

DIALOGUE

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**Inside the Current
 Issue:**

A River Runs Through It: SPSP Heads to San Antonio in 2011

The next SPSP convention will be held in beautiful San Antonio, Texas on January 27-29th, 2011. The meeting will be held at the San Antonio Convention Center and the hotels are the Grand Hyatt and the Hyatt Regency. These hotels are located on the San Antonio River Walk, a lovely area with restaurants, bars, and shops built along the river. Malcom Gladwell, best-selling author of *Blink* and *The Tipping Point*, will give a keynote address.

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State of SPSP:

News from the Executive Committee Meeting

The SPSP Executive Committee held its bi-annual meeting on January 31st and February 1st following the SPSP convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. The executive committee first expressed a great deal of gratitude to David Dunning for his excellent work as the executive officer of SPSP for the last 5 years. In addition to keeping SPSP in tip-top shape, he has taken on many of the behind the scenes tasks. As executive officer, David not only handles the finances and membership – big jobs! – but also implements new policies and initiatives. In short, he makes SPSP run. As SPSP has grown, so has the work of the executive officer. In fact, it will take two people to fill David's shoes. Over the summer, the

transition to new Executive Officer, Jack Dovidio, and new Deputy Executive Officer, Linda Dovidio, will take place.

Christie Marvin will continue as Executive Assistant, and David will take on a few tasks as Associate Executive Officer.

The reports from each committee were then given and discussed. Because reports from several of the committees appear in this issue of *Dialogue*, we give just the highlights of each report here:

Membership and Budget. Membership in SPSP has now broken the 6000 barrier. Attendance at the convention was up by approximately 800 people this

Cont. on page 16

More Coffee and Fewer Nude Pirate Revues, Please: Notes on the Process of Site Selection for SPSP Conventions

By *Monica Biernat*

This year's conference was a great success measured against many important metrics—submissions and attendance were at all-time highs and the conference program contained a vast and exciting array of research presentations. As with past years, however, the venue chosen appealed to some members and not to others. Placement of this year's convention at an older hotel at the center of Sin City's entertainment strip was a particular concern for some members. In response, some in the convention committee felt it would be useful to explain the process by which conference venues are chosen and the competing concerns that need to be balanced.

Each year, the SPSP Convention Committee is charged with finding locations for upcoming SPSP conventions and offering proposals for final consideration by the Executive Committee. This is never an easy task, as a viable site must meet a number of desired criteria, be pleasing to a majority of our constituencies AND come in at a reasonable price. Perhaps the most limiting criterion is the desire for warm, sunny weather in late January/early February. If this seems like a minor concern to you, then there is a good chance you live in a warm climate. Past experience exploring venues has revealed a strong desire for SPSP to provide a "winter break" to members who live in colder environments. This means that the committee can only consider cities in the southern half of the country. (Some think the Pacific Northwest would also suffice, but that winter grayness is prohibitive to many members, and the weather patterns in this part of the country are hard to predict during the winter months).

Committee members are not convention specialists, so they work with Tara Miller Events to obtain proposals from cities and hotels, and to develop and vet contracts. Any given year, a desirable city may not proffer a reasonable proposal—hotels may not be available for particular dates, hotel locations may be undesirable or too expensive, or sites may not be large enough to house our meeting. The size issue has been a particularly difficult one of late, as SPSP convention attendance continues to increase each year. Cities that once housed us—such as Savannah—are now too small for our needs, as are many other options (e.g., Charleston, Santa Barbara). All of this means that in any given year, only 4-5 reasonable "bids" come in, and of those only one or two ultimately come close to meeting enough of our needs. Once these bids are identified, representatives from Tara Miller Events (and often a member of the convention committee) visit the sites for a final check and walk through, at which point a recommendation is passed on to the Executive Committee. The convention committee is currently working on a "2 years+ in advance" schedule—so Las Vegas was selected by the 2008 convention committee, San Antonio (the site for 2011) by the 2009 committee, and San Diego (2012) by the 2009/2010 committee.

In 2008, the Executive Committee of SPSP charged the convention committee with developing criteria for site selections. Based partly on comments following the Albuquerque meeting in 2008, the following were set as the *highest priorities* for convention sites, and were specifically considered beginning with the San Antonio selection:

- Ensuring all hotels are within walking distance of the conven-

tion center

- Safe local environment
- Sufficient public transportation (e.g., cabs, buses, light rail)

A next set of *high priorities* include the following:

- Warm weather location
- Reasonable cost of airfares and good number of direct or easy-connection flights
- Reasonable hotel costs and range of price options (especially for graduate students)
- Reasonable overall convention site costs (to keep registration rates low)
- "Greenness" of the city, convention center, and/or hotels

Additional priorities include:

- Good number and diversity of good restaurants within walking distance
- Some semblance of an East-Midwest-West rotation (to balance out costs for SPSP members)

This myriad of criteria means that a number of cities are often out of SPSP's reach. For example, Miami and San Francisco tend to have prohibitively high expenses (both in terms of room rates and expenses for "food and beverage"—always a required part of a hotel or convention center contract). Airfare to Honolulu would be unaffordable for many graduate students. Some of Atlanta's likely hotel/convention center accommodations would not be near a walkable restaurant district. With each convention experience, more criteria are suggested—recent nominees include "no pirates," "no nude revues in the hotel," and "hotel rooms must have coffee

makers.” Finding the ideal convention site becomes more and more complicated each year. In addition, the requirement to sign a contract early means that unexpected problems can creep up by the time the conference takes place. In the case of Las Vegas, a planned \$50 million renovation at the Riviera was scuttled because economic recession hit the city after the conference contract was signed.

With these constraints and experiences in mind, the current convention com-

mittee is beginning its work in selecting a city for 2013. The goal is to head east (at least east of Texas), and cities under consideration include New Orleans, Nashville, Jacksonville, Orlando, Charlotte, and Miami (maybe we’ll get lucky on price!). The reality is that SPSP may reach a point at which rotating among a select group of “known” cities will work best for the organization. At this time, Tampa, Palm Springs, Austin, and San Antonio seem like possible candidates. If

you have city suggestions or any comments about convention issues, please contact the current Convention Committee (Wendi Gardner, chair, Toni Schmader, and Cindy Pickett), or consider writing to *Dialogue*. No city and site will please everyone, but the convention committee always hopes to find locales that match the quality of SPSP programming.



Summer Institute on Social/Personality Psychology and Health

By Wendy Nelson

In July 2009, the National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) Basic and Biobehavioral Research Branch (BBRB) sponsored the *Summer Institute on Social/Personality Psychology and Health*, a 3-day, workshop designed to introduce promising social/personality psychologists to health research. Although focused on cancer prevention and control as a platform to test classic and novel theoretical perspectives from social and personality psychology, the workshop was also intended to give participants an appreciation of what is involved in conducting health research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The overarching objective of the Summer Institute was to enhance cross-disciplinary collaborations between social/personality psychologists and cancer control researchers toward the end of promoting novel approaches to cancer prevention and control research questions.

Twenty-four junior faculty and graduate students from 21 colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada were selected to participate in the workshop following a competitive application process. Institute faculty included eight extramural social/personality and clinical psychologist cancer researchers and 13 NCI scientists. The invited extramural faculty included Jamie Arndt, (University of Missouri), Marc Kiviniemi (University of Buffalo), Bill Klein (University of Pittsburgh), Michael Diefenbach (Mount Sinai School of Medicine), Alex Rothman (University

of Minnesota), Angela Bryan (University of New Mexico), James Shepperd (University of Florida), Jennifer Hay (Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center), and Paula Pietromonaco (University of Massachusetts at Amherst). Topics included cancer screening and theories of health behavior; cancer prevention and health promotion; challenges of conducting transdisciplinary team science research; energetics; communicating uncertainty; and medical decision making. In addition, participants learned about funding opportunities at NCI, preparing a NIH grant, and the NIH grant review process. Throughout the three days, participants were encouraged to discuss their research ideas with extramural and NCI faculty. Summer Institute presentations and suggested readings are available online at <http://dceps.nci.nih.gov/bbrb/spsi.html>.

The Summer Institute was part of NCI’s efforts to encourage social/personality psychologists to connect their knowledge and research skills to critical issues in cancer prevention and control. In September 2007 and June 2008, NCI hosted two “think tank” meetings – titled *Incorporating Innovative Social Psychological Theory in Cancer Control Research* – to gain a better understanding of new theories in social psychology that might inform and be informed by behavioral research in cancer control. Chaired by Bill Klein and James Shepperd, the meetings featured Barbara Fredrickson (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), Irene Blair (University of Colorado), Jeff Stone (University of Arizona), Benjamin Karney (University of California at Los

Angeles), Michael Robinson (North Dakota State University), Traci Mann (University of Minnesota), Rosanna Guadagno (University of Alabama), Michelle “Mikki” Hebl (Rice University), James Larson (University of Illinois at Chicago), David Amodio (New York University), Michael Stefanek (American Cancer Society), and Vish Viswanath (Harvard University). The meetings focused on how theories and models of emotion, self-regulation, personality, social influence, stereotypes/discrimination, group processes, and social cognitive neuroscience could enhance behavioral research in cancer control.

NCI also hosted the 2009 and 2010 SPSP pre-conferences on health research in social/personality psychology, and sponsored a grants workshop on the Sunday morning following the 2009 SPSP meeting. Related events include an upcoming special issue of *Self and Identity* on self-regulation and health (co-edited by James Shepperd, Alex Rothman, and Bill Klein), and the development of a new social/personality and health interest group. Social/personality psychologists who are interested in conducting research in cancer prevention and control should contact:

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President's Column: The Blurry Line between Social and Personality

By Jennifer Crocker

As a social psychologist, I grew up believing in the inherent superiority of social over personality psychology. Conforming to social psychological theory, my prejudices originated in categorization processes, ingroup favoritism, and socialization. Once acquired, they affirmed my sense of self. Through biased processing of information, and resistance to contrary evidence, they persisted for years. Recently, however, personal experience (in the form of my own data) has forced me to reconsider not only the superiority of social over personality psychology, but the very distinction between them.

When I was a graduate student more years ago than seems possible, social and personality psychology were separated by a bright line into distinct categories. Personality psychologists studied traits, which were supposed to predict behavior in a way that was invariant across time and situations, whereas social psychologists studied the power of the situation to shape behavior. Along with this distinction in intellectual approach went a distinction in the methods used; personality psychologists used correlational methods, examining associations between measured traits and actual behaviors, whereas social psychologists conducted laboratory experiments, manipulating situational variables and observing their effects on behavior. It seemed natural for social and personality psychology to be organized into separate Ph.D. programs.

My views at that time were shaped by Mischel's monograph (1968), *Personality and Assessment*, which had recently challenged the traditional view that personality traits consistently predict behavior across a wide range of situations. Mischel himself did not give up on personality, and went on to search for consistency in the "if-then" contingencies that characterize a person's behavior. But social psychologists—at least those

I knew—considered Mischel's critique to be a fatal blow to the field of personality. In our view, the interesting question was, "why do people believe so strongly in personality traits that clearly either do not exist, or account for little variance in behavior?" Our reaction revealed our shared views on human judgment, as social psychologists were particularly interested in the attributional processes—and biases—that lead to erroneous inferences about personality as a cause of behavior.

Along with the belief in the inherent superiority of focusing on the power of situations to influence behavior, social psychologists like me also believed in the superiority of our research methods. Because laboratory experiments permitted the manipulation of situations, the methodology of social psychology provided stronger grounds for causal inference, the gold standard of social psychological research. Correlational studies, typically used in personality research, could not test inferences about cause and effect. Of course, I was instructed in the limitations of laboratory experiments—lack of mundane realism, the possibility that findings with college students might not generalize, and so on—but the value of testing causal hypotheses far outweighed these limitations, in my view. To my uncertain and insecure graduate student self, it felt great to be a member of the high-status group, with the superior intellectual framework and the superior research methodology.

