

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

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Psychologist and retired Air Force
Lieutenant Colonel, Dr. Tammy Savoie
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"Your mission, should
you choose to accept
it...."

"There are two levels
on which to enjoy this
film. The first is its
predictable
employment of the
features that
characterize the whole
series ..."

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LSBEP Sends Blistering Critique to Psych Boards in US & Canada

ASPPB Rescinds Decision to Make EPPP-2 Mandatory

On August 17, President of the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB), Sharon Lightfoot, PhD, announced that the ASPPB Board of Directors voted to rescind their 2017 decision, a decision which would have essentially mandated a second exam for those seeking a license in psychology.

"Based on your input this summer and our own priority-setting," wrote Lightfoot, "the ASPPB Board of Directors on Sunday August 12, passed a motion to rescind our decision of August 2017 and announced to you in October that made the Enhanced EPPP (including both knowledge and skills portions) as the single licensure exam offered by the ASPPB."

"We will continue toward launch of the Enhanced EPPP in 2020," Lightfoot said, "and make it available to states and provinces interested in serving as early adopters. We are lifting the

requirement for use of the Enhanced EPPP and are lifting the deadline for implementation."

Lightfoot's announcement came after a blistering critique of ASPPB's methods, sent July 20 on behalf of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP)

and signed by Executive Director Jaime Monic.

The letter listed numerous criticisms and was addressed to the ASPPB Board of Directors, ASPPB members, and copied to the administrators at state psychology boards across the US and Canada.

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Dr. Darla Burnett (L) and Dr. Amy Henke, at past LSBEP meeting. Dr. Henke is key figure in those voicing concerns about EPPP expansions.

Gov. Edwards Joined Pres. Trump and Other Governors to Discuss Criminal Justice Reform

On August 9, Gov. Edwards joined President Trump, other state governors, and White House cabinet members in a roundtable discussion about the positive impact that criminal justice reform is having across the nation.

Gov. Edwards explained to the President that the package of bipartisan criminal justice reform legislation that Edwards signed into law in 2017 was working.

"In Louisiana, we're proud of the work we've done," said the Governor. "It's been sentencing reform, prison reform, and a real focus on reentry and for the first time in 20 years, I can tell you Louisiana does not have the highest incarceration rate in the nation today."

"We are reinvesting the savings into our reentry program and also into the victim services. And so we are excited about what we're doing and looking forward to sharing that with you," according to the press release.

A report in the *Advocate* by Elizabeth Crips noted that Trump and others at the

meeting spoke about the need to enhance job and skills training programs in prisons, and to focus on how to prepare people to be productive citizens when they get out. "Our first duty is to our citizens, including those who have taken the wrong path but are seeking redemption and a new beginning," Trump said. "That's people that have been in prison, and they come out and they're having a hard time."

According to Gov. Edwards' press release, he was the only democratic governor attending. Also attending were Gov. Matt Bevin (R-Kentucky), Gov. Phil Bryant (R-Mississippi), Gov. Nathan Deal (R-Georgia), Gov. Doug Burgum (R-N. Dakota), Atty. General Ken Paxton (R-Texas), Atty. General Pam Bondi (R-Florida), Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta, Energy Secretary Rick Perry, Jared Kushner and other White House staffers.

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Editorials and Opinions

Standing Up for Our Standards

by Times publisher, J. Nelson

Dr. Amy Henke's efforts to stop the ASPPB (Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards) from forcing an additional exam on licensee candidates, brings to mind Margaret Mead's famous saying, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Last month, the President of the ASPPB Board of Directors, Sharon Lightfoot, announced that the association had decided not to force the new test—and the 100% fee increase—down the throats of the state boards and their candidates, after all. (See story page 1.)

Lightfoot's letter came after a blistering critique from the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP) sent to the ASPPB Board of Directors, their members, and all the state board administrators across the US and Canada.

You wouldn't want to be on the receiving end of such a critique. While generally politely stated, the criticisms struck at judgment, competence and the integrity of the ASPPB.

While signed by the LSBEP Executive Director Jaime Monic, anyone following this story knows the David behind this slingshot is Dr. Amy Henke.

In motives that began as more altruistic than righteous indignation over testing standards, Henke started working against the additional exam, called the EPPP-2, back in July 2016. She and the Early Career Psychologists Committee of the Louisiana Psychological Association put forth a resolution to oppose the second testing hurdle, and to ask ASPPB, APA, other state associations and licensing boards to oppose the additional test, saying it was a burdensome, ineffective, and "unnecessary hardship on our trainees and students."

Of course nothing much happened. ASPPB continued to brush off objections.

But Dr. Henke kept the home fires burning and gradually gathered together a coalition of people, and those people began to talk, and to research, and to dig deeper. As Henke's community newspaper, the *Times* reported the news she was making and this included some investigative reporting (Whatever They Say It's About..., Vol 7, No 9). The picture got worse and worse.

In late 2017, ASPPB added gasoline when someone at ASPPB—it is unclear who exactly—decided to play hard ball and force the test by combining it with the current one. A few other states, New York for one, joined the rebel forces.

What Dr. Henke has done is to get enough people to stop and pay attention, and uncover a serious set of problems at ASPPB—it's built in conflict of interest, role confusion, and problems in testing standards, all in our own backyard.

I'm reminded of another of our colleagues, Michael Chafetz, and his struggle to get assessment methods updated at SSA. Kudos to our colleagues who put standards of psychological science above political expedience, leisure, and self-interests, who remember that we are unique, both a science and a profession, and it carries a duty.

It's not easy being us.

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

Guest Editorial

Clinical Psychology and Honky-Tonk

by Alvin G. Burstein

In 1982 Logan Wright was president of the American Psychological Association's Division 12 (Clinical Psychology). His presidential address was entitled *Please Don't Tell My Mother I'm a Clinical Psychologist—She Still Thinks I Play Piano in a Brothel*. It was a witty, heartfelt rant about clinical psychology's poor standing as a profession as compared to medicine. Wright attributed that failure to the proliferation of for profit schools for psychology practitioners and the absence of clear, enforceable standards for what constitutes doctoral training in clinical psychology.

Wright's address did not remark on an important difference in the evolution of medical education and that for psychology practitioners, a difference that has had important consequences.

Until the 20th century, medical training in the United States was largely carried out in proprietary schools owned by practicing physicians, following the model of apprenticeship training. In 1910, Abraham Flexner's Carnegie Foundation report detailed the variability and shortcomings of that situation, precipitating a migration of medical training into universities and a pattern of pre-medical undergraduate university studies.

Clinical Psychology's story is different. That story begins in speculations by the philosophers of antiquity about the nature of things, including human nature. These ancients argued views of how life should be lived, but the views were not research based.

Formal research in psychology began in the university. The first psychological laboratory was founded by someone who did not call himself a psychologist, Wilhelm Wundt. He established the laboratory at the University of Leipzig in 1879. His first students did not call themselves psychologists either. They earned doctoral degrees in philosophy or physiology. Their focus was not on how to live well nor on healing, but on how to objectively note, i.e., to measure, the contents of consciousness.

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The Psychology Times

Member, Louisiana Press Association

Published monthly
by Nelson News, LLC.

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We welcome ideas for news, features, Letters to the Editor, photos, and other material related to psychological community of Louisiana.

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Corrections & Clarifications

We did not receive corrections for last month. Send your corrections to:
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LSBEP Sends Blistering Critique to Boards in US & Canada

ASPPB Rescinds Decision to Make EPPP-2 Mandatory

Continued

“LSBEP does not believe that data exists demonstrating that psychologists are not already held to high standards of competence,” wrote Monic. “The data that exists in terms of complaints and disciplinary actions toward psychologists also does not support the theory that competency problems abound in the field of psychology. In fact, ASPPB’s own data regarding complaint patterns notes that ‘Incompetence’ is not even among the top 10 reasons psychologists were disciplined in 2016 (the most recent year of date reported). Moreover, reported disciplinary action (for any reason) has steadily decreased since 2013.”

“Nationwide, ASPPB reported that only 12 licenses were revoked in both 2015 and 2016,” Monic said. “These numbers are exceedingly low and do not suggests that public safety is in question. Therefore, LSBEP is not convinced that another exam is justified by the current data. Prior to instituting additional barriers to the process of licensure by the LSBEP, clear rationale must be presented for their necessity.”

The letter also noted that there is a strong anti-regulatory climate in the country and that Board members are concerned that additional barriers to practice would draw the attention of Louisiana legislators. They also criticized the idea put forth by the ASPPB that additional testing for psychologists would bring the professional psychology in line with medical training, saying that these two professions are inherently different.

Monic, on behalf of the Board, also pointed out concerns with validity and test construction. “Psychology has long held itself as the profession with the most expertise surrounding test design and construction. We are uniquely qualified to create and implement assessments. We are trained that tests are not used prior to establishing validity and reliability. Changing statutes and rules preemptively before we know that the test is necessary and valid is not prudent and would prevent us from choosing another, perhaps better, exam from another vendor.”

The authors also criticized ASPPB’s role and reminded them that they are not a regulating body and have no jurisdiction in Louisiana, and that the decision is “...an overstep.”

