



Michigan Psychological Association
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Fourth Quarter Newsletter

A Brief History of the Michigan/Metro Detroit Association of Black Psychologists, Black Psychology and MPA

by Ellen Keyt, PhD

The author wishes to express her deep gratitude to Dr. Jane Robinson, Dr. Amorie Robinson, and Dr. Josephine Johnson for their lifelong contributions to psychology and for graciously taking the time to be interviewed for this article. Thanks also to Dr. Amorie Robinson for her archival work at the Metro Detroit ABPsi, for sharing the organization's documented timeline and for reviewing this article prior to publication. No one article could completely describe the rich history, accomplishments, and people of the Metro Detroit ABPsi; additional references are included for continued exploration at the end of this piece.

At the height of the Civil Rights Movement and in the midst of the Vietnam War, as early as 1966 a small group of Black psychologists in Michigan began meeting informally once a month at Mr. Mike's, a bar/restaurant at the edge of Wayne State University's campus in Detroit, Michigan. Dr. Jane Robinson, later known as Michigan's Mother of Black Psychologists, was among them.

"We were concerned with the biased testing of Black children," stated Dr. Robinson recently, adding that although there were other issues, biased testing resulted in disproportionate numbers of Black children being "labeled" and then funneled into special education classes, which had damaging long term effects on their lives. Dr. Robinson's description of purpose for these early meetings is consistent with national researcher, author and lecturer Dr. Kevin Cokely's assertion that, "Black psychology was born from the struggle of Black psychologists who were constantly exposed to messages of Black deficiency, pathology, and inferiority," (Cokely, 2020).

In April 1968, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. happened the day before the group's meeting was scheduled. When the group arrived at Mr. Mike's, they were told that the restaurant was closing for the day, due to fears that riots might begin; businesses all over

the U.S. were closing their doors. Galvanized by the indescribable tragedy of Dr. King's murder, the group decided to formalize their organization. They began meeting at Dr. Robinson's home, electing officers, and beginning publication of a newsletter for Black psychologists. Dr. Robinson was a founding member and the first Secretary of the Michigan Association of Black Psychologists (now known as the Metro Detroit ABPsi), and she later served as president.

"We talked about it and we felt we had a role that maybe no other group had," said Dr. Robinson, recalling the early days and the sense of purpose for psychology within the Black community. A few months after they formed, the group attended the August 1968 American Psychological Association (APA) convention and met with other Black psychologists and Black psychology graduate students from around the country. The group of graduate students had previously met in California in late 1967 to address racism and discrimination within psychology. Planning to attend the conference, the graduate students had formulated a ten-point plan of action for APA. At the convention, after a private meeting with Black psychologists who provided encouragement and support, the graduate students suddenly took the main stage during the presidential address. "We were all in the lounge watching them on the monitors," said Dr. Robinson recalling the historic moment. Led by native Detroit and future distinguished psychologist Dr. James Jackson, the graduate students presented their ten-point plan and demanded that APA take definitive action.

The ten-point plan, which included addressing bias issues in test construction and administration, was adopted by the APA Council at the convention, with only two dissenting votes. It should be noted that Dr. Jackson later served as President of the national ABPsi (1972-1973). He also served two terms as Director of the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research, has been on several national research committees, and he is currently a Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan.

In discussing the 1968 APA convention, Dr. Robinson said, "that was really where the National Association for Black Psychologists began, although some feel that it started the previous year in California (when the graduate students had gathered)." She remembered that while the national ABPsi group was forming, national and state associations for Black social workers, Black physicians, Black educators, and other professional groups were also coalescing. "Everyone was getting together and forming these groups trying to help the Black community," she stated. "We could easily get the word out and help each other when we had workshops and conferences. They (other Black professionals) would attend our conferences and we would attend theirs." This was long before the internet, personal computers, and printers. She added that the Association for Black Psychology Students was formed out of ABPsi. From the late 1960's to the early 1990's, the Michigan Association of Black Psychologists was very active; they met monthly, published a newsletter, and provided countless conferences, trainings, and community events. They also hosted the sixth national ABPsi conference in 1973. "We were like family," Dr. Robinson recalled, "all working for the same goals."

In addition to serving for many years on the Board of Michigan

ABPsi, Dr. Robinson was a longtime member of the Michigan Psychological Association (MPA). In 1979, she formed MPA's Minority Affairs Committee, the first committee on the MPA Board to focus on diversity and social justice issues. Dr. Robinson invited Dr. Josephine Johnson to serve on the committee with her. Dr. Johnson was an early career psychologist at the time, but many at MPA now know her as a distinguished longtime member of MPA, an MPA Fellow, and former MPA President.

“Historically, there have been very few members of color at MPA,” said Dr. Johnson when interviewed for this article, “In fact, Michigan ABPsi formed because of a lack of representation or voice.” Dr. Johnson remembers that, soon after agreeing to serve on the MPA Minority Affairs Committee, she found herself leading it as Dr. Robinson turned her focus elsewhere. In subsequent years and in various roles, Dr. Johnson worked to build awareness and collaboration between MPA and Michigan ABPsi.

Although an ongoing partnership between the two organizations never quite coalesced, Dr. Robinson recalled an important collaboration between Michigan ABPsi and the MPA Insurance Committee. “The Insurance Committee was meeting with Blue Cross Blue Shield trying to get coverage for psychologists,” said Dr. Robinson, “and I asked the Chairman of the Insurance Committee if they wanted our help, because I knew State Representative Matthew McNeely.” With Dr. Robinson's coordination, several Michigan ABPsi members attended a large fundraising event and Dr. Robinson advocated strongly for McNeely's support for psychologists with BCBS. This advocacy led directly to a contract that provided insurance coverage for psychologists, which dramatically expanded the accessibility of affordable mental health services in Michigan. “I was really proud of that,” noted Dr. Robinson, “It benefited everybody, and MPA gave us (Michigan ABPsi) the credit.”

After almost thirty years, by the mid-90's, the Michigan ABPsi chapter had become somewhat inactive. In 1996, Dr. Robinson's daughter and then-early career psychologist Dr. Amorie Robinson, was one of many Detroit area psychologists invited to attend a December Michigan ABPsi meeting at the Fisher Building to discuss the possible future of the chapter.

“The Elders pulled us together,” recalled Dr. A. Robinson, adding that after the meeting, “We all felt a connection and a renewed sense of commitment. The Elders offered us their wisdom and encouragement. They expressed their confidence in us and left us the task of continuing the newer version of Michigan ABPsi.”

Dr. Annita Sani became the chapter President from January, 1997 through the summer of 1997, followed by lifelong national ABPsi member Dr. Sheila Williams-White. Dr. A. Robinson indicated that with a continued spirit of community, the group held didactic presentations on issues affecting the Black community and attended events such as the Sistas Movin' Up Conference.

Under Dr. Williams-White, the group also decided to change their name to The Metro Detroit Chapter of the Association of Black Psychologists. Dr. Angela C. May became the chapter President in 1998, serving two terms to 2003. Under her leadership, with Dr. A. Robinson as

Secretary and Michelle Dunnell-Rodgers (deceased) as Treasurer, the Metro Detroit ABPsi focused on increasing their visibility and community involvement.

Dr. A. Robinson and Ms. Dunnell-Rodgers later received awards for their service to the chapter. They created an “adopt a school” project and held workshops for teachers, parents, students, and faculty at the historically-Black Lewis College of Business. Topics included stress management, parenting, anger management, and substance abuse.

The Metro Detroit ABPsi also began holding Juneteenth celebrations for the community. In her archival records, Dr. Amorie Robinson noted that the first annual Juneteenth celebration in 1999 had overflow crowds, it was covered by Channel 50 News, and the regional ABPsi student representative from Chicago who attended it brought the inspiration back to her local chapter, who then began their own Juneteenth celebrations the following year. The Metro Detroit ABPsi also held pre-Kwanzaa programs and other cultural events at Marygrove College, and began an informal mentorship program for Black students interested in psychology. In addition to speaking at professional training events, chapter members such as Dr. Cheryl Munday were called to present on various topics at schools and to provide expert statements to the media.

Around the same time that the chapter was becoming active again, Dr. Josephine Johnson, a member in both Metro Detroit ABPsi and MPA, was serving a four year term as MPA Secretary. In 1998, Dr. Johnson became MPA President-Elect and attended the APA’s State Leadership Conference. “The State Leadership Conference provides advocacy training and access to programs that facilitate leadership development for state, provincial and territory association leaders,” stated Dr. Johnson, “but when I first attended, there were hardly any psychologists of color there. The Diversity Initiative was formed to address that, to increase the presence and representation of psychologists of color.”

While serving as MPA President, Dr. Johnson petitioned then-Metro Detroit ABPsi President Dr. Angela May to attend the Leadership Conference as a diversity delegate representing MPA. Dr. May currently serves on the board of the Michigan Psychological Association Foundation. After Dr. May attended the conference, Dr. Johnson also invited Dr. A. Robinson to attend as a diversity delegate. Dr. A. Robinson has since been a featured speaker at two MPA Conferences. “There have been a few crossover efforts over the years (between MPA and Metro Detroit ABPsi),” reflected Dr. Johnson, noting that another MPA President-elect and Metro Detroit ABPsi member, Dr. Tamara McKay, also attended the Leadership Conference in the late 2000’s, and Dr. Debra Brodie has also been very active in both organizations.

