

Judge Says Psych Board Procedures Unconstitutional

On May 2, Judge R. Michael Caldwell of the 19th Judicial District Court in Baton Rouge, said that the procedures leading to the suspension of Dr. Eric Cerwonka's psychology license included so many Constitutional violations that the decision could not stand, said Cerwonka's attorney, Mr. Lane Roy to the *Times* in an interview this week.

The Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists conducted a hearing in January and decided to take away Dr. Cerwonka's Louisiana license, after an investigation process that appears to have resulted in over \$75,000 of legal fees by the LSBEP Prosecutor and general council.

The May 2 hearing was preliminary to Dr. Cerwonka's appeal of the Board's decision, made sometime in February. Mr. Roy was requesting a "Motion to Stay," so that Cerwonka could retain his license until the Court could hear the appeal.

"It was all at the sidebar," Roy said. "Without me bringing up anything, he [Judge Caldwell] called us up and said, 'I read the briefs and I read the pleadings. I just can't send this up to the Court of Appeals, the violations of Due Process are rampant.' Roy reported.

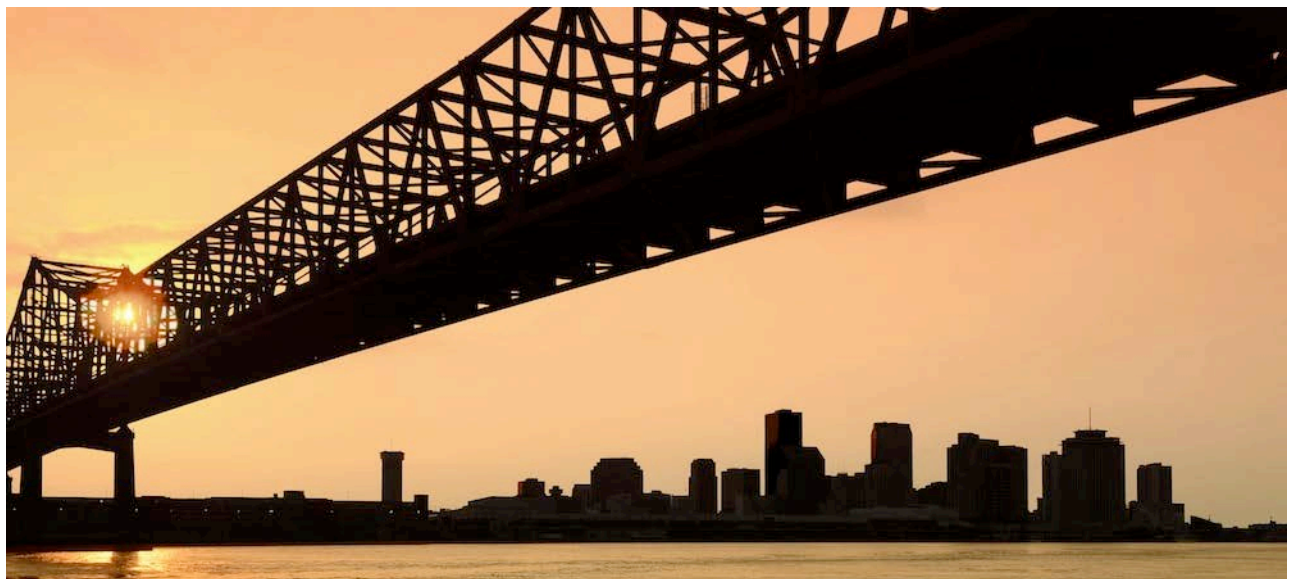
The Judge mentioned some of what he viewed as Constitutional violations, such as the hearing officer being the law partner of the board attorney and also someone entering Cerwonka's home illegally to attempt to gather evidence.

Issues were listed in a Pre-Hearing Memorandum by Mr. Roy. One of these was that Cerwonka had previously been

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Dr. Robert Gordon, expert witness for the defense, speaking to Ms. Jaime Monic at a January disciplinary hearing of the LSBEP. Some of the board's procedures are now being questioned by a District Court judge.



AT THE BOTTOM

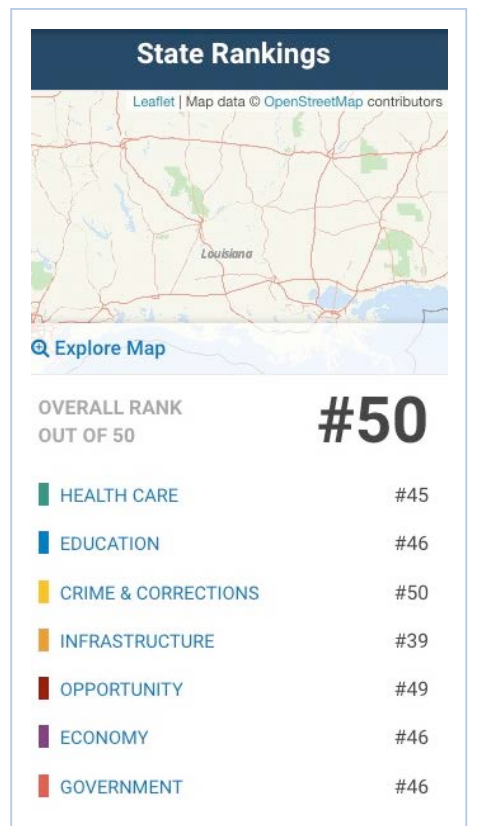
Louisiana ranked dead last in this year's "Best States" by *U.S. News & World Report*. The well-respected measure is driven by a composite score with factors of health care, education, crime and corrections, infrastructure, opportunity, economy and government. The authors drew from extensive government and private sources, including proprietary data and more than five dozen subcategories of metrics.

With Louisiana's interwoven problems between opportunity, health, crime, and economy, it appears that the state has nowhere to go but up. Here are some of the main results and comments from community experts.

Health Care – 45th

Louisiana's rank of 45th in Health Care includes scores in: health care access and affordability at 32nd, health care quality at 41st, and health outcomes at 44th.

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From US News&WR

Counselors Bill Advances After Being Amended

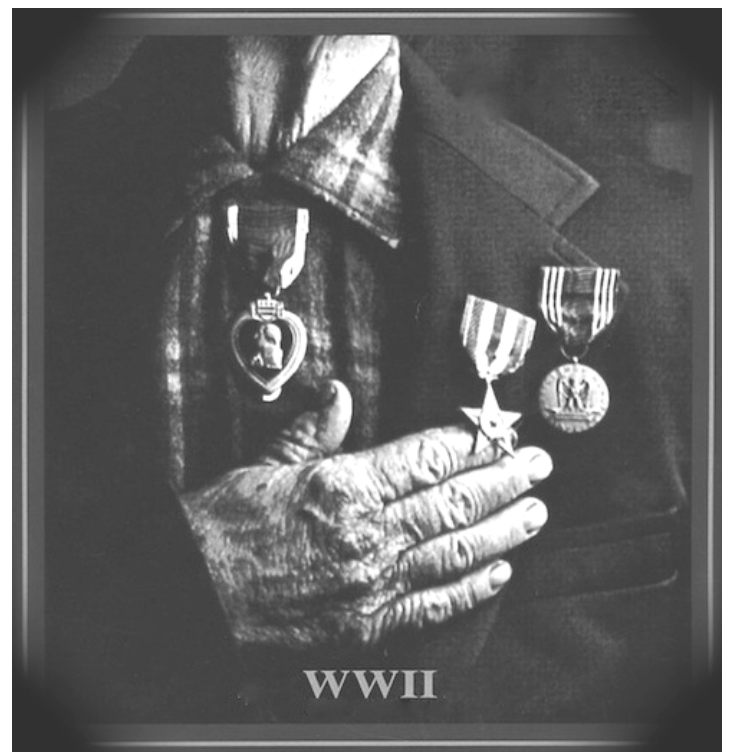
A bill to remove language requiring that counselors and marriage and family therapists consult and collaborate with physicians, psychiatrists, medical psychologists, or advanced practice registered psychiatric nurses, when treating or assessing individuals with "serious mental illness" is scheduled for House Floor debate today.

After some negotiations between the counselors and psychologists, sources indicate that the measure is likely to pass, after an 11 to 0 favorable vote from the House Health & Welfare committee on the May 23.

Psychologists initially opposed the measure, and some viewed it to relate to psychological testing.

"First and foremost, psychologists and counselors/therapists met face-to-face to hear each other's concerns and real listening took place," Dr. Mary Feduccia, Government Relations Committee Chairman, and a past President of Louisiana Counseling Association, said about the behind the scene talks between the two groups.

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Memorial Day Rerun Our WWII Fathers

For Memorial Day we are reprinting the article written by psychologists Dr. Susan Andrews, Dr. Julie Nelson, and Dr. John Magee. The feature ran in 2015 and earned a first place for Best Feature from the Louisiana Press Association. The judge said –"Wonderfully intimate portraits of men who lived through hell and came out the other side. Good, solid writing. A great feature and a beautiful tribute to The Greatest Generation." Page 7.

Editorial Page

Another Bittersweet Rerun

by Times publisher, J. Nelson

I was calling around when Christine Angelloz told me that some dogs “got a number” of her “hand-reared chickens.” It was finally here: I had to stop suppressing my feelings and deal with the fact, like Kelley Pears is always showing us with exposure therapy—that our two chickens were gone, murdered by a fox. I didn’t even want the chickens at first, but then, as life has it, I grew to love them—two spectacularly interesting and funny creatures. The story of “Christmas Present from Our Backyard Chickens” was a readers’ favorite, and part of an entry that won a first place from the Press Association. I’d gladly trade the first place to have them back.