Time has not been kind to my sense of superiority. Although I still think of myself as a social psychologist, the fundamental assumptions of social psychology—that persons and situations are independent of one another, and behavior is caused by situations—increasingly seem wrong, or at least oversimplified. My own data repeatedly confront me with the complex, dynamic, and reciprocal effects of persons and situations—particularly interpersonal situations.

Laboratory experiments seem inadequate to test these dynamic and reciprocal effects.

Behind these doubts lies a deeper dissatisfaction. It seems to me that the traditional view of social psychology, that the power is in the situation, with people merely reacting to the situations in which they find themselves, encourages people to view themselves as being at the mercy of situational constraints, unable to change their experience or behavior unless the situation changes.

This view denies evidence that people at least to some degree create their situations; people are sometimes the source, rather than at the mercy, of what they experience. When we teach about the power of the situation, we do not teach people to identify the power they have to create what they do want. Furthermore, the situations people create for themselves shape who they are. Ultimately, rigid adherence to the mantra that the power is in the situation undermines our ability to truly understand social behavior, and does a disservice to the field and the consumers of our work.

To provide just one example, people often feel at the mercy of their relationship partners (e.g., "My relationship is bad because the other person is unresponsive to my needs. If the other person would change, I could be more supportive and compassionate."). Yet, Amy Canevello and I (Canevello & Crocker, in press) showed that on days people have compassionate goals for their roommate relationships, their responsiveness to their roommates is higher the following day, their roommates perceive their increased responsiveness and reciprocate it, and the relationship quality of both roommates increases over two days. Furthermore, two days later these processes predict increases in the compassionate goals of both roommates toward their relationships, creating a constructive cycle. These data suggest that people in relationships have a choice: they can feel at the mercy of their rela-

tionship partners, waiting for others to have compassionate goals and be responsive to them, or they can decide to be the *source* of responsiveness in their relationship, adopt the goal to be compassionate, and act responsively. The latter strategy seems more helpful, because it is more likely to create the responsive relationships people desire.

My research has taught me that in lives outside the laboratory, persons and their situations are not independent variables. As Harry Reis pointed out, relationships are situations, and situations involve relationships (Reis, 2009). People shape their relationship situations, and their relationship situations shape them in return. In our data, people create responsive relationship partners by being responsive to them, which shapes their goals. These processes unfold over time, involve more than one person, and are reciprocal. Ultimately, these unfolding, dynamic, reciprocal processes hold the potential for significant change in both social situations and personality characteristics over surprisingly brief time intervals. For example, we found that one person's compassionate goals predict increases in their responsiveness, which in turn predicts increases in trait self-esteem and secure attachment styles over 12 weeks (Crocker, in press). We could not observe these processes in laboratory experiments, which typically treat the person and the situation as independent variables, remove people from their usual relational contexts, study people for an hour or less, and test only one direction of causal effects.

Of course, others have made these points before. In 1976, shortly after I began graduate school, Endler and Magnusson argued for a dynamic model in which people and their situations influence each other (Endler & Magnusson, 1976). Personality psychologists have also studied the ways people influence their situations for some time (Snyder & Ickes, 1985). But social psychologists firmly convinced of the power of the situation and the superiority of laboratory experiments have not, on the whole, embraced this view. Their reluctance, I think, stems from the inherent difficulty of studying dynamic reciprocal influences

of persons and relationship situations, given the tools available at that time. At the time Endler and Magnusson argued for the mutual influence of persons and situations, the field lacked the research methods to capture these dynamics and the statistical tools to analyze them.

Fortunately, the nonexperimental methods of today are not the correlational studies disdained by my graduate school self; data collection and data analysis methods have made huge leaps since then. Today we have the tools to study dyadic, dynamic, reciprocal processes over time. We now have available statistical techniques such as multilevel modeling and the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model that adjust for the interdependence of reports over time and of relationship partners' reports with each other (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). Longitudinal studies in which people repeatedly report on their experiences permit testing of within-person effects and change over time, establishing the plausibility or implausibility of causal hypotheses. With repeated measurements of behavior in vivo, we can examine the possibility of reciprocal causal effects.

In fact, I would argue that we must study people over time in their "real life" contexts if we want to fully understand the nature and importance of social phenomena. Reciprocal causal effects between people and their situations can transform initially small effects of people on their situations and situations on people into large effects with important consequences over time. Furthermore, when situations involve other people, effects can become contagious and reverberate through social networks. Phenomena that appear quite constrained in the laboratory may be much more powerful when studied in vivo. And the opposite may also be true; phenomena that seem powerful in the laboratory may be much less so when people are studied in the wild, where countervailing forces may constrain them.

In my view, the contribution of social and personality psychology does not depend on method, but on our theories and our methodological and analytic

sophistication and breadth. The sense of superiority of social psychologists over personality psychologists is unfounded, and based on a false dichotomy between persons and situations. Understanding process and the importance of our findings requires studying them in vivo, being open to the possibility of reciprocal effects, and to a wide range of methods.

My point is not to criticize experimental research. I still love doing experiments, reading about other people's experiments, and teaching about the results of experiments. But I'm not monogamous about methodology—I also love the richness of studying people's lives over time, in their relationships, and how they, their relationship partners, and their relationships evolve. My point is simply that it is time for social psychologists to let go of their biases against personality psychology and nonexperimental methods, and embrace the full range of ideas, theories, and methods that can help us better understand people and their behavior in social contexts. The bright line separating personality and social psychology is more in our minds than in our missions. The vitality of social psychology, personality psychology, and SPSP is strengthened by blurring that line.

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Diversity and Climate Committee Report

By Denise Sekaquaptewa

The SPSP Diversity and Climate Committee (DCC) organizes activities and programs within the society with the goal of increasing the diversity of the SPSP membership (in terms of race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class, disability, etc.) and ensuring that the climate of the Society is inclusive and supportive. The DCC members for 2009-10 are Denise Sekaquaptewa (chair), Nilanjana (Buju) Dasgupta, and Rudy Mendoza-Denton. In this report, I describe the activities and events we organized for the SPSP conference held in Las Vegas in January 2010.

Diversity Fund Undergraduate Registration and Graduate Travel Awards

SPSP provided financial assistance to undergraduate and graduate students from various demographic groups that are underrepresented in personality and social psychology. For undergrads, these awards paid for conference registration so that students could attend the conference and get a taste of the professional lives of personality and social psychologists. This year, undergraduate students also received a complimentary copy of a book entitled *Getting In: A Step-by-Step Plan for Gaining Admission to Graduate School in Psychology* (American Psychological Association) published by APA books. In previous years, the undergraduate registration award was limited to students who were enrolled in a college in the region of the conference. However, several SPSP members noted that this criterion is likely to favor states in warm parts of the country where SPSP is typically held. Therefore, this year we opened up the undergraduate registration award to all undergraduate Psychol-

ogy majors who are currently enrolled in college, regardless of region. We received 71 applications for the Undergraduate Registration Award from students across the country, and we were able to grant 30 awards (42% acceptance rate).

Graduate student awardees received a \$500 cash award to assist with conference-related expenses, and a complimentary copy of *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing* by Paul J. Silvia (our thanks to APA Books for providing the two award books at a considerable discount). Graduate student awardees also had an opportunity to meet 2-3 "admired scholars" of their own choosing at the Diversity and Climate Committee Reception. These admired scholars were social or personality psychologists whose work had influenced the award winners' intellectual development and/or were sources of inspiration to them. This year we received 104 applications for the Graduate Travel Award (up from 68 last year) and we granted 24 awards (23% acceptance rate). Please visit <http://www.spsp.org/divwin10.htm> for pictures and biographies of our 2010 award winners.

Diversity and Climate Committee Reception

The DCC also sponsored a reception at the Las Vegas conference to honor the student awardees. The event was open to all conference attendees, and we had a really great turnout! The reception provided an opportunity for graduate and undergraduate awardees to mingle with senior social psychologists as well as their peers and to start developing professional and mentoring networks. We extended a special invitation to the admired scholars identified by the awardees to attend the reception with the expressed purpose of seeking out and chatting with the

graduate student(s) who nominated them. Many of us who are now faculty can remember a time when, as students, we waited on the sidelines looking for an opportunity to join a conversation with an admired, yet seemingly intimidating, senior researcher. Alternatively, from the other perspective, we have noticed the faces of hovering students trying to work up the nerve to ask an interesting question. These conversations can be critical to the intellectual development of any student researcher, and working through one's anxieties to meet the challenge can be liberating. Sometimes there are additional barriers to these interactions for students whose life experiences and group memberships are not well-represented among conference attendees. The DCC seeks to alleviate those barriers.

Mentoring Luncheon with the GLBT Alliance in Social Psychology (GASP)

This year we launched a new mentoring lunch for graduate students, postdocs, and young faculty associated with the GLBT Alliance in Social Psychology (GASP). Our goal was to create a space for professional and social networking among social and personality psychologists who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender (GLBT) and/or whose research focuses on issues of sexuality. The luncheon was held on Friday afternoon, and was hosted jointly by the DCC and GASP. Like all DCC events, this event was open to all conference attendees. Our first GASP mentoring luncheon was a great success! GLBT community members and allies were able to mix and mingle socially and professionally to develop professional networks and foster an inclusive and supportive climate. For more information on GASP, please visit <http://www.psych.utah.edu/gasp/>.

Diversity Symposium

This year, the DCC sponsored a symposium at the conference that was closely related to issues of diversity. This symposium was held on Saturday afternoon and was entitled “*A Multi-Stage Approach to Understanding Intergroup Contact: Challenges and Potential Solutions*” (Co-Chairs: Tamar Saguy, Interdiscipli-

nary Center (IDC) Herzliya, and Tessa West, New York University). The symposium featured talks by Michael Inzlicht, Michael Norton, Tamar Saguy, and Tessa West.

Get involved with DCC!

We welcome any comments and input from SPSP members. If you are interested in serving on the committee at some point, or if you have

ideas about expanding or improving our programs or activities, please send an email to any of the committee members. The DCC members (Denise Sekaquaptewa (chair), Nilanjana (Buju) Dasgupta, and Rudy Mendoza-Denton), can be contacted via the Social Psychology Network (www.socialpsychology.org). ❖❖

Looking Back, Looking Forward: News and Views from the Training Committee

By Marti Hope Gonzales, University of Minnesota, SPSP Training Committee Chair

Although attendance at conferences often activates the “scientist” dimension of our professional self-concepts, the demands of our professional roles as personality and social psychologists are multidimensional. Of course, we conduct research, often in collaboration with students and faculty peers. Those of us in academic settings, however, also teach and mentor graduate students, all the better to ensure that along the way they become professional peers who will join us in shaping the future of our discipline.

At the last meeting of SPSP in Las Vegas, the Training Committee worked closely with the SPSP Graduate Student Committee to address topics especially relevant to changes in higher education. Our professional Malthusian dilemma is reflected in the fact that academic psychologists reproduce at a geometric rate, whereas tenure-track positions in the academy increase at an arithmetic rate, if at all. Given that the supply of new PhDs far exceeds the demands for faculty, responsible graduate training more than ever requires faculty and students to consider alternatives to traditional career trajectories. This topic was the focus of the annual preconference held in Las Vegas. In a daylong series of

talks and informal discussions, personality and social psychologists who work inside and outside colleges and universities in the U.S. and Europe shared their experiences and tips for success with a graduate student audience that broke all previous attendance records. We are grateful for their participation.

