atypical appearance of senior council, a Complaints Coordinator who did not appear altogether pleased, and a surprised defense team.

I've reported what happened the best I can, given the difficulty in describing a shell game. But the bottom line appears to be full of irony. In prosecuting others for their mistakes, the board may have made a mistake of its own. And, they seem to be trying to hide it. What are we to think?

The system problems are also clear in the overzealous investigations group, which looks like it exhibited motivated reasoning in regard to time limits and other things. While I went looking for the bad stuff (one will always find it in that condition) I was a little chilled to hear about intimidation, secrecy, isolation, and what seemed a little more similar to

Zimbardo's prison guard experiment, than a thoughtful, respectfully applied evaluation process with checks and balances.

Apparently the investigations process is having trouble in more places than just the psychology board. The medical board is in an overhaul mode. The issue may be symptomatic and more widespread. If so, applied psychology can help find the real problems and craft real solutions. I'm deeply concerned about what I see and hear that seems to be a lack of psychological insight and skills in the processes at the board.

We need to start fresh designing our own problem-solving processes with psychological science and its values. At a minimum, for complaints, we need more psychologists, not more criminal prosecutors. We need to separate the goals and methods of law enforcement, from those of remedial education, from those of customer service, and then match people by their temperament to the task. Validity evidence would be nice—some even believe it is essential.

Why not use psychological science to solve our problems?

Letter to the Editor

TRIBUTE FOR DAVID BURKART/LETTER TO EDITOR

by John Magee
Lead Psychologist
Overton Brooks VA Medical Center

As *The Psychology Times* noted in the September 2015 issue, David Burkart, psychologist at the VA in Shreveport, passed away unexpectedly on August 19, 2015, at the age of 58. With his passing, the Veterans and the VA here lost a compassionate and hard-working psychologist, I lost a trusted and loyal friend, and the world lost a unique and caring man.

David started at the VA here in 1991 and served in many different roles at various times, including Chief of Psychology and Chief of the Substance Use Disorders Program. He also worked on the inpatient psychiatric ward, provided emergency on-call evaluation services, did individual and group therapy, did disability evaluations, and was director of training for both doctoral and masters-level psychology students for almost 20 years. But regardless of the job at the time, David always gave the maximum effort to the Veterans he served. His case-load was consistently one of the highest in volume. But more importantly, he gave his best effort to all, through his care, dedication, and hard work.

I knew David for 24 years, including 22 years we shared at the VA together. In fact, he is one of the few people that I came to know before we ever formally met. David started his professional career here as a psychologist on the inpatient psychiatric ward. I was active duty in the Air Force at the Mental Health Clinic at Barksdale, and at the time in 1991 and 1992, almost all of the initial psychiatric hospitalizations of active duty members from our base came to the VA psychiatric ward in Shreveport. One of my duties was to consult with David about the status of those hospitalized. From the very beginning, I learned that David did excellent evaluations, but more importantly, I first began to see the professional and personal characteristics of David that make him special, especially his genuine compassion and concern. It was also clear that he understood that the nature of those initial meetings he had with those on the inpatient unit would often determine whether a person would continue to trust and risk to continue the often painful process of therapy after they left the hospital. Over the years at the VA, he and I frequently consulted each other about Veterans under our treatment.

Psychology has gone through many transitions and changes at the Shreveport VA since 1991. Some of these have been positive; others have not, including the dissolution of Psychology from a "Service" and later a "Section" and unilateral changes of Psychology positions into positions for Psychiatry and Social Workers.

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LSBEP May Have Botched Time Limits

Continued

The time limit became an issue in a complaint case against forensic psychologist Dr. Alicia Pellegrin. The LSBEP investigations subcommittee had set a tentative October 20 date for a formal hearing to review its criticisms against Dr. Pellegrin. Pellegrin agreed to an interview with the *Times* and also provided several documents.

Dr. Pellegrin explained that she had been investigated by the board for three years, with a main criticism that she had acted improperly when she decided not to disclose her professional identity to a seven-year old whom she was evaluating by court order. (See related story this issue, “The Secret Life of Board Complaints: Molehills to Mountains?”)

Pellegrin said that up until the week before the board’s regular meeting on September 18, “They were going full bore toward a formal hearing against me.”

Pellegrin explained to the *Times* that she had expected the time limit motion to heard, but then dismissed, since this had happened in another case.

Pellegrin and her legal team also explained that they were always confident that Pellegrin had not violated the practice act, and were fully prepared to prove it in district court if needed.

As part of her defense, the team submitted a “motion to dismiss on

prescription.” This was to be heard at the September 18 regular meeting of the board, prior to the details of case being heard on October 20. Also, Pettegrin’s legal team had worked to make sure both discussions were open to the public.

Just days before the “motion to dismiss on prescription” was to be heard, Pellegrin’s team was surprised to learn from officials of the board that there would be a new motion made by the Complaints Coordinator regarding her case, which would come ahead of the motion to dismiss on the time limit.

The meeting on the 18, held in Baton Rouge at the board’s office on Jefferson Highway, included the current board members, Dr. Greg Gormanous, members of Pellegrin’s legal team, the *Times* publisher, and the senior council to the board, Mr. Lloyd Lunceford for the law firm Taylor Porter. Mr. Lunceford does not usually attend board meetings.

Also attending was the board’s Complaints Coordinator, Dr. Gary Pettigrew, who reviewed criticisms levied against Pellegrin.

During Dr. Pettigrew’s review, attorney Mr. Lunceford interrupted and asked Pettigrew, “Based on the pre-hearing investigation, do you have a recommendation to make?”

Pettigrew responded, “Yes. My recommendation is that, purely upon the advice of the prosecuting



Attorney Mr. Lloyd Lunceford (L) speaks with Dr. Greg Gormanous at the September board meeting. Mr. Lunceford is senior council for the LSBEP.

attorney, that this case be dismissed.”

The Chair, Dr. Marc Zimmermann then asked, “Do any of the board members have any questions at this point?”

Immediately Mr. Lunceford asked, “Is there a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss with legal council a recommendation?”

There was some back and forth discussion and then Dr. Zimmermann asked, “So does someone want to make a motion to go into Executive Session to talk about legal issues?” The motion was made and passed and they proceeded to a closed, executive session.

When they emerged from executive session, Zimmermann asked, “Do we

have a motion regarding Dr. Pettigrew’s recommendation?”

Dr. Jessie Lambert, said, “ ... I put forth a motion to dismiss this matter on legal advice.”

Zimmermann said, “We have accepted the dismissal of—has it risen to the point of a complaint yet?—of the investigation slash complaint. Okay, the next item on the agenda would be—”

Lunceford interrupts again and said, “That actually moots consideration of a motion to dismiss on prescription.” The issue of prescription was not discussed again during the morning.

In the interview with Pellergin she said, “What seems clear to me, from the way the board handled this, rather than expose the

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Letter to the Editor, continued

But none of this ever affected David’s work, nor his efforts at meeting whatever needed to be done to help. He worked hard, regardless of what was going on administratively.

He was one of the most respected people I have known, personally and professionally. To my knowledge, he never once turned down a request to see a Veteran. And when I became Chief of Psychology in 2000, David was the first person to whom I’d turn to be Acting Chief in my absence. And he was also a person to whom I turned with concerns about a Veteran or an ethical issue.

Many of the Veterans whom we see at the VA have significant trust issues, especially those with the emotional scars from combat trauma, and especially those from the Vietnam and Korean Wars, many of whom did not experience a welcoming back to society. Many are wary of trusting because of their experiences. But I saw David earn their trust by his actions, and by the person he showed himself to be. David was the same person with all of us, as he was with Veterans. At a time of change and debate within the VA about treatment issues, David’s professional life was evidence of the primary importance of the therapeutic relationship in any treatment. He

was also an example of the fact that “some therapists do better than others.”

A number of Veterans have come up to me since David passed away to tell me how much David’s care meant in their lives. And more than one has said that they are still here today because of him. His impact was far-reaching, and will continue to be.

Personally and professionally, I never knew David to say anything but the truth as he knew it. He was one of the most intelligent and well-read persons I have known. I think he loved well, and loved much. His wife Laura was his life companion since the early 1980’s. They shared many years together, along with some cats, a lot of books, and friends who recognized how special he was.

For anyone who met David for the first time, it was impossible not to notice the wheelchair. But for those fortunate to know him, David was a person of ability, not disability. And except for “walking,” David did everything that other psychologists did at the VA. And he usually did it better. He regularly took the “extra time” that it takes to do things well. And he was one of the very few staff members who wrote extra summary reports and letters for Veterans.