“We are concerned that ASPPB has lost sight of their original mission, which from this board’s understanding was limited to facilitating communication between various member jurisdictions,” Monic and the LSBEP pointed out, and that mandatory decisions on EPPP-2 do not fit this role but rather the role of a vendor providing a product.

The expansion of the current licensing exam, called the EPPP-2, has been a source of controversy in Louisiana and for some other state boards.


In 2016, ASPPB CEO, Dr. Stephen DeMers, told the state boards that the ASPPB Board of Directors approved the development and implementation of a second examination to assess competency-based skills. Through 2016 and 2017 the new “skills” test was promoted as a voluntary addition to the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP).

Through 2016 and 2017 objections to the EPPP-2 mounted, mostly from student and early career psychologist organizations. In Louisiana, Dr. Amy Henke, then a Director on the Executive Council of the Louisiana Psychological Association (LPA) and Co-Chair of the LPA Early Career Psychologists Committee, put forth a Resolution to oppose the EPPP-2 for Louisiana. The Resolution passed unanimously.

However, then, in a surprise move, the ASPPB Board voted to make the new test mandatory. In late 2017 Dr. DeMers announced that the EPPP-2 was no longer going to be voluntary and that the price would increase from \$600 to \$1200 for the two sections.

Issues of need and statistical validity have been concerns for Dr. Henke, the state psychology board, and the state psychological association. She took up the banner for the young doctoral graduates, who will bear the financial and emotional burdens of the proposed new test. Other LPA members began looking closely at the scientific need for the new test and also the methodology. “There is no evidence that the public is facing some sort of previously unheard of crisis in

Cont’d next pg



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July 20, 2018

Board of Directors
Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards
P.O. Box 3079
Peachtree City, GA 30269

Re: Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP)

Dear ASPPB Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (LSBEP). The members wish to thank Dr. DeMers for attending our April meeting. We appreciate ASPPB’s efforts to educate and clarify aspects the development of a second exam of the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP).

The following concerns remain for the LSBEP:

1. The LSBEP must ensure that any changes and additional barriers to licensure are supported by data suggesting necessity for protecting the public. LSBEP does not believe data exists demonstrating that psychologists are not already held to high standards of competence. The data that exists in terms of complaints and disciplinary actions towards psychologists also does not support the theory that competency problems abound in the field of psychology. In fact, ASPPB’s own data regarding complaint patterns notes that “Incompetence” is not even among the top 10 reasons psychologists were disciplined in 2016 (the most recent year of date reported). Moreover, reported disciplinary action (for any reason) has steadily decreased since 2013. Nationwide, ASPPB reported that only 12 licenses were revoked in both 2015 and 2016. These numbers are exceedingly low and do not suggest that public safety is in question. Therefore, LSBEP is not convinced that another exam is justified by the current data. Prior to instituting additional barriers to the process of licensure by the LSBEP, clear rationale must be presented for their necessity.
2. Louisiana, and the rest of the country, is currently experiencing a strong anti-regulatory climate. LSBEP remains concerned that any additional barriers to practice would be viewed as marketplace restriction. LSBEP strongly believes Louisiana legislators would disapprove of additional hurdles restricting practice, and that sufficient data does not exist to support the necessity of additional hurdles.
3. ASPPB suggested that the addition of the EPPP-2 (or, the “Enhanced EPPP”) would bring the profession of psychology in line with medical training. It is the opinion of the LSBEP that psychologists are inherently different from physicians. Moreover, from a financial standpoint, the starting salary and potential earning power of a psychologist is far less than the average physician. LSBEP has concerns that an additional test (with accompanying fees) would result in an undue burden for early career professionals, who carry the most debt and have the least earning power. Any comparison between licensing test fees and physicians needs to be qualified by

Phillip Griffin, Ph.D. Chair	Jesse Lambert, Psy.D., M.P. Vice Chair	Koren Boggs, Ph.D. Member	Amy M. Henke, Psy.D. Member	Leah J. Crouch, Psy.D. Member	Jaime T. Monic Executive Director
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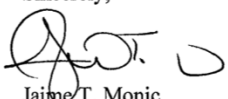
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acknowledging this salary discrepancy. The LSBEP does not support changing the field’s licensing path based on the model of another profession.

4. Psychology has long held itself as the profession with the most expertise surrounding test design and construction. We are uniquely qualified to create and implement assessments. We are trained that tests are not used prior to establishing validity and reliability. Changing statutes and rules preemptively before we know that the test is necessary and valid is not prudent and would prevent us from choosing another, perhaps better, exam from another vendor.
5. ASPPB is a vendor providing a product (EPPP) for states to use for their licensing exam. ASPPB is not a regulating body and has no jurisdiction in Louisiana to make decisions regarding licensing. Further, the role of advocating for the profession is that of national, state or regional professional organizations/associations. LSBEP considers ASPPB’s ongoing attempts to insert themselves into the regulation and practice of psychology an overstep. We are concerned that ASPPB has lost sight of their original mission, which from this board’s understanding was limited to facilitating communication between various member jurisdictions. Currently, ASPPB states that their mission includes “offering” products and “enhancing” services. However, it appears that ASPPB will market the EPPP-2 as a mandatory addition to the already existing EPPP-1. LSBEP has concerns that this will not allow individual member jurisdictions the ability to choose from a vendor which products they feel are necessary to incorporate into their licensing procedures.
6. Removing a state’s jurisdictional authority to determine who can sit for the EPPP is unacceptable for Louisiana. LSBEP’s current statutes read that applicants must be approved to take the EPPP by the LSBEP. LSBEP does not have the authority to circumvent its statutes. Further, LSBEP recently revised its statutes and rules in 2015 to create a provisional license and allow for early admittance (after the completion of one year of supervised practice) to the EPPP. LSBEP does not see a need to change this statute or allow people seeking initial licensure in Louisiana to obtain entry to the licensing exam without approval from the board. In fact, LSBEP agrees with statements made by internship training directors, that the time it will take for an intern to study and prepare for the EPPP would distract from their internship training.
7. LSBEP also agrees with previous concerns presented by New York state regarding the process of this test development. LSBEP does not feel the process has included direct member jurisdiction involvement. LSBEP has not been asked at any time to provide feedback on whether an addition to the licensing exam is necessary.

In closing, LSBEP appeals to ASPPB, whose mission it is to support its member boards, and not as a vendor providing a product (EPPP) for states to use for their licensing exam. As current customers of this product, we strongly urge ASPPB, to offer the EPPP-2 as an optional test that states can contract for on an as-needed basis.

Sincerely,



Jaime T. Monic
Executive Director

cc: BARC Listserv

ASPPB Rescinds Decision

Continued

terms of safety from currently practicing psychologists,” said Henke, who currently serves on the LSBEP.

This past April Dr. DeMers met with LSBEP members and representatives of LPA and others about the objections. After the meeting, Dr. Kim VanGeffen, LPA Past-President and current Chair of the Professional Affairs Committee for LPA, said, “Dr. DeMers acknowledged that, currently, there is not really any research on the validity of the EPPP-2.

“The EPPP2 committee believes that this exam has face validity and content validity,” VanGeffen said. “They are satisfied that these types of validity are acceptable for the EPPP2. There do not seem to be any plans to obtain predictive validity nor does the EPPP2 committee believe that establishing this type of validity is necessary,” she said.

Dr. Marc Zimmermann, past LSBEP board member and Chair of the LPA Medical Psychology Committee, also attended DeMers’ meeting. “I think the idea of measuring a professional’s skills before turning him/her loose on the public is a good idea. I do not think this attempt hits the mark,” Zimmermann said. “When the Board does oral examinations we come closer to this by allowing the person to provide reasoning for their projected behaviors.”

“He [Dr. DeMers] stated that there is no predictive validity,” said Zimmermann. “He also threw in that none of the national tests had predictive validity. He reported that content validity was the accepted standard because a test with predictive validity could not be constructed.”

“He said several times that they were just a vendor, but they have put themselves in the position of being the only vendor,” said Dr. Zimmermann, and it impressed him that, “... DeMers had the temerity to try to sell us something that does not meet the standard that psychological tests being published are expected to have.”

In Dr. Lightfoot’s announcement, she wrote, “our goal is to provide the

best possible resource to you to evaluate your candidates. All jurisdictions will continue to receive detailed information about the nature, content, validity, and utility of the Enhanced EPPP as that information becomes available during 2020 and beyond.”

The ASPPB is a private, non-profit, 501(c) tax-exempt corporation located in Tyrone, Georgia. The company states its mission is to “Facilitate communication among member jurisdictions about licensure, certification, and mobility of professional psychologists.”

ASPPB’s main income producing product is the national exam for psychologists, which brings in about \$5,000,000 in gross sales each year. They have a few other products, such as the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT), a service to coordinate psychologists working across state lines. In 2016 they listed assets of \$8,954,240.

The “members” are about 65 representatives from regulatory boards from across the United States and Canada. The boards pay dues to be a member of ASPPB.

While many members are government officials, ASPPB does not follow open meetings laws. Deliberations and decisions are private. “If you are not a member or staff of an ASPPB Member Psychology Regulatory Board or an individual member, you are not eligible to access this section of our website,” they write. Their conferences are also members only.