Also in keeping with our focus on the myriad demands of doing professional personality and social psychology, the Training Committee, under the able leadership of Jamie Arndt and Michael Robinson, sponsored a well-attended symposium on the rewards and challenges confronted by the graduate mentor. Too often—whether in academic positions or in careers outside of the academy—new PhDs tackle the demands of mentoring with only their own personal experiences as advisees to guide them, as they work to replicate what worked for them and to avoid what didn’t. The Training Committee symposium—*Giving Them Wings to Fly*—served to expand the toolbox of mentoring options for new and future faculty members, all the better to prepare attendees for the additional rigors of their new roles as faculty members. Some of the most committed and gifted mentors in our field shared their philosophies and the best practices that follow, and we appreciate their participation, as well.

As for the future, members of the

Training Committee are hard at work planning for next year’s preconference and symposium to be held at the next meeting of SPSP in San Antonio, Texas (January 27-29, 2011). As planning progresses, be on the lookout for listserv messages that will provide detailed information on topics and speakers.

Finally, the Training Committee has rounded third in connection with our Applied Personality and Social Psychology web site. In keeping with our commitment to providing graduate students with a wide array of employment options—including applied work outside of academia—we are putting the finishing touches on a site that includes information on applied researchers and applied work settings for which the skill set of new personality and social psychologists is ideally suited. Again, be on the lookout for future messages, in which we will provide you with additional information on that site, and solicit contact information on colleagues and former students who work in applied settings.

In the meantime, feel free to visit our web site (<http://www.spsptrainingcommittee.org/index.php>) or to contact one or more of us: Marti Hope Gonzales, Jamie Arndt, Michael Robinson, Stacey Sinclair. ❖❖❖

Publishing Papers: Myths and Facts

By Jack Dovidio

For the first half of my professional life, I was amazed by the mysteries of publishing. I would work diligently on a project, analyze it responsibly, write it up carefully, and send it on its way, hopefully to be published in a top-flight journal such as JPSP, PSPB, or JESP. I soon learned that submitting a paper was like having a baby: No matter how ugly it really is, it looks beautiful to me. So, I was always surprised – and frequently offended – by the responses of reviewers and editors. I just could not understand why they did not love it the way I did. They *just didn't understand*, and I blamed them for it.

For much of the second half of my career, I have served in various editorial roles. I have personally been action editor on a couple of thousand manuscripts. So, I have more recently spent many hours wondering why authors don't understand the decisions I have made. Reviewers volunteer substantial time and energy evaluating manuscripts, spelling out what is wrong, what is right, and what needs to be done to improve the manuscript and the research. As an editor, I would independently review the manuscript; read, process, and synthesize the reviewers' comments; and spend hours writing an action letter.

It then occurred to me that the problem in communication is not necessarily about the details of any given manuscript. The problem is that the editorial process is a black box, with authors making certain assumptions about the process and editors operating on a separate set of assumptions. There is enough overlap between the two sets of assumptions to create the illusion that we are “on the same page,” but because our transactions are sequential – authors submit, editors later respond – there is insufficient

dialogue to achieve true mutual understanding.

In this article, I try to de-mystify the review process by discussing common author perceptions of the publication process and bringing, as much as possible, data to bear on these issues. These data are based on an analysis of 18 papers published during my term as Editor of JPSP-IRGP, yoked to 18 manuscripts submitted at the same time but which were not published in JPSP. These were all initial submissions to JPSP, not invited revisions or resubmissions. Some of the issues may be unique to JPSP, and I suspect may be specific to my editorial term: buyer beware. However, I suspect that the issues I am focusing on represent more general publication principles. I consider four common publication “myths.” In each case, I describe a common assumption and then present the data from the studies in my sample. After each, I suggest an interpretation.

Myth #1: Reviewers have poor reliability.

Fact #1: Of the 18 accepted manuscripts, 6 had full agreement by the three or more reviewers that the manuscript merited an invited revision or acceptance. Of the 18 rejected manuscripts, for 12 there was full agreement by the reviewers that the manuscript should be rejected or not invited for further consideration (i.e., major revision, including new data, was needed).

These data suggest that there is considerable agreement among reviewers, but that agreement is much stronger for rejection than for acceptance. In my experience, reviewers approach new manuscripts with a “rejection set.” Essentially, they see their role as protecting the profession from inferior or misleading work becoming part of

the established body of literature. In fact, the field counts on reviewers to be such a filter.

How does this rejection set work? I use the metaphor of five gold coins. Each author has the benefit of the doubt equivalent to these five coins. Every time a reviewer becomes confused, suspicious, or concerned by a point in the manuscript, the author forfeits a coin. When all five coins are used up, the show is over; the recommendation will be to reject the manuscript.

Although there is no precise number of gold coins an author has, in essence reviewers typically root through a manuscript until there is sufficient question about the appropriateness of the work for publication. When they reach that conclusion – which appears like it can be done relatively reliably – the recommendation is to reject the manuscript. As a consequence of this rejection set, reviewers tend to be very hard on authors, typically even harder than editors. Indeed, of the 18 manuscripts I accepted, 27% of the reviewers had recommended rejection or resubmission with major changes; for the 18 I chose to reject, only 8% recommended acceptance. Before I became an editor, a former editor of JPSP once said to me, “If I relied solely on the recommendations of reviewers, I would never publish anything.” This, of course, is an exaggeration, but not as much of one as I originally thought.

Myth #2: The more studies in a manuscript, the better chance it has be published.

Fact #2: The modal number of studies in an accepted manuscript was 2; in rejected manuscripts the modal number of studies was 3. Of the accepted manuscripts, 1 included one study, 9 had 2 studies, 4 had 3 studies, 1 had 4

studies, and 3 had 5 or more studies. Of the rejected manuscripts, 2 represented one study, 4 had 2 studies, 3 had 3 studies, 1 had 4 studies, and 4 had 5 or more studies.

In my editorial experience, evaluations of manuscripts are not based on a simple additive model – more is not necessarily better. The algorithm is more like a weighted average, with negative aspects weighted particularly heavily. If we consider this in the context of the rejection set embedded in the process, reviewers and editors are more likely to reach the saturation point leading to rejection when more studies are included in a manuscript.

Moreover, the goal of publication is the communication of research findings. It is not about an author's personal journey of discovery. For instance, authors often begin their manuscript with a study that did not work well. Study 2 usually accomplishes everything that Study 1 did, but more and better. Drawing from the earlier discussion, Study 1 uses up most of the gold coins without making a real, substantive contribution to the work. Sometimes people ask me whether the weak study should be first, last, or buried in the middle. My answer is always the same. It shouldn't be there at all. The contribution of a manuscript is not measured in terms of the author's effort or the length of his or her journey; it is determined by the novel contribution of the work and the efficiency with which it is communicated. More is thus not always better, and frequently it is worse.

Myth #3: Writing quality does not matter. (Or, being confusing makes you seem smart.)

Fact #3: On a 1 (= poor) to 5 (= excellent) rating scale of clarity of presentation used by reviewers, accepted papers averaged 4.2, whereas rejected papers had a mean of 3.4.

Of course, this is a correlation and it would be wrong to imply causation. It may be that more skilled researchers are the ones with more experience, which also relates to clarity of writing. I suspect that there is a causal element, as well, though. First, the clarity of writing, represented by details as small as correspondence with APA format, conveys an impression of professionalism. A simple, clear flow makes reviewers (and editors) happy; it makes their job easier. Densely or poorly written manuscripts take longer to review, are more cognitively taxing, and make us cranky. Although reviewers and editors focus primarily on the content of a manuscript and consciously adjust for the challenges in writing in a non-native language, there is little generosity for carelessness. Carelessness communicates a lack of seriousness in the endeavor and, at the very least, it costs the author a gold coin (or two).

Myth #4: Reviewers and editors have their mind made up and won't admit when they are wrong.

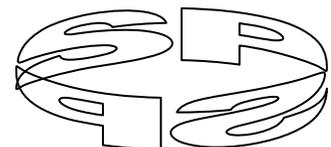
Fact #4: Editors and reviewers are more responsive to new data than to new arguments. In an additional sample of 10 manuscripts that were originally rejected but resubmitted with narrative revisions and re-analyses, but no new data, 9 of the 10 were rejected again. In contrast, of 8 other manuscripts that were originally rejected but resubmitted with new data, 50% (4 out of 8) were eventually accepted. Thus, editors are open to be persuaded – but mainly with new data.

Believe it or not, reviewing and editing are not about ego. They are about helping authors and serving the profession. No good egoist would commit the time it takes to serve as a reviewer or editor with such miniscule material payoff. Reviewers and editors feel an obligation to the field and work primarily to uphold scholarly standards. The editorial process thus should not be construed as a battle or even as a negotiation. The bottom line is qual-

ity. As the one accepted paper out the 10 manuscripts submitted without new data reveals, there is some limited play at the margins. Editors face complex decisions, and many decisions involve fine distinctions. But 90% of the time, the original decision holds, and now many journals will not even reconsider a manuscript under these conditions. In contrast, when authors follow the suggestions offered in the review process and collect the data to make a more compelling case, the acceptance rate is 50%, far above the 10%-15% rate for initial submissions. Thus, it is more productive to see the relationship among the editor, reviewers, and authors as a collaborative one with the common goal of publishing top quality work.

Conclusion

I began this article with the goal of try to offer a peek into the black box of the editorial and publication process. I provided a little bit of data, and a lot of interpretation. For me, seeing the process from both sides, as an author and an editor, gives me an appreciation of the intelligence and dedication of those in our profession. It has also given me a keen sense of how important openness and honesty are. Our work requires integrity; it is critical to our reputation, contribution, and success. The author-reviewer-editor one thus should not be adversarial. But in a process which is secretive in so many ways, it is difficult to develop the trust that is needed to create and maintain effective communication. Hopefully, the snippets of statistics I have provided will make the process a little more transparent and help create a bridge that will facilitate the success of authors and ultimately meet the need of editors for high quality manuscripts. The goals of authors, reviewers, and editors are indeed the same.



Report from the Publication Committee

By Wendy Wood

SPSP's journals and the Dialogue are probably the most important activities of the society. So it is good news that they continue to flourish. Ensuring that they do so is the central job of the SPSP Publications Committee. You may not know what this Committee does—I didn't have a very good idea until I became a member. Mostly, we give advice. We recruit and recommend new journal editors when positions become available. We also advise the existing editors about Society policy, and we work with SAGE to make sure that they understand the needs of social psychology. The other thing we do is report on journal functioning. Twice a year, the editors report to us on the status of their journals, and we in turn report to the Executive Committee. This might sound a bit bureaucratic, but we also get together for dinner a couple of times a year to talk over journal policies with the journal editors, SAGE publishers, and the rest of the Publication Committee (this year Dwayne Wegener, Daniel Cervone, and myself, Wendy Wood, as Chair). What we discussed this year and then reported to the Executive Committee is the following:

The issue that generated the most discussion was, how can our journals better represent a broader, diverse population? That is, how can they publish more papers that draw on broadened participant populations beyond college students, broadened settings outside of the lab, and broadened research methodologies beyond 2x2 experiments. Shinobu Kityama, the Editor of PSPB, stressed the importance of diverse populations in his editorial statement in the January issue of the journal. The discussion was split on how much journal policy should be changed to promote a broad data base. On the one hand, policy makers and others outside of the field sometimes dismiss the value of social and personality research because of our narrow data base. Also, when our findings are adapted by marketing researchers, economists, and others who

use research methods higher in external validity, they may get credit for the findings. On the other hand, social psychology is flourishing, as evidenced by our citation impact in other fields. Social psychology as a science is a citation hub, suggesting that our knowledge base is highly respected. Also putting our narrow data base in perspective, all social science fields to some extent favor westernized, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic (WEIRD) participants.