At a retirement ceremony at the VA in 2003 for a much-loved and respected psychologist, David said of her that she always did “the right thing” every day in her work with Veterans by her actions, and not just by words. The same can be said of David. He tried to do the right thing for everyone he knew. A photograph of David that was included at a recent Memorial Service shows David with a big smile, and that might be another of the testaments to David—that in spite of physical limitations, a wheelchair, and stressors of work, David is remembered for his smile and his deep laugh and kind humor.

Recently, another colleague wrote me about the value of David’s life to others and making the world a better place. There is no doubt that Dave did all of that. And if the value of a life is a positive impact on others, David set a high standard. I have been fortunate to have called him colleague, mentor, and best of all, a good friend.

John Magee
Lead Psychologist
Overton Brooks VA Medical Center



Dr. Alicia Pellegrin speaking to the board at the September 18 meeting, following a dismissal of a complaint against her and the dropping of a motion about time limits. Seated counterclockwise from bottom right, are Dr. Gary Pettigrew, Dr. Koren Boggs, Dr. Jesse Lambert, (Dr. Darla Burnett not seen), Dr. Marc Zimmermann at head of the table, Dr. Phil Griffin, Dr. Greg Gormanous, and attorney Mr. Lloyd Lunceford. To left of Dr. Pellegrin is court reporter.

LSBEP May Have Botched Time Limits Continued

missteps regarding prescription, my case was dismissed, making our argument moot and irrelevant.”

Pellegrin also said that her attorney would have taken the prescription issue to the 19th district court, and that the board’s attorney had known that this was the plan.

Before leaving the September 18 meeting, Mr. Lunceford spoke again about the prescription issue. “Although the matter on motion to dismiss based on prescription is moot,” he said, “there are some significant issues that are raised in that, that will be the subject of attorney advice recommendations by both Amy [Groves] and me ...” he said.

“I know there have been a lot of turnover from an administrative standpoint, I’m not sure where things took a different path, but Amy and I will be happy to elaborate on the pros and cons of that ...” Lunceford said.

The debate over the time limit

The time limit had been the source of previous debate between Pellegrin’s team and board officials.

The *Times* obtained a Memorandum from Pellegrin, in which her attorneys wrote in response to the board’s argument that the one-year time limit did

not apply. The board’s arguments were titled “LSBEP’s Opposition to Respondent’s Motion to Dismiss,” and authored by the LSBEP prosecuting attorney, James Raines.

One of the arguments expressed by Mr. Raines was that the psychology law one-year limit must be considered along with R.S. 37:21, Chapter 1-A. Chapter 1-A of the law says that time limits may vary from two to five years.

Pellegrin’s attorney pointed to the wording of the psychology law that specifically says that Chapter 1-A should not apply, “... notwithstanding Chapter 1-A ...” and also defined the meaning of “notwithstanding.”

Pellegrin’s attorney also argued, “A general rule of statutory construction is that a specific statute controls over a broader, more general statute,” and that the “Board should give effect to every word and provision of the statute to make a proper interpretation.”

According to the Memorandum, LSBEP prosecuting attorney put forth arguments about the possible different meanings of the terms for initiating or commencing a proceeding. Pellegrin’s attorney argued that these ideas were not meaningful.

Mr. Raines also argued that the Board does not find out about allegations until long after the investigations subcommittee finds

out, and so the time limit does not begin until later. This idea also appears in an Affidavit by the previous Executive Director, Ms. Kelly Parker, who identified herself as Operations and Disciplinary Matters Consultant, wrote to state that the “Board” is unaware that an investigation is taking place, until later in the process.

To this issue, Pelligren’s attorney argued that the board cannot disregard the procedures of the investigations subcommittee from the definition of the board itself.

Fight over Open Meetings

Somewhere around September 1, Pellegrin’s attorneys asked to present a motion to dismiss and also to have all matters held in open session.

In an email from Kelly Parker to Angelique Freel, Assistant Attorney General, copying James Raines, Amy Groves, and Pellegrin’s attorney Mr. Wade Shows, Ms. Parker wrote, “I will need to check with Amy. In the past, the Board has only considered same in executive session and did not allow argument. I’ll wait to speak with Amy and get back to you.”

Mr. Shows wrote back, “The licensee has the right to waive executive session for character and fitness issues...” He noted that Pellegrin wanted deliberations in open session.

Parker responded, “According to Ms. Groves, the Board has always done this in Executive Session and will continue to do so.”

Then Mr. Shows asked for Ms. Groves send him her opinion in writing. He said he wanted to see in writing why Pellegrin could not have matters heard in open session.

Shows also asked what the hearing officer had to say, and Assistant Attorney General responded that she wanted to discuss the issue in the phone conference scheduled the next day.

It is not known what occurred next. However, Pellegrin’s case was reviewed in open session. The motion to dismiss was also scheduled to be heard in open session, but was dropped.

When the *Times* arrived 15 minutes early for the September 18 meeting, the board members appeared to be together already, prior to the meeting being opened to the press at 8:30 am.

[Editor’s Note: The Times appreciates Dr. Pellegrin’s and her attorneys’ cooperation in allowing interviews and providing information to answer questions. The Times was not able to interview anyone from the LSBEP, due to the board’s policy of no interviews with the press.]



President Obama has ordered more behavioral science in governmental programs.
(White House photo by Pete Souza.)

Pres Obama Signs Executive Order to Use and Recruit More Behavioral Scientists for Programs

On September 15, President Obama signed an Executive Order directing departments and agencies to increase their use of behavioral science in achieving goals. This continues President Obama’s interest in psychological science reported in various ways: that he is a consumer of information coming from cognitive and behavioral psychologists such as Robert Cialdini (*Influence*) and Daniel Kahneman (*Thinking, Fast and Slow*).

The Order directs the administrative agencies to identify policies, programs, and operations where applying behavioral science insights may yield substantial improvements in public welfare, program outcomes, and program cost effectiveness. The order says to develop strategies for applying behavioral science insights to programs and, where possible, rigorously test and evaluate the impact of these insights. Also, the order says to recruit behavioral science experts to join the Federal Government as necessary to achieve the goals of this directive; and strengthen agency relationships with the research community to better use empirical findings from the behavioral sciences.

The order asks agencies to identify opportunities to help qualifying individuals, families, communities, and businesses access public programs and benefits by, as appropriate, streamlining processes and

improving how information is presented to consumers, borrowers, program beneficiaries, and others. The President asks for agencies to review elements of their policies and programs that are designed to encourage or make it easier for Americans to take specific actions, such as saving for retirement or completing education programs.

In a 2013 news report by the Association for Psychological Science authors noted that the Philip Rubin, assistant director for social, behavioral and economic sciences in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, reported that the administration welcomed behavioral and social scientists into policy development. In 2013 an event was sponsored by American Psychological Society and various government groups and helped leaders in a team-building effort.

Some inspiration for this movement comes from the British Behavioural Insights Team, commissioned by British Prime Minister David Cameron in 2010. Cameron’s team was charged with testing, through randomized control trials, the effectiveness of programs such as tax compliance, energy conservation, charitable giving, health programs, and prevention.

Emergency Rule Calls for Training in Sexual Assault Awareness for College Police

The Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement published an emergency rules regarding Peace Officer Standards and Training. The rule specifically provides for the implementation of sexual assault awareness training for college and university peace officers.

Regarding Title 22 for Corrections, Criminal justice and Law Enforcement, the rule sets

the standard that each full-time college or university peace officer shall complete a sexual assault awareness training program as provided by the council pursuant to R.S. 40:2405.8.

The training program shall be implemented through a series of learning modules developed for this purpose. The date given is January 1, 2016. Comments are due by October 20.

Tulane, LSU, LaTech in U.S. News Rankings for Top Tier Universities

The U.S. News & World Report has ranked three Louisiana Universities in its top tier, released in the biannual review of national universities in September.

Tulane University in New Orleans ranked #41.

Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge campus, ranked at #129, and was also #62 in top public schools.

Louisiana Tech University ranked at #199, and #116 in top public schools.

Paxil Not Safe for Adolescents New Reanalysis of Data Finds

A new study published in September contradicts a 2001 study that said the widely prescribed antidepressant, Paxil, was safe and effective for treating depression in adolescents. The reversal is based on a reanalysis of research from 2001. According to CBS News, the reanalysis of the drug trail is the first by a group of researchers who work to correct erroneous studies.