The company it also owns the intellectual property rights to the EPPP and the data generated by the testing program, which they appear to have acquired in or around 2013 from PES.

ASPPB officials said that the change was “mutually beneficial because ASPPB can now provide a simplified agreement that is more specific to the needs of psychology licensure boards. In addition, the renewal of contracts is expected to be more efficient...” And, “Finally, as voting members of ASPPB, each jurisdiction exercises more oversight of this important examination service by contracting directly with ASPPB for examination services.”

Over the last two years, Henke and others have also pointed to multiple hurdles that candidates



Currently an LSBEP board member, Dr. Amy Henke has been key in better understanding the issues and problems surrounding the EPPP-2.

already must clear, including two years of supervision, a written exam, oral exam, background check, and jurisprudence exam. Additionally, the law allows the board to require additional physical and psychological assessments whenever needed, Henke has pointed out.

However, Dr. Emil Rodolfa, involved with test development at ASPPB, has said he questions if these standards are enough, saying that supervisors have “... difficulty providing accurate evaluations of their supervisees to others who may have to evaluate the supervisee’s competency.”

Dr. Henke has said, “I am particularly concerned about

regulatory boards encroaching ownership of training standards. The goal of a regulatory board, in my personal opinion, is to provide the least restrictive amount of guidelines possible in order to protect the safety of the public.”

Dr. Rodolfa disagrees and said, “Licensing boards have a mandate to ensure that the professionals they license are competent. Competence is comprised of the integrated use of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.”

[Editors Note: The Times has reported on this topic over a number of years. See reports in past issues, Vol 7, No. 6, No. 5, No. 8, and No. 9, and Vol. 8, No. 12, and Vol. 9, No. 5, available on our website.]

Credit Raters, Standard & Poor, Remove Louisiana from Negative Watch List

Standard & Poor, one of the the world’s top credit rating agencies, wrote that they are removing Louisiana from the negative watch list. The rating has important effects on business, industry and government, including universities.

The Governor’s Office put out a press release thanking those responsible. “We knew it would not take long for the credit rating agencies to take notice of the bipartisan work we did during the last special session to stabilize Louisiana’s budget,” said Gov. Edwards.

“Today’s announcement from S&P is further evidence that what we did was right for Louisiana. For too long, our state lacked the stability and predictability we needed, but those days are over. Thanks to the work of a bipartisan group of legislators, we have a stable budget that still allowed us to reduce the tax burden on the people of Louisiana by more than \$550 million. We still have a long way to go, but with our economy growing, more people finding work, and our commitment to improve health outcomes and access to education, Louisiana is finally headed in the right direction.”

Gov. Edwards Joined Pres. Trump and Other Governors to Discuss Reforms

Continued

Gov. Matt Bevin of Kentucky, commented, "The most powerful thing about this... I look at guys like John Bel Edwards in Louisiana, represents a different party than I do in Kentucky in terms of our political affiliation. This is something that we are very much of like-mind on. I think this transcends anything political."

Energy Sec. Rick Perry said, "I want to share with these governors around here; every one of them is courageous..."

Just after the meeting, Gov. Edwards gave President Trump a letter detailing Louisiana's efforts, said the release.

The Governor wrote, "For nearly twenty years, Louisiana was known as the nation's incarceration capital. Our imprisonment rate was nearly double the national average. We were spending roughly \$700 million annually on corrections, more than any other line item except education and healthcare, but our communities were not safer for it...."

And, "With the technical support from The Pew Charitable Trusts, we convened a bipartisan task force and spent a year scrutinizing our correctional policies and practices. In June of 2017, I signed into law the most expansive criminal justice reform package in Louisiana's history...Republicans, Democrats and Independents, as well as the business and religious community, came together to pass these historic reforms."

The Governor invited the President to tour the State Penitentiary at Angola and see efforts to reform the state's criminal justice system.

"I believe you will gain a great deal of insight by visiting Louisiana State Penitentiary and I look forward to welcoming you to Louisiana on behalf of the people I serve," Edwards wrote in

the letter given to Trump. "The reentry programming services at LSP (Louisiana State Penitentiary) are key examples of how we plan to utilize the savings from our reforms to better prepare those being released from our prison system. In fact, the first year savings is dedicated specifically to the five parishes that generate nearly 50% of Louisiana's prison admissions..."

Also according to the report by Crisp, Governor Edwards joined other Democratic governors in Colorado recently and discussed divisive politics and ways to unite people. "Folks are just anxious," the Aspen Daily News quoted Edwards as saying Friday at the Aspen Institute event. "We ought not to vilify anyone. I don't talk about Trump backers as crazy or racist."

The justice reform efforts have not been without controversy. Critics point to the two individuals who are now accused of murder and others who have been rearrested. District attorneys are some of the most vocal skeptics, according to various sources.

Some estimate that as many as 22 percent are now back in the justice system, according to the *Advocate*. The Department of Corrections disputes that figure as inflated. "I'm not sure where the DAs are getting their information from," said the head of Corrections, James LeBlanc. "Our numbers are not anywhere close to what they are saying."

Dr. Susan Tucker, clinical psychologist and the Assistant Warden at the Bossier Parish Medium Security Facility, has explained the significance of comprehensive psychological programs in the corrections and justice system.

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 to the state because of shorter incarceration times of those offenders who participated in the psychological programs designed by Tucker.

Dr. Raman Singh, previous Medical Director at Corrections, pointed out the reasons for over-incarceration in Louisiana. Based on a 2016 Louisiana Legislative Auditor's review Singh said the top reasons were mandatory sentences and habitual offender laws, high rates of local incarceration without treatment programs, and "not addressing issues driving criminal behavior such as substance and mental illness."

Jails and prisons have a disproportionately high number of persons with mental health issues and people with a serious mental illness. He noted that of the mentally ill in society, greater than 40 percent have been arrested and the majority of these are brought in for minor offenses. Those with mental illness spend two to five times longer in jail.

There is a complex interplay of multiple societal factors stemming from problems in education, stressed family structures, socio-economic challenges and lack of job opportunities. The unemployment rate in the mentally ill adults in Louisiana is 88.3 percent.

And while 16 percent of the DOC prison population has been diagnosed with a serious mental illness, 82 percent are diagnosed with a substance use disorder.



Governor Edwards met with the President and other Governors from around the country to discuss criminal justice reforms. Louisiana no longer ranks at the very bottom in incarcerations. See the clip of Governor Edwards at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epl3HpmlZ2Q&feature=youtu.be>

APA to Develop Blueprint for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Psychology

The Board of Educational Affairs at the American Psychological Association (APA) will work on developing a plan for APA to accredit master's programs in health service psychology, said the association this week.

The memo stated that the APA Council of Representative decided in August 2017 to study options and issues.

This past March the Council of Representatives voted to pursue the accrediting of master's programs. According to the recent announcement, the "Council directed staff and governance, in particular the Board of Educational Affairs, to take steps to develop an accreditation system."

The Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) has formed a task force. The task force shall be charged to outline a plan by which APA could pursue development of an accreditation system for master's programs in health service areas (clinical, counseling, school) of psychology."

Goals are: 1) Developing a statement that broadly delineates the scope of accreditation for training at the master's level as contrasted with the current scope at the doctoral level; 2) Prioritizing possible pathways for APA to establish accreditation of master's programs in psychology; and 3) Identifying the necessary expertise for the accreditation decision-making body.

The state affiliate for APA, the Louisiana Psychological Association, has also developed a task force, chaired by Dr. Larry Dilks, and has been studying the issues, according to several sources.

Training for Mental Health

First Evaluations Completed by Blue Ribbon School Safety Team

Gov. John Bel Edwards joined State Police Col. Kevin Reeves and other education and law enforcement officials announced that the first round of assessments by the Louisiana Blue Ribbon Commission on School Safety have been completed. The commission was created earlier this year to evaluate the safety measures currently in place and determine the steps necessary to improve school security. The on-site assessments were conducted by Louisiana State Police (LSP), sheriffs, local law enforcement and the Louisiana Fire Marshal's Office at public, private and charter schools.

"Evaluating and improving the safety of our schools is paramount for a successful school year, and it's something all of us including our students, teachers, parents and communities are concerned about," said Gov. Edwards.

With the assistance of stakeholders, LSP has successfully applied for two federal grants including the COPS School Violence and Prevention Program (SVPP). The SVPP will provide up to 75 percent funding for improved school safety measures that among other things will provide for improvement in security, coordination and training for local law enforcement officers, metal detectors and emergency technology. The Bureau of Justice Assistance STOP School Violence Threat Assessment and Technology Reporting Program will address the following:

- Training school personnel and students to prevent student violence
- Developing and operating anonymous reporting systems against threats of school violence, including mobile telephone applications (apps), hotlines, and websites.
- Developing and operating school threat assessments and crisis intervention teams to coordinate with local law enforcement.
- Specialized training for school officials in responding to individuals with mental health issues who may impact school safety.