By all accounts, mentoring young professionals, networking with and supporting colleagues, and honoring the Elders have all been enduring characteristics of the Metro Detroit ABPsi throughout its history. In 2003, Metro Detroit ABPsi hosted a reunion to bring in the Elders and Founders to celebrate this rich legacy. The event was attended by approximately 100 Black psychologists, university students, social workers and counselors, supportive community members, and the Honorable Senator Martha G. Scott.

According to Dr. Amorie Robinson, the national organization has grown fairly steadily since the 1960s, and the local chapter of ABPsi has had a few periods of inactivity. Having regained momentum in 1996, it made another jump-start in 2009, when Dr. A. Robinson held a dinner meeting at a restaurant to see if there would be interest in reviving the Metro Detroit ABPsi. The meeting was attended by some of the Elders, including Dr. Paris Finner-Williams, a mentor to many psychologists in the Detroit area and an esteemed Elder within the national ABPsi. Dr. Finner-Williams gently appointed Dr. A. Robinson to take the helm as the group moved forward.

“I wasn’t planning on leading,” remembered Dr. A. Robinson with a smile, but when Dr. Paris Finner-Williams tells you to do something, you do it. It was an honor to be asked by an Elder like that.” As a founding member of the Ruth Ellis Center, a social service agency serving at-risk LGBT+ youth where she now works as a therapist, Dr. A. Robinson expressed high hopes that Black psychologists will begin to pay more attention to the mental health needs of this population. She added that she plans to speak more about this at ABPsi’s “Pandemics of Covid 1619 to Covid 19: Healing through Ujima” webinar in September 2020. Raising awareness about intersectional social justice, Dr. A. Robinson has conducted psychoeducational presentations across the country. For example, MPA invited her twice to do a workshop on LGBT+s of color, and the APA invited her as a Thought Leader in 2018.

In 2013, with the help of Dr. Cheryl Munday, Metro Detroit ABPsi meetings were held at the University of Detroit Mercy. They were later moved to the Michigan School of Professional Psychology, thanks to faculty member Dr. Dondi Browner. During this 7-year period, Drs. George Fleming (Vice Pres.), Josephine Johnson (Secretary), and Sheila Williams-White (Treasurer) served as officers. Between 2017-2019, the officers were Dr. Mishelle Rodriguez (President), Joycelynn Glover (Vice President), Juanita Houston (Secretary), and Dr. Sheila Williams-White (Treasurer). In its most recent years, the Metro Detroit ABPsi has co-facilitated multicultural dialogues and Black psychology student seminars, updated their bylaws, held a host of member activities, started a professional email listserv, and established a website and Facebook page.

In 2017, the Metro Detroit chapter hosted the ABPsi Midwest Regional Symposium on Secondary Trauma, facilitated two Emotional Emancipation Circles, held a workshop on serving LGBT+ clients, and successfully applied for their 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. In 2018, the Metro Detroit ABPsi celebrated its 50th anniversary with an event that brought together generations of Black psychologists, members of the Greater Detroit Association of Black Social Workers, students, and community members. Michigan ABPsi co-founder and one of the original graduate students who protested at the 1968 APA convention, Dr. James Jackson, spoke at the event. “He was the highlight of the celebration and we were thrilled that he offered us his wisdom,” stated Dr. Amorie Robinson. Expressing congratulations to the members, Dr. Jane Robinson spoke virtually at this historic event. On April 13, 2019, the chapter co-sponsored with the University of Detroit Mercy Black Studies Department a film screening of “Set Yourself on Fire” by Darnell Lamont

Walker along with a panel discussion on Trauma, Healing, and Community Transformation including the filmmaker.

The current officers of Metro Detroit ABPsi are Dr. Julian Bass (President), Tammy McCrory (Vice President), DeAirah Mast (Interim Secretary), Fatimah Muhammad (Member-At-Large), Dr. Sheila Williams-White (Treasurer), and Dr. Jennifer Gomez (Cultural Liaison). On June 27, 2020, they hosted a symposium on “The Talk” and Covid-19: The Influence of Racism and Racial Socialization in a Global Pandemic, featuring Dr. Riana Anderson. The Metro Detroit ABPsi chapter was also set to host the 2020 national ABPsi convention in Detroit for the first time since 1973. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the conference has been rescheduled for 2021.

In discussing the history, accomplishments and community of the Metro Detroit ABPsi, Dr. Amorie Robinson notes the contrast between current ways to connect and communicate and the regularly printed newsletters of the earlier years, so diligently and painstakingly compiled by Elder Dr. Jane Robinson. Dr. Amorie Robinson recalls early Michigan ABPsi meetings that occurred in her home while she was growing up; with her mother’s collection of memories, newsletters and newspaper articles throughout the years, Dr. Amorie Robinson has become an archivist for Michigan ABPsi and she has written several articles about their history (see reference section).

In 2017, Dr. Amorie Robinson interviewed her mother about the early history of Michigan ABPsi (see video link in the reference section). As she remembered that interview more recently, during worldwide Black Lives Matter demonstrations and the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and racism, Dr. Amorie Robinson recalled that, “I was listening to her answer my questions, and I was nodding and saying, ‘yep, that’s still happening, it’s just a newer version of it. The need for African-centered Black Psychology to be taught at colleges and universities, and cultivating Black youth to go into psychology continues to be strong.”

Asked about an APA cited U.S. census report that, as of 2015, only four percent of psychologists in the United States are Black, Dr. Amorie Robinson said, “That sounds about right. My mom said there were only a handful of them back then. That’s why they got together.” When also asked about the same statistic however, Dr. Jane Robinson did express some surprise. She explained that, compared to her earlier experiences in the 1960s, “there seem to be so many more of us now when we all get together.”

Dr. Jane Robinson wondered about a cyclic lack of representation. “My father, Dr. C.A. Alexander, was Kalamazoo, Michigan’s first black physician,” she said, “so I had no difficulty seeing myself as a black psychologist in private practice.” She then mused about the complexity of the issue and how it is experienced within the Black community.

Dr. Jane Robinson recommended an article by her second cousin, Dr. Dionne R. Powell, who is a psychiatrist and a psychoanalyst; “Race, African Americans, and Psychoanalysis: Collective Silence in the Therapeutic Conversation,” (Powell, 2018). The article is an excellent and intentionally unvarnished historic overview as well as a detailed reflection on this topic (see references).

At the end of her interview for this article, Dr. Jane Robinson was asked if, in the early years of ABPsi, she and the other Elders had suspected what they were forming would have such an impact. She replied, “We felt that it would, but never to the degree that it has.” Dr. Jane Robinson paused and added thoughtfully, “I am so thrilled that I was a part of something that produced so many Black psychologists doing such excellent work. To hear the competence of the young people in the field today speaking about what they are working on, it is more than what I had imagined.”

When informed about the recent announcement that Michigan would be requiring implicit bias training for all licensed health care providers, Dr. Jane Robinson responded, “That is wonderful.” She spoke about how important it is for psychologists who are not part of the Black community to continue educating themselves about the issues, and to effect positive change within the field. Dr. Amorie Robinson and Dr. Johnson echoed her sentiment, and Dr. Powell’s article emphasizes this as well: “Racism affects us all, particularly when we are least reflective on our privilege, distancing ourselves from those who are oppressed” (p. 1040). She continues, “Silence regarding otherness, particularly regarding race and culture, threatens every facet of our field. It is not enough to wait until others bring up these topics to engage with them. We are charged to make contact” (p.1044).

“Our history (at MPA) is narrower than it should be,” stated Dr. Johnson, “What can you do to expand it? What is your impact? Find the skills you need and do the advocacy you need to do regardless. It’s like people who don’t wear masks; even if you don’t need it yourself, you need to wear it for someone else who needs it. Stay engaged; this is ongoing. The tendency is to cover this up because it’s painful. I don’t want to see this window closing! How will you use your new insight? Will you use it? Or will you let it go dim?”

Postscript: With a willingness of MPA to support the work of the Metro Detroit ABPsi chapter, the Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Responsibility Committee of MPA is currently exploring opportunities to partner with the Metro Detroit ABPsi. Watch for upcoming announcements and programs. To learn more about Metro Detroit ABPsi and National ABPsi, and to listen to ABPsi Elder Dr. Jane Robinson’s 2017 interview with her daughter, Dr. Amorie Robinson, please explore the additional links below.

References

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National ABPsi: <https://www.abpsi.org/index.html>

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ALSO FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS

Review: *Faceless Killers* by Henning Mankell, New York: Vintage, 2003.

Jack P. Haynes, Ph.D.

This is the 17th *Also For Psychologists* review of a book, movie, or other product that may be of interest to psychologists. The additional required parameters behind this ongoing feature are that the subject need not specifically or exclusively be psychological in nature, and that the product is not the work of a psychologist. The review typically recommends viewing or reading of the subject because of its interest to psychologists -- hence the snappy caption *Also For Psychologists*.

This time around, the writer reviews a book by Henning Mankell, considered the dean of Swedish crime novelists. No worries about the Swedish part as the book was ably translated in 1997 by Steven Murray. Unlike most mystery/crime/noir works, this book reads like literature. The writing is atmospheric, spare, vivid, and crisp – like the book's cold Scandinavian winter setting.