Archimedes brought home two backyard chickens and while at first highly skeptical, I’ve become a believer and fully support his comment that there are two things he’s found that are “a lot more fun and a lot less work than expected — our grandchildren and backyard chickens.”

On the other hand, for an untreated over-functioner like myself, the power dynamics between our two chickens pose an emotional challenge.

“Red,” our unimaginatively named Rhode Island Red hen is a sweet, calm, friendly bird. Hawk, also named with the least amount of effort, is more neurotic, a little paranoid, and termed “skittish” by bird people.

But Hawk is not timid when it comes to cheating—stealing to be precise. If Red obtains a bug (a chicken’s idea of rib-eye steak) Hawk immediately zooms in, snatches the delicacy right out of Red’s beak, and dashes away.

Red (and Archimedes) appear generally unperturbed by this, while I, a rigid moralist with Irish-Catholic upbringing, find it nearly intolerable.

So, I work to help the down-trodden, and to “protect the public,” so to speak. One solution I’ve found is to feed the two together, a food source of dried mealworms. While expensive and not as good as a nearly alive bug—I’m pretty sure these worms are dead—they are too numerous and too small to motivate robbery.



However, invariably a bug enters my environment and I feel obligated to recycle. Since I’ve decided that Hawk is “unfair,” I’m now reliably intervening to level out our backyard social system.

Having discovered a very large Palmetto bug (I call it that so I don’t have to call it a roach because if it were a roach, it would be the biggest, most disgusting creature ever and I wouldn’t be able to come any where near it), I plan an intervention to deliver it to Red.

I review the terrain, knowing that Red will come closer to me. I also take a broom handle to wave at Hawk in an emergency. I toss the bug at Red, but it snags on the paper towel I have it wrapped in, and falls short. Hawk lunges. I quickly wave the broom, which has the unintended consequence of frightening both birds. To compensate, I wave my hands, which seems to keep Hawk back. Red steps forward and grasps the bug in her beak.

Seeing Red in possession of the bug apparently triggers neural pathways in Hawk and she launches a renewed attack to Red’s right side, then left, then right—Red is barely able to dodge Hawk and hold on to the bug.

I see the thing falling apart before my eyes and shout, “Hawk! Stop it!” Both birds freeze and look at me, and Red drops the bug. Hawk grabs the bug and speeds away.

Having surely co-evolved with humans, Red looks at me wide-eyed, as if to ask, “Do you have another bug for me?”

I’m subject, like most of us, to develop finer and finer interventions, some probably quite innovative, maybe some even effective, which could make life seem more fair, more perfect, more moral. I could spend time micromanaging our backyard chickens.

Or, for this Christmas and New Year, I could just let things be.

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

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Corrections & Clarifications

No one sent in corrections for April. (Not even Nancy Arnold.)

Please send corrections or clarifications to the *Times*
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Judge Says Procedures Unconstitutional continued

a client of the LSBEP prosecuting attorney, Mr. James Raines.

Also attending the May 2 review by Judge Caldwell was LSBEP attorney Ms. Amy Lowe. According to both Roy and Cerwonka, Ms. Lowe appeared concerned about Judge Caldwell’s viewpoint and remarked to him that a large amount of money had been spent by the state for the proceedings against Cerwonka.

Roy told the *Times* that Judge Caldwell replied to Ms. Lowe that he [Caldwell] understood that the costs were a concern, however, “He said, ‘My hands are tied. There’s no way we’re going to be able to sustain it.’”

Cerwonka said that the Judge commented that if the board wanted to develop a Constitutionally allowed process and retry him, they could.

At the May 2 review, Judge Caldwell was scheduled only to hear the arguments about the Motion to Stay. Judge Caldwell granted the motion and reinstated Cerwonka’s license. Cerwonka is also licensed in New York.

According to both Roy and Cerwonka, both who were present, Ms. Lowe insisted on a briefing, presumably in hope of countering Judge Caldwell’s conclusions regarding Due Process violations.

Roy said that Judge Caldwell agreed to a briefing, which is taking place this week, but Caldwell said that it would not help Lowe unless something dramatic was produced. Caldwell said the decision to vacate the decision by the psychology board would likely stand, this according to Mr. Roy.

After seeing the legal charges in this case, “I was shocked at these fees,” Roy told the *Times*. “I’ve never seen these types of fees. It clearly is punitive,” he said. “I’m convinced that they don’t want anybody to appeal.”

Mr. Roy said that he has a good deal of experience with boards and that costs average around \$10,000.

A previous review of public documents suggested that fees for the Cerwonka case had come to \$78,000 for the LSBEP.

In a Pre-Hearing Memorandum, one of the documents Judge Caldwell reviewed to reach his views, Mr. Roy argued that there were procedural violations in the prosecution of Cerwonka.

“The Administrative Law Judge, Lloyd Lunsford, the person who at the hearing made all rulings on

questions of law, admissibility of evidence, what was relevant and not relevant, and generally acted as ‘judge’ at the hearing, was and still is the law partner of Amy Lowe, who represented the Board at the hearing and who in fact, is representing the Board in this appeal,” wrote Roy.

“A review of the record will show that in fact Mr. Lunsford allowed the Board to put on anything it wanted to put on while restricting on numerous occasions evidence or other testimony on the part of Dr. Cerwonka. There was even a questioning by Ms. Lowe and not surprisingly, Mr. Lunsford made no adverse rulings on admissibility of his law partner’s questioning.”

Mr. Roy continues in the Memorandum, “The prosecuting attorney for the Board had represented Dr. Cerwonka in a hotly contested custody dispute, had obtained much personal information about his then client, and provided information obtained to his Board client, all without authority or consent.”

The Memorandum also lists a number of other complaints, including the charge that the board prosecuting attorney obtained confidential patient records without authority or consent, that the board ruled on the basis of information about a previous girl-friend while that had not been part of the complaint against him, that the board’s complaint coordinator instituted a suspension without Board authority and did so “ten minutes after Dr. Cerwonka refused to resign his license and requested an evidentiary hearing.”

Mr. Roy also wrote that the Board’s investigator persuaded the previous girl-friend, who had a contentious breakup, to enter Cerwonka’s home to take photographs and that these included staged images. The complaint also states that the investigator had another individual obtain, illegally from Cerwonka’s office, files, phone, and computer information without authority.

Cerwonka told the *Times* that Judge Caldwell commented that this was similar to the dental board case, known as Haygood v. LA State Board of Dentistry, heard in the Court of Appeal of Louisiana, Fourth Circuit, in 2012.

In that finding, Judge Terri Love, writing for the Appeals Court, said, “After conducting a de novo review, we find the combination of the Board’s general counsel’s roles of prosecutor and adjudicator violated Dr. Haygood’s due process rights. We find the Board improperly combined the prosecutorial and judicial functions by allowing its general counsel, Mr. Brian Begue, to serve as the prosecutor, general

Counselors Bill Advances After Being Amended continued

“Psychologists were concerned about psychological testing as a necessity for diagnosis of certain serious mental illnesses and counselors were concerned about the public’s access to mental health care when their ability to diagnose serious mental illnesses or make referrals when indicated is questioned.”

“As a result of the discussion,” an amendment to the bill was offered by psychologists which would have required referrals for all clients with serious mental illnesses. This amendment was unacceptable to LPCs and LMFTs and was countered with an amendment that addressed the concerns of psychologists. This amendment added language that clarified the types of psychological tests that LPCs and LMFTs cannot give—neuropsychological, intellectual, developmental, and personality tests—and further stated that referrals will be made for psychological testing when indicated.”

When the amendment was agreed upon by both parties, psychologists dropped their opposition, said Feduccia.

The *Times* asked if the Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists had been involved, and Feduccia said she did not notice their participation.

Bill to Allow LSBEP to Charge Fees for Informal Hearings Up for Vote in House

Senate Bill 37 by Senator Martiny, a measure to remove the current one-year time limit for disciplinary investigations at the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists, is set for a vote today on the House Floor.

The measure would also allow for the board to start charging fees for informal hearings, including fees incurred by the board for a disciplinary action that is resolved by settlement, consent decree, or other informal resolution, including its investigator, staff, and legal fees. Current law allows them to charge for formal hearings.

The measure was amended in committee to cap the fees for informal hearings at \$10,000.

In the Senate Committee the measure was amended to conform with the time-limits set out in R.S. 37:21, from the LSBEP’s original language to be exempt from time limits for conducting investigations.



counsel, panel member, and adjudicator for the proceedings against Dr. Haygood. [...]”	by experienced psychologists and past board members, now there is a Private Investigator and a Prosecutor.
The Complaints Committee of the LSBEP is a subcommittee that operates without direct oversight of the board members. The reason for this is so board members will avoid being exposed to information prior for disciplinary votes.	According to public records the board has had escalating legal fees which stem primarily from charges from the Board Prosecutor, held currently by Mr. James Raines. Over 2015 to 2016, and into January 2017, Mr. Raines prosecuted 16 cases. Three of these 16 cases amounted to \$146,987 of charges from Mr. Raines.
The subcommittee handles disciplinary matters until a complaint rises to the level of a hearing or other recommendation, including Consent Orders.	No comments were able to be obtained from the LSBEP because of a policy of no interviews with the press.
The Policy and Procedures have been changed dramatically over the last decade, so that once staffed	

Included is the state’s 44th rank in health care enrollment and 45th in health care affordability.

