
Vocational Psychology News

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR VOCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY: A SECTION OF THE
DIVISION OF COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY (17) OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Volume XIV, Number 1

Winter 2003

From the Chair

It has been a busy autumn getting ready for the future events and activities to promote the field of vocational psychology and to facilitate the functioning of the Society as an organization. Of course, our biggest news is the sixth biannual conference for the Society of Vocational Psychology that has been scheduled for June 12-14, 2003, in Coimbra, Portugal. The conference will focus on the following theme: School and work based transitions: Theory, research, and practice. In keeping with the expanding scope of the Society, the conference will provide participants with a valuable opportunity to meet scholars and practitioners in Europe, thereby promoting an opportunity for cross-fertilization of our ideas and practices. The conference organizers: Drs. Joaquim Ferreira and Eduardo Santos from the University of Coimbra, and Dr. David Blustein from Boston College, have been involved with the Society for over a decade. They have extensive experience and professional contacts in North America, South America, and Europe. One of the goals of the

conference is to connect scholars from North America with scholars from Europe. We believe that this infusion of ideas and perspectives will serve to enhance the quality and scope of our scholarship and practice. Do your best to attend what promises to be an exciting conference.

Second, David Blustein and I have put together a symposium proposal and a roundtable discussion proposal sponsored by the Society for the APA meetings to be held in Toronto in August, 2003. The symposium is entitled "New Perspectives of Vocational Psychology: Views from Across the Disciplines." The symposium will seek to expand the intellectual perspective of vocational psychology by exploring the contributions of scholars who have been studying careers and working outside the disciplinary confines of vocational psychology. The first paper by Jeylan Mortimer will highlight the perspectives of contemporary occupational sociology in the context of work. A second paper by Monica Johnson will focus on a sociological approach to career development and emphasize social structure. The third presentation by Jack Bauer will emphasize growth and well-being in career transitions. The fourth paper will be presented by a

psychoanalyst (Steven Axelrod) and will explore the contributions of relationally oriented psychoanalytic theories to the delivery of career services. The symposium will be concluded by the commentary of two vocational psychologists (Lenore Harmon and David Blustein) who have had a long standing interest in expanding the intellectual horizons of vocational psychology. This symposium, we believe, will provide the audience with the opportunity to learn how scholars outside of counseling psychology are thinking about work and career development.

The goal of the roundtable discussions is to explore the cultural, political, economic, and social contexts of transitions across the life span. In this context, five roundtable discussions have been structured: School-to-work transitions; School-to-college and college-to-work issues; Unemployment-to-work transitions; Work-to-family and family-to-work issues; and Theoretical models and school-to-work transitions. Each roundtable is to be facilitated by a Society member and a graduate student member of the Society. Roundtable discussion leaders that have agreed to participate include

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Cindy Juntunen, Darrell Luzzo, Chris Brown, Lucia Gilbert, and Bob Lent. We believe that the roundtable discussions will serve to enhance the quality and scope of our scholarship and practice and, to some extent, furnish a forum for the development of research teams that will engage in international studies of school and work based transitions.

Third, to assist you in planning for the APA Convention in Toronto in 2003, I submitted the following space requests for the Society. The Business Meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 7, 2003, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. followed by the Conversation Hour from 4:00-5:00 p.m. The Executive Committee meeting is also scheduled for August 7, from 1:00-2:00 p.m. I requested a separate room for the Business Meeting given the fact that our attendance is usually quite large. The Executive Committee meeting and the Conversation Hour will be held in the Division 17 Suite. If you have thoughts about who to invite for the Conversation Hour please let me know. We are also now soliciting nominations for the 2003 Graduate Student Research Award (see story on page 5). If you have other ideas and thoughts for extending vocational psychology and the Society, please let me know.

W. Bruce Walsh
Chair
Society for Vocational Psychology

Society Conference to be held in Coimbra, Portugal

The Society of Vocational Psychology is delighted to announce the Sixth Biennial Conference for the Society of Vocational Psychology (SVP), which is scheduled from June 12-14, 2003 in Coimbra, Portugal. The conference will focus on the following theme: School and Work-Based Transitions: Theory, Research, and Practice. In keeping with the expanding scope of the Society, the conference will provide participants with a valuable opportunity to meet scholars and practitioners in Europe, thereby promoting a critical opportunity for cross-fertilization of ideas and practices. We are hoping that the conference will help SVP members expand the scope of their work in a manner that will facilitate the type of scholarship needed for the rapidly shifting global labor market.

As we move into the 21st century, the importance of understanding the psychological nature of life transitions is becoming even more compelling. A common observation about the rapidly changing world of work is that people will need to become adept at negotiating transitions throughout their work lives. The transitions include the natural developmental processes that have become hallmarks of career development theory: school-to-work; job-to-job; and work-to-retirement. In addition to these expected transitions, many

workers will need to make significant transitions across occupational fields, involving new sets of skills and abilities. These transitions will be dictated by a labor market that is increasingly characterized by uncertainty and change. Moreover, people will transition between complex life roles that boarder on the work role, including the roles of citizen, family member, and leisurite. Despite the critical nature of transitions, the existing research literature has not devoted the sort of concerted attention to this process that it would seem to merit. In Europe, the study of psychological transitions has received considerably more attention than it has in North America. A number of European research groups have been following students and workers longitudinally, with some highly revealing findings. One of the goals of this conference, therefore, is to connect scholars from North American with scholars from Europe. We believe that this infusion of ideas and perspectives will serve to enhance the quality and scope of our scholarship and practice.