Manning's novels have been published in 40 languages and have sold more than 30 million copies worldwide. Mankell's most famous character is Inspector Kurt Wallander, a police detective in the small town of Ystad in Sweden. *Faceless Killers* is the first in the series of five Wallander novels. I also

have read the chronologically second book in the series. The BBC series of Wallander starring Kenneth Branagh is excellent but is not the same; and the two books I have read are superior to the television series, though the latter is also worthwhile.

The gist of the context of the book includes Wallander battling a midlife crisis, components of which include Wallander's wife having left him, and when he encounters her, she emphasizes how much weight he has put on. Additional to his woes, Wallander's adult daughter rarely has contact with him, and Wallander's father who lives alone is belligerent, and apparently is beginning to suffer from dementia. His father is a painter who now paints the same landscape over and over in exactly the same way. Wallander himself loves opera, and he drinks too much. One episode of his drinking excessively, driving, and then getting apprehended by his own police force is handled in an interesting way.

The plot of the book involves two main threads. Very early one morning Wallander receives a call to investigate the murder of the husband of an elderly farming couple, the wife still clinging to life, her only spoken word being "foreign." Another clue is a noose tied with a knot in a fashion unfamiliar to Swedish forensic investigators. An additional puzzling fact was the horse in the victim's barn had apparently been fed by the killer or killers after the murder. Also, as the story progresses, the deceased farmer is revealed to have much more wealth than had been apparent, this wealth even unknown to his wife.

The murder coincides with a nearby refugee camp barracks being firebombed, and also a Somali refugee having been gunned down by racists. Wallander therefore has two simultaneous cases to solve, and he does not know if the cases are related. The anxiety of some of the population at the immigrant circumstances parallels some issues in our country regarding immigration. One of the interesting parts of the book is the portrayal of Wallander's personality and circumstances. At times, the book presents the thought process of Wallander as he struggles with the elements of the two crimes. I found that appealing, interesting, and different.

This book is engaging regarding plot, presentation of social issues, and also character portrayal. Reading this book would be a good choice for a Michigan winter day.

(To comment on this article, contact Dr. Haynes at jackphaynesphd@comcast.net)

Posthumous Tribute to Scott O. Lilienfeld: Book Review

S. Satel & S. Lilienfeld. (2015). *Brainwashed. The Seductive Appeal of Mindless Neuroscience*. New York: Basic Books.

Steve Ceresnie, Ph.D.

Editor's note: This book review first appeared in The Michigan Psychologist in 2014. It is being

run again as a tribute to Scott O. Lilienfeld, who died recently.

“Fifty Shades of Gray Matter,” was the first title Sally Satel wanted but she had to go with “Brainwashed. The Seductive Appeal of Mindless Neuroscience.”

Satel and her co-author, Scott O. Lilienfeld, discuss the stunning progress in neuroscience and its implications for society, especially through the development of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) that takes pictures of the brain in action.

The authors do not aim to critique science and the technology of brain scans. Rather Satel and Lilienfeld sound a warning bell that we are witnessing premature applications of these seductive, techno-color images of the brain that promise to help diagnose drug addicts, understand the influence of neurological damage on criminal responsibility, and predict consumers’ buying habits – to name only a few topics discussed in this concise, elegantly written book.

Psychologists, psychiatrists, and neuroscientists are alert to this warning and know we are in danger of losing the mind to this age of neurocentrism. For example, in his new book, “The Spark: The Science of Human Development,” Jerome Kagan reviews in detail the many problems using blood flow measures in the brain to understand emotions. For instance, many events evoke a brief feeling that lasts about a second and then disappears. But there is little change in blood flow to a brain site during the initial second. The peak in the blood flow signal occurs about six seconds after the event occurred and, therefore, five seconds after the feeling may have vanished. The blood flow measure reflects a cascade of phenomena that include association to the event, a possible feeling, and perhaps a private query as to why the scientist presented that particular stimulus.

The rigor of psychological studies of the mind cited in Kagan’s book often take a back seat to the fMRI scans which measure brain activity by noting associated changes in blood flow. Since cerebral blood flow and neuron activity are correlated, when an area of the brain is in use, blood flows to the region also increases. We are flooded with observations of brain parts lighting up. There are no shortages of interpretations when certain regions of the brain glow – even though we know that brain regions have millions of interconnections, we sometimes confuse the meaning of excitatory and inhibitory functions on brain sites, and that the better people become at a skill, the less hard the brain appears to work.

Yet this neuromania pervades the culture, supplying consumers craving certainty the illusion of simple black-and-white answers to their many shades of gray psychic distress.

For example, the other day I watched the Dr. Oz Show, a daily television program focusing on medical issues and personal health launched by Oprah Winfrey’s Harpo Productions and Sony Pictures. Dr. Mehmet Oz is a cardiac surgeon and Professor of Surgery at Columbia

University. I watched Dr. Oz interview child and adult psychiatrist Dr. Daniel Amen on the topic of “Your Brain: Up Close and Personal.” Dr. Amen runs the many national outlets called Amen Clinics (sounds religious) in Newport Beach, California; San Francisco, California; Bellevue, Washington; Reston, Virginia; Atlanta, Georgia; and New York, NY. According to Satel and Lilienfeld, Daniel Amen oversees an empire that includes book publishing, television shows, and a line of nutritional supplements. Single photon emission computer tomography, SPECT, a nuclear-imaging technique that measure blood flow, is the type of scan favored by Amen. His clinics charge over three thousand dollars for an assessment – and he grossed over 20 million in 2011. There is near universal agreement among psychologists and psychiatrists that Amen’s scans cannot diagnose mental illness.

In another chapter, Satel and Lilienfeld focus on neuromarketing – a field with a long history. Using consumer motivational research, depth psychology and subliminal tactics to manipulate expectations and induce desire for products was the theme of Vance Packard’s 1957 classic book on advertising “The Hidden Persuaders” – a book I read in high school. Now, enter the fMRI and marketing. Some neuromarketers sell the idea that focus groups are not a reliable means to find out what consumers like or what they are going to buy. Instead of asking people about their buying preferences, neuromarketers bypass the conscious mind and go straight to analyzing fMRI’s of consumers to determine both their unconscious desires and decision making processes.

Satel’s specialty is treating drug addicts. She is frustrated with the accepted definition of addiction as a chronic and relapsing brain disease. To treat drug addicts, Satel reminds us, we must help them change their behavior and cravings for drugs. To do this, we appeal to their desire and motivation for change. To call something a disease implies there is a medication to stop the disease process. There is no such medication for drug addicts – nor for many other mental maladies. Drug addicts sometimes respond to incentives to change. People with disease are not able to reverse their disease voluntarily. To treat drug addicts, we have to understand minds.

The book has six chapters and an epilogue:

1. This Is Your Brain on Ahmadinejad: Or What is Brain Imaging?
2. The Buyologist Is In: The Rise of Neuromarketing
3. Addiction and the Brain-Disease Fallacy
4. The Telltale Brain: Neuroscience and Deception
5. My Amygdala Made Me Do It: The Trials of Neurolaw
6. The Future of Blame: Neuroscience and Moral Responsibility

Epilogue: Mind over Gray Matter

In their last chapter, Satel and Lilienfeld turn their attention to neuroscience and moral responsibility. They wonder if advances in neuroscience bring us closer to solving the age-old dilemma of how much of our behavior is determined and how much is the result of our free will. As Satel and Lilienfeld note, the proper use of reason is to recognize reason’s limitations.

Neuroscience does not bring us closer to understanding this predicament.

But we do have a choice about learning from neuroscience and accepting the limits of our new technology, without throwing out our minds with the brain water. We remain mystified about how the water of the brain becomes the wine of self-consciousness. Our limits spring from the mystery of the generation of consciousness, the basic experience of humans on which our social and personal relationships rest. We do not understand how consciousness is produced, nor do we understand its full potential.

I believe I made a free choice to read Satel and Lillienfeld's superb book, but maybe the writer Issac Bashevis Singer is on to something when he says: "We have to believe in free will. We've got no choice."

Reference:

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(To comment on this article, contact Steven Ceresnie, Ph.D. at Sceresnie@Aol.com)

Branding MPA

Antu Segal, Psy.D., ABPP

This year MPA presented its membership with a new logo and a new [website](#). The MPA website is interactive with a [Blog](#), [Find a Psychologist](#) tool, and member directory search, just to name a few features!

Please make sure to log onto your Member Only section and update your profile information. To opt in to the Referral and/or Member Directory, please indicate *Yes* in "Do you want to be included in the Member Searches" and/or "Referral Directory Search."

Keep a lookout for more ways to interact with other MPA members and the new website in the next few months.

What's coming? How about advertising on the MPA website, virtual programming and a job board.

Finally, MPA now has a YouTube [channel](#)!

Please subscribe to MPA's YouTube channel to access seminars hosted by MPA's committees.

And do not forget to follow MPA on social media!

Notes of a Psychology Watcher

Steven J. Ceresnie, Ph.D.

Stories for the Newly Old Folks

Frank Sinatra goes to see his mother in a nursing home. It's his first visit, and the residents are thrilled to see him.

He patiently answers their questions and signs a few autographs. When he notices a woman, who is sitting alone and paying no attention to him, a mixture of compassion and narcissism prompts him to go over and sit with her.

How are you today?" he says.