The score concerns the percentage of children receiving medical and dental care under Medicaid, hospital readmissions, nursing home citations, prevention, and infant and overall mortality rates.

Overall mortality falls at 43rd, infant mortality at 46th. The state is 50th in obesity, has a low smoking score at rank of 43rd. Access to medical care factors include a rank of 44th in health care enrollment, and 45th in health care affordability.

Dr. Deborah Palmer-Seal, with the Health & Education Alliance of Louisiana (HEAL) works in the Central City area of New Orleans where generation poverty is common and healthcare limited. As lead psychologist, she has worked in multidisciplinary team settings, assisting those with autism, depression, anxiety, ADHD and trauma. She follows the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model developed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

“HEAL works with school nurses to ensure students receive basic health screenings —vision, hearing, dental, blood pressure, BMI,” she said, “and receive necessary follow up care. By coordinating with the school nurse and the student’s parent/guardian HEAL has identified over 2000 students who failed at least one of these basic health screenings.”

“We continue to work with the school nurse to coordinate ongoing care regarding these failures. It makes common sense: if a child can’t see, then they will struggle with reading; or if they can’t hear, they will struggle with following directions. By encouraging follow up care with pediatricians or dentists we can ensure that students at school are better able to learn.”

While the U.S. News report found that Louisiana was 27th in adults with “poor mental health days,” Dr. Mary Feduccia, but a past president of the Louisiana Counseling Association, points to another measure. “According to ‘Parity or Disparity: The State of Mental Health in America 2015,’ a survey conducted by Mental Health America, Louisiana ranks 47th in access to mental health care,” Feduccia said.

“There is an abundance of need for mental health care in Louisiana,” she said. “As a result of high poverty levels, a proliferation of uninsured residents, and a lack of mental health providers, many serious mental health needs go untreated and frequently lead to disastrous results on an individual as well as a societal level.”

She points to continued state and federal budget cuts for mental

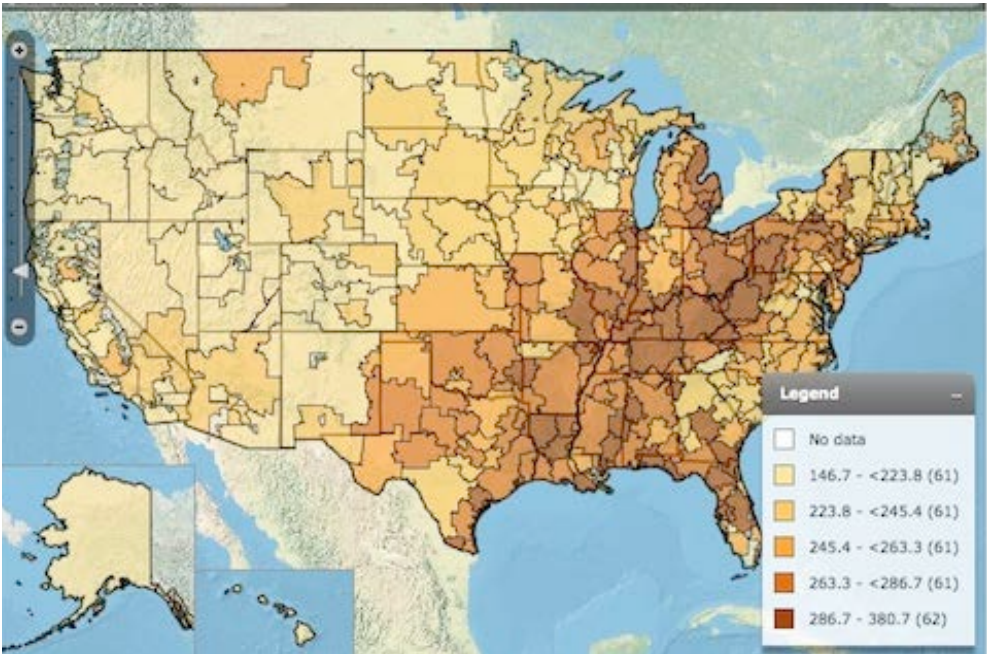
health care, “... further limiting the ability to receive services, particularly for those from lower socioeconomic levels,” she said. “There seems to be a vicious cycle of lack of funding for mental health that results in increased need as a result of the lack of treatment.

Education – 46th

Two main factors make up the state’s 46th rank in education, Louisiana’s higher education system at 36th and its pre-K to 12 at 44th.

One of the high points for Louisiana was its Pre-K Quality, which ranked 5th and Preschool Enrollment which came in at 9th. Also, Louisiana ranked 6th in low debt at graduation.

But the state was 49th in math scores and 48th in reading scores. Also at the bottom were a 48th in educational attainment, 45th place in high school



While Louisiana benefits from a low cost of living score, healthcare costs rank at the bottom. Here, the hospital use measured by Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care.

graduation rate, and 44th in college readiness.

Crime & Corrections – 50th

While overall crime in America has reached historic lows, and prison reforms are slowly reducing the prison populations, said the authors, Louisiana remains at the bottom with a 48th ranking in Public Safety and a 50th in Corrections.

The state comes in last for its incarceration rate, at 50th which Governor Edwards set as a priority. Property crime falls at the 47th and violent crime is 46th.

The one bright spot is in change in incarceration rate. Louisiana ranks 15th.

“The crime rate in Louisiana is the highest in the world per

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At the Bottom

continued

capita,” said Dr. Susan Tucker, clinical psychologist and assistant warden in Bossier Parish Medium Security Facility.

“We are working diligently to change sentencing laws, to pass legislation for nonviolent offenders being able to get rehabilitation through diversion programs,” she said.

“Also, for those incarcerated who wish to participate in treatment or educational programs that allows good-time releases. For instance, our 9-month program at SHISAP [Steve Hoyle Intensive Substance Abuse Program] offers one year off a sentence saving tax payers millions of dollars for allowing nonviolent offenders to transition into the community with jobs and education earlier for good behavior and rehabilitation participation.”

Tucker’s programs have earned national recognition for excellence. In 2016 the Louisiana Legislature commended Tucker and her team in a House Concurrent Resolution, pointing to multi-million dollar cost savings for the state.

Dr. Tracey Rizzutto is another leader in the community working in crime prevention efforts, and a part of the Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination (BRAVE) initiative that works to reduce and eliminate violent crime committed by juveniles. Dr. Rizzutto uses social network analysis to examine social structures and dynamics, one of her interests as an IO psychologist and professor.

Rizzutto just returned from data collection in Europe, where she is building a partnership with the Centre for Counter Intelligence in Denmark where they have a jihadi re-entry program very similar to the BRAVE program.

Violence reduction and the role of psychologists will become even more important she said because Baton Rouge has been selected by the Department of Justice to participate in the Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center. Rizzutto and other key members of the project have been invited to join the team of individuals to participate in this federal program to strengthen evidence-based decision making policing and prosecution, Rizzutto explained.

Opportunity – 49th

The chance for upward mobility and the freedoms that support advancement, include economic opportunity, equality, and affordability, composed of measures such as poverty at the 48th.

Racial equality fared somewhat better (24th) than Gender equality (48th). Middle of the road were Employment Equality by Race rank of 24th and Education Equality by Race at a rank of 20th.

Positives included the Disability employment rate ranked 14th. The cost of living (14th) and housing affordability (19th) come in better than average also.

Economy, Government, Infrastructure

In these categories Louisiana ranked poorly with unemployment rates and growth adding to a 46th place in Economy.

Government also came in at the 46th and while boosted by a 7th place in budget transparency, fiscal stability was 47th. The state’s infrastructure ranked 39th.

Stress Solutions

by Susan Andrews, PhD

Hazards of Mindfulness: A New Study

Dr. Willoughby Britton and her colleagues at Brown University and the University of California, Santa Barbara have just published a research article on the some of the other than health benefits or more negative effects of Buddhist-derived meditation practices that are underreported (PLoS ONE 12(5) 2017). The meditation traditions selected for study were Theravada, Zen, and Tibetan. Since Mindfulness is a related Buddhist-derived meditation practice that many people are touting, myself included, I wanted to share the results of this study. Mindfulness was not specifically investigated. The study was supported by a grant to Brown U. from the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NIH).

There are a few things about the study that need clarification. First, this study is not saying that meditation is harmful and bad. It is saying that of the almost 100 practitioners interviewed some of them reported experiences that were occasionally distressing, even very negative. Such experiences are not unknown among Buddhist traditions; the Tibetans refer to them as “nyams.” Exactly what kind of negative experiences might show up, how they affect each person, and which ones are going to be experienced as distressing is based on a range of personal, interpersonal and contextual factors. Secondly, the study does not offer any percentages or numbers of negative experiences that might show up with the regular practice of meditation. And, it certainly does not say that you must have such an experience if you practice a form of meditation, such as Mindfulness. The purpose of the study was to provide detailed descriptions of the many different experiences that are not positive, health-related outcomes and to start to understand why they might happen and how to deal with them.

The interviews generated 59 types of experience, which the authors further analyzed into seven domains: cognitive, perceptual, affective, somatic, conative, sense of self and social. They also identified 26 categories of factors that might influence how much distress or impairment the experience might cause. Examples of the types of negative experiences the study was investigating include things like: hypersensitivity to light or sound, insomnia, feelings of fear or panic, feelings of oneness with others (but described as lasting too long or making the person feel violated or exposed), or not feeling up to returning to working once they leave the retreat. In other words, an experience that some meditators would describe as “positive or desirable” could be described as “negative” by another.