Given this range of views, the publication committee suggested that (a) decision rules for publication should reflect that, all other things being equal, preference should be given to articles with diverse samples and methods, and (b) SPSP should work to increase researchers' opportunities to access diverse samples and methods—in this way increasing the supply of such articles available for publication in the field.

Also noteworthy, from our discussions with SAGE, new developments are on the way for authors. SAGE has started attaching podcast interviews between an editor and author to some articles for some journals. SPSP would like to start this policy for our journals, and we discussed how editors might do so. Such podcasts apparently increase citation rates of articles, and even have a spill-over effect of increasing citations of other articles published in a given issue.

As for the end of year reports, Dialogue is thriving under the editorial team of Hart Blanton and Diane Quinn. This smart, entertaining publication does an excellent job of keeping us informed about what is going on in the profession.

For the *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, Shinobu Kitayama continues his leadership, along with two senior associate editors, nine associate editors, and a 104-person editorial board. Manuscript submissions continue high, with 638 total submissions in 2009. Editorial lag time continues to be impressive at 8.5 weeks. The impact factor of PSPB has stabilized at a high level, rising to 2.24 in 2008, ranking PSPB #7 out of 47 journals in social

psychology. Thus, PSPB continues to prosper.

Personality and Social Psychology Review has a new editorial team in Mark Leary (Editor), Bernadette Park (Associate Editor), and Deborah Prentice (Associate Editor), taking over for Galen Bodenhausen and his team. *PSPR* submissions have increased 46% over 2008 to a total of 98 new submissions in 2009—reducing a chronic concern with numbers of submissions. An additional 13 papers were received for a special issue on religiosity edited by Constantine Sedikides. The rejection rate last year was 76%, consistent with past years, and mean editorial decision lag stayed short at 8.4 weeks. The remarkable *PSPR* news is its impact factor that rose to 8.50 under Galen's editorship. It is now the top-most cited journal in social/personality and the 8th most impactful journal in all social science titles. We welcome Mark and look forward to his innovative ideas for the journal's continued success.

Finally, the new brief-reports journal, *Social Psychology and Personality Science*, is now in full operation. This new journal, edited by Vincent Yzerbyt and 8 Associate Editors, is a joint venture among four societies: the Association for Research in Personality, the European Association for Experimental Social Psychology, the Society of Experimental Social Psychology, and SPSP. SPSP owns a 32% stake in the journal. The journal is wildly successful. After its start in April, *SPPS* received 378 submissions—far outstripping the submission rate of any launch with which SAGE has been associated. Submissions were from 22 countries, with geography of acceptance/revisions closely mirroring that of the submissions. The first issue has been published, and a hard copy was distributed to all members of SPSP as well as the members of the other associated societies. The journal is meeting its goal of speedy decisions on manuscripts, with a mean editorial decision lag of about 5 weeks.



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2010 SPSP Travel Awards

And the winners are . . .

YEAR 1

- Angela M. Garrison (Maiden: Angela M. Marotta)
- Edward Hughes O'Brien
- Fabrice Pinard Saint-Pierre
- Jessica Kang
- Matthew Baldwin
- Michael Slepian
- Sarah Gaither

YEAR 2

- Andy J. Yap
- Ashley K. Randall, M.S.
- Bastiaan T. Rutjens
- Chin Ming Hui
- Christopher C. Berger
- Elizabeth Focella
- Emre Selcuk
- Erika Carlson
- Francesca Righetti
- Jason Martens
- Keely Muscatell
- Kenneth E. Vail III
- Kris Ariyabuddhiphongs
- Kristin E Hawkinson
- Laura A. Maruskin
- Laura Blackie
- Marijn H. C. Meijers
- Melissa Marie McDonald
- Michael Philipp
- Tristen Inagaki

YEAR 3

- Adam Pearson
- Alexa Tullett
- Amber Emanuel
- Ashley Waggoner
- Bobby Cheon
- C. Daryl Cameron
- Elizabeth F Broady-Johnson
- Elizabeth Przybylinski
- Eric Hehman
- Erik Bijleveld
- Justin Friesen
- Kevin R. Betts
- Melissa Holt
- Pablo De Tezanos-Pinto
- Ryosuke Asano
- Samantha Mowrer
- Sarah McLachlan
- Spike W. S. Lee
- Tila Pronk

YEAR 4

- Adrianna Jenkins
- Benjamin Liberman
- Daryl R. Van Tongeren
- Edward A. Witt
- Elizabeth R. Brown
- Elze Ufkes
- Eva Telzer
- Gabrielle Adams
- Genevieve Lavigne
- Kyle Scherr
- Nathan Heflick
- Paul Kayhan Piff
- Robert Franklin
- Ron Dotsch

YEAR 5

- Anett Gyurak
- Angela J. Jacques-Tiura
- Aurelia Mok
- Elliot Berkman
- Emily Zitek
- Ethan Zell
- Jesse Graham
- Justin Cavallo
- Kiley Hamlin
- Kimberly K. McAdams (previously Assad)
- Lotte Thomsen
- Philip Gable
- Shannon Holleran
- Tyler Davis
- Young-Hoon Kim

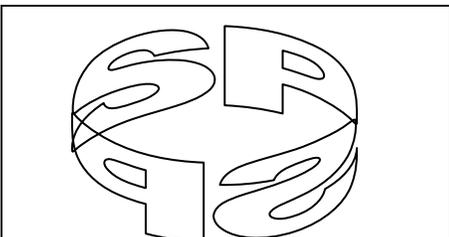
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APA in San Diego: On Caregiving and Controversy

By Diana Sanchez

The APA Convention 2010 will take place from August 12th to August 15th in sunny San Diego, California at the San Diego Convention Center. Because the APA Convention theme is Caregiving, the Division 8 program boasts several exciting addresses from the leading experts on caregiving. For example, Nancy Collins and Shelly Gable from the UC Santa Barbara will represent the social and personality perspectives on caregiving in an invited APA President Highlighted Symposium. They will be joined by Naomi Eisenberger and Joan Monin to discuss the consequences of caregiving and social support. The 2010 Spielberger Symposium on emotion, motivation, and personality will feature M. Lynne Cooper who studies motivation for risky behaviors. In addition, 2010 APA Distinguished Scientist Award recipient, Susan Fiske will present her latest research on scorn and envy in social comparison. The Henry Murray Award winner, Avril Thorne will also present her research on introverted personalities and friendships. The current President of SPSP, Jennifer Crocker will revisit the social importance of self-esteem in her

address at the convention. These leading experts are joined by a host of other pioneering researchers invited to present at APA on the topics of culture, emotion, close-relationships, motivation, health, stereotyping, and stigma. These presentations include Art Aron, Monica Biernat, Sapna Cheryan, Nicholas Christenfeld, Thierry Devos, Brooke Feeney, Diane Quinn, Toni Schmader, Jenessa Shapiro, and Margaret Shih.

I also want to take this opportunity to address the controversy surrounding this year's APA Convention. As a researcher of stereotyping, prejudice, and stigma, I accepted my appointment as the APA Program Chair for Division 8 with mixed emotion—excitement about the opportunity to put together a strong program of scholars to represent our discipline and anger about the APA's decision to designate the Manchester Hotel as an APA Convention Hotel. The Manchester Hotel is owned by a known supporter of the Prop 8 Initiative to ban same-sex marriage. Because of SPSP's united front with Divisions 9, 12, 17, 27, 32, 35, 39, 44, 45, 48, and 56 to boycott the Manchester Hotel, I am happy to report that all of the Division 8

programming will be held at the San Diego Convention Center (not the Manchester Hotel). Moreover, the APA Convention program now features several addresses and symposia on the topic of LGBT issues in psychology from a wide variety of divisions including our own. For example, we are co-sponsoring a symposium on the new directions in research on minority stress among LGBT populations with Division 9 (SPSSI). We have also joined forces with Division 9 (SPSSI) to offer a joint social hour on Saturday evening at the San Diego Marriott Hotel. So, there are many reasons that I highly recommend attending the APA Convention this year. The 2010 APA Convention will provide an opportunity to learn about the new directions of the field, especially in the areas of caregiving, stereotyping, prejudice, and LGBT topics. In addition, your attendance will support the SPSP boycott of the Manchester Hotel (and you could take the opportunity to picket the Manchester Hotel should you be inclined to take further social action). I hope to see you at the Convention. Registration begins on Thursday, April 15th (see website for details: <http://www.apa.org/convention/>).

❖❖❖

Report on APA Council of Representatives

By Janet K. Swim and
Lynne Cooper

APA Convention

The APA convention will be held in San Diego from August 11-15. Controversy had arisen over APA's initial decision to remain in the Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel after concerns about the hotel owner's monetary contribution to Proposition 8 which bans gay marriage in the state

of California. Several divisions, including Division 8, wrote letters encouraging APA to move divisional events and the APA Council meeting itself out of the hotel. Council voted in solidarity with the letter writers, thus directing the APA to move its meetings elsewhere. APA is not calling for a general boycott of the hotel, but will make every effort to provide other lodging and meeting space options so that members or groups who do not

want to use the Hyatt have other attractive options. Special attention has also been given to convention programming that highlights same sex marriage rights.

Other conference events of interest to Division 8 members include: Dan Gilbert will deliver a keynote address, and Shelly Taylor will receive a life time achievement award. Roslyn Carter will also receive an APA Presidential citation. Attention

Report on APA Council of Representatives (continued from p 14)

has also been given to making the convention a fun place for attendees, including opportunities for visiting the San Diego Zoo.

Public Education Campaign

Council reauthorized monies for APA's public education campaign, adding the stipulation that the focus of the campaign be brought into line with the goals and objectives of APA's Strategic Plan. The previous public education campaigns has very successfully raised

public awareness about psychological services and, for instance, worked to remove the stigma associated with seeking help from a clinical psychologist. The current re-authorization requires that the public education dollars be used for broader purposes, especially educating the public about psychology as a science.

APA Dues

Council voted to create a \$25 dues credit for full members of APA who are also members of the Association for Psychological Science; the Society of Neuroscience; as well as any organization that is part of the Federation for the Advancement of Behavioral and Brain Sciences. The credit also extends to members of the state, provincial and territorial psychological associations and the four national ethnic-minority psychological associations. At the same time, Council repealed what had been a 25% dues reduction for individuals who were also members of APS or one of the other Federation organizations. Although this move is seen as creating parity for across all APA members who pay dues to more than one professional organization, it has the effect of increasing membership costs for most scientists since the 25% discount greatly exceeds the \$25 reduction. This move will be discussed further by the APA membership committee since

Stages of Work-Life Balance



By DMQ

Early Grad School	Late Grad School	Assistant Professor
<p>"It is way harder than undergrad, but if I shift all my research, coursework, and TA duties to Mon-Fri, 10-5, I still have plenty of time for other life activities! I can do this!"</p>	<p>"It not easy, but if I work hard on research, teaching, and writing my dissertation, I can still take one day off per week for other life activities. Unless no writing gets done . . . stupid dissertation!"</p>	<p>"Balance-schmalance, I'll worry about balance later. If I work really hard on my research, teaching, advising, writing, and service activities every day, 7 days a week, I can still get 5-6 hours of sleep a night!"</p>
...	Associate Professor	Full Professor
<p>" . . . what's that? What do you mean now is a good time to start a family?! Now? Really? OK, OK, you're right, if I cut the sleep down to 3 hours per night, I could fit a baby and tenure in."</p>	<p>"Sure, I've got work-life balance. I teach, advise, write, research, edit, see my partner, take care of my kid. Plus, I go to conferences!! That's balance right? Wait, did I mention the kids? I can't remember . . . research shows that sleep deprivation affects memory."</p>	<p>"As I tell all my graduate students, being a professor is the perfect job for work-life balance. A lot of flexibility, time for your family, golf, you name it! Oh, and next week I'm spending a month in Greece! I have no plan to retire. No, I don't remember any major work-life balance issues."</p>

it may have the unintended effect of further decreasing the number of primary scientists who are members of APA.