LSU Health Shreveport, Ochsner Health Meet with North La Legislators

On August 29, leadership representing the Division of Administration, the Governor's Office, LSU Health Shreveport and Ochsner Health System held meetings with north Louisiana legislators specifically to provide updated details on the intended public-private partnership between LSU Health Shreveport and Ochsner Health System.

This joint venture is critically important to the north Louisiana legislative delegation and the constituents and communities they represent, noted the announcement from the Governor's Office. Participating members of this new alliance are confident that their efforts will result in strengthened clinical care, increased patient access, enhanced medical education and expanded research opportunities, said the release.

The agreement reflects a 50/50 partnership between LSU Health Shreveport and Ochsner with a shared vision for advancing healthcare and medical education in north Louisiana.

Please welcome Heather Pedersen, PhD to the community!

Dr. Pedersen is a clinical neuropsychologist with experience assessing memory disorders, dementia, multiple sclerosis, and other neurocognitive problems. She will be joining us at Algiers Neurobehavioral Resource, LLC in May 2018 when she moves here from Arizona.



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Q&A with Dr. Tammy Savoie Candidate in 1st Congressional District

Dr. Tammy Savoie, licensed psychologist and retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, is running in the 1st Congressional District of Louisiana for U.S. Representative and going straight up against the well-funded, incumbent U.S. Rep. Steve Scalise.

Savoie is not shying away from the challenge at all, but facing into the effort with a positive and upbeat local campaign. She has been called the most viable candidate to challenge Scalise—a view that could be related to her long list of credentials and achievements.

Savoie is psychologist with a doctoral degree from Emory and an MBA, and has served 38 years in the military including the Air National Guard and Air Force. She has served in the U.S., Japan, Afghanistan, and the U.K.

In 2016, she retired as a Lieutenant Colonel and now provides mental health services to veterans and the Red Cross, and is an adjunct professor at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology at Xavier.

We were lucky enough to slow her down for a few questions.

Q – Psychology Times: What do you plan on when you get to Washington regarding the group dynamics and polarization between the parties and in the country?

A – Dr. Savoie: I plan on working with all members of Congress to bring everyone together to solve issues. We must use problem solving techniques that we’ve all learned: identify the problem, identify the achievable outcome and then forge a path to that outcome. Work for consensus. These are all things my professional education and training have made me well versed in, and when combined with my 38 years of service to my country in uniform I believe I am uniquely qualified to bring to Congress. We must do this together: democrats and republicans; rich and poor; public and private; and academia and industry. When we all put our energy and efforts into solving problems, there really is no stopping the United States of America. I think there has been no better time to send a psychologist to Congress.

Q – Psychology Times: What are some of your ideas for approaching the problems (quality, costs, availability) in the health care system? What of your background as a psychologist might you rely on?

A – Dr. Savoie: Besides fixing and protecting the Affordable Care Act and providing a public option for individuals, we need to target populations that demonstrate specific health issues that can be addressed through prevention or targeted therapies. Population health strategies reduce costs and help communities that suffer from illnesses due to genetic, environmental, or social factors.

A – Dr. Savoie: As a psychologist, I believe in data! We have population health data that will help us target those in need to reduce the health care burden on all of us. I also understand the role of stress in every mental and physical health problem. When government policies provide needed resources



Psychologist and retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, Dr. Tammy Savoie, is running for Congress in the 1st District. Here, in 2006, she receives the Arthur S. Flemming Award for program management, from George Washington University. (Courtesy photo.)

for citizens, thereby reducing chronic stress, both mental and physical health outcomes improve, and the quality of life is heightened.

Q – Psychology Times: What about veterans’ care?

A – Dr. Savoie: As a veteran and a provider, I am committed to healthcare for our veterans. I believe the integrity of our VA Hospitals and clinics must be maintained. When I was working at the Pentagon on the Joint Staff with our coalition allies on health care policies, they all had what we called, “VA envy.” They envied the system the United States had in place to take care of its veterans, i.e., clinics and hospitals where the unique needs of service personnel can be addressed, studied and remedied. We must not dismantle this system.

A – Dr. Savoie: The Veterans Administration is the largest health care system in the United States. As a veteran myself, I appreciate the fact that the department has more than 300,000 employees serving more than 9 million veterans at 1,240 treatment facilities. The VA serves Veterans from WWII, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam and the Gulf War Era. The diversity of these cohorts cannot be underestimated; however, they all have one thing in common and that is their service to our country and the sacrifices they made. There has been much media hype about the inadequacy of VA hospitals. However, the data just does not bear this out. The VA generally delivers care that is better or equal in quality to other health care systems. We must not allow the disintegration of the largest healthcare system in the country and the only one devoted to our Veterans for the sake of profit and privatization.

Q – Psychology Times: What are your thoughts on the wars, terrorism, and threats from other countries?

A – Dr. Savoie: As a veteran of 38 years in uniform, I know we must do everything we can to avoid war and to that end we must

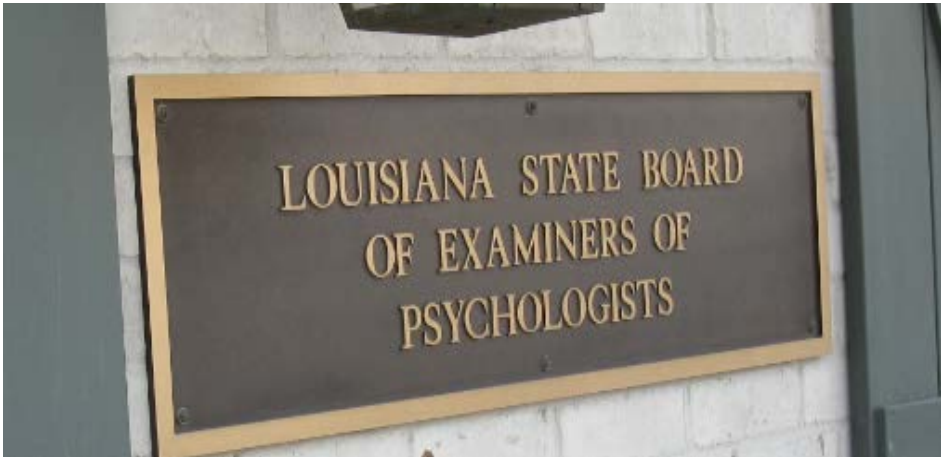
remain strong both militarily and diplomatically. We must show leadership which is currently sorely lacking in our country. My hope is that the people of this country will vote in November for a change in leadership that we so desperately need.

The current administration has depleted our diplomatic corps to the bone. We must restore the State Department to its full strength and engage the world through diplomacy and leadership. The relationships and institutions that the United States has built since the end of WWII have been denigrated and decimated; this is a travesty. One of the greatest honors of my military career was representing the United States overseas to our NATO and coalition partners. It saddens me to see this administration and Congressional sycophants destroy precious relationships. The people of the United States must not let this stand. We all must demonstrate the support we have for our allies and let them know that we still stand shoulder to shoulder with them against the threats looming large over the world.

Q – Psychology Times: Anything else?

A – Dr. Savoie: Every experience in my life has led me to this moment. My graduate and postgraduate training in psychology were demanding and thankfully so. I know how to think critically, to question, and then to develop solutions. I have used this training throughout my military career and I hope to bring that training to bear upon a Congress that has lost its way. I spent 38 years fighting for my country in uniform, and now I look forward to fighting for my country and my community as our next member of Congress.

To learn more about Dr. Savoie visit her website at <https://www.tammysavoie.com/>



From the Minutes

Selected Items from June and July Discussions of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists

June 2018 (posted August 30)

1. FARB 26th Annual Meeting: Regulatory Law Training (September 27-29, 2018) - The Board discussed this training and its benefits to board operations/transactions. The board considered the proposal of the Physical Therapy Board to split costs to send Attorney Courtney Newton to represent both boards at this training. The board further considered the legal focus of the training, including: Deference: Eroding of Chevron Deference; Board Appointment and Removal; Board Certification: What it Means; Administrative Procedures Act; Conflict of Laws; Conflicts of Interest; Sovereign Immunity; Due Process: Notice and Opportunity to Be Heard; Confidentiality of Complaints; Bright Line vs. Standard of Care; Top Recent Regulatory Cases; New Legislation; Regulation In the News. After consideration of the legal focus of the training and benefit to the operations and transactions of the board, by motion of Dr. Koren Boggs, the board unanimously approved funds to pay 1/2 the costs of travel and expenses to include: registration, attorney fees, travel expenses [flight, baggage, taxi, mileage], hotel and meals not covered by the conference at state approved rates. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote as follows: Griffin - YEA, Lambert – YEA, Boggs- YEA, Crouch– YEA.

2. RULEMAKING: Chapter 8: Continuing Education (Letter from the Louisiana Psychological Association RE: Objections): Ms. Monic reported that the rules for Chapter 8 had been submitted to the Legislative Fiscal Office on May 11, 2018 to initiate rulemaking on the revisions approved on March 16, 2018. The Board also reviewed and discussed an additional email from Dr. Julie Nelson, President of the Louisiana Psychological Association, objecting to the board's authority to establish a process for the board to preapprove continuing education activities for the renewal of a license. The Board further disagreed with LPA's assessment that the members of the board were not qualified to review and approve continuing education activities. The Board discussed this matter and reaffirmed its intent to proceed with rulemaking.