Some meditation teachers who were interviewed talked about the meditator’s health and diet, how long they meditated, any psychiatric history, or trauma history as being important in understanding why the person might have a negative experience. However, those factors were not always able to explain the findings. Overall, they researchers stated in their PLoS ONE article: “The results also challenge other common causal attributions, such as the assumption that meditation-related difficulties only happen to individuals with a pre-existing condition (psychiatric or trauma history), who are on long or intensive retreats, who are poorly supervised, who are practicing incorrectly, or who have inadequate preparation.”

In the summary of the article, Britton and her team identify “testable hypotheses” and acknowledge that there is a lot yet to discover and understand about what makes meditation a positive, health-improving, and rewarding practice to relieve stress versus a negative source of distress. For example, we still do not know much about the neurobiological mechanisms that are affected by the practice of meditation. One remedy that was mentioned and seems to be particularly important for any clinicians who might use Mindfulness training or other forms of meditation with clients for a variety of different problems ranging from anxiety and stress to health issues, is that it really helps to have a person, the teacher, other meditators in a support group or individually, with whom they can talk and share the diversity of their experiences. It helps to know they are not alone in having that particular consequence and that someone is there to discuss their experiences.

In the many years of my own meditation practice and using Mindfulness and other similar meditation tools with clients, I have never experienced something that I felt was distressing or difficult. I can only remember one client that reported that they could not use the technique because it caused them to become more anxious. This person was very controlling and highly anxious to start with and they agreed with me in the end that in order to become relaxed, calm and still, they had to lower their hypervigilance. And, it was becoming less vigilant that caused them increased anxiety. Their distress did not continue as a result of having tried meditation; they just agreed to use other techniques to reduce their stress.

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





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Memorial Day Rerun

Our WWII Fathers

They were young and they were green. Two-thirds of them had never even fired a rifle. They marched off, 16 million of them, half of all the young men in the country, to the deadliest and most widespread war in history.

They went to stop the Axis powers from carving up the world. And they did it. They were our fathers.

As the last of the WWII Veterans fade from life's stage, we honor all our Veterans this month by sharing three stories, by psychologists, about their WWII fathers.

In this special feature, Dr. Susan Andrews, Dr. Julie Nelson, and Dr. John Magee will share some of what they remember about those in the Greatest Generation.

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Kenneth A. Ring, Jr.

Battle of the Bulge, defense of Alsace, France
Awarded Silver Star, two Bronze Stars
by Susan Andrews, PhD

My father, Kenneth A. Ring, Jr., was one of the thousands of veterans who served our country in the last days of WWII in France, Austria, and Germany. My memories of my father have always pictured him as “larger than life.” I knew he was multiply decorated (Silver Star, 2 Bronze Stars) and I guess I knew that meant that he was a hero but I don’t think the meaning really sunk in until recently. My son was telling me what he had learned about how his grandfather had earned the Silver Star, and wondered if I knew how my father earned the Bronze Stars.

Dad never talked about the war to me—or in mixed company, in general. Unfortunately, he died in 1978 at age 53 from a brain tumor. However, my brother knew a lot of his stories from years of hunting and fishing trips with dad and other men, some veterans. In the evenings, they would sit around and trade stories. My brother has an amazing memory and shared some of what I am now sharing with you. Some of it comes from details of two books about the 42nd “Rainbow” Infantry Division (I.D.) published immediately after the war. The first book tells the story of the 42nd I.D. while the second book details the 222nd Regiment of the 42nd I.D., which was dad’s regiment.

The 222nd was part of the Rainbow Infantry Division under the command of Major General Harry J. Collins, and shipped from Fort Bragg to Camp Gruber to Camp Kilmer to Marseilles in November 1944, and in 1945 took part in the Battle of the Bulge.

My father was a leader even before he was pressed into his role in history. He was the Cadet Commander of the ROTC at Texas A&M, in his junior year in petroleum engineering when he was called to active duty. He reported to Camp Gruber with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

My mom, newly married, tagged along and rented a room in a house in the little Oklahoma town of Muskogee just to be near dad until he shipped out, sometime before September 1944. I did not meet my father until the war was over and he shipped home. Mother and I lived in Dallas, Texas, where both of my parents were born and grew up a block apart.

My father was on the front lines in heavy combat for 114 days in the thick of those last days of the war in Europe. He was awarded his Silver Star for his heroic defense of Alsace France on January 24, 1945. At that point he would have been in Europe for only 2 or 3 months. Only a few months before he had been a petroleum engineer junior year student at Texas A&M.

As a 21-year-old, green, 2nd lieutenant, he was instrumental in turning the tide in the Battle of the Little Bulge, important in the defense of Alsace, France, for which he earned the Silver Star. He also earned two Bronze Stars in the short 3 or 4 months after that. Dad and his Company made raids behind enemy lines. He found and arrested Hitler’s secretary, and many other high-ranking Nazis, who were trying to hide in the Bavarian Alps, including the infamous Butcher of Paris, SS General Von Oberg, who was posing as a private.

As the Commander of his Company in the 222nd Regiment of the 42nd I.D., they advanced 450 miles from the Hardt Mountains of France to the border of Austria, along the way capturing the towns of Wurzburg, Schweinfurt, and Furth. His was the first unit to successfully cross the



Ken Ring (front right) in combat gear as his Company M of the 42nd Rainbow Division takes Wurzburg.
(Courtesy photo.)

Siegfried Line. Dad said that they knew the fighting was going to be intense when the men were given a steak dinner and a new pair of socks the night before. The Rainbow Division captured 51,000 German prisoners. When they were finally in the Tyrol and quartered in fancy hotels, Dad’s men found a cache of \$300 million in gold and art (just like the *Monument Men*). He also served as the Occupational Mayor of Achensee, Austria, in the Tyrolian alps. Finally, his unit was among those who captured Munich.

One of the highest profile things my father did was to command the forces that liberated Dachau through the front gates. I never heard the stories of those days from my father. But, I accidentally—at age 14 while looking for something in the attic—found the pictures my father had taken inside Dachau. Members of my family and myself have occasionally seen captured news footage of my father that was taken during the liberation. I know I had nightmares as a teen and young adult from the photographs. In fact, I can still see the pictures as if they are burned on my brain. I feel sure that my father had more than nightmares from that experience. The concentration camps were among the true horrors of that war. However, that kind of emotional reaction was handled differently by most WWII veterans.

Finally, my father moved to Vienna and became the Aide and bodyguard for General Mark Clark, the general over Austria. Among other things, dad organized and ran the Officer’s Club in Vienna for the General until he was discharged and returned home to mom and me.

In trying to imagine what veterans like my father must have gone through, I have tried to gather as much information as I could find about what my father lived through in the first few months after landing in Europe, the events that led to his Silver Star.

His unit landed in Marseilles in November 1944. It was called the worst winter in Europe in 100 years. The temperature dropped as low as 20 degrees below. Our troops were not prepared for the extreme cold. No one was, even the Germans, who at least had white snowsuit uniforms, were suffering. The bitter cold of that winter is one reason why the Russians defeated the Germans.

The landing and deployment of the Rainbow Division into the Western Front was supposed to be kept a big secret but somehow the Germans found out they were coming and were ready, waiting and actually taunting our young, totally green troops when the Battle of the Bulge started Christmas eve 1944.

The Germans were planning the last major offensive campaign on the Western Front in Europe, called Operation North Wind (*Unternehmen Nordwind*). It began on December 31, 1944 in Alsace Lorraine and ended on January 25, 1945. Hitler, himself, briefed his military command on December 28, 1944, three days prior to the launch of Operation North Wind. Hitler told his command that the goal of the offensive was to break through the lines of the US 7th Army and the French 1st Army in the Vosges mountains and destroy them. He wanted to liberate Alsace but more he wanted to “exterminate the enemy forces wherever we find them...destroy their manpower.” This last Battle of the Little Bulge, as some called it, was a month of some of the bloodiest fighting by the Americans in Europe.

Memorial Day Rerun: Our WWII Fathers

Winston Churchill called World War II's Battle of the Bulge "the greatest American battle of the war." Steven Spielberg impressed the 6-week ordeal on the popular imagination with the movie, *Band of Brothers*, which dramatized the attack on the village of Foy by three companies of the 101st Airborne Division, the Screaming Eagles. The 222nd I.D. fought alongside of the 101st.

Imagine the stress these young men were under. It is late days in the war in Europe. Our young troops are underdressed for the extremes of cold and wet. They have never faced combat and now they are facing two very experienced German army groups; one group was commanded by Reichsfuhrer-SS Heinrich Himmler, himself. Our young men sat in their foxholes, wet and freezing, with the foxholes forming a crust of ice on them, close enough to the Germans that they could hear them being whipped up to a battle frenzy with drugs, mostly crystal meth, while waiting for dawn.

Our troops were thinly stretched out over 68 miles, as General Eisenhower had sent any extra troops and supplies north to reinforce the main failing positions of the Battle of the Bulge. The Germans sent in 17 divisions, including several SS and Panzer units; the armored tanks were manned by some of the most fanatical of the SS troops; the 10th Panzer Grenadiers was a crack outfit, composed of some of Hitler's most fanatical followers from the Youth Movement.

The fighting, which started on December 31, 1944 was intense and our line had bulged as we retreated. The 222nd had been forced, because of casualties and the delay of reinforcements, to pull back up north from Strasbourg toward Haguenau to the French town of Neubourg where my father set up a defensive position on the south bank of the Moder River on January 21, 1945. Thus, at age 21 my father found himself the leader of Company M (heavy machine gun platoon) of the 222d Regiment of the 42nd I.D. He was a Company Commander because of field promotion after the death of Company M's commander in the earlier battle.