"Not too bad," she replies. "Are you here to visit someone?"

"Yes, my mother lives here. By the way, do you have any idea who I am?"

"No," says the woman, "but if you go to the front desk, I'm sure they can tell you."

The worst time to have a heart attack is during a game of charades.

A Clash of Religions

One Pope, in the Dark Ages, decreed that all Jews had to leave Rome. The Jews did not want to leave, and so the Pope challenged them to a disputation to prove that they could remain. No one, however, wanted the responsibility until the synagogue custodian, Morris, volunteered.

As there was nobody else who wanted to go, Morris was given the task. But because he knew only Hebrew, a silent debate was agreed. The day of the debate came, and they went to St. Peter's Square to sort out the decision.

First the Pope waved his hand around his head. Morris pointed firmly at the ground.

The Pope, in some surprise, held up three fingers. In response, Morris gave him the middle finger.

The crowd started to complain, but the Pope thoughtfully waved them to be quiet. He took out a bottle of wine and a wafer, holding them up.

Morris took out an apple, and held it up.

The Pope, to the people's surprise, said, "I concede. This man is too good. The Jews can stay."

Later, the Pope was asked what the debate had meant. He explained, "First, I showed him the Heavens, to show that God is everywhere. He pointed at the ground to signify that God is right there here with us. I showed him three fingers, for the Trinity. He reminded me that there is One God common to both our religions. I showed him wine and water, for God's forgiveness. With an apple, he showed me original sin. The man was a master of silent debate."

In the Jewish corner, Morris had the same question put to him by his fellow Hebrew-speakers, and answered: “It was all nonsense, really. First, he told me that this whole town would be free of Jews. I told him, Go to Hell! We’re staying right here! Then, he told me we had three days to get out. I told him just what I thought of that proposal.”

An older woman asked, “But what about the part at the end?” “That?” said Morris with a shrug, “Then we had lunch!”

YouTube Recommendations

I highly recommend the YouTube video where Robert Wright interviews E. O. Wilson (1:06:38), 2003.

Robert Wright is a journalist who writes about science, history, politics, and religion. He has written five books:

- *Three Scientists and Their Gods: Looking for Meaning in an Age of Information* (1988)
- *The Moral Animal* (1994)
- *Nonzero: The Logic of Human Destiny* (1999)
- *The Evolution of God* (2009)
- *Why Buddhism is True* (2017)

E.O. Wilson is a biologist, naturalist, and writer. His biological specialty is myrmecology, the study of ants. Wilson is the father of sociobiology – later renamed evolutionary psychology. He is the Pellegrino University Research Professor, Emeritus in Entomology for the Department of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology at Harvard. He published the controversial book, *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis in 1975* to the uproar of the radical left and later the radical right because he implied that we could apply Darwinian principles and genetics to the biological understanding of human social behavior. At one lecture about sociobiology, an audience member rushed to the lectern and poured a bucket of cold water on Wilson’s head. He is the two-time winner of the Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction for *On Human Nature*, in 1979, and *The Ants* in 1991. He is a New York Times best-selling author for *The Social Conquest of the Earth* (2012), *Letters to a Young Scientist* (2013), and *The Meaning of Human Existence* (2014).

As of 2019, Wright is a Visiting Professor of Science and Religion at Union Theological Seminary. World-famous neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, Professor of Psychology, Philosophy, and Neuroscience at the University of Southern California praises Wright’s, *Why Buddhism is True*, in his *The New York Times* book review (August 7, 2017). I quote from his review:

” Wright relies on science, especially on evolutionary psychology, cognitive science, and neuroscience...My take on Wright’s fundamental proposals is as follows: First, the beneficial powers of meditation come from the possibility of realizing that our emotive reactions and the consequent feelings they engender – which operate in automated fashion, outside our deliberate control – are often inappropriate and even counterproductive relative to the situations that trigger them.

Second, the mismatch between causes and responses is rooted in evolution. We have inherited from our nonhuman and human forerunners a complex affect apparatus suited to life circumstances very different from ours.

Third, meditation allows us to realize that the idea of the self as a director of our decisions is an illusion, and that the degree to which we are at the mercy of a weakly controlled system places us at a considerable disadvantage.

Fourth, the awareness brought on by meditation helps the construction of a truly enlightened humanity and counters the growing tribalism of contemporary societies.”

This interview with Professor Wilson covers a wide range of topics, including his ideas about human nature, what it feels like to be an animal, free will versus determinism, God and religion, scientific humanism and much more.

Book Review

Henry S. Gornbein, Esq., and Jack P. Haynes, Ph.D. “*Child Custody. A Complete Guide for Parents.*”

Here’s some good advice: Get good advice.

This book on child custody is filled with good advice from two seasoned experts.

Mr. Gornbein is a lawyer who is a leading expert in family law, practicing in Michigan, with more than 40 years of experience. Gornbein is a former Chairperson of the Family Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan. He is also a Past President of the Michigan Chapter of the American Chapter of Matrimonial Lawyer. He is the author of *Demystifying Divorce*.

Dr. Haynes is a distinguished and highly respected psychologist with more than 40 years of forensic psychological experience, having performed thousands of evaluations in domestic and non-domestic cases. Dr. Haynes has conducted more than 700 court-ordered psychological evaluations related specifically to child custody and parenting time. He has been appointed Parent Coordinator in many high-conflict cases. He has been a member of the Michigan Psychological Association for many years and was MPA President in 2006. Most recently, Dr. Haynes has been the Chair of the Ethics Committee for the American Psychological Association.

The stand-up comedian-philosopher Richard Pryor said, “Marriage is really tough because you have to deal with feelings and lawyers.” After seven divorces, he knows.

There was a time the word “divorce” was whispered in public gatherings. Not now – when about 50% of first marriages fail. Divorce is common but no less hurtful to the children from a broken marriage or relationship.

When love turns to hate, divorcing parents use their children as pawns, putting aside their children’s fear, anxiety, depression and grief. The upsurge of strong negative emotions pushes some parents to focus only on their needs rather than considering the Best Interests of their children.

In child custody disputes, there are no winners.

The chapters in this comprehensive and practical book are:

1. Then and Now
2. The Best Interests Factors
3. Joint Legal Custody – and Decisions
4. Psychological Issues: It's Complicated
5. Choosing an Attorney
6. Attachment: Maintaining Emotional Bonds
7. Impact: Domestic Violence
8. Alcohol and Beyond: How Substance Abuse Affects Custody
9. Social Medical & Technology
10. Cultural Issues
11. Parental Alienation
12. Never-Married Parents
13. Blended Families
14. Same-Sex Issues
15. What About Grandparents?
16. Over the State Line
17. Beyond Border
18. Document Everything
19. Choosing a Psychotherapist
20. Trial Tips: Preparing a Custody Case
21. Guardians and Parenting Coordinators
22. Resolving Your Case
23. The Judicial Interview: Reasonable Preference of the Child
24. Perspectives from the Bench
25. The Psychological Evaluation
26. Child Custody & Support
27. Managing Conflicts
28. Modification of Child Custody
29. Recap & Final Thoughts
30. Food for Thought Q&A

There are “takeaways” at the end of each chapter, and several blank lined pages for notes.

Most children come out of divorced families psychologically healthy. Sometimes children and their families require psychological therapy to reroute them back to a normal developmental course. This is an essential book for parents and mental health clinicians when considering the Best Interests of Children during a rupture of a marriage or relationship.

When I was a young psychologist, I wish I had this book.

(To comment on this article, contact Steve Ceresnie, Ph.D. at Sceresnie@aol.com)



From the President's Desk Health, Faith, and Joy

Joy Wolfe Ensor, PhD

How It Began.

At our planning retreat in November, I led the Board in a meditation that included this appeal to our MPA ancestors: "Please protect us so that we have the health, faith and joy to continue your work." When our Past Treasurer Deb Smith first read those words at our retreat a year earlier, we had no way of knowing how prescient they would be. We were only a few months into 2020 when the novel coronavirus swept into our country; nine months later as of this writing, we are still in its terrible grip.

The toll of COVID-19 on our families and communities has been incalculable, and its impact will persist for years to come. In my clinical practice, I have validated clients' experiences of stress and feeling overwhelmed. I have invited them to honor the achievement involved in simply maintaining functioning, and to give themselves permission to consider that this might not be the best time to expect themselves to up their game.

And yet even as COVID-19 touched altogether too many members of our MPA Board and committees, we pressed forward with our ambitions, and did in fact up our game to meet the challenges of these unprecedented times. You will learn more about this in our upcoming annual report, but a preview of our 2020 achievements includes these:

- A nimble response to the COVID-19 crisis, most notably in advocating successfully for access to and reimbursement for telehealth services
- A remarkable 20% one-year increase in our membership (including successful recruitment of graduate student and early career members), thus elevating MPA from a mid-size to a large state psychological association and building a solid foundation for intergenerational continuity in our membership and leadership ranks
- Enhanced use of technology, such as shifting CE programming to Zoom and making recordings of these programs accessible for viewing on the MPA YouTube channel
- Active efforts, spearheaded by our Masters Committee, to address barriers to Michigan LLPs' achieving the independent practice privileges on a par with those granted to other masters-prepared clinicians in our state
- Tireless advocacy by the Insurance Committee and Integrated Care Committee to recognize psychologists' uniquely important role in the integrated health care space

- Improved visibility of our activities via our new website, social media presence, and public-facing communication between MPA and our communities in presentations, interviews, and position papers
- Continuous self-assessment and improvement in our Board practices, including near completion of a new policy manual to provide a road map for future generations of leadership
- Redoubling our commitment to address the pandemic of systemic racism via programming, outreach and advocacy

Our emergence into a new era of growth and ambition challenges MPA to welcome innovation while also maintaining stability. Thanks to our enormously dedicated and capable Board we have been able to honor the legacy of our predecessors while implementing leading-edge practices of collaborative leadership.