The original study was funded by SmithKline Beecham, now called GlaxoSmithKline, and was called Study 329. Study 329 has received criticism over the years said the CBS report. The New York State Attorney General sued the drug company for misrepresenting data on the medication and they agreed to pay \$3 billion in fines.

Complaints Coordinator

Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists

The Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists is seeking a licensed psychologist to serve in the capacity of complaints coordinator.

The individual serving in this capacity must have a strong background in ethics. This is a part-time position. Historically this position has been held by a former board member.

Interested licensed psychologists with expertise in ethics (teaching/research/practice) should send a cover letter and vita detailing their experiences in ethics and professional issues to
Greg.Gormanous at La.gov.

State & National News

Medical Board to Publish New Rules on Investigations; To Hire Full Time Physician as Investigator at \$175K

The Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners intends to publish new rules because the Louisiana Medical Practice Act was amended by Act 441 of the 2015 Legislative session. The new rules will govern the investigation of complaints.

The new proposed rules include Review, Formal Investigation, Informal Settlements and Consent Orders, and Adjudication. "Preliminary review of a complaint shall be completed as promptly as possible within one-hundred and eighty days of receipt." Formal investigations "shall be completed within thirty-six months after initiated by the board," according to the proposed rules.

Discovery, Prehearing Conference, and Recusal is also covered. In recusal, the new rule will be, "A. Any board member who, because of bias or interest, is unable to assure a fair hearing shall be recused from that particular proceeding. The reasons for the recusal shall made part of the record. Should the majority of the board members be recused for a particular proceeding, the governor shall be requested to appoint a sufficient number of pro tem members to obtain a quorum for the proceeding."

According to the announcement, the proposed rule will result in an estimated cost of \$422,429 in FY 16 and recurring costs of approximately \$340,000 beginning in FY 17. The announcement noted that estimated costs are attributable to: the need to hire a physician consultant separate from the physician executive director to conduct investigations (\$246,901 – base salary \$175,000 per year + \$64,750 retirement for state employees + \$4,613 group insurance per year + \$2,538 Medicare contribution = \$246,901 salary package). Also a compliance investigator to monitor investigations is to be hired, to insure compliance with other procedural requirements (\$74,240 – base salary \$50,000 per year + \$18,500 retirement for state employees + \$5,015 group insurance per year + \$725 Medicare contribution = \$74,240 salary package).

The Board will also incur one-time costs to acquire a new software system to properly track and monitor investigations and complaints (\$100,000).

The Rules will set out Informal Settlements and Consent Orders. "Informal dispositions may be either non-disciplinary or disciplinary: 1. Non-disciplinary dispositions consist of correspondence, an informal conference and a letter of concern. These dispositions shall not constitute disciplinary action, are not a public record of the board and are not reported and distributed in the same manner as final decisions of the board. 2. Disciplinary dispositions consist of consent orders, and other orders and agreements, and stipulations for voluntary surrender of a license. These

Complaints Coordinator Dr. Pettigrew Retires From Psychology Board

Dr. Clinton (Gary) Pettigrew will retire from his position as Complaints Coordinator at the end of October, after more than 10 years with the Louisiana State Board of Examiners (LSBEP), he announced last month at a September 18 meeting in Baton Rouge.

He expressed that the role was not pleasant, and said, "I think it's somebody else's turn." He received thanks and praise from the board members for his service and assistance. Board members agreed that few people know about value of his contributions. Chair Dr. Marc Zimmermann said, "We appreciate your 10 years of service in a thankless," and difficult job.

Pettigrew commented that it was difficult. "... when I recommend to dismiss cases, usually they have never been investigated, and the psychologist never knows about, and none of my peers know that I have come to dismiss a case against them," he said. "But they sure know when I don't dismiss a case against them, and it sure gets to you after a while."

He indicated that there might be changes and agreed to consider helping with inputs to the process and also to stay on to help train a new person.



dispositions shall constitute disciplinary action, shall be a public record of the board, and are reported and distributed in the same manner as final decisions of the board."

This comes after changes from the legislative session and Bill 573 proposed by Representatives Hazel, Hoffman and Jackson. HB 573 put forth 33 pages of changes. The bill would have required that a member of the board act as a supervisor for each complaint and that all complaints and investigations be supervised by a board member. It also included language that limited the amount that a person had to pay for his or her own proceeding. HB 573 also would have established expert physician review panels relating to medical specialties.

However, HB 573 was replaced by substitute and much of the original language was changed when it became HB 843 and Act 441.



Ms. Jaime Monic on phone at a convention in 2010. She will return to the psychology board as Executive Director.

Dr. Gormanous Steps Down, Jaime Monic Returns as LSBEP Executive Director

Dr. Greg Gormanous has resigned from his position as the new Executive Director of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP). Gormanous assumed the role only a few months ago.

While no formal announcement appears to have been made, several sources confirm that Ms. Jaime Monic has returned to the Executive Director position. Monic left in 2010 in order to spend additional time with her three sons and to enjoy other family duties, she had told the *Times* previously.

Dr. Gormanous replaced Ms. Kelly Parker, who left the position in July but who has continued on as Operations Director and as a consultant in disciplinary matters.

Dr. Gormanous is retired Chair of the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences at LSU Alexandria. He has served as President of the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB), and as the President and Vice-President of the Federation of Associations of Regulatory Boards, among many other accomplishments.

Sources report that he stepped down due to administrative challenges in the agency, but Dr. Gormanous could not be reached for comment or to confirm or disconfirm this idea.

Ms. Jaime Monic began working with the LSBEP in 2000 under the directorship of Brenda Ward, who was the Executive Director from 1990 to 2006.

Community members have noted several problems at the board. One of these is that some licensee holders report that they have not received their licenses.

Corrections & Clarifications

No corrections or clarifications were received for the September issue.

Please send corrections to the *Times* at psychologytimes@drjulienelson.com

Science & Education

Teaching Everything Human, continued

psychology in action on a daily basis,” she said. Psychology as a subject is important because, “It enables them to triumph, not simply survive, in the face of inevitable life struggles.”

“Across the U.S.,” said Dr. Livingston said about psychology, “it is a way to understand about themselves, and many see it as a personal journey. A small child asks ‘Why?’ and this is the same thing but more advanced.”

Many students go well beyond the required courses, and choose psychology as a major. Based on the most recent data available from the U.S. Department of Education, psychology ranked fourth highest among all majors in degrees awarded across the country.

Dr. Janet R. Matthews, Professor Emerita from the Department of Psychological Sciences at Loyola also sees this interest. “The material can be applied to a myriad of life experiences,” she said. “Thus, they have immediate relevance rather than something which needs multiple layers and future application.”

Matthews, who has served in many positions for the American Psychological Association, including Chair of the Board of Educational Affairs, is currently Associate Editor for *Professional Psychology: Research & Practice*. She also has written numerous books about various topics and a new edition of her *Your Practicum in Psychology: A Guide for Maximizing Knowledge and Competence* is just out.

Matthews finds that psychology topics are important for today’s young adults. “Because it can be used to better understand their world,” a world that many think is increasingly complex, she explained.

“I think it is really important for undergraduates to see the connection between the science and the applications in each of their courses,” Matthews said, “rather than viewing each subject within an undergraduate psychology curriculum as independent.”

Dr. Livingston, in her role at LaTech of teaching future professors, also noted that these types of connections are important. “So the challenge in Introductory Psychology,” Livingston said, “is showing how this material connects to them.”

One of the best tools for engaging the undergraduates in learning about psychology at



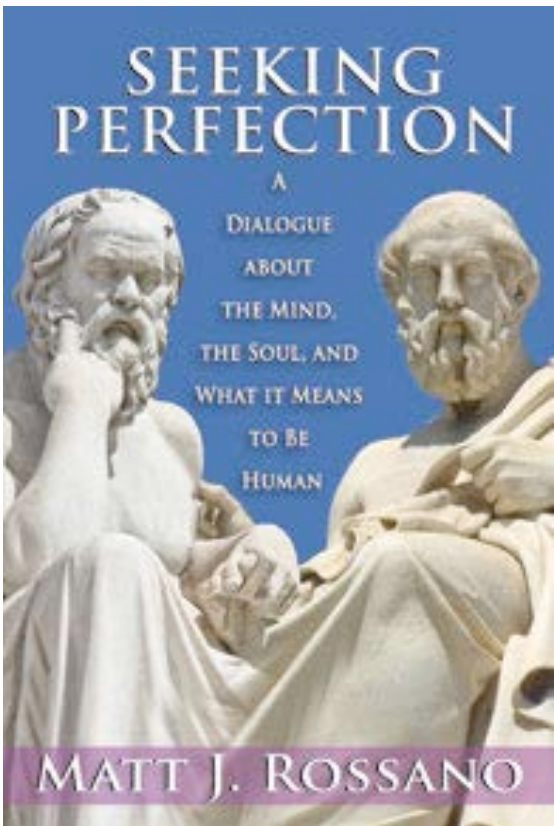
Dr. Matt Rossano, Professor of Psychology and past Chair at Southeastern. Dr. Rossano has a new book out, *Seeking Perfection*. He mixes history, science, and philosophy, and superimposes the Greek philosophers Socrates and Plato onto topics of modern life.