Ethics code.

In its continued effort to be clear about its stance against torture, Council approved changes to the APA Ethics Code to resolve potential conflicts among professional ethics, legal authority, and organizational demands. The revised language to standards 1.02 and 1.03 is intended to ensure that the standards can never be interpreted to justify or defend violating human rights.

Task Force Reports

Task force reports are one way that APA is able to build bridges across different areas of expertise in Psychology and make connections between research and practice. This fall, Council voted to receive the Final Report of the Task Force on Psychology's Contribution to End Homelessness. According to the report, providing housing without addressing the psychosocial factors associated with homelessness is not enough to solve the overarching problem. The full report is available at: www.apa.org/pubs/info/reports/end-homelessness.pdf.

State of SPSP:

News from the Executive Committee Meeting (cont. from page 1)

year, with 3512 conference attendees. The finances of the Society remain in good shape with no surprises in the positive or negative direction.

Convention and Program Committees. The convention committee (Monica Biernat, Wendi Gardner, and Toni Schmader) discussed the search for future convention venues. The executive committee discussed how to get increased media involvement and reporting on the conference, including the ideas of inviting specific journalists to attend the conference and videotaping major addresses for download on the internet.

The program committee (chaired by William Fleeson and Serena Chen) noted that there were 195 symposia submitted for the conference – the highest number of submissions yet. There were 77 accepted, yielding a 61.6% rejection rate. We discussed potential ways to increase the number of symposia accepted in future years, such as adding an earlier start time to each convention day. There were 2026 posters accepted (again, a record high). The submission portal for SPSP 2010 underwent significant improvements this year with a new automated process that streamlined submission and allowed the use of keywords in scheduling the program. Specifically, posters were arranged in groups by their keywords in order to allow similar posters to be near each other. In order to prevent timing conflicts, there were several different sessions for heavily subscribed keywords. Keywords were also used to arrange the symposia sessions in order to increase variety in each time slot and to avoid conflicts on similar themes. Several people noted that the signage in the poster rooms was very helpful in allowing people to find specific posters.

Student Travel Awards Committee. The committee (chaired by Toni Schmader) received 592 applications for student travel awards. Each application was reviewed and rated by two committee members. Seventy-five awards were given, distributed proportionally across year in graduate school. See page 12 for the full list of winners.

Publication Committee. The committee (Wendy Wood, Duane Wegener, and Daniel Cervone) reported that each of the publications – PSPB, PSPR, SPPS, and Dialogue – is running smoothly. PSPR is transitioning to a new editorial team this year. For a full report from the publication committee, see page 10.

Training Committee. The training committee, along with the graduate student committee, organized a pre-conference that focused on the different types of careers available to those with training in personality and social psychology. Talks included information on academic jobs in research-oriented universities and liberal arts colleges, jobs in business schools and medical schools, and jobs in the public and private sectors. The training committee also organized a symposium session in order to give advice and best practices on the mentoring of graduate students. See full report on page 7.

Diversity and Climate Committee (DCC). In the spirit of “It ain’t broke, don’t fix it,” the DCC reported that they continue to have great success sponsoring the Diversity reception. At the reception, the winners of the diversity fund travel award (both graduate and undergraduate) get a chance to talk to researchers they admire. This reception is so popular with students and faculty that the food invariably

runs out well before people are finished conversing. (*Special Dialogue Tip: Get in line for food early, talk later!*) The DCC also co-sponsors a mentoring lunch with the GLBT Alliance in social and personality psychology (GASP). This year featured 13 mentors leading discussions on a variety of topics. See page 6 for more information on the work of the DCC.

Graduate Student Committee (GSC). The GSC was, as always, very busy this year. In addition to co-sponsoring the pre-conference on career trajectories, they organized a symposium on a “graduate student’s guide to external funding.” They also created a poster from the results of a survey on graduate student experiences. The GSC continued to organize two very popular events at SPSP: The mentor luncheon and the student poster award. The student luncheon included 272 students and 35 mentors, and a total of 88 posters were submitted for poster awards. See page 20 for a full report and the winners of the poster awards. The GSC also made two important recommendations that are under consideration by the executive committee: (a) In order to reduce paper use (and strain on people’s backs!) it was recommended that the printed program become optional. Many people already use the electronic version and would prefer to opt out of the printed program book. (b) Introduce a customizable online schedule for the conference. Given the size of the conference, this would help people to easily organize their schedules in order to attend all the events of interest at the conference.

Additional News and Task Forces. In addition to the standing committees above, members of the executive committee continue to work on several other issues, listed below in no par-

ticular order:

- The task force for Scientific Leadership was originally given the goal to consider ways to increase the representation and visibility of social and personality psychologists in distinguished and honorary societies at the national level. The task force recommended that (a) a database listing the objective impact of SPSP fellows be created and maintained. Work began on creating the database. (b) Create a list of senior scientists who could immediately be nominated to distinguished societies. Work began on creating this list. (c) Create a standing Nominating Committee who would report directly to the SPSP executive committee. This committee would be charged each year with identifying a group of scientists to be nominated to honorific societies.
- The Financial Task Force worked on devising and maintaining the Society's financial resources. The task force devised a plan to keep enough emergency funding for one year's expenses while pursuing a conservative investment strategy with any budget surplus. The task force recommended obtaining recommendations for the investment plan from two separate certified financial planners, not associated with any bank or brokerage, in order to examine all possible investment strategies.
- The search for a "web editor" for SPSP's planned website continued. Although progress has been made on finding a web editor, the progress has been slow. One issue has been how to define the scope of the job and whether it is best suited to just one person or to two people with different types of expertise. The search continues.
- The task force on Media Outreach

made several recommendations to increase the media attention to social and personality psychology, including (a) Initiate two awards for high quality journalism about social and personality psychology, (b) Increase media training for SPSP members, including training on how to write op-ed pieces and how to conduct television interviews, (c) Hire a public outreach consultant, (d) Embargo a small group of articles for which the public outreach consultant will write press releases, (e) Have designated press rooms at conferences. The executive committee voted to go forward with the journalism awards and the training for writing op-ed pieces. The other recommendations will be examined in more detail at the next meeting.

- The executive committee had a teleconference with Bill Elwood, a health science administrator at the National Institutes of Health, to discuss OPPNET, an NIH-wide initiative to expand funding to basic and behavioral science. The society was encouraged to draft a response detailing the type of research that they would like to see funded and submit this information when the official Request for Information was posted in late January. The society as well as many other societies and individual researchers responded to the RFI. Information about the results can be found here: <http://oppnet.nih.gov/news-012810.asp>. Encouragingly, a review of this page shows that the top research themes submitted were: Decision making; Cognitive and emotional processes; Social, personality and cultural factors; Health behaviors and disparities; The intersection between behavior and gene/environment interactions; Life-span/developmental perspectives; Psychosocial stress; Sleep and circadian rhythms; and Neurobiology/neuropsychology. These

themes will be used to develop new funding opportunities.

- Finally, the executive committee discussed some of the complaints about the Las Vegas convention location. Concerns about the objectification of women in the conference hotel décor and entertainment venues were noted. Dissatisfaction with some of the rooms in the conference hotel was also noted. The committee talked about ways to reduce these issues in the future. See Monica Biernat's report on page 2 about how convention locations are chosen.



Meeting on Division 8 – APA. Reports from the Division 8 APA council representatives and the APA programming chair were given to the SPSP Executive Committee in Las Vegas, and appear on page 14. Discussion was focused on whether Division 8 Council Representatives should boycott events held within the Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel in San Diego at the APA Convention later this year. The issue is that the owner of the hotel provided substantial financial support for Proposition 8 last year in California, which vacated the recent California Supreme Court Ruling that allowed for same-sex marriage. Although all Division 8 related programming was removed from the Manchester hotel, there was still a plan to have the APA council meeting held there. After much discussion, the executive committee decided to join with the other APA divisions to request a change of venue for the council meeting. If that meeting was not moved from the Manchester hotel, the plan was for the Division 8 council members to boycott the meeting. Happily, the council meeting has since been moved out of the hotel.



TRAVEL SECTION

In this installment of the travel section, we explore the life of social and personality psychologists at teaching colleges.

Being Teacher-Scholars in a Liberal Arts Setting

By *Kathryn C. Oleson*, Reed College and *Carolyn Weisz*, University of Puget Sound

Sunshine has returned to the Pacific Northwest, giving the small, private liberal arts colleges here the look of a resort or summer camp, and fitting nicely within the theme of Dialogue's "Travel Section." Many people – rightly or wrongly – assume that they already know what it would be like to work in such a setting. Some imagine that it is a smaller version of a larger university – often interpreted, therefore, as less stressful or demanding. Such perceptions, however, are misguided and can be damaging for candidates on the job market or for their well-meaning advisors. In this piece we'll try to give you a realistic sense of our lives as teacher-scholars in liberal arts settings. Whereas previous travel columns have considered differences between being faculty members in a psychology department versus other settings (e.g., marketing department, polling firm), our task is different in that we are writing about being social psychologists in a psychology department – *but* within a liberal arts college instead of a larger institution that trains graduate students. Instead of contrasting the two, we focus on what it is like to be a social psychologist in a liberal arts setting and consider what factors might make it a more or less good fit for someone. As a caveat, our comments are primarily based on our own experiences at Reed College and the University of Puget Sound, which may only loosely resemble positions at other liberal arts institutions.

Teacher-Scholar. One's identity in a liberal arts setting is as a teacher-scholar. Being a teacher-scholar involves a commitment to engaging under-

graduates in the learning process and helping them develop important skills in writing, research, and critical thinking. In addition, it assumes an active and engaged research program that develops one's social-psychological research identity, involves students in conducting research, and informs and enhances one's teaching. Faculty members are therefore expected to be excellent teachers *and* excellent scholars. At both of our institutions, promotion and tenure require meeting high standards for teaching excellence; if one is *not* an excellent teacher who loves to teach undergraduates, a liberal arts environment would likely be a poor fit. At the same time, lack of quality research engagement would be seen as problematic because of its harm to both the researcher and his or her ability to teach first-rate courses. Ideally, one finds a balance and synergy between teaching and research such that, by being an active and engaged researcher and an active and engaged teacher, both one's teaching and research are enriched. The line between teacher and researcher is often blurred, as is the case when one is teaching the research process through collaborating with a student on a senior thesis or independent study project.