3. 2018 Regular Legislative Session Updates - The Board discussed the following Acts of the 2018 Legislative Session: SB260 MILKOVICH – ACT 655; SB40 MILLS – ACT 515; HB748 EMERSON – ACT 693; HB372 CONNICK – ACT 623; HB189 WRIGHT – ACT 454. Noting that many would require revisions to policy and/or rules, Ms. Monic suggested a legal review by Attorney Courtney Newton for recommendations on applying the statutory requirements to the current policy and regulations of the LSBEP. Dr. Lambert moved in favor of a legal review and recommendation with regard to the new legislative requirements. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote as follows: Griffin - YEA, Lambert – YEA, Boggs- YEA, Crouch– YEA.

4. Texas Behavioral Health Board: Sunset Report and Recommendations (3-28-2018): The Board reviewed and discussed the report and recommendations impacting the Texas Board of Examiners of Psychologists and their practice act. The Board discussed concerns for potential impacts on receiving qualified applicants from Texas and upholding the highest occupational standards in the practice of psychology in light of the recommendations in Texas to repeal certain training requirements, including the postdoctoral supervision year; elimination of provisional licensure; elimination of its ability to engage an applicant orally for examination of credentials; board consolidation under an executive counsel without defining the purpose of the executive council; and recommending the engagement of compact licensure. The Board will continue to monitor the legislative initiatives in Texas as well as other states.

5. Announcement from ASPPB RE: Hiring of new CEO, Mariann Burnetti-Atwell, PsyD - The Board received and reviewed the announcement from ASPPB regarding the hiring of new CEO Mariann Burnetti-Atwell, PsyD.

6. ASPPB Correspondence from Dr. Sharon Lightfoot (May 2018) RE: Reviewing feedback from about implementation of EPPP - The Board received and reviewed correspondence from Dr. Sharon Lightfoot, ASPPB President acknowledging receipt of feedback concerning their “efforts to enhance the EPPP” and advising jurisdictions that they would be spending considerable time reviewing the feedback to find ways to address concerns.

LITIGATION [LSA-R.S. 42.17.A.(2)]

Dr. Leah Crouch recused herself from discussion regarding this pending litigation. The Board discussed the status of the pending litigation in executive session: U.S. DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA – LAFAYETTE DIVISION, Eric Cerwonka v. LSBEP Civil Action No. 6:17-cv-01095-UDJ-CBW; 19TH JDC, EBR Parish, Eric Cerwonka v. LSBEP, No.656,587 Div. I; LA Supreme Court, Application of Eric Cerwonka for a Writ of Certiorari or Review Directed to the to the First Circuit Court of Appeal, Its Docket No. 2017 CA 1199. No action was required at this time.

July 2018

Executive Director Report – Ms. Monic notified the Board that the 58th Annual Meeting of the Association will be held October 17-21, 2018 at The Little America Hotel, Salt Lake City, Utah. The 2018 ASPPB Annual Meeting program focus will be, “The Global Practice of Psychology: Impact on Regulation and Credentialing”. Ms. Monic reported that the fiscal impact statement on the proposed rules to amend Chapter 8 had been submitted to the Legislative Fiscal Office but had not been approved to date. Ms. Monic reminded the members of the Board to complete their ethics training for 2018. Ms. Monic reported that there are no updates on the following matters: U.S. District Court Western District Of Louisiana – Lafayette Division, Eric Cerwonka v. LSBEP Civil Action No. 6:17-cv-01095-UDJ-CBW; 19th JDC, EBR Parish, Eric Cerwonka v. LSBEP, No.656,587 Div. I; LA Supreme Court, Application of Eric Cerwonka for a Writ of Certiorari Directed to the to the First Circuit Court of Appeal, Docket No. 2017 CA 1199.

3. Contract Review: Taylor, Porter, Brooks & Phillips, L.L.P. – The board reviewed the contract for TPBP and by motion of Dr. Henke, unanimously approved a 3rd amendment to the July 1, 2016- June 30, 2019 contract, to increase the total amount of the contract from \$55,500 to 68,000 to cover the continuing legal expenses of the board.

5. Expedited Military Application – Ms. Monic discussed with the board the need to improve the expedited military application process following SCR 83 by Peacock which urges board to display prominently on their website, a process for licensure of military applicants and their spouses. Options were provided. Dr. Boggs agreed to review the current process and regulations with Ms. Monic to provide recommendations for better developing this process.

7. Board Member Reimbursement R.S. 37:2353(5) and LSBEP PPM Sec. 2003.C(3) – Dr. Henke requested the board consider reinstituting board member per diem and mileage reimbursement. Dr. Gormanous requested special consideration for reimbursement considering the distance he would have to travel noting safety concerns for the extended travel from his domicile. The board discussed this matter thoroughly. The Board requested Ms. Monic to obtain financial information on the impact of the current budget were the board to reinstitute these provisions for consideration at the next board meeting.

8. Legal Training Regarding Cases Impacting La. R.S. 37:2352(9), 37:2360 and 37:2361: Attorney Courtney P. Newton provided an in-service training to members of the board related to pursuing matters against individuals not licensed with the LSBEP, but are advertising using prohibited terminology such as “psychologist”, “psychological” and “psychology” in their description of services or to represent their credentials to the public

State & National News



Dr. Tiffany Stewart
(Courtesy photo)

Pennington’s Dr. Tiffany Stewart Celebrates DOD

The Pennington Biomedical Research Foundation recently honored their 30-year relationship with the U.S. Defense Department, by hosting a special Scientific Dinner.

Dr. Tiffany Stewart, the Dudley and Beverly Coates Endowed Associate Professor, and Paula Pennington de la Bretonne, a member of the Pennington Biomedical Research Foundation Board of Directors, joined with leaders of the Louisiana National Guard to celebrate the 140 studies and 100 papers that have come as a result of joint projects and efforts to improve the health of military warfighters.

Drs. Tiffany Stewart and Jennifer Rood presented a recap of the scientific discoveries made by Pennington Biomedical that are in use today to assist the U.S. military in optimum health.

"Every day, soldiers and their families make sacrifices for our freedoms," Dr. Stewart said. "At Pennington Biomedical, we are looking at the health of the whole soldier. We want our men and women in uniform to be ready for whatever they may face during their service, and that means optimization of physical and mental health and resilience, as well as the families that support them."

According to the announcement, Pennington Biomedical is one of the Defense Department's top nutrition research contributors. "With 30 years of collaboration and \$80 million in DOD funding to date, Pennington Biomedical has improved and continues to advance warfighter nutrition, fitness, sleep, technology, body weight, body fat and metabolism."

Dr. Stewart, clinical psychologist, inventor and entrepreneur, was named Woman of Excellence in 2015 by the Louisiana Legislative Women’s Caucus Foundation.

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Nicholls State University
Department of Psychology, Counseling
and Family Studies

Assistant Professor, tenure-track
Immediate Opening - position advertised through
September 30, 2018, or until filled

Minimum Qualifications:

- Earned doctorate in school psychology from NASP or APA approved program
- Minimum Licenses Required: License as school psychologist (or eligible to apply) by LA State Board of Examiners
- Other Minimum Requirements: n/a
- Test(s) Required: n/a
- Preferred Education: n/a
- Preferred Experience: Graduate-level teaching; history of employment as a full-time school psychologist; supervision of school psychologists; proven or demonstrated potential for scholarly productivity; solid evidence of an Applied Behavior Analysis background in training, publication, and work history.
- Preferred Licenses: Licensed Psychologist (or eligibility for licensure) with a declared specialty in School Psychology by the Louisiana Board of Examiners of Psychologists. BCBA certification also a plus.

Salary Range: commensurate with experience


Duties & Responsibilities:

- 10% Participate in Program; Department; and Unit accreditation processes; assume role of university-based supervisor for field experiences upon licensure
- 10% - Serve on faculty committees
- 10% - Scholarly activities and research
- 20% - Advise students and mentor undergraduate research projects; advise graduate students
- 50% - Teach Graduate Course work in School Psychology and undergraduate courses.

Please find the position application at <http://jobs.nicholls.edu>


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Guest Editorial

Clinical Psychology and Honky-Tonk, cont'd

by Alvin G. Burstein

William James introduced psychology to American universities. Like Wundt, he saw psychology as the study of the human mind. His famous description of the “stream of consciousness” and his theories about origins of emotion were not laboratory-based. He and his students, like those of Wundt, saw themselves as identifying the contents of the human mind, not as healers.

Thus the 20th century began with psychology situated in the university, as a specialty within philosophy or physiology, not as a healing practice. Once situated in the university, given its heritage of objective measurement, psychology was not entirely comfortable as a philosophical specialty. It looked for things to measure objectively and developed specialized areas of study—group behavior, human development, cognitive styles and the like. And psychology began to spin out of the speculative orbit into a “scientific” enterprise.

A Frenchman, Arthur Binet, carried measurement oriented psychology into the public sphere. In 1904 he was commissioned to help determine how many and which primary school students would need special education. He devised an age-indexed list of abilities, giving birth to the intelligence test and IQ, intelligence quotient, as its measure.