I have seen it written about the events of those days: "Further withdrawal was being planned; had it not been for the brilliant defenses of the 222nd."

At 1800 hours, the Germans began shelling the town of Neubourg, France in the Alsace. Patrols reported a build up of 2,000 Germans moving into attack position. The shelling continued for nearly 2 hours.

After a lull, the shelling began again and with it came the German infantry. The first wave bridged the narrow Moder River with wooden planks and struck at the positions of the 222nd.

My father was a crack shot and he had taken up a defensive position in a farmhouse basement, where he was lying on the snowy steps coming out of the basement, surrounded by sand bags with several carbines and several of his men behind him, reloading the carbine rifles and passing them up to him. It was night, about 20 degrees below; the roads were so covered with ice that men could not walk without slipping and falling. And, it was snowing hard. The men were tired from days and nights of almost constant moving and fighting.

My father ordered his men to hold their positions when the Germans penetrated the main line of resistance with a large force. The 222nd had no artillery support or tanks or tank destroyers. It was riflemen against self-propelled guns and armor. They were trapped in the basement with only turnips and schnaps to eat or

drink for three days. The Germans, dressed in white and nearly invisible in a snowstorm, were trying to storm the farm and clear them out so they could bring in the Panzer tanks. But, dad had blown three bridges that the tanks could cross on the Moder toward the Rhine. All night he lay in the snow and shot moving targets in the snowstorm. In the morning light, they saw that the enemy casualties were enormous; the Germans had withdrawn and were never able to capture the town of Neubourg.

During the night, my father had also gone out in the snowstorm, crossed enemy lines and repaired severed communication lines. He led the disorganized Rainbow riflemen in counterattacks in order to re-establish our lines. At one point in the several-day defense of Neubourg, he lost contact with one of his positions and he made his way into enemy territory and moved the machine gun to a new position. In the final analysis, my father spearheaded a defense of what

later proved to be the last offensive action ever launched by the German army on the western front in Europe.

For my father, as for so many others, he saw horrors and lived through things that we can only imagine today with the help of movies. He rarely spoke of it. He never went to therapy or claimed any mental or emotional disorder. Most of the true heroes I have met do not ever talk about what they did to be known by others as heroes. Maybe they don't even think of themselves as a hero. I don't know.

My father probably had what was called "combat fatigue" when he returned home. I really do not think he had PTSD. WWII vets did not react in the same way as veterans with PTSD do now. They came home from war, drank a bit too much, had an occasional nightmare but with family support and knowing they won and saved the world, they tried to put it behind them.

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An unidentified American soldier standing beside the bodies of SS personnel shot by US troops during the liberation of Dachau Concentration Camp, Germany, April 29-30, 1945. Ken Ring commanded the forces that liberated Dachau through the front gates. It was this group that discovered the Holocaust. (Photo from the National Archives, courtesy of C. Peter Chen, *WW II Database*.)

They typically did not talk about it much and did not even seek out other veteran groups. They felt that people did not want to hear about it. They did not want people to feel sorry for them. They did not want to be the hero who came back troubled by what he did over there and the people that he had bombed or killed.

Only in recent years have I realized that in my growing up years, I was often afraid of my father. He would become fiercely protective when his family was in danger and I can remember him spanking me when I came home crying that some kid had hit me. He spanked me and made me go back out and stand up for myself to the bully. He later explained and apologized saying that he saw many European children not know how to protect themselves and that he never wanted to see that happen to us if some foreign power were to invade our country. In those days, late 1940's and 1950's, people thought it was possible that America might be invaded.

I lost my father at the young age of 53. Many of those brave men died young. Some blame their early deaths on the amazing stress and horrors they endured and then mostly buried when they returned from the war. Although it is not easy to “re-member” the events of those days, it is with great love and honor that I remember my father; he was a great influence in my life.

Memorial Day Rerun: Our WWII Fathers

Gordon Nelson

Master Sergeant
20th Air Force, XX Bomber Command, HQ
China–Burma–India
by Dr. Julie Nelson

I don't think my father, Gordon Nelson, had any romantic ideas about war. Like all true Irishmen he told amusing stories about his experiences, which seemed to lighten what I always thought was a more melancholy undertone. But maybe that's just true of the Irish in general.

Dad (Gordon) was 19 when he signed up for the Mississippi National Guard in 1937. Coming from a poor, single mother family (his own father had taken off when he was small), his options for college were nil. He enlisted in November of 1940, before Pearl Harbor. He probably knew that the coming peacetime draft would pull him in. So, he might have signed up in order to go from the Army Infantry to the Air Corps (later renamed Air Force).

This now seems logical. My kid brother, Kevin, said that Gordon realized that 2nd Lieutenants and Sergeants in the Army Infantry “... were all being shipped to Europe battlefields and killed within two weeks on average. He said he was in line for that, so he switched to U.S. Army Air Corps which later was known as the Army Air Forces.”

Gordon's letters home to his mother were significant. “Those letters,” Kevin said, “were poignant and fascinating to read. Very telling. I started seeing a change in tone in GN's letters...something along the lines of

grim acceptance that he was doomed and there wasn't a damned thing he could do about it.”

Gordon had bomber training at MacDill Field in Tampa, Florida, and then went on to Smoky Hill Army Air Field in Salina, Kansas where he had his first experiences in B-29s. The subtext which was to color his war experiences.

In a letter home from Smoky Hill Gordon said that he and his buddies “were all a little droopy” because of a recent crash. A crewmember had come to his office and inquired about a fellow and Gordon said, “Who, that little Dago kid? He was killed in the crash.” Gordon wrote that the crewmember “...

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Gordon “Nero” Nelson on right with buddies Tom McDaniels (L) and “Buzz” Speyerer in 1939, Camp Shelby, Hattisburg, Mississippi. The three were with the National Guard. *(Courtesy photo.)*

Our WWII Fathers

continued

just slumped in shock and grief because they had become quick friends and poof, he was gone, dead.”

The dangerousness of the B-29s would follow him to the other side of the world.

B-29s were the very heavy bombers that were pushed into production by Roosevelt. While considered the most advanced bombers in the world at that time, they were not fully tested by the time they went into service. Because of their size and heavy loads, they were hard for pilots to handle. Takeoffs were risky. Boeing had rushed development and the B-29s had mechanical problems, including engines with a tendency to overheat.

Gordon served with the 20th Air Force, XX Bomber Command, at the Kharagpur Air Field, West Bengal, India. From Kharagpur, the bombers would double as transports and carry their own fuel and cargo, over the Himalayan Mountains, known as “the Hump.” There were so many crashes between India and the China air bases that pilots called it “The Aluminum Trail.”

But President Roosevelt wanted to bomb Japan and had promised Chiang Kai Shek that the U.S. would bolster the Chinese war efforts, and the B-29s were the best chance to reach the Japanese islands.

So, my father’s war stories included the occasional mission with him as a tail gunner, the high jinks of young men, living as best they could in the moment, and dealing with whose plane would be going down next. Toasting their dead and “turning down the cup” of the friend they’d all lost. The imagery Gordon could paint (he was a poet at heart) of India, and the irony he saw in everything, was, I think, how he coped.

The Japanese would strafe the airfield at Kharagpur and the men would dive into the ditches on either side of the runway, Gordon told Kevin. But, it was considered almost as dangerous to jump into a ditch because of the poisonous krait snakes and cobras that were often in the ditches.

The cobras were everywhere. They were so bad that tent members would hire a local “coolee” to bring his pet mongoose in and clear the tents before everyone went to bed.



A B-29 Superfortress crashed during an attempted emergency landing at Iwo Jima, Japan, April 1945. Two of our WWII Fathers encountered the B-29s during the war. (Photo from National Archives and U.S. Army Air Force. Courtesy of *WWII Database*.)

He joked that he was an overly anxious tail gunner, shooting so many rounds when they were in a fight, that the barrel would heat up, his crewmates yelling at him to stop.

In the latter part of the war, General Curtis LeMay took command and turned a failing B-29 program into a successful one, by flying low altitude missions that had more bombing accuracy, albeit even more risky.

My father liked and respected LeMay, and was part of the group that attended when LeMay inspected the facilities. During one inspection of the cafeteria, the General singled out my father and abruptly asked, “Sergeant! What do you think of this mess?” Gordon, confused about what LeMay was asking but not wanting to appear inattentive, fudged and answered, “Well, Sir, I guess it’s not too good?”

LeMay cursed and said, “I knew it! Get this damn mess up to snuff for these men.” And then LeMay walked off in disgust, thinking that Gordon had confirmed that the food, “the mess,” was substandard.

At a 1986 Christmas party we held in Baton Rouge, my father came face-to-face with a piece of his past. As the young Sergeant in India, he had spent his money collecting some “stones” that he bought from Indian jewelers. He had sent one, a star sapphire, home as a gift for his baby nephew. Forty years later it had found its way into a dinner ring for that nephew’s wife.

Recounting the events, Gordon said that the other stones had “disappeared,” which he thought was due to retaliation by a tent member. Gordon had taken the tent member’s beer (he had left him “Rupees 18”). He and his

buddies had needed the beer—they had drunk all of theirs—because Baldy Van Buren was in the base hospital with the flu and they went to visit him and would never go empty handed (without liquor) to see Baldy.