Teaching. Teaching high-quality undergraduate courses that promote students' development as scholars is an intensive activity. Like first-rate research and writing, it involves focused time, hard work, and creativity. Few, if any, courses are large lectures with multiple choice exams. Instead most classes involve teaching the writing of lab reports, research proposals, or term papers; conducting hands-on research; reading original research; and guiding animated discussions of class readings. Given the amount of writing students do, there are

frequently piles of papers to grade and rarely or never the help of a teaching assistant. Teaching a 2/2, 2/3, or 3/3 course-load is time-consuming. The types of courses one offers may in part be limited by the fact you are the only person in the department with particular expertise. You may, however, be able to offer upper-level specialty seminars that serve to bring students into your research lab. There are additional benefits to teaching in this environment. Knowing students' names by the second week of class creates a sense of camaraderie which quickly grows into shared expectations that both students and instructor will contribute to the vitality of the learning environment. Having colleagues, within and outside of psychology, who share a commitment to teaching is also a joy. Such colleagues serve as a practical resource and support network. Moreover, we both find that conversations with peers about teaching are a stimulating source of intellectual engagement. Both of our institutions promote effective teaching through a variety of means such as brown bag discussions, workshops led by visiting scholars, and evaluation processes that ensure we receive regular and thorough feedback from students and peers.

Research. There are challenges to conducting research in a liberal arts setting. First, there are not graduate students or postdocs, and you may be the only scholar in your sub-area of psychology. Instead, your collaborators are undergraduates – often whip-smart, motivated undergraduates who are a delight to work with and who appreciate one-on-one mentoring – but still undergraduates who may only be able to commit 1-2 semesters to your lab and who are clearly beginners. Second, there is limited time for research during the school

year. Clearly we can point to folks with high research productivity in liberal arts settings; however, individuals who pursue positions at liberal arts colleges should assume that most of their time during the academic year will be focused on high-quality teaching. Third, there is often no subject pool, or if there is one, it is small. Finally, some research may demand a different type of setting, such as projects that entail technical procedures that take months or years to learn, necessitate specific populations (e.g., for which a medical school would be helpful), or require access to an fMRI scanner. In some settings, there may be resources or strategies one can use to help confront these challenges. For instance, liberal arts colleges often have small pools of money to support faculty research, summer research opportunities, and student-centered research projects. Collaborations with faculty at other institutions can provide access to larger subject pools. On the positive side, collaborative research with undergraduates can be extremely gratifying. At Reed, for instance, where all students are required to conduct senior theses, many faculty members find that working closely with students in developing their thesis projects is one of the most intellectually rewarding parts of being a teacher-scholar. Another advantage of conducting research in a liberal arts setting is that there may be a high degree of scholarly freedom to work outside of one's specific subfield, take interdisciplinary perspectives, or explore "risky" questions. Many liberal arts institutions value the role that faculty scholarship plays in their larger educational missions, rather than as a tool to attract graduate students or compete for external funding. For example, one of us has ditched the experimental lab for several years to collect messy data on experiences of stigma among individuals who are homeless. This type of research offers opportunities that are valuable for undergraduates but could prove problematic for training graduate students seeking mainstream social psychology positions.

Service. In a small department within a small college, each individual's service is important. The department is a 6- to

10-person team in which each person is a critical link. If you have a chain of individuals with great generosity of spirit, the department thrives. But if individuals contribute little to the life of the department and institution, the community suffers. Your mere presence on campus may be valued or expected. In our departments, most faculty members are in their offices on most days, though some carve out part or all of a day to work from home. Moreover, as with any small team or a family, one needs to develop skills to cope with personality differences and potential conflicts. It is both a blessing and a curse that service activities, small and large, make a difference. These include department meetings, curriculum reviews, advising students, and shaking hands with parents at graduation receptions. You might, soon after tenure, be asked to be Department Head (both of us were), and sooner or later you may take your turn making decisions about the tenure of faculty across the college, helping your institution through its accreditation process, or chairing the IRB or professional standards committee. Service related to supporting under-represented students and diversity efforts is also important at liberal arts institutions, where there may be small numbers of students of color and where some student organizations may have few allies. Moreover, as the only social psychologist on staff, you might be uniquely able to share expertise on topics like stereotype threat and intergroup anxiety in order to improve the educational climate. At both our institutions, we are frequently reminded that service activities of the major sort can and should wax and wane throughout one's career. Saying no, and resisting interesting service opportunities, however, can be difficult.

Making Connections – Across Disciplines, Institutions, and Communities.

For both of us, a concern when moving to a small college from larger institutions was that we would be isolated as the only social psychologist. Who would we bounce our research ideas off of if there was no "social psych brown bag"? We were lucky to be in the Pacific Northwest with a group of junior social psychologists at various institu-

tions who started jobs around the same time, and we met about every quarter for several years to talk about research ideas and the challenges of being new professors. Within our institutions, interactions across areas of psychology are common. For example, one of us has routinely team-taught Introduction to Psychology with a behaviorist, a developmental psychologist, and a clinical psychologist. In addition, interdisciplinary collaborations are common at liberal arts institutions, given the lack of other collaborators, the value placed on interdisciplinary learning, and the creative freedom enabled in institutions with less dependency on external grants. Many liberal arts institutions also value educational opportunities for students to develop as citizens and leaders prepared to contribute outside the academy, and therefore encourage ways for faculty members and students to connect with the larger community. Community service and field-based research, for example, may be valued activities, especially when they enrich classroom teaching or provide research or internship opportunities for students.

Liberal Arts Setting - A Good Fit? Neither of us was trained in a liberal arts institution, or, in all honesty, knew this is where we'd end up at the time we interviewed for our current jobs. Having spent almost 30 years (collectively) at liberal arts institutions, however, we have experience and knowledge to help others discern whether the teacher-scholar model might be a good fit. Our analysis above suggests a good fit for those who love teaching and learning, whose research can be conducted with undergraduate collaborators, who function well in small groups, who can juggle multiple roles and responsibilities, and who enjoy forging connections across communities. That said, one's fit with a particular liberal arts setting might depend on a number of factors that vary across positions such as teaching load, lab facilities, expectations for service and research productivity, characteristics of students, and the location of the institution. A liberal arts setting isn't a spa, but, if you are lucky, every 7 years you may get a sabbatical!



Spring 2010 Graduate Student Committee Report

By Austin Lee Nichols

The SPSP Conference has come and gone and so has our term as your Graduate Student Committee (GSC). Throughout the year, we focused on creating and maintaining events that would be most beneficial to our fellow students. Below is a summary of the events we sponsored this past year.

SPSP Conference Events

GSC Co-sponsored Preconference: *Bridge(s) Over Troubled Waters: Traditional and Non-Traditional Careers for Personality and Social Psychologists*

The SPSP Training and Graduate Student Committees teamed up to recruit leading social psychologists working in and out of traditional Psychology departments to speak about their experiences. During the preconference, speakers described jobs within and outside of academia and presented the pros and cons of each. Speakers included Adam Galinsky, Meg Gerrard, Blair Jarvis, Marisa Miller, Stacey Sinclair, Sheldon Solomon, Fritz Strack, and Sophie Trawalter. We had a great turnout and thank the Training Committee (especially Marti Hope Gonzalez) for their collaboration on this event. For more information and to view some slides from the presentations, please visit <http://www.spsp.org/student/preconf10.htm>.

GSC Symposium: *A Graduate Student's Guide to External Funding*

This year's GSC symposium focused on finding funding, determining which opportunities are worthwhile, and learning how to be successful in obtaining funding. The symposium featured Laura King, Janessa Shapiro, and Amber Story. For the slides from the presentations, please visit <http://www.spsp.org/student/symposia.htm>.

GSC Poster: *What Graduate Students Want Faculty to Know*

In this year's poster, we presented the results of a survey asking graduate stu-

dents about their experiences in grad school.

For a copy of the poster, please visit http://www.spsp.org/student/pdf/2010_GSC_poster.pdf.

GSC Mentor Luncheon

This year's conference included two mentoring luncheons, one on Friday and one on Saturday. As in past years, leaders in the field hosted tables on topics related to both professional issues and research-related topics. This year's luncheons were in a room at the top of the Riviera, where across the two days 272 students had box lunches with 37 mentors and outstanding views of the Strip. We want to especially thank all of our outstanding mentors for making this event the success it was - Nalini Ambady, Roy Baumeister, Keith Campbell, Deanna Caputo, Bryan Castelda, Robert Cialdini, Catherine Cottrell, Chris Crandall, Lisa Diamond, Joyce Ehrlinger, Grainne Fitzsimons, William Fleeson, Olga Godes, Sam Gosling, Marie Helweg-Larsen, William Ickes, John Jost, Cheryl Kaiser, Benjamin Karney, Andy Karpinski, Aaron Kay, Jon Krosnick, Kristin Lane, Mark Leary, Winnifred Louis, Brian Lowery, Sonja Lyubomirsky, Jon Maner, Keith Markman, Iris Mauss, Kate Morris, Ara Norenzayan, Tom Pyszczynski, Catherine Sanderson, James Shepperd, Leigh Ann Vaughn, Kathleen Vohs, Seth Wagerman

GSC Poster Award

The GSC hosted awards throughout the conference for the best posters in each session. Three winners in each session received a monetary reward (i.e., \$100 for 1st and \$50 for honorable mention), while the author of the top poster in each session additionally received Empirisoft hardware and software. Congratulations to all of our winners!

Session A – 1st Place: Daniel Philip Weisberg (University of Birmingham)

HM: Pamela Sawyer (UC Santa Barbara), Danay Novoa (Wilfrid Laurier)

Session B – 1st Place: Jessica Remedios (University of Toronto)

HM: Maureen A. Craig (Northwestern University), Emily Falk (UCLA)

Session C – 1st Place: Edward O'Brien (University of Michigan)

HM: Andres Golden Martinez (UC Berkeley), Christopher P. Barlett (Iowa State University)

Session D – 1st Place: Julie Longua (Loyola University Chicago)

HM: Aleksandr Kogan (University of Hong Kong), Jennifer Smith (Loyola University Chicago)

Session E – 1st Place: Jennelle Yopchick (Northeastern University)

HM: Nadia Bashir (University of Toronto), Rick Andrews (NYU), Joshua Eng (UC Berkeley)

Session F – 1st Place: Jessica Sim (University of Chicago)

HM: Debbie Ma (University of Chicago), Kyle G. Ratner (NYU)

Session G – 1st Place: Danny Osborne (UCLA)

HM: Sunita Sah (Carnegie Mellon University), Ryan Buell (Harvard Business School)

We would also like to recognize the individuals who volunteered their time to judge the posters prior to and during each poster session. We thank you for your support!