IQ, and the notion of it as genetically determined (and racially linked) quickly spread. That idea was seized upon by Cyril Burt in England, and H. H. Goddard in the United States in the first part of the century, and more recently by Herrnstein and Murray in their controversial *The Bell Curve*. The link between intelligence and eugenics—how to improve the human race—Is complicated and problematic, but not central to Psychology’s story.

World War I and II intervened, changing the course of history and of psychology.

Rapidly raising armies required the American government to assess inductees’ suitability for military service. University psychologists, trained to measure intelligence and other skills, were pressed into service, giving tests to evaluate trainees and guide their placement in the war effort. Eventually, these applied psychologists began to find employment in the Veteran’s Administration and in state institutions for the mentally ill or disabled.

As WW II unfolded, Nazi Germany identified Freudian psychoanalysis as a “Jewish Science,” driving psychoanalyst refugees to America. In the mid-twentieth century, psycho-analysis became, albeit until the rise of psycho-pharmacy, the queen of American psychiatric therapies. Intelligence testing, already identified as the purview of psychologists, was supplemented with personality testing. Universities began to train psychologists in giving paper and pencil tests for vocational and diagnostic classification and “projective” tests, like Rorchach’s Inkblot test and Murray’s Thematic Apperception Test, designed to permit inferences about unconscious motives and conflicts.

Tensions emerged in university programs training of these applied psychologists—now called clinical psychologists— magnified by psychology’s academic origin. The university teachers of clinical psychologists were required to earn pay and promotion on the basis of publications and grant-supported research. In other words, competition for university resources pitted academic psychologists against the “hard” sciences, and required academic psychologists to demonstrate their worth, based on criteria transplanted from the fields against which they were competing.

On the other hand, their students needed to learn how to provide a help to clients and customers in the form of diagnostic and treatment services. Concretely, academic psychologists had to do experiments and publish the results. And they wished to teach their students, who were looking forward to providing clinical services, to do the same—do experiments and publish the results—in order to have a cadre of research assistants. Training in how to do research took priority because of the obvious value of research assistants to researchers. And there was a further constraining circumstance. Due to the practical and moral difficulties of

imposing strict experimental controls on human subjects, quasi-experimental and multivariate models came to characterize psychology’s scholarly journals and became the research mode in which graduate students were trained.

There were attempts to deal with the conflict between research and applied training. David Shakow introduced the scientist-practitioner model at the 1949 Boulder conference on the training of clinical psychologists. A follow-up 1965 conference in Chicago emphasized the importance of clinically trained full time faculty being responsible for university and internship training in clinical psychology. The American Psychological Association’s Education and Training Board incorporated the recommendations of the Chicago conference into its standards for accreditation, and federal agencies, including the VA, made APA accreditation a requirement for funding.

But as funding dried up, as Professor Wright’s *cri de coeur* indicates, the conflict between research and clinical priorities festered.

Profoundly unfortunate results ensued. One is the propagation of a cripplingly truncated view of scientific inquiry in psychology. Scientific inquiry in university departments is operationally defined as establishing the statistical probability of the truth of an hypothesis. Little or no attention is given to *systematic observation* and subsequent inference in the formulation of hypotheses. Absent the nourishment of inference, psychological theory building cannot flourish and hypothesis testing can become a trivial ritual.

Secondly, discomfort with graduate training that focused on an attenuated model of scientific rigor at the expense of real world experience with patients stimulated the development of applied psychology programs with little or no research elements, sometimes in for-profit settings, of the sort that invite the comparison that Dr. Wright protested.

Not only that, but clinical psychologists, having found employment in fee for service, insurance compensated practice or in institutional settings, must seek ways of demonstrating the worth of their work, the value of their services. That urgency finds expression in a current mantra of “evidence based approaches.” But what is offered as evidence are data generated by the impoverished model of science just described.

Perhaps the saddest and most unfortunate outcome may be this. Curiosity about human nature is central to being human, and for that reason, almost always and everywhere, introductory psychology is one of the most popular of undergraduate courses. Curiosity about human nature is also central to the liberal arts. But eschewing its philosophical roots, and confined by the attenuated model of science described above, introductory psychology courses in the public and private non-profit schools present students with accounts of the procedures and products of the truncated approach described above: quasi-experimental studies of social, cognitive, developmental, and their variants.

The result is that students hungry to explore what it means to be human are deprived. And general education in the liberal arts is diminished.

Alvin Burstein is an emeritus professor of psychology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and a retired psychoanalyst. He earned his PhD at the University of Chicago in 1959, was an assistant professor at the University of Michigan, 1960-63, directing the clinical psychology program there. He moved to the Neuro-Psychiatric Institute at the University of Illinois medical school as an associate professor directing the psychology internship program there 1963-70. His next position was professor and chief of the Psychology Division at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, 1970-82. He became Professor and director of clinical training at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 1982. He also served there as director of the University Studies program until his appointment as an emeritus professor in 2000. Subsequently, he served as chair of the Psychology Dept. at Southeastern Louisiana University 2000-06.

He was involved in the establishment of the Association of Clinical Psychology Internship Programs. A Fellow of the American Psychological Association, he served on its Accreditation Committee and chaired its Education and Training Board.

Concurrent with his academic activities, he became a Diplomate of the American Academy of Clinical Psychology, maintaining a private practice until 2000.

Clinical Psychology and Honky-Tonk is based on his long and varied experience in teaching and practice.

A Scientific Theory of Our Better Angels

A brief look at reciprocal altruism and talk with its author

by J. Nelson

“No doctrine heightens one’s consciousness of hidden selfishness more acutely than the new Darwinian paradigm. If you understand the doctrine, buy the doctrine, and apply the doctrine, you will spend your life in deep suspicion of your motives. Congratulations! That is the first step toward correcting the moral biases built into us by natural selection.”

– R. Wright, *The Moral Animal*

In the 1970s, a young, eccentric biologist, Dr. Robert Trivers, put forth an unconventional theory about evolved social traits. *Science* calls him, “One of the most influential evolutionary theorists alive today.” *Time* named him one of the top scientific thinkers of the 20th century.

Throwing out an older paradigm, Trivers reconceived the nature of altruism. He laid out the evolutionary logic for our heroes and heroines, for our Oskar Schindlers and Mother Teresas, for our religions and myths, and for our stories from the Bible to Shakespeare to the Kardashians.

Considered by many to be a founding father of evolutionary psychology, he will speak in November at the Louisiana Psychological Association’s Fall/Winter Workshop.

For this article, I’ll review some of the concepts of his theory of reciprocal altruism, which opened the door to understanding how human cooperation evolved, and then conclude with some comments by Dr. Trivers.

Reciprocal Altruism

In 1971, Trivers took the better angels out of the hands of kindergarten teachers and placed it back into our genes, in his now classic, “The Evolution of Reciprocal Altruism.”

“One human being saving another, who is not closely related and is about to drown, is an instance of altruism. Assume that the chance of the drowning man dying is one-half if no one leaps in to save him, but that the chance that his potential rescuer will drown if he leaps in to save him is much smaller, say, one in twenty. Assume that the drowning man always drowns when his rescuer does and that he is always saved when the rescuer survives the rescue attempt. Also assume that the energy costs involved in rescuing are trivial compared to the survival probabilities. Were this an isolated event, it is clear that the rescuer should not bother to save the drowning man. But if the drowning man reciprocates at some future time, and if the survival chances are then exactly reversed, it will have been to the benefit of each participant to have risked his life for the other.”

Seen in this way, the trait of altruism would spread through the human gene pool, being more beneficial to each of us than costly.

The preconditions for altruism to evolve would have included a long lifetime, long-term and secure relationships, and interdependence. These conditions—small social groups where our distant ancestors



struggled to survive—probably occurred before and during the Pleistocene period, or Ice Age. Dominance relationships would have been more relaxed, suggested Trivers, like those of the chimpanzee rather than the more rigid structures of the baboon. Benefits of mental abilities, such as tool-making talents, would have been exchanged, further disseminating social power.

The idea was elegant and simple. However, the reciprocal altruism system would be complex, said Trivers. The system was “sensitive and unstable” because altruists would be vulnerable to “subtle and gross cheating” by others who reciprocated less, or not at all, when it came to their turn. The beneficiary of a generous act did not automatically have to be generous when and if the roles were reversed. The temptation to be selfish was always present.

And so at the level of the gene, and often unconscious as well, is the myriad of social emotions needed to regulate this complex system— friendship, dislike, moralistic aggression, gratitude, trust, suspicion, aspects of guilt, justice, fairness, and some forms of dishonesty,

hypocrisy, and group dynamics that mirror the individuals.

“Given this unstable character of the system,” wrote Trivers, “where a degree of cheating is adaptive, natural selection will rapidly favor a complex psychological system in each individual regulating both his own altruistic and cheating tendencies and his responses to these tendencies in others. As selection favors subtler forms of cheating, it will favor more acute abilities to detect cheating. The system that results should simultaneously allow the individual to reap the benefits of altruistic exchanges, to protect himself from gross and subtle forms of cheating, and to practice those forms of cheating that local conditions make adaptive.”