It has been my great honor to serve as your MPA President. My tenure certainly brought unexpected challenges but, more importantly, countless opportunities for collegiality, purpose and, yes, joy. I look forward to stepping back into the consulting role of Past-President, and could not be more excited to see what lies ahead for MPA under the leadership of the extraordinarily talented Dr. Antú Segal.

Thank you so much for supporting MPA and me during this past year. I wish you all a 2021 that brings you health, faith and joy.

(To comment on this article, contact Joy Wolfe Ensor, Ph.D., at jwensor@comcast.net)

How It Ended



MPA Learning Opportunities Will Expand in 2021

Chris Sterling, Psy.D

This coming new year will feature increased and more varied learning opportunities with MPA-sponsored seminars. All seminars for the foreseeable future will utilize the Zoom format, which will ensure safe and convenient remote learning. Keep checking the new and dynamic MPA

webpage where you will find many more CE opportunities coming throughout this next year.

MPA's Pain Network held their first Wednesday Lunch Learning presentation on November 18, 2020 with a one-hour CE interactive program. Because of the strong response and enthusiastic member interest, Drs. Lisa Patterson, Bruce Hillenberg, and Jennifer Peltzer-Jones are now planning four more Grand Rounds learning experiences for 2021. All will be one-hour lunch time learning events and all will take place on Wednesdays. To plan to attend one of these invaluable programs, go to the MPA website for dates and pain topics for 2021. Registration for these events is limited, so I encourage you to plan ahead and register early so you don't miss out on an exciting learning opportunity.

The Trust returns for a Zoom seminar on February 5. Leisl Bryant, Ph.D, will present on *The Trust Sequence X: Perplexing Problems in Psychological Practice: Decision Science, Ethics & Risk Management*. Seminars by The Trust are always very popular with outstanding and knowledgeable presenters offering unique opportunities to receive Ethics Credits as well as reductions on malpractice insurance. The Zoom format promises to allow greater availability of these important seminars while reducing the chances that any members will be denied access due to limited seat availability. Registration is easy on the MPA website.

The *MPA Annual Spring Conference* returns on April 16, 2021. A highlight of our next year's conference will be a morning presentation by Ben Kuo, Ph.D., from the University of Windsor, who will talk about implicit bias in healthcare settings. Dr. Kuo brings an extensive teaching background and an engaging style as a presenter. MPA members should be aware that implicit bias in healthcare may become a requirement for health care workers in Michigan.

The *MPA Annual Spring Conference* afternoon session at the Spring Conference will be devoted to helping psychologists learn more about the many demands of coping with the COVID-19 pandemic for children, adolescents and older adults. The presenters for the afternoon session include Dr. Julie Braciszewski, who will discuss the impact of the pandemic on children, and Dr. Brenda Whitehead, who will address the impact of COVID-19 on older adults.

Dr. Braciszewski is a clinical psychologist whose passion is working with children and families. She completed her Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology at the University of Michigan and worked at the Center for Community Research at DePaul University in Chicago, IL. She completed her Master's and Doctorate degrees at Wayne State University and did her internship at Hawthorn Center in Northville, MI. She then went on to pursue further specialized training in pediatrics and neuropsychological testing at Brown University's Warren Alpert Medical School and Bradley Hospital's Early Childhood Clinical Research Center in Providence, Rhode Island. After completing her Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Dr. Braciszewski directed Child and Adolescent Services at Rhode Island Cognitive Behavioral. She is currently the owner and director of Monarch Behavioral Health in Bloomfield Hills Michigan.

Dr. Brenda Whitehead specializes in adult development and aging. She earned her MA and PhD in developmental psychology from the University of Notre Dame. She is currently an associate professor at the University of Michigan Dearborn. Her research reflects two primary areas of study, both with a health psychology emphasis: stress and coping processes in later life, and the influence of psychological factors on health behaviors and functional decline with age.

After more than 10 years of Chairing the Program Committee, I will be stepping away from this position at the end of 2020. It was a real pleasure serving the MPA membership and working with other Committee members, including Drs. Janice Tomakowsky, Lisa Yufit, Anthony DeOrio, Christine Liff, Laura Krasean, Michelle Leonard, Tyler Roskos, and Executive Director LaVone Swanson. I know all of them will be available to answer your questions about MPA CE events.

(To comment on this article, contact Chris Sterling, Psy.D. at miles702@mac.com)

Perspectives from a Black Psychologist

“Everybody Got a Pistol”

Byron C. Douglas, Ph.D.

“Everybody got a pistol, everybody got a .45; the philosophy seems to be as near as I can see, when other folks give up theirs, I’ll give up mine. This is a violent civilization, if civilization’s where I am...”

n Lyrics from Gil Scott Heron’s “Gun” on his 1981 Reflections album

This nation has always had a stormy love affair with firearms. Before America became “America,” during colonial times, gun possession and even gun control was a hot topic.

For example, in August of 1739, in South Carolina, white males were mandated to carry their firearms to church on Sundays because of the fear of slave insurrections. Their fears were realized one Sunday on September 9, 1739 when enslaved Africans started what became known as the Stono Rebellion. A group of brothers armed with makeshift weapons and firearms they took from a local shop were determined to fight their way to Florida and live as Maroons. Their rebellion was quelled when they were outgunned by the white planters and militia.

Throughout the antebellum period concerted efforts were made to keep guns out of the hands of Blacks. During the Civil War, white southerners were incensed by and fearful of guns in the hands of Black Union soldiers.

After Reconstruction and throughout the “Jim Crow” era, white controlled municipalities made concerted efforts to disarm Black citizens in an effort to prevent them from defending themselves against racist state-sponsored terrorism. In the late 1960s, the state of California enacted gun

control measures into law after members of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense openly carried firearms into the capitol building in Sacramento.

What you will never hear is Second Amendment zealots decry the various efforts state and local governments made in order to control Black citizens' access to firearms. America still fears its Black citizens, especially if it is a Black male whom they *think* has a firearm (note the cases of Philando Castile, John Crawford III, Tamir Rice, Stephon Clark, to name just a few). The “almighty” NRA has been completely silent about the cases of these brothers – I wonder why?

U.S. gun purchases have seen an astounding increase during 2020 over previous years. Black men and women have accounted for nearly 60% of gun purchases so far this year. Reasons for these increases include concerns over the impact of the pandemic on public safety, the increased racial tension over the last four years, and police violence. Black gun purchasers also cite the history of governmental gun control directed at Black citizens, the importance of exercising their Second Amendment rights, and to be prepared for racial violence.

Whatever your stance on firearms, we all can admit that gun violence is a plague on our communities and that we must find a way to stem the proliferation of guns on our streets. Our public officials act like cowards when the issue of sensible gun legislation is raised. We all know this is due to the political influence of the NRA, which is bought and paid for via campaign contributions, or the threat of withholding campaign contributions. Also, there are those who believe that gun ownership is a “God given right” (it ain't) and that a citizen should have unfettered access to guns. But just like the First Amendment and its freedom of speech provision does not allow one to falsely yell “Fire!” in a crowded theatre or to defame or slander someone without consequences, the Second Amendment does not allow ownership of a 50-caliber machine gun, a tank, or a hand-held missile launcher.

Personally, I see no need for military assault rifles on the streets (AR-15, AK-47, M-16, assorted machine pistols, etc.) or the need for extended clips. Emergency medical personnel can speak to the devastation such weapons produce.

It must be stated that sensible gun control is not the panacea to stemming societal violence. More effort needs to be given to teaching anger management, conflict resolution, the treatment of PTSD, and mental health screening. And there also needs to be better screening of prospective law enforcement officers before you even begin to talk about “cultural sensitivity” training. However, sensible gun control can significantly reduce the carnage.

Peace.

(To comment on this article, contact Jim Windell at jwindell21@gmail.com)

The Sustaining Members of MPA

John Braccio, East Lansing

Joy Wolfe Ensor, Ann Arbor
Larry Friedberg, Bingham Farms
Stacey Gedeon, Roscommon
Jack Haynes, Bloomfield Hills
Thomas Hulbert, Southfield
Pamela Ludolph, Ann Arbor
William Medick II, Grosse Ile
Howard Moore, Farmington Hills
Elissa Patterson, Ann Arbor
Cynthia Rodriguez, Ada
Thomas Rosenbaum, Ann Arbor
Valerie Shebroe, East Lansing
Kristin Sheridan, Mt. Pleasant
Jared Skillings, Washington D.C.
Debra Smith, Marquette
Lewis Smith, Troy
Judy Tant, East Lansing

Our Year of Anger

Jack Haynes, Ph.D.

There are many things to be angry about – politics, racial and equality issues, religion, cultural values, climate controversies – pick your issue and pick your side, right? And then, add on the pandemic – even the pandemic seems to have “sides” with accompanying anger and reactions also.