“In those days we thought we would live forever,” Gordon wrote to us. “But now it seems so long ago and far away that the little stone and the lives it touched has a strange poignancy about it. After thinking about it I’m reminded of the verse from the *Rubaiyat* that goes: “And not a drop that from our Cups we throw/ For Earth to drink of, but may steal below/ To quench the fire of Anguish in some eye/ There hidden—far beneath and long ago./”

“Can’t you hear temple bells, Indian children calling ‘Bakaheesh, Sahib.’ I can. Haven’t thought of it for 40 years, but I can see Baldy the practical joker, in the rickshaw race we had in Calcutta flinging handfuls of *appes* at the hundreds of kids running behind to bottle up the rest of us.”

“The war was winding down—or sort of,” Gordon wrote. “Some of us were being rotated back stateside to form a new 21st Air Corps and go West to Guam. Others were preparing to be flown across occupied China. To do this they flew long, long missions in the B-29s and on one of them to Mukden, Manchuria, Baldy’s plane had engine trouble and crashed.”

It was this tone, where the story ends in a minor key, that I always noticed. I do think my father was affected by the war, whether it was PTSD or Moral Injury or just the way that a young man would be affected when people around him keep dying.

He was not in regular combat like some—I believe he worked to avoid that. I think that my father flew only the required number of combat missions

But one night, late, while he was drinking too much, he began to talk about an event I’d never heard him talk about before. While guarding a prisoner, the man escaped. Dad shot at the man’s legs to stop him, but missed, and killed him. My dad began to cry, and then he started to sob, and he didn’t stop. I was stunned and felt helpless. I said something lame like, “It was an accident.” After a while, he finally stopped, wiped his eyes and, embarrassed, told me to ignore him, that he was being “silly.” The next day he refused to talk about it and acted as if nothing had happened.

Gordon was not any sort of hero, and would candidly say that he spent most of the war scared out of his wits. He came home in April 1945 and went to college on the G.I. bill and studied journalism and Shakespeare.

He married my mother and contributed four children to the baby boom and was normal, for him. He lived to 91, and was happy.

As far as I know, once he returned to the U.S., he refused ever to fly again. When my kid brother visited Ireland, Dad “treasured the vial of Irish dirt” Kevin brought back for him from Killarney, his hereditary home. Dad always wanted to see Ireland for himself, but he never did.

Our WWII Fathers

Soldier’s Heart by John W. Magee, Jr., Ph.D.

My Father, Warren Magee, never once talked to me about his combat experiences in World War II as a Marine Corps bomber pilot. Not once.

Warren Magee was the third of four boys born to Johnny and Vina Magee. His father, “Dr. Johnny,” was a true country veterinarian, and, during the Depression, often took payment in fruits and vegetables, and sometimes a chicken. Vina once told me the family history was one of “country folk.” It was not an apology.

The family lived on the outskirts of Brookhaven, Mississippi, but every summer Warren stayed on the farm of his maternal grandmother and her family. His Uncle Mac said Warren didn’t return home until it was “time for school and a haircut.”

My Father’s tales are likely typical for a child in the country during those times, but they almost always included Warren, himself, as “the butt of the joke.” Several family members told me that the incidents in Warren’s stories were just as they remembered them. Warren was a great storyteller, but he was not one for embellishing on the truth.



Lieutenant Warren Magee. (Courtesy photo.)

Warren wanted to be a veterinarian like his father, and a farmer like his Uncle Lamar. After high school, he started college in Pre-Veterinary and Agricultural Studies at Mississippi State University.

Warren was 20 years old, a full-time, sophomore-level, undergraduate student on December 7, 1941—the “date which will live in infamy”—when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. He learned of the bomb-ing that Sunday in the small country store of his uncle in Caseyville, Mississippi, less than 100 yards from Uncle Lamar’s 400-acre farm.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Warren left college and joined the Marine Corps. The course of his life changed forever, as it did for most everyone in his generation, including his three brothers—one of whom joined the Army Air Corps, another who was a glider pilot involved in the fighting of Europe in 1944, and another who joined the Merchant Marines.

My uncle, W.O., was a child during World War II, but later joined the military, and is a retired Air Force veteran. He married a younger sister of my mother, Billie, and they were very close to my father and mother throughout their lives, including many meals, fishing, and laughter. W.O. and Billie recently shared some of their memories with me for this article.

W.O. himself volunteered and served in Vietnam as a navigator on B-52 bombers during the Vietnam War. He viewed military service as an important duty and source of pride. After my father passed, he drove six hours from Abilene, Texas to Shreveport, for my entry and commission into the Air Force.

Uncle W.O. recalls my Father, Warren, as one of a group of young officers in World War II who were called “90-Day Wonders.” After Pearl Harbor, because of urgent need for officers, some were put through an intensive, condensed training period of 3 months. The term was sometimes used as derogatory, but by others

with affection. Of the 90-day training, W.O. says “if you survived it, you went on.”

Warren did survive the training, and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant, and then sent to train at Corpus Christi Naval Base, where he became a pilot. Information from “The Slipstream,” published by the Corpus Christi Naval Base after the war, indicates Warren was part of Squadron 5A, one of the earlier squadrons to go through Corpus Christi. According to W.O, Lieutenant Magee, at 5 feet, 8 inches tall was the ideal height for a pilot in the smaller bomber cockpits.

While in the Marine Corps, Warren boxed competitively. He won all fights but the last, which he lost on points. Early in that fight, his nose was broken. Warren said the hardest part of the broken nose was not the pain during the fight, but rather the fact that, despite the broken nose, he later had to complete high-dives into water as part of his training.

Warren was sent to the Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry, Point North Carolina, with Marine Air Craft Group 11 (“MAG 11”), 2nd Marine Air Craft Wing (“MAW”), under the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.

Cherry Point had an auxiliary pilot training station at Edenton, North Carolina, a small, picturesque town on a natural harbor from the Atlantic Ocean. Warren was a flight instructor there on B-25 Mitchell Bombers for Marines who would serve in the Pacific.

W.O recalls Warren telling him about one of the pilots-in-training who was exhausted from an extended wait on the runway in the heat before being cleared, and almost hit the control tower on takeoff.

It was at Edenton that Warren met my Mother, Sarah Russell, who reportedly broke a date with a Major to go out with Warren. Sarah was one of five daughters of Ms. Mamie, twice widowed. Uncle W.O., who grew up



Sarah and Warren Magee, sometime in 1944 or 45. (Courtesy photo.)

in Edenton, said “Warren got the prettiest girl in town.” Sarah used to say she first spotted Warren in church. Although Warren probably attended her church, and she may have spotted him there, they actually first “met” at the USO Club. My mother first told me about the USO near the end of her life. “He was so good looking,” she said of my Father, “and a good dancer.”

Sarah also told a story that Warren had said that on a specific day and time he’d fly over her family’s house. Sarah waited outside, until his bomber appeared and he dipped each wing as his “wave” to her. Warren was a young man preparing for war, but there had still been a little room for romance.

Warren liked to say they were married in December and their daughter, Susan, was born in January, omitting the fact that Susan’s birth occurred the following January, 13 months after the wedding.

Only months after their wedding, Warren was sent overseas to Okinawa for the remainder of the war. It was from Okinawa that he and his crew flew bombing missions until the war’s end.

My Father only told me one story that had occurred while he was in

the Pacific. It was a typical Warren story, and not a combat story.

Warren was leaving his plane when he saw a group of indigenous people in a circle, just off the runway. Curious, Warren walked over. The group had circled around a snake and one of them was trying to kill it with a long pole.

In college, Warren had earned extra money by catching snakes for the Biology department. He had been taught that the only poisonous snake with round pupils was the coral snake. This snake was clearly not a coral snake, so Warren moved inside the circle and grabbed the snake just behind the head. The people in the circle began yelling, which Warren interpreted as undeserved congratulations.

Then, still holding the snake, he began to think more about that rule. Realizing he wasn’t sure if this was the rule for “all” snakes, or just for snakes in the U.S., he walked outside of the circle and tossed the snake into the brush. He continued to receive congratulations, and, of course, later learned the snake was indeed quite poisonous. He said he never engaged in snake-catching on the island again.

Warren separated from the Marine Corps as a

Our WWII Fathers

Soldier’s Heart

by Dr. John Magee - continued

Captain after the end of the war in February 1946. Several Marine Corps Bombing Squadrons from Cherry Point maintain their own websites which list Marines killed and bombers lost in combat, but I have been unable to find details about the specific squadron in which he served in Okinawa. Uncle W.O. and Aunt Billie both indicate that Warren did not talk about his combat experiences, so the number of combat missions he flew, or specific events he experienced, are unclear.

After his military service Warren intended to return to college to become a veterinarian. But Mississippi did not have a Veterinary school and out-of-state admissions were very rare. An individual at a school in Alabama reportedly asked Warren for \$500 as a bribe for admission, but Warren refused. He never got into veterinary school.

In 1946, he started in the oilfield business, where he worked for 39 years. After his death, I learned he quit one job when they wanted to transfer him to Morgan City because he was concerned that my sister and I would not get a good education there.

Although he never became a veterinarian or a farmer, Warren continued to love animals and the outdoors all of his life. Uncle W.O. sometimes remarked that, if reincarnation really exists, then he wanted to come back once as “a Magee dog,” because he believed they were the most loved animals in the world.

Warren grew up Methodist, and Sarah Baptist, but my father did not believe that only one religion had it “all figured out.” When we first moved to Shreveport, my parents visited different churches, looking for the right fit. Eventually, they joined the First Presbyterian Church, and more importantly, they became part of a Sunday School Class. For years, I witnessed the importance of that class to my parents. Besides attending Sunday school, they ate together, played bridge, fished, and took trips. I still recall laughter as a regular feature of those times, even as I wondered how religious people could laugh so much.