Two million years of struggle to survive left us today with strong altruistic ties to others but with the devils on our shoulders. “Individuals will differ,” he predicted, “not in being altruists or cheaters, but in the degree of altruism they show and in the conditions under which they will cheat.”

Trivers would later set out the evolutionary logic for self-deception as a

A Scientific Theory of Our Better Angels

continued

form of deception, and point out that there is no need for conscious awareness of any of these traits. He proposed an origin for social traits that looked surprisingly similar to psychoanalytic models, and even the internal conflicts with their suppression.

Natural selection will favor the development of mimics, he predicted. “Once friendship, moralistic aggression, guilt, sympathy, and gratitude have evolved to regulate the altruistic system, selection will favor mimicking these traits in order to influence the behavior of others to one’s own advantage.”

To counter deception, natural selection should favor the ability to detect and discriminate against “subtle cheaters.” Characteristics of trust-worthiness, feelings of trust, or suspicion are examples. And also mental apparatus for this purpose.

Evolutionary psychologist Leda Cosmides has discovered evidence of just such mechanisms. Across cultures, people can unconsciously improve their logical reasoning scores, from 25% to 75%, when the problem is formatted to detect a breach of fairness in social exchanges. Cosmides calls it a “cheater-detection mechanism,” and views it as one of many such *cognitive instincts*.

Trivers’ model explains the automatic emotions of gratitude and sympathy, related to those described in popular books like Cialdini’s *Influence* and *Pre-suasion* where automatic responses triggered by the reciprocal altruism system.

“Developmental plasticity,” is another element of the theory. “The conditions under which detection of cheating is possible, the range of available altruistic trades, the cost/benefit ratios of these trades, the relative stability of social groupings, and other relevant parameters should differ from one ecological and social situation to another and should differ through time in the same small human population. Under these conditions one would expect selection to favor developmental plasticity of those traits regulating altruistic and cheating tendencies and responses to these tendencies in others.

Ten years after Trivers changed the paradigm, political scientist

Robert Axelrod and evolutionary biologist W.D. Hamilton conducted computer simulations and used game theory to show how, despite Darwin’s emphasis on individual advantage, “...cooperation based on reciprocity can evolve.”

Trivers wrote in his *Selected Papers*: “To me the paper had almost biblical proportions. That is, you could see how a kind of social heaven and social hell could evolve right here on earth. The social hell was perpetual isolation, perpetual inability to link up with others in a positive way, never being cheated by others to be sure, but at the cost of eternal loneliness. The social heaven was not heavenly in some naïve way, dancing around the mulberry

bush together without regard for selfish possibilities. Instead, cooperation required perpetual vigilance to enjoy its fruits, but tit-for-tat, a very simple mechanism that could apply even to bacteria, could bring about this cooperative world.”

Q&A

We recently asked Dr. Trivers about aspects of his work and overlap with traditional psychology.

Times: Dr. Trivers, you once explained in an interview with *Edge* that you worked on mapping your concepts to Freudian personality structure theory but that you couldn’t get a good match. What are your current thoughts on the

similarities between Freudian personality theory and evolved personality and mental traits.

Dr. Trivers: Freud’s insights into mechanisms of self-deception were often brilliant,” Dr. Trivers told the *Times* last month. “Denial, repression, reaction formation, projection, ego defense mechanisms and so on. But he had a thoroughly corrupt and absurd view of psychological development—anal, oral oedipal—based on nothing more perhaps partly than the cocaine he was snorting. Then he famously denied that young women were being molested by close male relatives and

Cont’d next pg





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Our Better Angels, continued

projected onto them that they had an “unresolved oedipal conflict”. It was strictly downhill from there. What about Thanatos? Our death instinct. Not what we would expect on Darwinian grounds.”

Times: Your work in evolutionary social theory, specifically in social characteristics stemming from the reciprocal-altruism system and traits such as desire for justice, trust, guilt, suspicion, moralistic aggression, hypocrisy, and others, would seem to be the perfect foundation for an understanding of ethics, moral behavior, and other areas that involve psychologists. But much of this area has been slow to catch on in mainstream psychology with only about half of all psychologist fully accepting the evolutionary basis for human behavior. What are your thoughts about the sluggishness of psychology to embrace this foundational theory?

Dr. Trivers: Very few. I really do not know. I have only a marginal understanding of the history of psychology and a superficial knowledge of present-day psychologists and the forces operating on them. But I do know that this sluggishness is absurd. By doing so psychologists are cutting themselves off at the legs. Psychology lies within biology—in a fundamental way—biology does not lie within psychology—except in a trivial way.

Times: I've asked you about this a number of times over the years because it continues to pop up in psychologists' writings. Many authors seem to continue to view the group as evolving rather than the gene through the individual. What are your thoughts as to why this is such a stubborn idea with psychologists?

Dr. Trivers: The error was very stubborn within evolutionary biology right up through the 1960's so psychologists have nothing to be ashamed of. But why? You tell me. I have never been much interested in why people are wrong. I concentrate on what is right and what can be derived from it.

Times: You'll be describing the basics of elementary social theory at the conference on November 9th, including the evolution of selfish, cooperative, altruistic, spite, and the reciprocal altruism system. Has much changed over the years since your discovery of reciprocal altruism in the 70s?

Dr. Trivers: Come hear my talks. There have been some minor advances, mostly involving game theory and some important mistakes that have been corrected and there has been a wealth of sophisticated facts from nature and the labs that give me great joy.

Stress Solutions

by Susan Andrews, PhD

Growing up in Poverty and Stress Has a Lasting Impact on the Brain

No one would quarrel with the idea that growing up in poverty is stressful. Children who grow up without enough to eat at times having to lay on the bedroom floor to be missed by bullets coming into the window or seeing other kids get things they cannot afford is stressful for them. Some of the stress is even traumatic stress where they fear getting hurt. Traumatic stress can affect children's resilience. It can make them slower to recover from other traumatic events, such as sexual or physical violence, in the future.

But, researchers have learned that the effects of poverty coupled with stress has potentially longer-term damage, one that the child will carry long into adulthood.¹ The researchers found that children in the study who had lower family incomes at age 9 exhibited, as adults, greater activity in the amygdala, an area in the brain known for its role in fear and other negative emotions. These individuals showed less activity in areas of the prefrontal cortex, an area in the brain thought to regulate negative emotion. The study was conducted at University of Illinois, Cornell University, University of Michigan and University of Denver.

In many ways the findings of this study may help account for the excess of violence and the general lack of achievement and leadership among people in this country (and others) who grow up in such an impoverished environment. Unable to move out of the projects to get an education and a good job, with an overly active amygdala and underactive prefrontal cortex, adults are prey to impulsive aggression, substance abuse, and an inability to recover from the normal types of hardships and stress that we all know come with living.

In general, people know many of the negative effects of poverty. What has not been well known is how childhood poverty coupled with stress might affect brain function, particularly the brain's function of regulating emotions. This was a longitudinal study in which 49 participants were followed from age 9 until age 24. One-half of the participants came from low income families. Data was collected on family income, stresses they were exposed to, physiological stress responses, socio-emotional development, and parent-child interactions. Functional magnetic resonance imaging was used to evaluate the participants' brain activity while viewing pictures and being instructed to suppress negative emotions.

A primary finding was that that the amount of chronic stress from childhood through adolescence, including substandard housing, crowding, noise, family violence and separation, determined the relationship between childhood poverty and prefrontal brain function when the participant was trying to suppress negative emotions.

¹ P. Kim, G. W. Evans, M. Angstadt, S. S. Ho, C. S. Sripada, J. E. Swain, I. Liberzon, K. L. Phan. **Effects of childhood poverty and chronic stress on emotion regulatory brain function in adulthood.** *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2013; DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1308240110



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

A Shrink at the Flicks

Mission Impossible –Fallout

by Alvin G. Burstein, PhD

There are two levels on which to enjoy this film. The first is its predictable employment of the features that characterize the whole series of movie adaptations of its television predecessor: the pounding musical theme, the amazing face masks, the fanciful technology, metal crunching car and motorcycle races, bloody hand-to-hand combat, acrophobic dangling, and the familiar mantra, “Your mission, should you choose to accept it....”.

The edge of some of the physical violence is carefully modulated with a dollop of camp. After a fight, the shirt is hardly rumpled, and the suit can merit entrance into a fancy soiree. The risks being run can be enjoyed even more safely than a real roller coaster ride.

The plot, too, is familiar. The Mission Impossible Force must deal with a conspiracy that threatens the civilized word. The degree of threat is such that IMF itself can violate rules, but must not be caught in the act. If it is, “The Secretary will deny all knowledge of....”.

All this is gratifying to IMF buffs. But this episode has another, subtler element. That is the tension between personal obligations and love for the individual and heroic struggles in the service of society as a whole.

In this film the threat to society is posed by a conspiracy peopled by a group called “The Apostles.” The group believes that social perfection can ensue only from the total destruction of society as we know it. A Leninist point of view, but arguably also a jab at religious zealotry. The Apostles have stolen nuclear material and plan world-wide nuclear and epidemic chaos.