I have heard people express actual anger about the year 2020 – good riddance that it is about to expire. Expressions of anger and outrage are our right and how we get things done, right? Steamroll opponents, put down others, vent that anger and frustration, right? You are correct and others are wrong. Let others know how you feel and do it belligerently and, if you feel like it, crudely. There is something very wrong with the other side. Attack. Better openly put down and slam them hard so they know it. Just check out some social media, or statements emanating from Washington, D.C.

There is no question that fear, uncertainty, worry, and, now, even death abound. Although our

circumstances may trigger anger, anger, though understandable, is not an adaptive response. Anger does not effectively get much done. Unless the point is just to be angry, anger is not an effective way to progress.

Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., John Lewis, and Nelson Mandela did the opposite. They presented an alternative. They did trigger anger, but, though intense, those violently expressing anger against them did not ultimately succeed, and major positive changes did take place. Anger ultimately did not benefit the angry. History favored those with specific positive values who persevered toward those values with wisdom and balance.

Channeling feelings into constructive, goal-oriented actions within a positive value system seems difficult and less immediate, less dramatic, but much more satisfying and durable, and likely more successful. Energetically expressing farewell to 2020 seems less useful than how are we to greet 2021. Hopefully, we are focused on what we can do that is reasonable and constructive – and that our focus leads to some sense of satisfaction in the new year.

(To comment on this article, contact Dr. Haynes at jackphaynesphd@comcast.net)

Insurance Matters

Louis Post, PhD

The MPA Insurance Committee has continued to actively engage with commercial health insurers in Michigan.

We have begun to work collaboratively with Priority Health Plan on a number of issues, including levels of reimbursement for procedure codes 90834 and 90837, reimbursement for telehealth services and issues of access to mental health care. We have found the company to be open to our concerns and recommendations and believe that we can work in concert to improve the experience of providers and of patients.

The Committee has continued its work with BCBSM. We are continuing to address the inability of many participating psychologists to join Physician Organizations and their consequent *inability join the PGIP and* to qualify for fee uplifts. We are advocating that those psychologists who are unable to join a Physician Organization either because one does not exist in their geographic area, or because the Physician Organization will not accept psychologists, be exempt from the incentive fee withholds. We are working to have BCBSM incentivize providers who utilize the Primary Care Behavioral Health model of care. In contrast to the Collaborative Care model, which has been recently adopted by BCBSM, the PCBH model offers psychologist an integral role in the care of patients. We are continuing to address questions arising in regard to the utilization of procedure codes 90834 and 90837.

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic the Committee was able to meet with both insurers. We advocated for access to telehealth mental health services, reimbursement at non facility rates and the waiving of copay and deductibles. Both Priority Health Plan and BCBSM were very responsive to our concerns. What they implemented very much paralleled the Committee's recommendations. You should be aware that it is unclear, at this time, whether the current telehealth reimbursement policies will be continued past December 31, 2020. We are advocating that this should be the case.

By having a seat at the table with BCBSM and with Priority Health Plan, MPA has access to companies which account for 75% to 80% of the commercial health insurer market in Michigan. We do seek to make an impact on how the state manages the various Medicaid plans and on the behavior of the smaller commercial health insurers, but we, unfortunately, have limited resources available to devote to these efforts.

The current Insurance Committee members are Betty Bishop, Ph.D., Carol Ellstein, Ph.D., Christina Jagielski, Ph.D., Joe Horak, Ph.D., Taisel Losada, Ph.D., Rebecca Roth, Ph.D., and Ken Salzman, Ph.D.

After years of invaluable service and hard work, with many valuable contributions, both Dr. Bishop and Dr. Ellstein are leaving the Committee. They will both be greatly missed for their wisdom and experience.

In order to increase the scope of its activities the Insurance Committee needs additional members. If you are interested and are able to devote some time to committee work, you can make an outsized impact for the benefit of both practitioners and patients.

(To comment on this article, contact Louis Post, PhD at Lpost48@gmail.com)

Therapeutic Handout

Mary Seyuin, M.A. LLP

Across populations of clients with various mental health disorders, facilitating positive change in clients' self-image is very challenging. But such facilitation is necessary to help clients improve the quality of their lives.

My endeavor is to continue to guide clients through and out of the maze of the thinking which creates emotional pain and low functioning levels. To guide them out of the maze toward freedom. Self-esteem and self-image are significant components to real client progress with any disorder. Even a narcissistic personality disordered client needs to replace the unrealistically high self-image with a self-image that is healthy and realistic.

To change our clients thinking is to improve how they experience their daily lives. So, we must help them learn to think well. Below is a recent therapeutic handout I have written and used with clients to help them improve their thinking and increase their insight. I hope my fellow MPA members may find this handout interesting and useful in their therapeutic work.

Lightness of Being: Perception is the Key

“Perception is subjective, not objective. The brain receives more than 10 to 11 billion bits of information every second...it filters the information and presents us with about 2,000 bits of information every second. Your self-image is the filter. What you see is what you identify with.” From Life Loves You by Louise Hay & Robert Holden

Fascinating, isn't it? To come to the realization that change is 1) Actually possible, and that 2) Change begins with me.

Sounds so simple that it's almost trite. However, as we dig deeper into what works to turn lives around from depression and pervasive dissatisfaction to a lightness of being and deep satisfaction, we find overwhelming evidence that supports these assertions.

Perhaps most surprisingly, we face the inevitable truth that our self-image is a very *powerful prejudice which filters how we perceive and take in information* . Through self-examination we see how our self-image drives our perceptions to such a powerful extent that it affects the way we enjoy – or fail to enjoy – life.

Therefore, if my self-image is that of someone who is able bodied, creative, in love with life and self-assured in my skills, then I have a good self-image. Also, critically important, is being confident that I am precious and loved. It is then that I have a lightness of being that carries me through life's ups and downs and through the complications presented in relationships.

Now we can be fully aware that our perceptions help us navigate life in such a way that we experience a true lightness of being. This is a significant advance over any previous unawareness of our power to change and create. We really can follow our joy without guilt as we become undefended and transparent. There is no longer a need to defend against the false notion that we are not valuable. We know to our bones that we are precious.

We now know we have a choice. We can choose to filter out distorted negatives with an improved self-image that allows us to absorb and appreciate realistic positives.

It is important work to be able to realize that change begins with how I see me.

I think this Chinese Proverb helps reinforce the work to be done on self-image: “Tension is who you think you should be. Relaxation is who you are.”

(To comment on this handout or to contact [Mary Seyuin](#), email her at maryseyuin@comcast.net)

MPA COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR NEEDED

Are you interested in leadership opportunities?

Would you like to lead a committee for your state psychological association?

Does creative programming appeal to you?

Would you accept the challenge of being a part of MPA's Board of Directors?

If so, please consider applying for the MPA's Program Committee Chair or Vice-Chair positions.

Early Career and BIPOC psychologists strongly encouraged to apply.

(To comment on this story, contact Antu Segal, Ph.,D. at dr.antusegal@gmail.com)

Looking Back, Looking Forward

Jennifer Peltzer-Jones Psy.D., RN.

In 2018, I was nominated and selected to serve as the Inaugural Chair of MPA's Integrated Care Committee (ICC). On January 1, 2021, I will transition into a new role within MPA as our representative for APA's Council of Representatives. As I excitedly look forward to this new way to serve MPA, I cannot help but reflect upon my experiences with MPA and the ICC over the last several years.

It has been interesting to think about my pathway towards MPA. Initially, when I was in fellowship and in my first career position, I was not interested in what MPA had to offer. This was in large part because my focus was on getting past my own feelings of "imposter syndrome" while simultaneously attempting to establish the value a psychologist can bring to an emergency department. As my career "attachment" became more secure, I became more interested in branching out and exploring the psychology world around me. I found myself wanting to know who my local compatriots were here in Michigan. Because I did not obtain any of my education in Michigan, I felt a little like an outsider in what had become my own state. Wanting to be part of something here in Michigan was a large part of what drew me to MPA – and I must say, I have not been let down!!

The opportunities to connect with and learn from other psychologists have been one of the greatest gifts MPA has given me; but the listserv, our social media sites, various program events, planned social hours, and committee/task force involvement all have been ways I have met, stayed in touch with, or worked alongside genuinely brilliant Michigan psychologists.

One of the most important lessons of 2020 for me has been respecting the enormous

importance of being connected to others. MPA held steady during the multiple storms our country faced in 2020.

Had I not been as involved, I may have felt a bit more “career-isolated.”

Looking forward, what can you expect from the ICC in 2021? First, I am so happy to announce our new leadership. As outgoing Chair of the ICC, I believe my successors will experience the same acceptance, encouragement, inspiration, and support as I have from our Board and from our members. Dr. Andrew Champine will be taking over the role as Chair and Dr. Julija Stelmokas will be sliding into the role of Vice-Chair. Both have been part of the ICC from its inception and both bring incredible insight and experience to these roles.

The ICC is a large committee of professionals from across the state and from a variety of health systems. In 2020, we recognized the need to improve the diversity of our committee as well as the need to include trainees; thus, we hope to recruit new members in 2021 in order to improve our breadth of knowledge and experience. If you are interested, please, reach out!