LaTech is their use of the best-selling introductory text by Dr. David G. Myers, Livingston explained. “We’ve been really fortunate to have that book,” Livingston said, “because of all the support for the young teachers. We have a lot of success with that and the students really like it.”

She also explained that one of the challenges is making learning a positive experience and these materials work. “It’s really fun. And it introduces the graduate students into the world of teaching,” she said.

Dr. Marsha Redden, previously at Southeastern Louisiana University, warned that not *all* psychology courses are popular. “I think *some* courses are popular,” she said. “These are the ones in abnormal, personality, social, and those related to issues/experiences to which the students can relate. Those in S & P [Sensation & Perception], learning, motivation, and experimental are not popular at all,” she said, “but are tolerated.”

Matt J. Rossano, Ph.D., Professor and past Chair of Psychology at Southeastern Louisiana University, pointed to the inherent interest humans have in themselves.



“There is something intuitively interesting about studying ourselves,” Dr. Rossano said. “I think this gives psychology an easy attraction to many students.” He noted that there are many other majors, such as nursing, that take psychology courses as well.

“Unlike many other majors,” Rossano said, “psychology is something that most people can put to use in their everyday interactions with people. Having some insights into human motivations and cognitive tendencies,” he said, “hopefully makes us a bit more understanding of others and may give us some insights into our own biases and tendencies.”

For today’s young adults, psychology may be even more important than in the past. “Getting along with each other is always a challenge,” Rossano said. “Young people today have many opportunities to ‘tune out’ others by immersing themselves in technology. Psychology can offer insights into how to better understand and appreciate ‘humanness’ and the importance of human interactions,” he said.

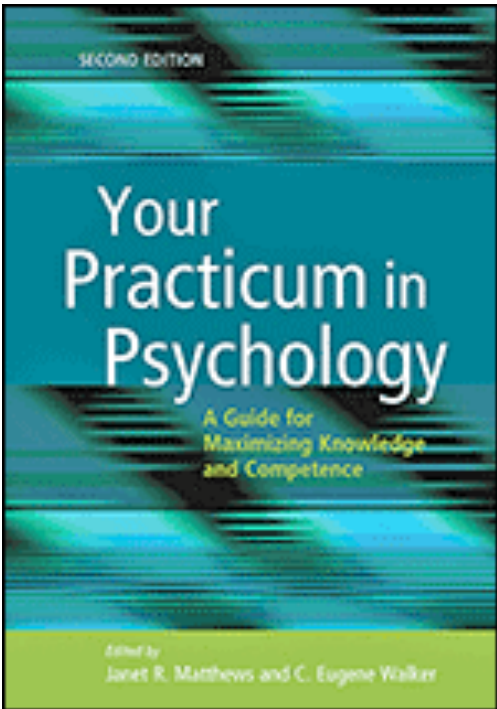
Dr. Rossano also has a new book just out, *A Dialogue about the Mind, the Soul, and What It Means to Be Human*. In his latest book, he asks and answers the question, “How would Socrates and Plato react to a modern world where secularism and religious fundamentalism are growing while the gap between the human mind and animal mind is narrowing?” In a creative approach Rossano mixes history, science, and philosophy, and through narrative and dialogue, he superimposes the Greek philosophers Socrates and Plato onto modern life.

What do our experts find most important in teaching? Dr. Gilda Werner Reed says she believes it is most worthwhile to reach young adults in a meaningful way. “I am able to awaken students to other possibilities

Cont’d next pg



Dr. Janet Matthews and Dr. Lee Matthews. Dr. Janet’s new edition of *Your Practicum in Psychology* is just out, published by Am. Psychological Association. Dr. Lee is a contributor in the new edition.



Teaching the Theory of Everything Human

continued

of thinking in this cynical, demanding world,” she said. “Rather than simply regurgitate theories and research to them, I stress applications that will maximize potential. So Child, Adolescent, and Educational Psychology courses are not just developmental stories but outlines of how to enable children and students of any age to maximize potential—what works and what is detrimental.”

Reed covers nutrition, exercise, attitude, environment and personal factors during courses like Adult Development and Aging Psychology. “Personality Psychology is an opportunity to show that each student is quite unique, unlike any other, and forcing him/her to unwrap the own core life story,” she said. “Psychopathology includes possible treatments rather than simply list all that can go wrong.”

She works her way around to the big picture, regardless of which course this awarding teacher is offering. “I am able to thread optimism vs. pessimism within all eight of the Psychology courses I teach,” Reed said.

For Dr. Matthews, her teaching has covered decades. So one of the things she finds most satisfying is “seeing former students who are now colleagues and have made such diverse contributions to the profession.”

“Helping students gain a greater appreciation of what it means to be human,” is most satisfying to Dr. Rossanno. But he finds that helping students bridge the various new disciplines can take some effort. “Psychology is becoming increasingly dominated by brain science and getting students to understand the importance of that along with an appreciation of its potential limitations is challenging.”

For Dr. Redden, getting introductory students to understand that they have to learn the basics before they can move on, is sometimes the challenge. “If they don’t know the difference between classical and operant conditioning they will not make it in the next course. If they don’t know basics of neurosciences when we discuss depression they wouldn’t know

why we find meds to be effective.”

“The unsolicited positive feedback that students give me even years later is my biggest reward,” said Dr. Reed. “The success stories that evolve from the embers of trauma are phenomenal.”

“My aim in teaching is to maximize learning and to enable students to reach their full potentials,” said Reed. She uses real-life examples and stories to illustrate. “I teach what it really means to be fair, how to put test results in proper perspective, and behavioral techniques that are effective as opposed to those that are not. I respect my students and, in return, I earn their respect,” she said.

“Psychology offers limitless possibilities,” she said. “It

adheres to stringent rules of science that must be followed. Yet it leaves a lot of room for discovery since the mind is such a complicated process, and the brain such a complicated structure.”

“Psychology beckons to me with so much territory left to charter,” Dr. Reed said. “Everything is not said and done. People change, times change, society changes. Flexibility and creativity are not only allowed, they are demanded—they are required.”

“I cherish making a difference in the lives of my fellow human beings,” she said, “not just those destined to be psychologists, educators and/or parents. Teaching is not an obligation for me; it is an honored privilege.”

Dr. Tiffany Stewart Named to Endowed Professorship

Dr. Tiffany M. Stewart has been appointed to the Dudley and Beverly Coates Endowed Professorship, according to a September press release from Pennington Biomedical.

Stewart is an Associate Professor at Pennington and Director of the Behavior Technology Laboratory, Eating Disorders & Obesity, and Founder of CSO, Body Evolution Technologies, Inc.

Earlier this year Dr. Stewart was named Woman of Excellence by the Louisiana Legislative Women’s Caucus Foundation and also commended by the Louisiana Legislature in a House Concurrent Resolution for her work and research, and for “spearheading unique, large, multi-site prevention studies that have included the development and deployment of novel approaches for health behavior change, ...”.

Dr. Stewart has been a pioneer in the development and testing of e-health and community-based programs in order to disseminate prevention and treatment efforts to large populations. She is dedicated to translational research and taking health behavior change programs and technologies from laboratory development to the people who need them and into practical, modern applications.

She has developed programs and technologies for health behavior change for female athletes, U.S. Army Soldiers, and military families.

Stewart told the Times she was very honored. “I’m the first endowed Associate professor at Pennington/LSU,” she said. “Usually endowed positions are reserved for full professors so this is a truly great honor.”

Stewart earned her doctorate in clinical psychology from Louisiana State University in 2002, and her undergraduate from Florida State University.



Dr. Gilda Werner Reed at one of her many psychology classes at University of New Orleans. Reed has been named a top teacher in the nation.
(Photo by Aubry Claire Brayard)



Dr. Katie Cherry at the Science Café in Baton Rouge. She recently spoke on her findings about stress and coastal residents. Cherry has a new book just out, *Traumatic Stress and Long-Term Recovery: Coping with Disasters and Other Negative Life Events*, published by Springer. (Courtesy photo.)