Reviewers: Matt Baldwin, Jenna Barry, Anne Bergen, Danielle Blanch, Kathryn Brooks, Camille Brown, Coral Bruni, Rochelle Burnaford, Shannon Callahan, Peter Caprariello, Christina Carino, Randle Chance, Justin Chase, Lyssette Chavez, Lillia Cherkasskiy, John Christensen, Christine Chu, Brian Clark, DeAnn Collins, Brian Davis, Wendy de Waal-Andrews, Tara Dennehy, Ada Diaconu-Muresan, Emily Dow, Stephanie Echols, Dan Evans, Carey Fitzgerald, Nicholas Freeman, Patricia Gilbert, Hay-

lie Gomez, Jessica Good, Laura Gravens, Jessica Harding, David Her-ring, Gina Hoover, Kim Howell, Chin Ming Hui, Jeffrey Hunger, Paul Hutman, Lixin Jiang, Kathryn Johnson, Joana Katter, Summer Kim, Bijan Kimiagar, Janet King, Scott King, Jay Ledbetter, Sadie Leder, Greta Lee, Brittany Liu, Evelina Lou, Kristjen Lundberg, Elizabeth Majka, Sarah McLachlan, Erin McMichael, Tanya McNeil, Meghan McPhie, Marijn Meijers, Matt Miller, Caitlin Mooney, Amanda Morin, Angela Nierman, Joonha Park, Raquel Perez, Lopez, Michelle Peruche, Eileen Pitpitan, Mariana Preciado, Kacy Pula, Lisa Reddoch, Allecia Reid, Janet Rha, Michelle Rheinschmidt, Travis Riddle, Joseph Roberts, Jaclyn Ronquillo, Erika Salomon, Kiersten Sandfoss, Stacey Sasaki, Iris Schneider, Sandy Schumann, Cherisse Seaton, Sawa Senzaki, Elizabeth Shockley, Alexandra Sigillo, Aukje Sjoerdsma, Allison Skinner, Kara Son-sky, Nick Stauner, Jane Stout, Erin Thomas, Stan Treger, Alexa Tullett, Greta Valenti, Stephanie Vezich, Amanda Vicary, Adrian Villicana, Beth Visser, Craig Vollert, Ashley Waggoner, Dana Weiser, Jodi Whitaker, Angela White, John Paul Wilson, Steven Young, and Jia Wei Zhang

Judges: Stephanie Afful, Rezarta Bilali, Eliane Boucher, David Butz, M. Janelle Cambron, Amy Canevello, Paul Conway, Thomas Denson, John Edlund, Jim Fryer, Kathleen Fuegen, Azenett Garza, Jesse Graham, Lindsey Harkabus, Jeremy Heider, Kristin Henkel, Andrew Karpinski, Kristine Kelly, Megan Knowles, Elizabeth Lee, Laura Luchies, Laurel Newman, Elizabeth Nisbet, Diana Odom-Gunn, Michael Poulin, Joan Poulsen, Tila Pronk, Krista Ranby, Daniel Randles, Stephen Reysen, Patrick Shroul, C. Veronica Smith, Weylin Sternglanz, Claudia Toma, Ahmet Uysal, Irem Uz, Jay Van Bavel, Joseph Wellman, Jessica Williamson, and Joshua Wilt

Non-conference Events

GSC Outstanding Research Award

Independent of the poster award, the ORA recognized the best research performed by graduate students

regardless of presentation at the conference. This year, the SPSP Travel Award Committee awarded each winner a \$500 travel award to defray the cost of travel associated with the conference. In addition, winners had the opportunity to meet with a faculty member of their choice. The winners were: Peter Caprariello, Juan Contreras, Eric Hehman, David Rast, and Jamil Zaki.

We also want to thank our judges for this competition – Jessica Barber, Heather Barry, Jenna Jo Barry, Vera Bossel, Justin Chase, Justin Cheng, Lilia Cherkasskiy, Katherine Corker, Rui Costa, Amber DeBono, Benjamin Drury, Tory Eisenlohr-Moul, Emily Fisher, Ricardo Fonseca, Jim Fryer, Angela Garrison, Ashley Gowgiel, Stacy Hawkins, Gina Hoover, Chin Ming Hui, Jeffrey Hunger, Figen Karadogan, Neda Kerimi, Ashley King, Scott King, Elizabeth Lee, Evelina Lou, Elizabeth Majka, Miriam Matthews, Sylvia Morelli, Anthony Nelson, Danay Novoa, Matylda Osika, Joonha Park, Allecia Reid, Bastiaan Rutjens, Erika Salomon, Maya Sarah Santoro, Charles Seger, Karen Sixkiller, Nick Stauner, Ally Stevens, Amanda Vicary, Dana Weiser, and Elena Wright

Finally, thank you to the faculty that graciously agreed to meet with our winners - Dominic Abrams, Susan Fiske, Steven Neuberg, and Leaf Van Boven.

Teaching Resources

On our webpage, we updated the teaching resources, providing students with information on many aspects of teaching - <http://www.spsp.org/student/teachintro.htm>.

Statistical Resources

A list on our webpage provides links to details and tips on many statistical procedures - <http://www.spsp.org/student/stats.htm>. In addition, a portion of the page is devoted to workshops and seminars available for continued statistical education.

Funding Opportunities

We created a comprehensive list of all relevant funding opportunities - <http://www.spsp.org/student/funding.htm>. We will update this list regularly to ensure the newest opportunities are always available.

New GSC

Our term as your GSC is officially over and the new GSC is already working hard to meet your needs. We are especially excited to add a new position focusing specifically on undergraduate affairs. Please welcome your 2010-2011 GSC: President - Sean Hughes (National University of Ireland, Maynooth); Past President - Austin Lee Nichols (University of Florida); Members-at-Large - Kristin Dukes (Tufts University), Haylie Gomez (University of Texas at Arlington), Robin Kaplan (University of California, Irvine), and Amy-Jo Lynch (University of Kent); and Member-at-Large for Undergraduate Affairs - Carmel Gabriel (University of California, Davis).

Thanks to ...

Finally, the GSC would like to thank all of those who attended our events, provided feedback, and volunteered to help. Without all of you, these events would not be possible. I would also like to thank those of you whose name I have misspelled in this report or others throughout the past year for your forgiveness.

Talk to us

If you have questions about the GSC or would like to provide feedback or suggestions, please contact us at spspgsc@yahoo.com. In addition, you can reach the new GSC

President, Sean Hughes, at sean.hughes@nuim.ie. Finally, you can find more information about us and what we do on the Web at www.spsp.org/student or on our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/SPSPGSC>. We would love to hear from you!

Seeking Answers from Social and Personality Psychologists: 10 Research Questions in the Torture/Interrogation Debate

By Bradley Olson, Foley Center
for the Study of Lives,
Northwestern University

As someone trained in personality and social psychology—and now also working as a community psychologist—it's clear to me that social and personality theory and research make essential contributions to understanding social justice issues.

I've long been an activist on the American Psychological Association (APA) torture issue and a member of Psychologists for Social Responsibility (PsySR). This led to an invitation to participate in a session chaired by Chris Crandall at last fall's Society for Experimental Social Psychology conference in Portland, Maine. The session involved presentations of several excellent studies related to U.S. torture and interrogation. My role was to act as a discussant and to suggest what other areas, as an activist, I thought should be studied empirically.

For several decades, the horrors of WWII and the racism that led to the civil rights movement inspired the work of U.S. social and personality psychologists. As several participants mentioned at the session in Portland, the Global War on Terror (GWOT) and Guantanamo can have similar influences on the discipline in the years ahead. I agree. From my perspective as an activist, here are 10 questions I would love social and personality researchers to help answer:

1. How does a nation that once publicly reviled torture come to accept it as an unfortunate necessity?

Group-oriented social psychologists have often focused on social conversion and societal change. Norm changes may reflect compliance or

internalization, minority influence or polarization. But bringing the political world into the social psychological laboratory and exploring these paradigms with GWOT stimuli would advance our understanding of the national dynamics around the issue of torture.

2. How can the public be inoculated against propaganda and pro-torture political media and marketing?

Briefings from the White House, conservative cable media outlets, and each episode of "24" present social psychologists with research opportunities that can lead to policy changes and preventive interventions. Elaborations on McGuire's inoculation theory—to prepare people for pro-torture arguments (like the ticking time bomb)—would be a good start. Such interventions could focus on protecting the American public by giving them stronger ethical and intellectual foundations against torture. Public norms on torture may be pushed to extremes through normative and informational influence. One hope is that if all the sound arguments against torture were available, torture would be less acceptable. If Americans could be encouraged to search more thoroughly for deeper and varied pools of informational influence, would they polarize against torture? One hypothesis is that we would be better off if more Americans vigorously exposed themselves to a wider variety of arguments—even those of the pro-torture side.

3. What are the distinct roles of authoritarianism, conformity, and aggression in pro-torture views?

Right-wing authoritarianism is a topic that combines personality and social psychology. Its nature and its surrounding correlates involve a fairly complex set of characteristics. Right-

wing authoritarianism is somewhat different from the construct of social dominance. Social dominance is different from low openness; a high level of fear and insecurity is different from the cognitive narrowing associated with dogmatism. We might ask, for instance, when does escalation of insecurity play a role in pro-torture views? A tendency toward aggression or prejudice might be other pieces of the puzzle. How might some or all of these human characteristics moderate American views, decisions, and actions around the issue of torture? And, how do these views interact with the reasons people give for supporting torture? Research of this type might contribute to more effective ways of influencing those who might otherwise endorse or promote national uses of torture.

4. Does psychological salience impact empathy for and action to help detainees at places like Guantanamo?

Milgram's original salience and proximity manipulations in his obedience studies still teach us much. Latane's social impact theory also emphasized salience. Salience may be the most interesting concept in understanding torture in the Global War on Terror. The holding facility for terror suspects was placed on Guantánamo, an island located on the southeastern end of Cuba, at least partly for psychological reasons. The distant and inaccessible island reduces psychological salience, for Americans and for the rest of the world. Without salience, it's hard to have empathy, and without empathy, it's difficult to motivate the public around justice-oriented causes. Research could examine this issue more closely. For instance, what effect does diminished salience have on public support for torture? How might increases in salience motivate greater public resistance against pro-torture policies?

5. *Why is psychological torture perceived by Americans to be more socially and legally acceptable than physical forms of torture?*

It appears that the American public grossly underestimates the harm associated with psychological forms of torture compared to physical forms. Many are convinced that techniques like sensory deprivation are more innocuous than physical techniques, whereas released detainees consistently say the opposite is true, that the psychological abuse is the most unbearable. Although ethical constraints prevent us from tackling this question directly, social psychologists may be able to devise stimulus materials and experimental designs to better understand these perceptions. Such studies could begin to understand more about our beliefs and attitudes around psychological versus physical harm. For example, is psychological harm perceived as less harmful because it's invisible, thereby reducing natural human tendencies toward empathy?

6. *How does the average American make moral decisions around torture?*

Naturalistic and descriptive work on moral decision-making around torture would also be useful. Do people use some variation of Kant's categorical imperative (e.g., what if everyone did this)? Do they apply Rawls' veil of ignorance (e.g., putting the most vulnerable at the forefront in their minds)? The world would benefit from some experimental tests of folk theories. On the torture issue, do we apply a utilitarian equity and exchange model (e.g., weighing costs and benefits, to individuals or to society at large)? If so, do we consider costs and benefits for ourselves, for our ingroup members, or for society at large? What interventions would lead to more reasoned and ethical choices?

7. *What is the relationship between American exceptionalism and ingroup favoritism? And how might such fac-*

tors play a role in the torture debate?

Allport believed it was often ingroup love that initially forms prejudice—and there is no doubt that these problems can occur at a national level. Once that love becomes exclusive, an implicit fence is built—and there is always something on the other side of that fence. Is American exceptionalism a macro-level variation of ingroup favoritism? Are there unique features to exceptionalism? Does it lead Americans to believe detainees don't deserve the protections of U.S. law or that international law is irrelevant? How does ingroup favoritism as exceptionalism contribute to the widespread acceptance of torture for non-citizens?

8. *What is the psychology of bureaucracy and how does it contribute to torture-accommodating policies in organizations?*

Organizational bureaucracy can epitomize the banality of evil. Many saw the APA not as consciously pro-torture, but as an association with an organizational culture that had its values in the wrong place. Its 2002 revision of Ethical Standard 1.02 seemingly usurped every other proscription in the code. Under the requirements of regulations, law, or governing authority, standards such as "Do No Harm" and "Do Not Exploit" could be ignored. Whether 1.02 was intentionally adopted to protect military psychologists or whether it was excessive moral caution in the service of guild-based interests is unclear given the current evidence. Bureaucratic features like guild-based protectionism seemed to be a primary problem for the APA, on Standard 1.02 and every other torture-related policy. Paradoxically, risk aversion imperiled the stability of the organization. How can such processes and decisions be better understood? Are they inevitable in large bureaucracies, or are effective interventions possible?

9. *What non-violent dissident strategies are most effective in bringing*

about positive forms of social change?