It was some 30 to 40 years later, ten years after my father died, that I learned more of the “Sunday School” story. In the late 1990’s, I recognized the name of one of the men from my parents’ Sunday school class. When I met him, I learned he was a former POW from World War II. His plane had been shot down over Germany, but, because of his injuries, he first stayed with a German couple until he was well enough to go to the concentration camp. When he asked the family

why they gave him such care, they shared that their son was in combat somewhere, and they hoped he would receive similar care if he was wounded or captured. The wife of this former POW shared something that I had never known about the Sunday school class—every man in the class was a World War II veteran.

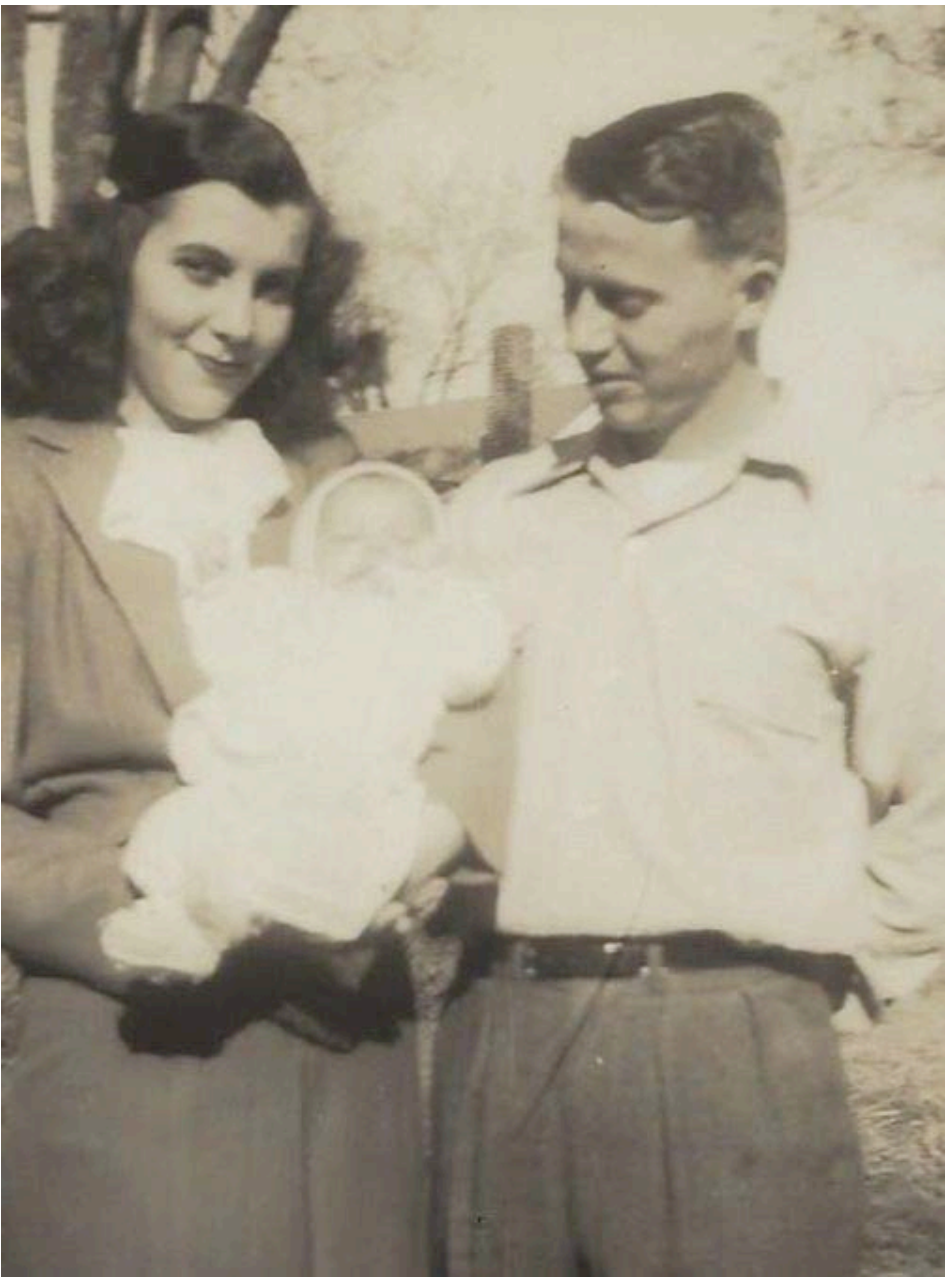
The class was like a family, and I’ve often wondered about the combat experiences of all of those other men in the class. The laughter that I heard as a child, and their obvious love for each other, means much more now, after learning about PTSD, and my 29 years clinical experience treating combat veterans. Ironically, I know more about the combat experiences of that ex-POW than I know about my own father’s experiences in the war.

My father died unexpectedly of a heart attack at age 64, one month before his retirement, and before I had earned my Ph.D.

It was only after his death that my Mother told me the one combat-related story she knew, of a time when Warren and his crew almost had to ditch his B-25 Bomber into the Pacific Ocean when returning to Okinawa after a mission. She had no details other than they almost did not make it back. I think Warren would have been the same person, regardless of his circumstances. I never heard him curse, ever. He never spoke ill of others because of race, age, sex, or religion. He was honest and ethical in all his relationships.

Warren never became a veterinarian, and never had a farm. Despite many reversals of fortune, I never heard my father complain about the unfairness of life, even though his early goals in life were not realized, and even with numerous major stressors and losses involving family and finances.

I don’t think my Father had PTSD, but he had a strong sense of doing what was right and facing things directly. He transmitted to me an awareness of his expectations, whether these came from the Marines or the war, or just my Father. These included standing up for what was right, even against bullies, and even at the cost of a fight.



Sarah and Warren Magee, March 3, 1946, holding daughter Susan on her two-month old “birthday.” Warren had been out of the military about one month when this was taken. *(Courtesy photo.)*

My father softened over the years, though he could still be tough. Somewhere along the way, the tough Marine country boy seemed different. He read poetry books I gave him, even though I know he much preferred other offerings. He did not judge me through my various phases (long hair, beard, leaving school, living with a girlfriend). He was amenable to change, even in himself.

A couple of years before his death, my father and I went fishing. I asked him about his life—it had turned out so differently from the one he had planned before World War II. He told me he was happy and had been happy, and believed things had turned out the way they were supposed to. He talked of the important things of his life—family, friends, the Sunday School Class, daily choices in life. He wondered if my sister and I would have received a good education if we had been living on a farm deep in rural Mississippi. He had once told me that you can “lose” almost anything you get in life, but not education.

After my father’s death, Uncle Mac told me a story about Warren’s last trip to Mississippi. While squirrel hunting somewhere deep in woods unfamiliar to my Father, he and Uncle Mac separated to hunt

alone. Later in the day, Mac realized he hadn’t heard Warren fire a shot all morning, and he went to find him.

Mac found Warren sitting on the ground with his back against a tree, looking up at the tall canopy of trees above, his rifle some distance away. Warren said that he had been so struck by the beauty around him that he just sat down to enjoy it, and he didn’t want to spoil it by hunting.

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Soldier’s Heart *by Dr. John Magee - continued*

Warren told Mac “If heaven’s supposed to be better than this, it must be some place.”

Two months later my Father passed away.

That day when we went fishing, when I asked about his earlier dreams, as he explained how he had been happy, even though he never got to be a country veterinarian or farmer, my Father also said, “Besides, try and picture your mom living way back in the woods.” I realize that Warren had his priorities right—he didn’t want to lose the prettiest girl in Edenton.

I’m sure my Father was grateful for the life he had, even if it wasn’t the life he planned. As a school boy, he chose his grandmother’s farm for the summers. As a young man, he chose to join the Marines, instead of continuing his studies. He chose not to pay a bribe to get into veterinary school. He made the choices he wanted to live with. I know he wouldn’t use the words I’m using, but I’d say he figured out what was important. Warren got the big things right, even if others wouldn’t see them as the big things.

One of the old terms for PTSD was “Soldier’s Heart.” In that time, some believed that the afflicted soldier was suffering from a form of heart-sickness for his home and family. I don’t think my Father had PTSD, but I think he had to overcome more body-blows than the average boxer, and he did so with quiet grace. Maybe for him, the term “Soldier’s Heart” would have meant more about the internal and external resources that helped him overcome life’s “slings and arrows” so he did not succumb to them.

After my father’s death, my sister Susan said that, even though our Father was often quiet, “You always knew he loved you.” I think there may be no greater inheritance to have from anyone.



The BABY BOOM: Warren Magee holding John Magee in August 1952. Lake Charles, Louisiana. Sister Susan is at bottom right and was born in 1946, the first year of the “Baby Boom.” More babies were born in 1946 that ever before, 3.4 million. In ’47 another 3.8 million were born. In John’s birth year, 1952, 3.9 million were born. It wasn’t until 1964 that the boom tapered off. The boomers make up 40 percent of the nation’s population. *(Courtesy photo.)*

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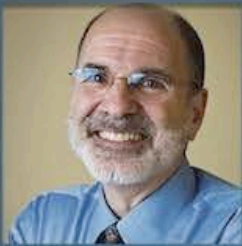
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Attend **Dr. Jack A Naglieri's** workshop at the LPA convention!