Dr. Cherry’s Work, Book Helps Understand Stress Impact Of Natural Disasters

Louisiana State University psychology professor, Dr. Katie Cherry, executive director of the LSU Life Course and Aging Center, presented her work on “Survivors from the Coastal Parishes,” in August. She also has a new book just out, *Traumatic Stress and Long-Term Recovery: Coping with Disasters and Other Negative Life Events*.

Cherry presented work from a study that she and co-authors Loren Marks, from the LSU School of Social Work, and others, published in *Aging and Mental Health*, at the Science Café in Baton Rouge recently. The study, “Long-term psychological outcomes in older adults after disaster: relationships to religiosity and social support,” was based on interviews and assessments of over 190 coastal residents.

The team studied coastal residents with severe property damage from the 2005 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and those with exposure to the 2010 British Petroleum Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

People were recruited from multiple sources including the coastal communities of St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes. Participants completed measures of storm exposure and stressors, religiosity, perceived social support, and mental health. Those who experienced recent and severe trauma related to natural and technological disasters were found to be at risk for adverse psychological outcomes in the years after these events. Individuals with low income, low social support, and high levels of non-organizational religiosity are also at greater risk. A striking finding was that more than half of the fishers (51.6%) reported the symptoms of depression

In her new book, Cherry and scholars from around the world, look at the stresses from natural and technological disasters, acts of terrorism, wars, and interpersonal violence, and how stress and prolonged suffering threatens health and well-being. In this edited text, Cherry focuses on the long-term effects of disaster exposure, the consequences for peoples’ daily lives, and the means for recovery and healing.

Drs. Comaty, Advocat Present in New Mexico

Clinical & Medical Psychologist, Dr. Joseph Comaty, and Louisiana State University Emerita Professor of Psychology, Dr. Claire Advocat, were featured speakers at the 2015 Fall Conference of the State Psychologist Association of New Mexico, held September 26 & 27, in Albuquerque.

Dr. Comaty spoke on, “Treatment of Special Populations: Focus on Vulnerable Populations,” He provided information on the treatment of children with selected neurodevelopmental disorders such as ASD, ADHD, Tourette’s Disorder and the treatment of older adults with behavioral health disorders including those with dementia. Participants learned the most commonly used psychotropic drugs for the treatment of selected disorders of the identified vulnerable populations, and most frequently encountered adverse effects of the currently used psychotropic drugs.

Dr. Advocat presented, “Introduction to Basic Epigenetics.” She described the phenomenon of epigenetics and how it works, and discussed why epigenetic processes are relevant to the practice of prescribing psychologists. Attendees learned to about the physical components that make up the epigenome, and how they act to modulate our DNA, and the significance of epigenetics to psychological and physical health.



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Dr. Chafetz to Present at Administrative Law Judge Conference in New Orleans

Dr. Michael Chafetz, clinical neuropsychology from New Orleans, will speak at Administrative Law Judge 24th Annual National Educational Conference, “Making the Right Decision,” to be held in New Orleans, October 26 through 28.

Chafetz will present “Psychological Tests, Other Instruments For Assessing Credibility, Detecting Malingering, Related Issues,” for the Discernment Skills in Assessing Credibility section of the conference. He will also be a discussant in the Mental Impairments section, and for “Malingered Psychosis and Other Disorders,” to be presented by physician, Dr. Phillip Resnick.

Dr. Chafetz has been at the center of the debate about validity issues in performing routine disability evaluations. He and his colleagues have contributed to the discussions about symptom validity that led to a April 2015 report, by Institute of Medicine (IOM), where authors sided with psychological science. They said 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.

The IOM's findings were another volley in the now decade-long debate between psychological scientists and policy makers at the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Administrative Law Judges find themselves also in the middle. In 2011, through the U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senator Tom Coburn was studying problems with backlogs in disability appeals. Appeals rose 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.

Chafetz and colleagues have published numerous articles on the topic. Chafetz has presented his work repeatedly, in various venues.

He has also authored *Intellectual Disability: Criminal and Forensic Issues*, published by Oxford Press, which includes many of these issues.

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Stress Solutions

by Susan Andrews, PhD

Tips for Reducing Stress

Anyone who has ever suffered from chronic or moderately severe acute stress knows that you feel it physically just as much as you feel it mentally. And, it is accepted that one's overall health can impact stress levels, both negatively and positively. In keeping with the focus on the positive, here are a couple of diet tips for reducing stress.

1. Keep a healthy, balanced diet. A good rule of thumb is to eat for your heart. When you're experiencing stress, your heart is experiencing it right along with you, which means that over time it can actually put your heart at risk. Keep your heart in good shape by eating a lowered fat diet with plenty of lean protein, whole grains, and fruits and vegetables. This will help lower your blood pressure, which will help keep your heart from thumping hard when you start to feel stress.

2. Eat to actually reduce stress. When stressed, your body produces stress hormones, like cortisol, which increases sugar in the bloodstream. This is what makes us crave unhealthy food when we're stressed. However, giving your body simple carbohydrates like candy and white bread only gives your body a quick burst of sugars, so any good effects won't last. That's why you need to focus on complex carbohydrates with lots of fiber, like whole grains and sweet potatoes. The carbohydrates in those foods will prompt your brain to produce more serotonin, a hormone that relaxes us, but the nutrients and positive effects will stay with you much longer.

3. Reduce caffeine intake and increase water intake. Too much caffeine can start a vicious cycle. The more you ingest caffeine, the more you feel you need to ingest caffeine. Coffee will give you a quick boost, but the fatigue will catch up, which causes you to drink even more coffee, even though that fatigue or an inability to focus is a signal that your body needs rest. Excessive caffeine consumption can actually lead to lapses in concentration and a decrease in our overall ability to be effective. So the work becomes harder because we're less efficient. Caffeine is a substance that naturally increases blood pressure anyway, so you pile that on top of the effects of stress, and that's a lot of strain for your heart.

4. Most of us drink too little water. It is a known fact that we lose cognitive efficiency as our body becomes more dehydrated. Being dehydrated by just 2% impairs performance in tasks that require attention, psychomotor, and immediate memory skills (Adan, J Am Coll Nutr, 2012). The research data on this topic can be somewhat contradictory but everyone knows drinking water is good for you. For example, if the mild dehydration is due to physical exercise, that is actually good for long-term and working memory. There is also evidence that executive functions are better preserved. And, drinking more water helps keep our weight down.



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

The Secret Life of Board Complaints — Molehills to Mountains?

by J. Nelson

“My heart was bounding at every meeting.”
“You feel isolated and helpless.”
“It has been devastating.”
“You’re guilty until proven innocent.”
“You can’t talk to your colleagues about it because you know you’ll just sound defensive.”

These comments are some of what I heard from people who had to deal with a board complaint. I talked to people about their experiences, reviewed laws that apply, requested policies, and I looked at some statistics.

A complaint, especially one that leads to discipline, is rare, but for those who get pulled into this process, it is emotionally and financial costly. It is also shame provoking. Most of it happens in secret. And most do not talk about the experience easily.

For this article, I wanted to understand more about this mostly obscure process. I focused on the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP) with some information from other boards. All those I talked with asked me that they remain anonymous, except for one, Dr. Alicia Pellegrin, who not only agreed to be interviewed on the record, but who also asked for press coverage in recent experiences with the board.

However, this review is based on only one side, since I did not interview anyone currently on the board.

A short comment by outgoing Complaints Coordinator, Dr. Gary Pettigrew, gives a clue. He made a short statement to the board when he gave his resignation at the recent meeting. He said, it was a “very difficult” role and not pleasant. “... when I recommend to dismiss cases, usually they have never been investigated,” he said, “and the psychologist never knows about it, and none of my peers know that I have come to dismiss a case against them. But they sure know when I don’t dismiss a case against them, and it sure gets to you after a while.”

Laws, Rules and Murkiness of the Complaint Process

The licensing law empowers the board to monitor the “unauthorized, unqualified, and improper application of psychology,” and discipline to 15

standards listed in R.S. 37:2359. The Louisiana Administrative Code, called the rules, in “Rules for Disciplinary Action,” and a few other laws, apply.

Some of the standards are clear-cut, such as engaging in sexual contact with a client or being convicted of a felony. Others are more subjective and open to interpretation, such as the ethic for “avoiding harm,” and the prohibition about being “unprofessional.”

A disciplinary action starts with a complaint, which can come from consumers, other professionals, or the board itself. Many complaints are dismissed but some trigger investigations. Over the most recent five-year time frame, the psychology board listed 83 investigations. Nine of these resulted in disciplinary action. Six of the nine appear to involve a forensic theme.