The early minority influence work of Moscovici provided hope in a world of majority influence. How can we defy senseless forms of majority influence and obedience in places that support torture? What are the best strategies for the non-violent, social justice-oriented dissident? Saul Alinsky, the famous Chicago community organizer, believed verbally aggressive approaches worked best. He stated definitively: "Ridicule is man's most potent weapon." Gandhi's social action required the exact opposite, arguing that "Non-cooperation is not a movement of brag, bluster, or bluff" and "Not a negative thought or action should be had against others. One may not respect another, but do not insult him." The comparative effectiveness of such strategies could be separated in the laboratory.

10. *What are the psychological dimensions of truth and reconciliation commissions compared to current U.S. trial systems?*

The field of psychology and the law has brought substantial knowledge about how our traditional legal system works. But what do we now know about alternatives to this system? Can we experimentally compare truth and reconciliation approaches with more punitive methods on issues related to torture?

The global war on terror and the mainstreaming of torture and interrogation, by psychologists and others, has put social psychology at the center of another scientific and philosophical crisis. Fortunately, key advances in our understanding and potential solutions are solidly within the domain of experimental social psychology. Many people will benefit from the efforts of social and personality psychologists to address these challenging questions in their work.



Call for Proposals: SPSP 2011

The SPSP Program Committee invites proposals for symposia and posters to be

presented at the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and

Social Psychology (SPSP), which will be held January 27-29th, 2011, in San Antonio Texas. The submission deadline is July 20, 2010. Proposals will be submitted electronically to the internet site that will be included in the calls for proposals.

Presentation Formats

Submissions may be in the form of symposia or poster presentations.

Symposia

Symposia will be 75-minute sessions that include three or more talks on a

common topic, printed as symposia abstracts in the Proceedings. Symposium

proposals must include a title, abstracts of up to 250 words for each talk, and a

250-word (maximum) summary describing and justifying the symposium theme.

Please include audio/visual requirements.

Poster Sessions

Poster sessions will involve standard poster presentations,

which will also be printed as poster abstracts in the Proceedings. Poster submissions must include

the title, the authors' affiliations, and an abstract of up to 250 words.

Submission Content

- Abstracts must contain the specific goals of the study, the methods used, a summary of the results, and conclusions.

- Data must be collected prior to abstract submission. We will not consider abstracts for studies that have not been conducted.

- The title of the abstract should clearly define the work discussed.

- After listing authors' names, give the name of each author's institutional

affiliation.

- Use only standard abbreviations.

- Submissions will be reviewed with regard to: scholarly/theoretical merit,

soundness of methodology, relevance to social and personality psychology,

clarity of presentation, significance, and originality. Final selection among

submissions deemed meritorious will be made with an eye toward achieving a balanced and broadly representative program.

General Submission Information

An individual may be first author on only ONE submission (symposium or

poster) and may serve only ONCE in a symposium speaking role. Individuals

may, however, be co-authors on more than one paper (symposia and posters).

Please note that discussants are no longer allowed in regular symposia submissions. It is incumbent on symposia organizers to verify that speakers in their symposia have not submitted their names as speakers in other symposia.

Failing to do so may result in a symposia being rejected. Individuals are not allowed to switch who fills the speaker role after submission.

The 2011 Program Committee:

Wendy Berry Mendes (Co-Chair)

Andrew Elliot (Co-Chair)

Grainne Fitzsimmons

Cheryl Kaiser

Rich Lucas

Jason Mitchell

Shige Oishi

Emily Pronin

Valerie Purdie-Vaughns

Michael Robinson

Diedrik Stapel

Jessica Tracy

Kathleen Vohs

INSERT GUILDORD AD HERE

Dear Me!

Do you favor internal, stable attributions for your failures and external, unstable attributions for your successes? Do you only realize you suffer from the hindsight bias, in retrospect? Are you unable to think of a single instance in which you fall prey to the confirmation bias? Do you think it is more likely that you suffer from the conjunction fallacy and chronic halitosis than that you suffer from the conjunction fallacy? Do you sometimes fear you are the only one experiencing the false consensus effect?

Dear me!

If any of this applies to you, you may need help. SPSP is at the ready. Email questions regarding your personal problems, your professional problems or those ever-tricky personal/professional problems to advice.spsp@gmail.com. With each issue of *Dialogue*, the editors will choose one or more questions to be answered by an anonymous do-gooder who can help you through your difficult time. Just realize that all answers are provided for entertainment purposes only. So, if the advice you receive falls flat, take heart in knowing that your problems have entertained others.

Dear Me!

Will there come a time when having a paper rejected doesn't ruin my day?

~Laurie O'Brien

{Note: Dr. O'Brien did not actually write in to Dear Me! but she did post this question on Facebook and we all know about Facebook's privacy rules, don't we?}

Dear Laurie,

The best way to avoid having your day ruined by a rejection letter is to have your work accepted in the first place. To this end, we point you to the article by Jack Dovidio (p. 8). This nice article has lots of helpful advice. There will, however, be rejection days in your life. For those days here is a step-by-step guide to dealing with the rejection letters that are bound to come to every hard-working member of SPSP.

Step 1: Denial. Scan your cover letter to quickly determine if it is a rejection letter and if it is, make

fast work of it. Simply note whether the letter is a straightforward "reject and don't ever return here" letter or the less common "reject but possibly resubmit a completely different manuscript with the same title" letter. If the letter is of the former type, reframe this "rejection" letter in your mind as a "revise and resubmit to another, better journal" letter. Congratulate yourself on this success. If the letter is of the latter type, congratulate yourself on this success. Put the letter away quickly, savor your success. If you run into someone who asks you how you are doing, say "fine, thanks" and just keep walking.

Step 2: Self-Affirmation. Return to your letter a day or so later to begin to get some sense of what words can be found in the letter. Pay close attention to the positive statements, no matter how inconsequential (e.g., "great potential in theory," "well written," "ambitious," "a glimmer of an idea," "not completely confounded in Study 9," etc.). Studiously **ignore** the negative statements no matter their frequency (e.g., "a bad

undergraduate thesis," "ill-formed and ill-conceived" "previously published," "in need of 8 more studies," "failed to cite my 1984 article in the High School Psychology Today," etc.).

Put the affirming rejection letter away and think about how you have great potential and you are a great writer and you have good ideas. Don't tell anybody about the letter just yet. Bask in the glow of your own success.

Step 3: Cathartic Engagement. Return to the rejection letter and reviews a week or so later and give everything a more serious read. Be sure you are alone while you rain curses down on the reviewers for their idiocy. Write such things as "%\$#@ you!" and "What a @\$%ing idiot" and "Didn't the @\$hole read what I wrote in footnote 17?!" after each of their misbegotten points. Now is not the time to use your PhD-level vocabulary. Let the righteous indignation burn. Put rejection letter away again. Begin to tell co-authors and colleagues about the letter and how little minds aren't going to hold you down.

Step 4: Constructive Engagement.

Once you are able to think about your manuscript without feeling flush in the face, read everything again but now with an open, accepting mind. If the letter is a straight rejection, think constructively about how to use the reviewer comments to improve the manuscript for a new audience. If there is a glimmer of a hope that you can revise and resubmit a radically different manuscript, decide if the revision you would pursue will retain a message you want to publish. If it will, resubmit. If it will not, consider a new journal. Either way, note the concerns that are easily addressable and begin there. Once you address a few of the easier problems, you will gain steam and you can get down to the harder business of making substantive changes.

Step 5: Psychological Acceptance.

When you have finished revising, read over your new creation and admit to yourself that the manuscript has actually improved. Promise yourself that when you are a reviewer of other people's work that you will only write nice constructive comments (at least for the manuscripts that don't read like bad undergraduate theses or fail to cite your work).

See, that wasn't so bad, right?

~Yours in Rejection,

Me!

~~~~~  
Dear Me!

I am about to submit an article for peer review and I'm wondering if it is OK to tell the editor about a reviewer who will be biased against my argument and try to tank my paper.

What do you think?

~Peer Anxious

Dear Anxious Peer:

It concerns me that you feel a need to point out the reviewer that will be opposed to your submission. If you have to do this, you're not being critical enough. You see, even if you are just mildly critical of a published article, then its author will be asked to review your submission and will recommend rejection. This single negative review can tank your paper, as you say.

So the best advice is just to go for it. Write your manuscript in the spirit of the philosopher Imre Lakatos who promoted honest, competitive theory testing with his famous dictum, "shoot from the hip" (paraphrase). Sure, some editors are Lakatos Intolerant these days but most can be counted on to survey the full range of opinions. Yes, yes -- the editor will still invite a review from the researcher whose work you criticized, but since you were honest about your opinions this time, it will be clear to the editor that this other author is biased against *you*. The editor will thus know to discount what this reviewer says. So, whereas the wimpy version of your submission might have been rejected due to this one negative review, your bold, unabashed and honest submission might be accepted over the exact same protest. I hope this gives you the courage to embrace Karl Popper's famous directive: "Show a little grit, will ya?" (paraphrase)

But there is a downside and you should be prepared. We live in a postmodern age, an age where great truths are true and so are their opposites (a view that is actually false, if it is a great truth). As a result, the presence of extreme and opposing viewpoints in the same journal provides heuristic evidence of the presence of multiple truths. This means that the author of the work you criticized will be asked to write a rejoinder to

your criticism, which can later be cited by this researcher as evidence that the original article has "weathered criticism." This means you just made a weak article look like established science. Way to go.

But there is a solution to this too. What you need to do is criticize your *own* research! Does this sound silly? It is. Silly like a fox!

Here's how it works: After you get a big publication, submit a scathing criticism of your own article to the same journal, under an assumed name. I encourage you to be creative in thinking of your new identity. If you wanted, for instance, you might come up with some sort of anagram. So if you normally publish under your full name ("Peer Anxious"), then you could publish your critique under a name like, "Ian Exposure" (male) or "Ina Exposure" (female). Of course you (i.e., the real you) will be asked to review Dr. Exposure's manuscript and you will argue vehemently against publication. From the above analysis, however, you know that the editor will discount your "biased" criticism of Dr. Exposure's criticism but will later ask you to publish a rejoinder to his or her criticism. Later, you can cite your rejoinder as evidence that your original work has become established science. Thus, by criticizing your first article in print, you cement it into the literature. This nice turn evokes an often-used quotation from Friedrich Nietzsche, who so famously opined, "That which does not kill us makes us stronger, especially if we are the ones trying to kill ourselves" (paraphrase).

Of course, if you end up losing the debate, you can always start registering at conferences under a new name -- "I Exposure."

~Tough love,

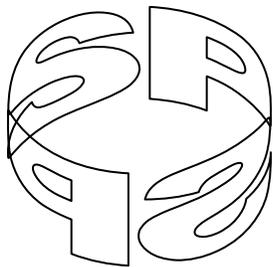
*Me!*

**The Official  
Newsletter of the  
Society for  
Personality and  
Social Psychology**

**Dialogue Mission Statement**

*Dialogue* is the official newsletter of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology. It appears twice every year, in the spring and fall. Its intended readership is members of the Society. The purpose of *Dialogue* is to report news of the Society, stimulate debate on issues, and generally inform and occasionally entertain. *Dialogue* publishes summaries about meetings of the Society's executive committee and sub-committees, as well as announcements, opinion pieces, letters to the editor, humor, and other articles of general interest to personality and social psychologists. The Editors seek to publish all relevant and appropriate contributions, although the Editors reserve the right to determine publishability. Content may be solicited by the Editors or offered, unsolicited, by members. News of the Society and Committee Reports are reviewed for accuracy and content by officers or committee chairs of SPSP. All

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