A Shrink at the Flicks

Take Me Home...Almost Heaven: A Review of *Alien: Covenant*

by Alvin G. Burstein, PhD

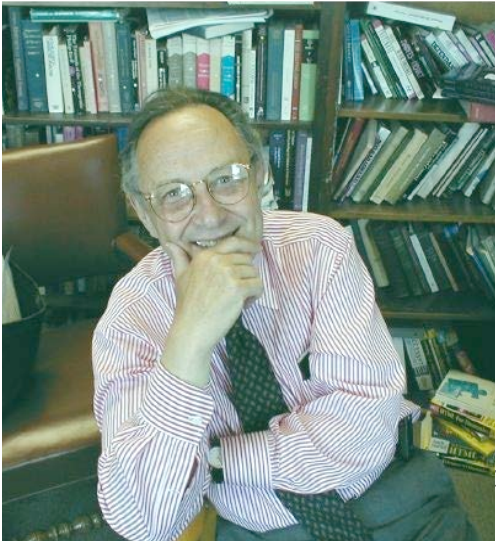
The film *Alien: Covenant* is a multi-layered experience. One level is the predictable body-bursting horror flick. But there is much more: a computer named Muthur that takes care of everything, the anomalous introduction into a sci-fi adventure of John Denver singing *Take Me Home* and an exploration of the evil twin theme. All these intertwine in a Gothic interpretation of parenthood and creation.

The film is one of the *Alien* sequence. It opens with a scene in which Peter Weyland, founder of a mega-technology firm is taking his new android creation for a trial run. On command, it walks, talks and plays the classics on a grand piano. Asked to name itself, the android looks up at another creation, Michelangelo's statue, David, and chooses that name for himself. Weyland promises David that one day, together, they will search for the creator of mankind.

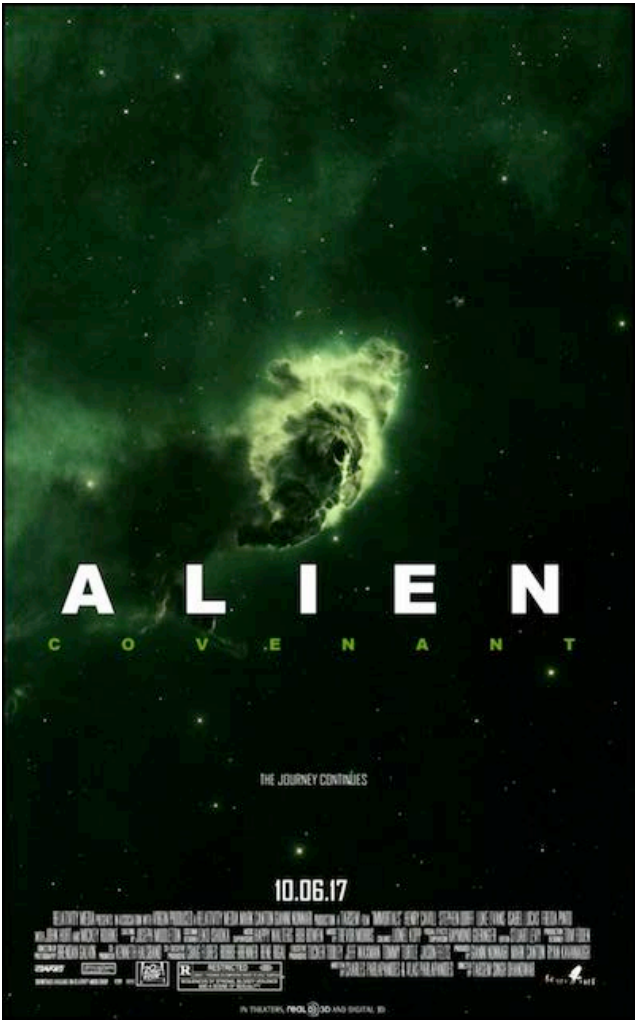
This a prelude the account of the 22nd century voyage of the colonization ship, *Covenant*, en route to a distant planet with several thousand colonists and a thousand embryos—and an android, Walter, a newer model of David, who, with Muthur, manages the ship. A violent neutrino storm damages the ship, flinging it off course, and killing many colonists as well as the ship's captain. After repairing the ship, the crew picks up an unexpected radio transmission from a near-by planet—John Denver singing *Take Me Home*.

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.



Deciding to investigate, the space ship approaches the planet and sends a shuttle with an exploring party that includes Walter. They find a planet that seems designed for humans—breathable air and lush vegetation, including wheat.

Appearances are deceptive. The seemingly supportive environment includes spores that invade the bodies of some of the explorers, creating xenomorphs, alien forms that quickly mature bloodily and painfully to erupt from their dying, involuntary hosts. In the battle with the aliens the shuttle is destroyed. Those remaining are met by David, Walter's predecessor, the only survivor of the earlier *Prometheus* mission, which, David tells them, ended in chaos when their ship crashed, accidentally releasing a bioweapon that killed the planet's native population.

Revealing the details of the ensuing complications would constitute a spoiler, but I must disclose that David's role as a rescuer is also deceptive. He has been experimenting at creating xenomorphic life. That sets off a battle between Walter, whose duty is to protect his human charges, and David whose interest is finding hosts for his "progeny".

Questions about creation and about motherhood are posed by the story. One might wonder if the bloody eruption of aliens from the body reflect a masculine fear of the essence of motherhood. And perhaps the exigency of current political struggles over abortion rights/wrongs is fed by similar fears.

On another level, the *Alien* series raises the questions about another kind of parenthood, the human creation of technology, and about evolution. Can technology evolve into a threat to humanity? Does humanity have a warrant to protection against a future in which it is replaced?

We began with a reference to the evil twin theme. Michael Fassbender's adroit portrayal of both David and Walter was anticipated in *Star Trek* by Brent Spiner's playing both of Dr. Soong's creations, the androids Data and Lore.

But the relationship between David and Walter has an erotic component revealed in David's teaching Walter to play his flute—almost embarrassingly clear symbolism—and his kissing him in the midst of their final struggle.

Walter and David, Abel and Cain, Jeckyl and Hyde, twins that can't co-exist. All these, and their attraction to each other, are literary expressions the persistence in all of us of disowned, disavowed elements of ourselves. Elements that, suppressed, can erupt without warning, bloodily.

Up-Coming Events

Louisiana Psychological Association Kicks Off Annual Convention June 2–3 in New Orleans; Features Naglieri, Davis, Tucker, Dohanich, & others

Jack A. Naglieri, Ph.D., Research Professor at the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, Senior Research Scientist at the Devereux Center for Resilient Children, and Emeritus Professor of Psychology at George Mason University, will present a workshop on Saturday, June 3, as part of the Louisiana Psychological Association’s Annual Conference, held this week, June 2–3 at the DoubleTree in Kenner.

Dr. Naglieri is a well-known teacher, researcher, and test developer. In this presentation Dr. Naglieri will describe a five-dimensional model of executive function (EF); intelligence (e.g., CAS2), observable behaviors (e.g., CEFI), social-emotional skills (e.g., DESSA); academic achievement (e.g., FAR); and impairment (e.g., RSI).

The session will include a discussion of the theory, assessment, and research relevance of tools that can be used to form a comprehensive assessment of Executive Functioning across these dimensions and a way to measure the amount of impairment an EF weakness creates. Benefits include a broad view of EF that can be used to guide assessment and improve academic, behavioral and social-emotional skills.

Naglieri’s work includes psychometric studies of tests such as the Wechsler Scales of Intelligence, Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, Cognitive Assessment System, and the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children; examination of race, gender, and ethnic differences in cognitive processing.

This year’s conference theme is “The Evolving Role of Today’s Psychologist,” and includes presentations by distinguished psychologists and psychological scientists from around the state.

Also presenting is Tom Davis, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychology, LSU and Director of the Psychological Services Center, will present “One-Session Treatment of Specific Phobias: An Introduction to Rapid Cognitive-Behavioral Exposure Therapy for Youth.” Dr. Davis is an international expert on the science of one-session CBT treatment. One of Dr. Davis’ books, *Intensive One-Session Treatment of Specific Phobias*, published by Springer, is considered to be the treatment manual for this approach. He is currently working with research scientists in the United Kingdom as part of the \$2 million research program and grant from the U.K. National Institute for Health Research on CBT approaches.

Susan Tucker, PhD, Clinical Psychologist and Warden, Bossier Parish Medium Security Facility will present “*How to Design Complex, Comprehensive Change Programs.*” Tucker developed the Steve Hoyle Intensive Substance Abuse Program which has earned national recognition for excellence. In 2016 the Louisiana Legislature commended Tucker and her team in a House Concurrent Resolution, pointing to multi-million dollar cost savings for the state. She has been honored by the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University.

Gary Dohanich, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Psychology, Program in Neuroscience, Tulane University, will present, “*Updates in the Neuroscience of Stress: ‘What’s Happening Inside My Brain?’*” Dr. Dohanich is the co-founder of Tulane’s major and masters programs in Neuroscience, and is the current director of Tulane’s doctoral program in Neuroscience. He teaches courses in Stress and Trauma, Psychopharmacology, and Behavioral Endocrinology. He is the recipient of Tulane University’s highest teaching awards.

Other distinguished presenters include Dr. Janet Matthews, Dr. Chris Leonhard, Dr. Marc Zimmerman, Dr. Alan Taylor, Dr. Sean Ransom, Dr. Thomas J Maestri, Dr. Erin Reuther, Dr. Christopher Parkinson, and others.

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