Disciplinary actions can range from having to take a continuing education course, to a restriction on practice, to a temporary suspension or a revocation of a license.

Laws and rules do not describe how decisions are made, or how severity of the offense is judged, or how punishments are decided upon.

For this I requested internal policies and procedures from the LSBEP. I was told that there were no current policies. I also requested information from the counselors’ board, and was given a written description, but told the policies are not public records.

This lack of information has not always been the case. I was able to obtain a copy of the 2005 policies and also found that 15 years ago, the board freely published the policies in their newsletter.

The authors described the three outcomes of an investigation. The first was “No Violation – there was either (1) insufficient evidence, or (2) clearly no violation. The complaint is placed on the agenda for review at the next scheduled meeting of the Board. If the Board affirms the investigator’s determination, the psychologist and the complainant are notified in writing regarding the results.”



The second was, “Clear Violation, with minor offense – there may have been a technical error, dispute between psychologist and complainant, or other complaint involving behavior which has not been identified to be harmful or a danger to the public. If remediation is determined to be necessary, the psychologist will be notified by a letter of instruction. The Board may have a meeting with the psychologist following the remediation and formal dismissal of the complaint. This level does not impose any limitations on license, is not considered formal disciplinary action, and is not reportable...”

The last was, “Clear Violation, with significant offense – Such violations usually, though not always, involve a preliminary determination by the investigator that the behavior at issue poses, or reasonably will pose, a threat to the public health and welfare. The violation represents behavior which warrants revocation, suspension, restriction, or any other formal limitations of license.”

In this last situation, negotiation of a consent order is sought, and if a consent order cannot be arranged, the Chair is alerted that, “a hearing is imminent.”

Since these guidelines are no longer in effect, the process appears to fall to the Investigative Subcommittee.

Investigative Subcommittees

All of the boards I reviewed had a process, with one or more

people, to dismiss unfounded complaints and then help handle further investigations.

For the psychology board, the investigations subcommittee is established by a rule: “C. Unless otherwise provided by law, the board may delegate its authority and responsibility under these rules to a committee of one or more board members, to a hearing officer, or to other persons.”

Since the psychology board has only five members, and four votes are required for discipline, board members believe that they must not involve themselves in investigations, requiring them to have to recuse themselves. So, others staff the investigation subcommittee. This is different, for instance, from the Licensed Professional Counselor board, where four board members serve in the investigations committee.

Fifteen years ago, the policy was, “Complaints received shall be rotated between former LSBEP members appointed as investigators,” who are appointed by the board. However, somewhere between then and today, major changes appear to have occurred.

The current subcommittee appears to include only one, very part-time psychologist, Dr. Gary Pettigrew. His 40 hours per year contract suggests less than one hour a week, and considering board meetings, this appears minimal involvement.

The subcommittee is staffed with several legal and criminal

The Secret Life of Board Complaints, continued

investigation professionals, however. These include Ms. Kelly Parker, the previous Executive Director, who serves as Disciplinary Matters Consultant. Her background is a Fraud Analyst/Investigator in the Criminal Division of the Maryland Attorney General.

Also with the subcommittee is Prosecuting Attorney, James Raines, with the law firm of Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson. Other attorneys who may assist, include Mr. Lloyd Lunceford and Ms. Amy Groves, from Taylor Porter.

Mr. Tony McCoy appears to have been with the subcommittee also. His background is in drug and law enforcement, according to his resume. It is not clear from current records if he is still involved.

Up until the end of 2013, Dr. Constance Patterson also helped with ethical analyses, but it does not appear that she was replaced.

Due Process and Confirmatory Bias

The investigations subcommittee handles both the objective gathering of facts, which may lead to dismissing a complaint, and at the same time, may push for a consent order. The members also prosecute in a hearing, while the board members judge.

Some of those I spoke with were unclear which posture the subcommittee embraced at various times, and said they were caught by surprise when the style shifted from cooperation in finding facts, to a more adversarial or prosecutorial style. While a person might want to openly cooperate with an investigation, a different approach might be called for if one is being prosecuted.

Some also indicated the feeling of being manipulated.

Another concern mentioned was that the subcommittee would over time, add on new

complaints to the original, something like being stopped for speeding then having one's car searched.

This task of both objective fact-finding and prosecution would create conditions for confirmation bias, the phenomenon that once a decision is made, new information that contradicts that decision is automatically rejected.

Dr. Pellegrin indicated that this was her experience. She said, after her case was dismissed, "After years, and countless letters, emails, meetings—they still have the facts wrong."

One of the criticisms toward Pellegrin was that her interview with a seven-year old youngster was insufficient because a parent was in the room. However, the parent was never in the room, the investigators misinterpreted a videotape editing artifact. Repeated clarifications from Pellegrin had no effect.

The investigators also criticized her for "liking" a *Facebook* photo of a bottle of perfume, posted by a secretary in an attorney's office who had some connection to the case. The investigations said it constituted a "dual relationship."

Most of those I interviewed felt that investigators had exaggerated issues, making a difference in professional judgment, into an ethical matter.

Dr. Pellegrin also experienced this. One of the main criticisms against her was a complaint that she violated ethical standards when she failed to identify herself to the child during the forensic evaluation.

Pellegrin said that she explained to the subcommittee that while she had obtained informed consent from both parents, she chose not to reveal her true purpose to the child so as to not contaminate the data and also to help protect the child from additional stress. The investigators did not appear to be swayed by this explanation.

They were also not swayed by three Louisiana forensic psychologists who reviewed her procedures and reported that they saw no problems in this work.

Because of this, Pellegrin had to seek the opinion of a national ethics expert, Dr. Gerald Koocher. Koocher reviewed the case and agreed with the local psychologists. "I find no sign of bias, exploitation, or harm ..." and viewed her work to be "... quite reasonable in professionalism, detail, relevance of factors considered and logic in framing conclusions and recommendations."

Pellegrin's team was in the process of submitting this opinion and other information when her case was dismissed, and they pointed out that only the board knows the reason for the dismissal.

Does the board view that one, very part-time psychologist is able to keep abreast of all specialties and subspecialties?

Koocher's report noted that the issues fell into the problem areas of child custody evaluations, which is known to be high risk

for board complaints. It is also a subspecialty in forensic.

In another interview I had with a person with a fairly rare specialty area, the person said that the board did not understand enough about the area to make qualified judgments.

Koocher mentioned that the LSBEP was using the 2002 Ethics code, instead of the current one, which suggests that keeping current may be difficult.

Base Rates, Costs, and Incentives

I took disciplinary actions listed on websites for various five-year time spans, which gave 108 for the social work board, 19 for the counselors' board, and 9 for the psychology board. Using an average number of licensees, times five years, produced base rates of .003, .001, and .003, respectively.

Screening or selection methods with very low base rates suggest challenges in usefulness, as well as the possibility of high false positives. No empirical data appears to exist for local regulatory boards on validity of the process.

Psychologist Hal Arkes, President of the Society for Judgment and Decision-Making, warned in a 2012 article that screening with weak methods and low base rates is inappropriate, "...unless the cost of false positives or false negatives is very low."

Costs to those I spoke with were not low. The emotional costs appeared high. And the legal costs to manage an investigation were also high, said to be \$50,000 or higher. Dr. Pellegrin said that psychologists need to be sure to, "Mark that little box on your insurance, for extra coverage for a board defense."

One person dealing with an investigation related that he/she passed by several important professional opportunities, because of the uncertainty of being involved in a complaint investigation.

Finally, the incentives may not be properly aligned. It may be to a psychologist's economic advantage to agree to a consent order, even if they do not agree with it in truth. A consent order allows some degree of control over the outcomes, whereas a hearing is highly uncertain.

The board may have an incentive also, because if the board prevails, the psychologist may have to pay the board's expenses. This seems to present a possible conflict of interest, but perhaps it is assumed to be checked by the fact that if the psychologist goes then to district court, he/she can recover fees—if they win. Still, more uncertainty and more costs. One person told me that he/she did not fight because they did not have the money. The board of course, does not have this same concern.

Talking with some of those who had had some part of this threatening, mostly secret, and often shame-provoking experience, I found that many just wanted it to be over, even if they believed that molehills had been made into mountains.



Student Corner

Loyola Student Earns LPA Top Research Poster Honor

Ms. Sarah Scalese, a graduate of Loyola University who studied physicians' perceptions of psychology consultations won the first place under-graduate research poster at the recent Louisiana Psychological Association convention.