In 2020, we held the 3rd Annual Michigan Health Psychology Symposium, one of our favorite ICC accomplishments! The MI HP Symposium openly invites clinicians to present their programs – and it has become a “highlight reel” of the great work being done here in the mitten. The vision for this conference remains twofold: to highlight our programmatic and academic “jewels” and to create a place where professionals and trainees can network. The work we have done with the Michigan HP Symposium has attracted national Keynote Speakers, all of whom remain impressed with our progressive approach to bringing the work of Health and Integrated Psychology into the limelight. In the last two years, we have had over 200 participants for this conference, with a significant number of poster submissions from all levels of Michigan trainees. Because we have stars in Michigan that need to shine, the HP Symposium will remain an important part of the ICC work moving forward. We hope you will keep this on your radar for 2021.

Another important aspect of the ICC work has been to advocate for broader access to psychology on behalf of all Michiganders. This is especially important for our populations who are insured through state payors and plans. Access to evidence-based psychological care should not only be for those with the “right insurance” or the ability to pay out of pocket for services. Rather, as part of the ICC’s goal towards eliminating health disparities, we have advocated to increase psychologists on plan panels and to have plans understand and value our services –especially health and behavior interventions not delivered in traditional office settings. With more people losing jobs and insurance, there are more people needing state plans for their coverage, increasing the urgency to have psychological services included as benefits in these plans. The ICC will continue this advocacy work in 2021.

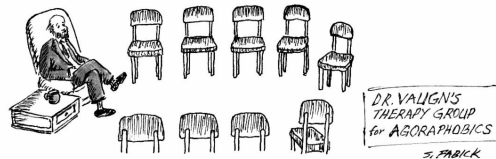
My goal in writing this short piece was to bring the ICC into your line of sight, as I think you

can expect some great things in 2021-2022. However, I also wanted to capture what MPA has meant to me in order to say “thank you” for all of you who are part of this wonderfully supportive organization. I have made lifelong friends already through MPA and witnessed a master class in leadership from our Presidential trio, our Executive Committee, our Board, and our Executive Director. While 2020 has challenged our way of connecting, it has also given us the opportunity to treasure the meaningful relationships we have and to create new ones. I am thankful MPA had the foresight to create so many wonderful pathways for us to share and support each other as we faced a year like no other. Quite frankly, I did not know what to expect when I really focused on becoming involved with MPA.

What I found was a community of outstanding clinicians and caring individuals, working to promote psychological science, education and advocacy.

Thank you for trusting me to pick up the baton with the Council of Representatives, but more importantly, thank you all for caring for each other (myself included). Please have a safe and joyous holiday!

*(To comment on this article or to contact Dr.Peltzer-Jones, at
JPOLTZE1@hfs.org)*



Transitions in the MPA Board

Joy Wolfe Ensor, PhD

At our November board meeting, we recognized the contributions of departing Board members and welcomed new ones.

Early Career Psychologist Committee

Dr. Lisa Vroman Stokes has been a rising star in MPA, and served with distinction as Chair of the ECP Committee. However, she is stepping away from the Board at this time to tend to the needs of her family. We hope that her departure is temporary and that when the time is right, MPA will again benefit from her talents and leadership. ECP Committee member Dr.

Lisa Woodcock-Burroughs, Ph.D. will assume the Chair in 2021. An honors graduate of Wayne State University's Ph.D. program in Educational Psychology, Dr. Woodcock-Burroughs, Ph.D. has extensive clinical, school psychology and teaching experience to offer in addressing the needs of early career psychologists.

Program Committee

Dr. Chris Sterling has been the face of MPA at countless CE events over the years. His warmth, good cheer and love for programming have always shined through. Chris played a major role in organizing MPA's Annual Convention programs and in working with other host committees in developing their CE events. Most recently Chris, working closely with Executive Director LaVone Swanson, shepherded MPA's transition to Zoom programming in response to COVID-19, in the process making programs more broadly accessible. He served MPA with devotion, and we are all grateful for his contributions. Incoming MPA President Dr. Antú Segal will serve as interim PC Chair until a permanent Chair is named.

APA Council of Representatives

Dr. Susan Silk's, term on the APA Council of Representatives was just the capstone of a long and distinguished record of service to MPA and to the people of Michigan and beyond. She was the face of MPA's Disaster Relief Network for almost 30 years and led the way in demonstrating how we can be psychological first responders when tragedy strikes. Her "[Ring Theory](#)", based on her own personal experience, taught us how to "dump out and comfort in" – a skill that is important now more than ever. The MPA membership voted in Dr. Jennifer Peltzer-Jones as our new CoR representative.

Integrated Care Committee

With Dr. Peltzer-Jones' move to the APA Council of Representatives, the new ICC Chair will be Dr. Andrew Champine. Dr. Champine is a graduate of the Michigan School of Psychology doctoral program and of MSU's master's program in Healthcare Management, with a concentration in Leadership and Strategy. Currently he is the Director of Behavioral Medicine Education – Internal Medicine at McLaren Flint/MSU and is an Assistant Professor in MSU's departments of Internal Medicine, Family Medicine and Psychiatry.

Federal Advocacy Coordinator

Dr. Jo Johnson has served MPA (as well as APA and her various communities) with distinction for decades, holding every imaginable position of leadership and earning every imaginable award. She is the embodiment of her long-standing mantra, "The more you do, the more you can do." In her more than 20 years as MPA's Federal Advocacy Coordinator, she taught countless MPA members how to engage with our elected representatives to speak on behalf of psychology and the public good. The MPA Board has named Dr. Molly Gabriel-Champine, the outgoing Chair of the Membership Committee, to succeed Dr. Johnson. Dr. Gabriel-Champine is already spearheading efforts to integrate MPA's state and federal advocacy efforts and to increase member engagement in this process.

Membership Committee

With Dr. Molly Gabriel-Champine's move to the FAC role, Membership Committee member Dr. Kristen Votruba will assume the Chair in 2021. A graduate of Wayne State University's doctoral program in Clinical Psychology/Neuropsychology, Dr. Votruba is a Clinical Associate Professor and the Neuropsychology Program training director in the Department of Psychiatry at Michigan Medicine.

Children, Youth, and Family Committee

Earlier this year, the MPA membership voted in CYF Chair Dr. Brittany Barber-Garcia as our new President-Elect. The 2021 CYF Chair will be Dr. Sarah Witherell. She earned her PhD in Clinical Psychology (with a minor specialization in Child Clinical Psychology) at Wayne State University and is currently a staff psychologist at The Children's Center of Wayne County in Detroit.

Presidential Trio

As of January 1, Dr. Antú Segal will transition to President, Dr. Brittany Barber-Garcia will come in as President-Elect, and I will move to Past President. Dr. Elissa Patterson, our outgoing Past President, will transition off the Board. Dr. Patterson became active in MPA as soon as she moved to Michigan from Massachusetts, joining the Insurance Committee and then assuming its Chair when Dr. Louis Post left the Committee temporarily to serve as MPA President. She was elected to serve as President-Elect in 2018, only to assume the President role midway through her term when then-President Dr. Jared Skillings moved to his job at APA.

Dr. Patterson was the leading edge of culture change in the MPA Board, helping us align our practices to our values, and ushering in an era of mutual accountability that continues and grows to this day. Her guidance, mentorship and example were invaluable to me during my own President-Elect term, and her legacy will serve us all well in our new era of growth.

(To comment on this article, contact Joy Wolfe Ensor, Ph.D., at jwensor@comcast.net)



Top 10 Benefits of Working from Home and Telehealth

Valerie L. Shebroe, Ph.D.

What Clients See

Editor's Note: Valerie L. Shebroe, Ph.D. has been a psychologist in Independent Practice in East Lansing for nearly 30 years, but has been practicing from her home office since mid-March. She has a special interest in Health Psychology, and also teen and adult executive functioning, in the

I never, ever, ever, ever wanted to work from home or do Telehealth. For the last few years I have been in my ideal office and practice, and I initially mourned not going to my office to work. But now, after a number of months and getting the hang of telehealth technology and working from home, I am starting to see some of the advantages. Here are my top 10 benefits of working from home:

10. I can wear yoga pants to work.
9. I can actually do yoga between work activities in my yoga pants.
8. I can go barefoot.
7. I can wear my favorite fuchsia slippers if my feet are chilly.
6. I can try on all of the tops I haven't worn in a long time, and either discover that I still like to wear them, or discover what was annoying me about the top and throw it in my donation bag.
5. I can play my favorite online word game and/or read a novel during lunch. Technically, I could also have done these activities at my brick and mortar office, but my boss had fairly rigid rules about not doing the above because I would just want to do it all day and not do other work tasks. I looked in the mirror and had a conversation with my boss and she said that it was okay to do these things at home – because, she reasoned, these are unusual times and I seem to need more treats.
4. I can do some dinner prep between activities.
3. I can go outside for a few minutes between things, or more easily take a short or longer walk without having to go down a flight of stairs at my office building.
2. I can go home for lunch every day.

And the Number One Benefit of working from home:

1. I now have an idea of how it would be to work from home in the future if I wanted to as I get closer to retirement and I decrease my practice.