In a hint of the personal/institutional tension that the film will explore, it opens with a scene of Ethan Hunt’s—he is the



leader of the IMF team—marriage ceremony. The officiant’s invocation devolves into a recitation of the risks the marriage will involve for Julia, his bride, and Hunt begins frantically to protest. He is having a nightmare, and wakes from his restless sleep to receive a package that will begin the IMF war with the Apostles. IMF/Ethan Hunt buffs will recall the backstory of the couple’s painful decision to divorce, for Julia to “walk away,” leaving Ethan unfettered in his role as the IMF leader.

IMF’s pursuit of the Apostles will bring Hunt into the usual encounters with *femmes fatales*, and Julia will reappear in a way that I won’t spoil by describing. In addition, the issue of individual caring vs. what would aptly be titled “missions” repeatedly arises as the plot unfolds. In an echo of the basis for his divorce, Hunt muffs an opportunity to recover the stolen nuclear material in order to save the life of one of his colleagues. The decision earns him predictable operational criticism. Hunt, and his IMF team, are contrasted with the Apostle’s by the former’s valuing of individuals at the cost of risking mission failures, and the latter’s unflinching pursuit of their “greater” good.

Many viewers probably won’t care much about that conflict, and will be happy with the film’s pyrotechnics. But it is a complicated and interesting element of the story—and it makes sense of the film’s title.

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.

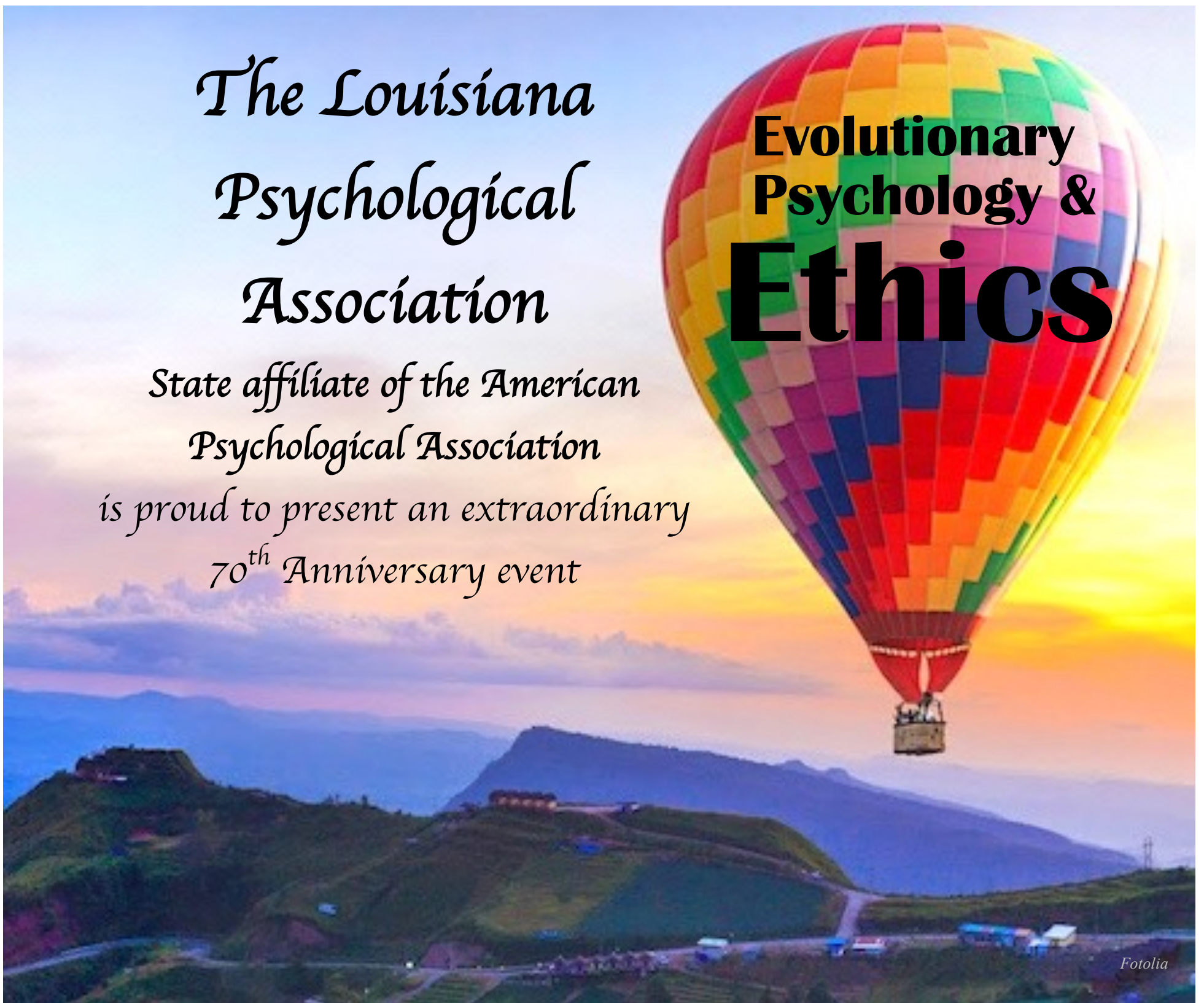


He is also a member of Inklings, a Mandeville critique group that meets weekly to review its members’ imaginative writings. Burstein has published flash fiction and autobiographical pieces in e-zines; *The Owl*, his first novelette, is available at Amazon. He is, in addition to being a movie fan, a committed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

The Louisiana Psychological Association

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Evolutionary Psychology & Ethics



Featuring the legendary **Robert Trivers, PhD**, evolutionary biologist who explained the scientific foundations of *reciprocal altruism* and *self-deception*. *Time Magazine* named him one of the top 100 scientists and thinkers of the 20th Century. Steven Pinker has said, “I consider Trivers one of the great thinkers in the history of Western thought. It would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that he has provided a scientific explanation for the human condition...”

For this special event we will also have Dr. Jack Palmer, from U. of Louisiana Monroe, author of *Evolutionary Psychology: The Ultimate Origins of Human Behavior*, and Dr. Matthew Rossano, from Southeastern Louisiana University, author of *Supernatural Selection: How Religion Evolved*. In applications we'll have Dr. Michael Chafetz on malingering research, Dr. Michael Cunningham on diversity, and Dr. Denise Newman on psychoanalytic concepts.

Join us to Celebrate 70 years of Psychology in Louisiana



Friday, November 9, 2018
Hotel Monteleone, New Orleans

Register at:

<http://louisianapsychologicalassociation.org/>

Up Coming Events

6th Annual Gulf Coast ABA Conference to be Held October 12-13, New Orleans

The Louisiana Behavior Analysis Association will hold its 6th Annual Gulf Coast ABAC on October 12 and 13, in New Orleans, at The Westin on Canal.

Keynote Speaker is Dr. Mark Dixon, BCBA-D, who received his PhD in Psychology from the University of Nevada and has been a Board Certified Behavior Analyst for over a decade. He is the founding President of the Illinois Association for Behavior Analysis and has also held the President position for the MidAmerican Association for Behavior Analysis.

Other presentations include, "The Ins and Outs of Supervision and Field Supervision," "Protecting Your Career: Troublesome Ethical Situations to Avoid and Manage for Practicing Behavior Analysts," "Legal Update on ABA Coverage and Practice Issues: What You Need to Know," and "Continuing Towards the Functional Analysis of Behavior," and "Virtual Reality and the Future of Delivering ABA Therapy." The conference includes a Poster Session, Student Poster Competition, Conference Social Symposia, and other events. For more information and to register: www.labaa.net

LPA to Hold Ethics Workshop November 9, at the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans

The Louisiana Psychological Association will host the legendary evolutionary theorist, Dr. Robert Trivers, at their winter workshop, to be held Friday, November 9, at the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans.

The one-day event, "Evolutionary Psychology & Ethics," will address the scientific foundations of self-interest, reciprocal-altruism, cooperation and deception in human relationships, and the evolutionary logic that predicts this complex psychological terrain.

Dr. Trivers will speak on "Ethics and Social Theory: The Evolution of Reciprocal Altruism," and then on "The Logic of Deceit and Self-Deception." "I will define natural selection, the basis social traits, then concentrate on altruism and quickly move to reciprocal," he said, and explain gross and subtle cheating, sense of justice and other traits.

In "The Logic of Deceit and Self-Deception," he will start with the co-evolutionary struggle between deceiver and deceived, the intrinsic bias in favor of the deceiver, and the invention of self-deception to facilitate deception.

Also presenting and participating as discussants will be Dr. Jack Palmer, from University of Louisiana Monroe, author of *Evolutionary Psychology: The Ultimate Origins of Human Behavior*.

Dr. Matt Rossano, from Southeastern Louisiana University, author of *Supernatural Selection: How Religion Evolved*, will also present.

Dr. Michael Chafetz, known for his extensive work in malingering research, and Dr. Denise Newman, chair of the Louisiana Psychological Association Psychotherapy Interest Area and a psychoanalytic psychologist, will present along with Tulane Professor Dr. Michael Cunningham, chair of LPA's Diversity Committee.

Registration is open at <http://louisianapsychologicalassociation.org/>



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