Scalese worked with Dr. Amy Henke of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center and Children's Hospital in New Orleans, to capture information about collaboration in health services.

Scalese and Henke surveyed physicians within seven specialties at Children's Hospital and found the most commonly cited reasons for consultations with psychologists were mental health, building diagnostic evidence, and helping patients cope with illness.

Physicians also reported problems due to long waiting times for psychological services and patients refusals.

Scalese and Henke found that physicians expressed a desire for increased involvement with general outpatient services, including services from medical psychologists,

and had generally positive relationships with psychology in medical settings.

The authors said the results suggest an acceptance of pharmacological treatments over non-pharmacological treatments.

The *Times* asked Scalese what she found to be the most important findings of her work. "What I believe to be the most fascinating, and most relevant finding to us in Louisiana, is that 77% of surveyed physicians requested more services from medical psychologists! I believe this could suggest an acceptance of psychologists as prescribers, but certainly could also highlight physicians' adherence to the medical model (i.e. more comfort with drugs than behavioral intervention).

"It could also potentially point to a lack of success on psychology's part in helping the general public understand the power of non-pharmacological intervention," Scalese said, "particularly as research shows that quality therapy is

LA Counseling Assn Hosts Record Crowd at September Conference



The Louisiana Counseling Association (LCA) held its convention in Baton Rouge in September. Officials reported a record attendance of almost 1,200 participants.

President Tim Fields said to members that the record crowd caused some inconveniences– "tightly packed" sessions and creative parking – but "our counseling compassion and energy to learn, share and celebrate pulled us through...". He also noted in his message to members that the organization's membership has grown to 2,236. Fields thanked his conference team, Executive Director Diane Austin, Business Manager Austin White, President-Elect Dr. Iman Hawash, Dr. Matt Lyons, and Strategic Planning Chair, Joyce Fields. Ms. Fields is Academic Counselor at LSU and also the Archive Chair for LCA.



Louisiana Counseling Association President Tim Fields (top) at the General Session. The association had a record 1200 attending. (Photos courtesy of Joyce Fields.)

more efficacious for mild/moderate mental illness (i.e. mild/moderate depression) compared to medication (and results in less relapse following discontinuation!)"

Ms. Scalese is originally from the Philadelphia area and moved to New Orleans to attend Loyola.

"At Loyola, I took a field practicum class and was lucky enough to be placed in the Adolescent Behavioral Health Unit at Children's Hospital. There, I shadowed Dr. Amy Henke, a clinical psychologist who serves as a consultant to the medical team," she said. "It was such an incredible learning experience, I didn't want to leave at the end of the semester. Eager to get more research experience, when Dr. Henke informed me the Psychology Department could

benefit from a quality improvement project to enhance collaboration within treatment teams, I jumped at the opportunity!"

This was Ms. Scalese's first independent research study. "... there were many small bumps along the way, despite the great support Dr. Henke provided me. I found that I had to work at a snails pace to ensure I got everything right. In particular, I had difficulty translating the data into a clear and concise visual format so that people viewing my poster could quickly understand my findings."

Ms. Scalese is currently in the process of applying to graduate schools in clinical psychology and she hopes to study childhood trauma. She is currently working full time an Early Childhood Development Center.



Sarah Scalese (L) and Dr. Michelle Moore. Ms. Scalese earned the 1st place honor in her poster research at the spring LPA convention.

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A Shrink at the Flicks

Dealing With The Devil: A Review of *Black Mass*

by Alvin G. Burstein

The biopic’s title prepares us for a consideration of moral perversion. Johnnie Depp’s chilling portrayal of James (Whitey) Bulger, the Boston mob boss, his bloody career, and his relationship with the FBI provide that opportunity, raising questions, some of which go unanswered.

The film describes Bulger’s transition from a member of the Winter Hill mob of “Southies,” Boston toughs at war with the Italian mafia centered in north Boston, to a crime kingpin in that city, one whose odious tentacles extended abroad. His success, perverse indeed, was grounded in his murky collaboration with the FBI as much as in his elaborate murderous sadism.

From a dramatic point of view, Depp’s depiction of Bulger is extraordinarily effective. I find myself feeling an unreasoning reluctance to suggest an Oscar because of the evil of his creation. And the film director’s blood-splattered horror scenes of torture and murder will doubtless gratify any inhibited or displaced aggressive drives in eager audiences.

From a psychodiagnostic point of view, the movie poses a question about whether the portrayed Bulger is a psychopath, a person without the capacity for empathy and lacking a moral sense or whether he is a sociopath, someone whose morality is deviant, a person whose social surround and consequent morality deviates from that of the larger society.

Many of Bulger’s associates would appear to merit the second diagnosis: sociopath. They are loyal to their fellow crooks, see law enforcement as the enemy, and the larger society as naïve in its inhibitions. Bulger himself, despite the film’s nod in the direction of his having a love for his mother and his son, violates a basic law of his deviant tribe by becoming what the FBI called “a top echelon informant.” In that capacity, he was later claimed to have contributed to the conviction of many



members of the mafia. But he also escaped prosecution (until many years later) for serious crimes of his own.

A central question raised by these anomalies is the degree to which the FBI itself displays a kind of sociopathic readiness to collaborate in some criminal activities, perhaps even murder, in order to pursue other illegal practices. In the film, the FBI’s collusion with Bulger is regarded as the work of a few bad apples, but some commentators have suggested that a code of silence operates at the FBI level as well. Some have suggested that the Bulger’s success in avoiding capture for a decade and a half was due to the desire by the FBI to avoid questions about a practice instituted by J. Edgar Hoover in 1961, to develop “live sources within the upper echelon of the organized hoodlum element.”

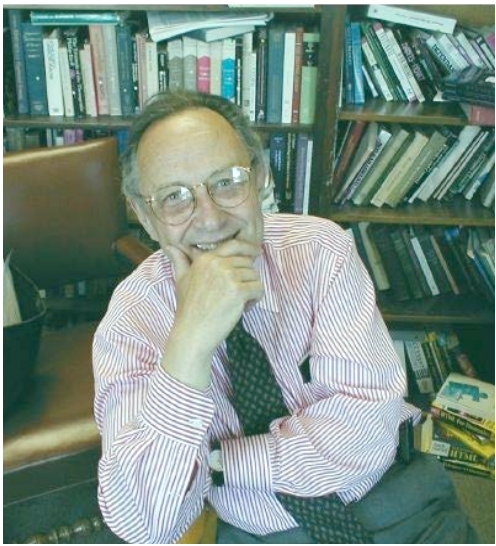
The film does not go deeply into two fascinating loyalty issues. One is the tie between John Connolly and Whitey Bulger. Connolly was a fellow Southie who joined the FBI and who recruited Bulger as an informant. Connolly was one of the few of Bulger’s associates who did not agree to testify against his old buddy in return for a reduction of sentence. Like Bulger, Connolly is still in jail. And then there is Bulger’s younger brother, Billy. A long-time member of the state senate, Billy went on to become president of the University of Massachusetts. When it became clear that he had been lying to investigators about being in touch with his fugitive brother, he was forced to step down. What he has said about Whitey is, “...I cared about him deeply and I still do.” There is no indication that he ever suggested to his brother that he turn himself in.

One is left wondering about how Whitey, the sadistic murderer, feels about them.

Guest Columnist,
Dr. Alvin Burstein

Burstein, a psychologist and psychoanalyst, is a professor emeritus at the University of Tennessee and a former faculty member of the New Orleans-Birmingham Psychoanalytic Center with numerous scholarly works to his credit. He is also a member of Inklings, a Mandeville critique group that meets weekly to review its members’ imaginative writings.

Burstein has published flash fiction and autobiographical pieces in e-zines; *The Owl*, his first novelette, is available at Amazon. He is, in addition to being a movie fan, a committed Francophile, unsurprisingly a lover of fine cheese and wine, and an unrepentant cruciverbalist.



courtesy photo

Up-Coming Events

Saturday, November 7

Louisiana Psychological Association to Host Conference at Ralph & Kacoo's in Baton Rouge

The Louisiana Psychological Association will host its Fall Conference on Saturday, November 7 at Ralph & Kacoo's Restaurant in Baton Rouge.

The full day continuing education program offers morning breakout sessions on clinical and practice topics, and an afternoon general session on ethics and community psychology. Continental breakfast and lunch at Ralph & Kacoo's Seafood Restaurant, and a talk on advocacy skills, is included.

The morning sessions offer a choice for participants to learn about, "Bipolar Disorder in the Age of Over-Diagnosis and Treatment." Psychologist Dr. Am Henke will co-present with Psychiatrist Dr. Arwen Podesta.