(To comment on this article, contact Dr. Shebroe at vshebroe@gmail.com)

What Clients Don't See



Business Newsletter

Kathryn Vassel was writing tips for Working at Home for CNN Business in October. She needed quotes and found Valerie Shebroe, Ph.D. willing to share how she deals with the pandemic and working from home. The article, which appeared in CNN's Work Transformed newsletter, gives advice about easing in and out of your day, while working from your home office. Here's what Vassel wrote:

“Back when going into the office was a thing, you probably didn't start working as soon as you walked in the door. Maybe you stopped for coffee or chatted with a co-worker. Easing in and out of the workday can be hard when your home is your office. Here's what Work Transformed reader Valerie Shebroe, in East Lansing, Michigan, does:

[I am] intentional about cleaning up my home office at the end of the day, just as I would do at my brick-and-mortar office: [I] make a ‘to do’ list for the next day, and hang out a little before entering home life. And at the beginning of the day, [I] take time to get centered for work well before the start time of my first appointment or work task of the day.”

To read the original story by Kathryn Vassel, go to:

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/20/success/how-to-get-a-raise-pandemic-work-transformed/index.html>

Book Review

A Guide to Helping Car Accident Victims Heal

**James F. Zender, Ph.D. (2020). *Recovering from Your Car Accident: The Complete Guide to Reclaiming Your Life.*
Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield**

Reviewed by James Windell

As I write this, the number of deaths related to COVID-19 in the U.S. exceeds 270,000. We have become accustomed to a daily death count adding up the coronavirus fatalities. Also, we are used to hearing about every military death in Afghanistan. The total of deaths of our military in Afghanistan since 2001 is nearly 3,000, and another 50,000 soldiers have been in injured.

These figures pale when compared to the number of people killed and injured in automobile accidents. In fact, we could say that car crashes are a global pandemic that kills more than one million people and injures more than 50 million – and this happens *every* year. In the United States, annually more than 40,000 people die and more than 2.9 million individuals sustain an auto accident-related injury.

Michigan psychologist, James F. Zender, Ph.D., the founding director of the Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Psychological Trauma at Detroit Receiving Hospital and University Health Center, specializes in helping people injured in car crashes. Now, after more than 20 years of treating auto-accident patients, Dr. Zender has written a book for people who have been directly or indirectly the victim of a car accident. Most of his clients suffer from symptoms of PTSD, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, sleep disorders, pain disorders and traumatic brain injuries.

Just as he aims to do in his psychotherapeutic practice, Zender wrote “Recovering from Your Car Accident” to help people understand their symptoms and develop new coping skills to deal with the trauma that results from being involved in an auto accident. His book is also useful to family and friends to help them comprehend a car-accident survivor’s difficulties with thinking, speech, mood and the new challenges they often have with relationships. But, despite the title and the stated intent of the author, this book will be invaluable for psychologists and other mental health practitioners to better understand and help the victims of auto crashes.

Because of the number of car accident survivors who are left with ongoing trauma and pain, Zender believes a separate diagnostic category for the constellation of psychological, neurocognitive and neurobehavioral symptoms that come about because of car accidents is needed. That new diagnostic category, he suggests, should be called Motor Vehicle Trauma. He makes a strong case for this in one of the 16 chapters of this book which discuss the kinds of symptoms and the lasting effects that car crash victims typically experience. Chapters are devoted to PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, and pain and each chapter features case studies, the specific symptoms victims experience and recommendations for successful coping with these symptoms.

In the chapter on managing pain, Zender discusses the risks and hazards of depending upon medication for dealing with pain. He offers those who suffer from chronic pain several alternatives so that they can avoid opioid addiction or reliance on other drugs. Although he offers psychotherapy as a choice, he also covers a range of alternative treatments and approaches. Nonetheless, he describes the benefits of both individual and group psychotherapy for people with long-term symptoms following a car crash.

Taking a compassionate and empathetic approach to car accident victims, Zender is always understanding and practical. Each chapter ends with useful tips. One chapter provides helpful advice about how to deal with insurance companies. He also has a chapter on prevention and notes that many auto accidents these days are related to alcohol and distracted driving. He doesn’t hold out much hope for self-driving cars to reduce accidents – at least not in the near future. While he isn’t recommending that we ban cars, he does point out that highway accidents constitute a major public health crisis that needs to be more effectively addressed.

While waiting for any kind of substantial effort at prevention, we can better understand accident victims and help them reclaim their lives. Dr. Zender's book is a knowledgeable contribution to that end.

(To comment on this article, contact James Windell, at jwindell@gmail.com)

Executive Director's Report 2020 A Year of Changes for MPA

LaVone Swanson
Executive Director

Another year is ready to be put to bed. And quite a year it was for MPA. I think we are all ready for 2021 to arrive and put the Year of the Pandemic behind us.

Early in 2020, the Leadership Team participated in the Annual APAPO Practice Leadership Conference in Washington D.C. We enjoyed three full days of networking with others from around the country, finishing with our Hill visits to our Legislators in Washington.

And that would be the last time we got together in person – all MPA Board meetings, Executive Committee meetings and other meetings became Zoom meetings.

MPA's CE Program in February on Ethics was a sell-out. Little did we know that the Ethics Program was to be MPA's last in person event of the year. MPA's Annual Spring Conference was quickly changed from the usual location in Lansing to the very first Zoom program for MPA, and it was a smashing success. Two scheduled programs were postponed until 2022, and a number of other programs were offered on the Zoom platform.

Please check the calendar of Events schedule on the MPA website for a list of upcoming 2021 CE Programs.

Also, at the November Board Meeting MPA said goodbye to three long-serving Board Members. The coming year marks a generational transition in MPA leadership. Five Board members are retiring from Board service: Dr. Josephine Johnson, MPA/APA Federal Advocacy Coordinator; Dr. Susan Silk, APA Council of Representatives; Dr. Chris Sterling, Chair MPA Programs Committee; Dr. Lisa Vroman Stokes, Chair MPA Communications Committee and Dr. Elissa Patterson, MPA Past-President.

As always, I welcome your input, questions and concerns about MPA. Feel free to contact me at any time via email.

(I welcome your input, questions and concerns about MPA; you can contact me at executivedirector@michiganpsychologicalassociation.org)

Parenting Stress and Children's Media Use

Kiersten Fox and Sarah E. Domoff, PhD

Many parents may try to start out with a “no technology” attitude when it comes to exposing their children to digital media. However, parents often resort to a “digital babysitter” before long.

What contributes to parents’ use of digital media to distract or placate children? Researchers from the Guelph Family Health Study (Tang, Hruska, Ma, Haines, & the Guelph Family Health Study, 2020) asked just that question, and the short answer is stress. Note—this study was carried out before the current pandemic, but the results are especially relevant today.

This may not come as a surprise. In many homes it is hard to plan for screen-free days in the midst of school, work, household chores, and many other competing demands. What this study explored was how parents’ stress associated with the amount of screen time, whether limits are set, and how closely parents monitored their children’s screen usage. The study also compared results between mothers and fathers, finding that they respond to stress in different ways when it comes to media parenting practices.

The Guelph Family Health Study determined that for mothers, being stressed is associated with less frequent monitoring and fewer digital media limits for their children. Parenting stress in fathers was also associated with poorer screen limit setting, but also with increased mealtime media use.

If you’re a parent struggling to decide “do I fight this battle, or let it slide?” when it comes to limiting your children’s screen time, you’re not alone. For those of you who want to work towards reduced digital media in your homes, the large takeaway from this study is to focus on lowering the stress that you and your partner experience. One way to do this is to reach out to a local psychologist who specializes in parent management training. For example, at the Center for Children, Families, and Communities (CCFC), we offer evidence-based programs to help parents better manage their stress and learn strategies to mitigate too much screen time. Given the heightened stress of parenting during the pandemic, many find that screen time is increasing and mental health symptoms are escalating. With enhanced options for telehealth, clinicians at the CCFC and other psychologists can reach families across Michigan. Go to <http://sarahdomoff.com/news/covid-19-resources-for-families/> to learn how to get assistance, as well as additional resources and support.

Click [here](#) to view the article: Lisa Tang, Valerie Hruska, David W.L. Ma, Jess Haines & on behalf of the Guelph Family Health Study (2020) Parenting under pressure: stress is associated with mothers’ and fathers’ media parenting practices in Canada, *Journal of Children and Media* , DOI: 10.1080/17482798.2020.1765821

(To comment on this article, contact Dr. Domoff at domofise@cmich.edu or call her at 989-774-6639 to learn more about the services offered at the CCFC.)

Poster Winners Announced

The Poster Competition Winners from the 3rd Annual Michigan Health Psychology Symposium were just recently announced.

The First-Place winners were Alyssa Ewell, Diondra Straiton, and Brooke Ingersoll from Michigan State University. Their winning poster was entitled: "Do Parent Implemented Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Differently Affect Children in Medically Underserved Areas?"

Finishing second was Jay Sands, from the University of Michigan – Dearborn, whose poster was: "An Examination of the Relationship Between Psychological Flexibility and Sleep."

The Third-Place winners were Roukaya R. Najdi, Briana N. Cruga, Hillary R. Easton, MS, Celia Bourgeau, BA, Alicia P. Forsythe, BA and David K. Chatkoff, PhD, from the University of Michigan – Dearborn, whose poster was: "Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Chronic Pain Experience."

(To comment on this article, contact Dr. Jennifer Peltzer-Jones, email

JPELTZE1@hfhs.org)



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