Drs. Henke and Podesta will focus on the increasing rate of diagnosis in Bipolar Disorder in both children and adults and look at the research that suggests that actual rates have not changed. The workshop will address accurate assessment and differential diagnoses. The ethical role of diagnostician as gatekeeper to protect against over diagnosis and use non-pharmacological treatments will be presented.

Dr. Henke is a clinical psychologists and assistant professor with the LSUHSC and Children's Hospital in New Orleans and consults regarding medically compromised children. Dr. Arwen Podesta is a board certified psychiatrist with subspecialties in addiction, forensic psychiatry, and integrative and holistic medicine. She is on the Tulane clinical faculty.

Also in morning session is "Private Practice: Essentials and Updates," presented by Drs. Lacey Seymour and Gail Gillespie. This workshop will cover requirements and information for managing a successful private practice, including state and government laws and regulations, business planning, marketing, and HIPAA compliance.

Dr. Seymour is current president of LPA and owner of Live Oak Children's Center, a licensed psychologist and license behavior analyst, and focuses on children's issues and children with special needs. Dr. Gillespie is a licensed psychologist in private practice, specializing in the evaluation and treatment of children and adolescents, LPA secretary and Chair of continuing education.

A thirty-minute presentation by LPA Executive Director, Ms. Cindy Bishop, "Advocacy 101: The Basics of Communicating Effectively with Public Policy Makers," will be included. Ms. Bishop is owner of Checkmate Strategies and has worked on high profile legislative campaigns including the Smoke Free Air Act, the Primary Seat Belt Act, and the Child Passenger Safety Act.

The afternoon session is "Ethics, Politics, and Psychology: Where Are We and Where Do We Go from Here?" The presenters are Drs. William "Gig" Costelloe and Julie Nelson. Presenters will provide an integrative look as the underlying social and



Dr. Gig Costelloe

organizational characteristics that impact the psychology community and psychologists' contributions, with special emphasis on ethical concerns. Presenters will facilitate a group activity to identify needs, create innovations, and envision solutions for psychology's role in the state, and fold into a strategic planning process for the association.

Dr. Costelloe is president of Costelloe & Associates in New Orleans and a licensed Industrial-Organizational

Behavior Analysis Assn Conference Oct 9-10

The Louisiana Behavior Analysis Association will host the 2015 Gulf Coast ABA Conference October 9-10, 2015, in New Orleans. Keynote speaker is Dorothea Lerman, PhD, BCBA-D, Professor of Psychology, Coordinator of the M.A. Behavior Analysis Program, and Director of the Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities at the University of Houston. Lerman was previously at LSU.

Psychologist. He has consulted for 35 years to public corporations and businesses across the country, providing pre-employment assessment, team-building, employee surveys and other services. Dr. Nelson is licensed psychologist with emphasis clinical and organizational psychology, and has consulted to the petrochemical industry for over 30 years in organizational development. She is the publisher of the *Psychology Times*.



The Louisiana Psychological Association will hold its Fall Conference next month. Here, at the spring conference, Dr. Michelle Moore (R) speaks with an attendee about some of the books authored by psychologists.

Up-Coming Events

Accessible, Sustainable School Mental Health

La School Psychological Association to Gather November 11- 13 in Lafayette, La

The Louisiana School Psychological Association will hold its 35th Annual Conference, on November 11-13, at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, in Lafayette. This year's theme is "Promoting Accessible and Sustainable School Mental Health Services."

Invited speakers include Dr. Debra Duhe who will present on "Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule-2, Toddler Module , Video Training Program Upgrade."

Also Dr. Krisin Johnson will speak on "Using Technology to Enhance your Mental Health Services."

Dr. Howie Knoff, will present, "Interventions for Students with Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Challenges." And Dr. Jerome Sattler, will present on "Recent Developments in Assessment of Children."

Other presenters include Dr. John Simoneaux who will present on "Considering Cultural Issues," and Dr. Kevin Jones, presenting a Professional Development Forum.



Dr. Alan Coulter speaking at a previous conference of the Louisiana School Psychological Association.

Dr. Constance Patterson, will offer a School Psychology Trainers Forum. And, Dr. Stacy Overstreet will present Prepared II, Day 1.

Openings for Participants in Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Study

Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or Persistent Post-Concussion Syndrome

Any person who has persistent symptoms from one or more concussions that have occurred within the last six months to ten years is eligible.

Referring practitioners and individuals wanting to participate can contact the research coordinator at 504-427-5632 for more information.

The Psychology Times

The *Psychology Times* is provided as a **community service** for those in the practice, teaching, and science of psychology and the behavioral sciences in Louisiana, and related individuals and groups. The *Times* offers information, entertainment, and networking for those in this Louisiana community. The *Psychology Times* is not affiliated with any professional group other than the **Louisiana Press Association.**

None of the content in the *Times* is intended as advice for anyone.

March/April 2016 in New Orleans

SEPA Submissions Due October 13

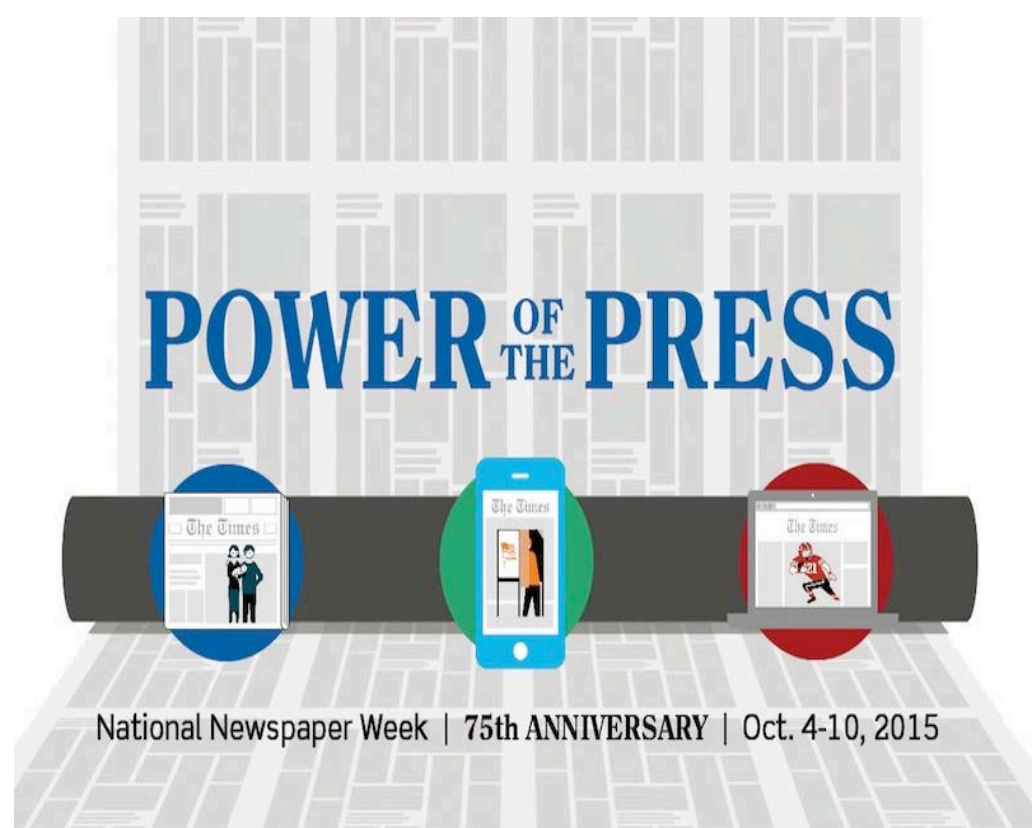
Submissions to the 2016 Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA) conference are due by October 13. SEPA will hold its 2016 Annual Meeting in New Orleans, March 30 through April 2, at the Sheraton New Orleans.

SEPA is the largest psychological organization in the Southeast, and its mission is to stimulate the exchange of scientific and professional ideas across the diverse areas of psychological inquiry and application. SEPA consists of both professional and student members.

Invited talks for the 2016 session include Dr. Oscar Barbarin, previously the Lila L. and Douglas Hertz Endowed Chair in Psychology at Tulane University, and who began a new appointment as Chair of the African American Studies Department at the University of Maryland in August 2015.

Dr. Barbarin has published widely on the socio-emotional development of children, particularly boys of color.

Other invited speakers include Dr. Pam Imm, community psychologist and Dr. Paschal Sheeran, who will speak on the psychology of health behavior change.



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