The conference will be open to members of SVP and to counseling scholars and practitioners from across the globe. We anticipate that the conference will draw a significant number of practitioners, researchers, and counselor educators from Portugal and other

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countries in Europe. The conference organizers are committed to doing all that they can to provide North American members of SVP with an opportunity to travel to Portugal to attend this important event. As such, the costs of the conference, including hotel and food will be kept to a minimum to ensure wide participation by SVP members and other interested colleagues. In addition, North American members of SVP should note that the costs of attending a conference in Portugal, aside from the airfare, tends to be considerably less than the costs of conferences in most North American cities. Naturally, it is difficult to predict what the airfare will be in June 2003.

As a brief introduction to Portugal, we have downloaded the following material from the Lonely Guide's on-line website, which we believe captures the essence of Portugal's unique flavor:

Portugal is one of the most inexpensive and fascinating destinations in Europe. It has a rich seafaring past, superb beach resorts, wistful towns and cities, and a landscape wreathed in olive groves, vineyards and wheat fields. Four decades of dictatorship sidelined the country from modern progress and Europe's power centres, but like its neighbour, Spain, it has spent much of the last 20 years trying to move in from the periphery, forging new ties with the rest of Europe, restructuring its economy, and struggling to maintain what is best in its national culture despite the sudden onslaught of international influences. The struggle between the traditional

and the modern continues, and as Portugal flows towards the economic mainstream of the European Union, it still seems to gaze nostalgically over its shoulder and out to sea.

One of Europe's oldest university towns, Coimbra it has kept its secular academic traditions, as seen in the black-caped students, in the soulful tones of the "fado de Coimbra" (traditional song sung to the sound of guitars by the students) and in the Queima das Fitas, a boisterous celebration of the students' graduating year (Burning of the Ribbons).

For further information, please feel free to contact one of the conference organizers:

SVP Conference Organizing Committee:

David L. Blustein:
blusteid@bc.edu

Joaquim Ferreira:
jferreira@fpce.uc.pt

Eduardo Santos:
nop37070@mail.telepac.pt

Donna Schultheiss:
d.schultheiss@csuohio.edu

Relevant websites:

University of Coimbra: <http://www.uc.pt/english/>

Portuguese Tourism website:
<http://www.portugal.org/tourism/index.html>

Hotels in Coimbra: http://www.ci.uc.pt/english/where_to_stay.html

Send your news, notes, and newsletter articles to:

pgore@siu.edu

Deadline for Summer issue: 6/15/03

Vocational Psychology News

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Visit our web site at

<http://www.div17.org/vocpsych>
Webmaster: Paul A. Gore, Ph.D.

Society

Spotlight

This edition, the Spotlight shines on
Esther Care
University of Melbourne

Column Editor: Camille DeBell

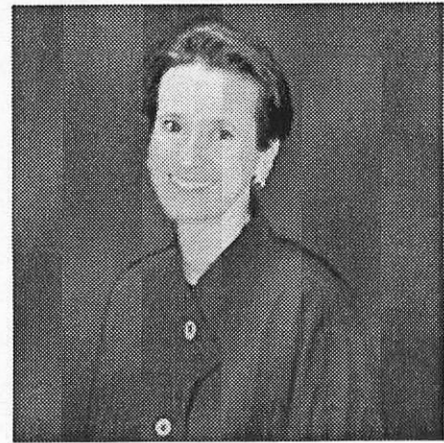
Esther lives in Melbourne, Australia, and teaches at the University of Melbourne. "I am indeed Australian," she said, when I asked if she were a native, "and very glad to be." Esther's parents emigrated from England after the Second World War, and her cultural background includes Italian ancestry, Chinese, and Malay. In this way, she says, she is very typical of Australians, who tend to have a mixed cultural heritage.

Esther's path to the field of vocational psychology has not been exactly "linear." She started her collegiate level of schooling by majoring in languages, including Latin, Indonesian, and Japanese. She calls this her "first phase" of education, "a typical student who follows her interests rather than any vocational direction!" Her "second phase," she states, involved a specific interest in psychology, and she eventually graduated from the University of Melbourne with a Ph.D. in psychology. Her dissertation research involved looking at Holland's concept of differentiation.

Following obtaining her Ph.D., an academic career appealed to Esther. She had been a private practicing psychologist,

specializing in vocational guidance with adolescents and adults and consulting with industry regarding employee selection, for 12 years. "I had my children somewhat late in life, and it was impossible to devote the hours to work in the corporate world that I previously had, so I thought that academia would be an easy way to go." When she said this, I thought to myself, "hmm, Australian universities must be different than those in North America." But then she continued. "It is fascinating how the outside world has no idea of exactly how much work is required in the [higher] education sector!" I think I was both relieved and disconcerted to know that Australian academics also face these workload challenges...

Esther teaches graduate students in psychological testing, research methods, multivariate statistics, and differential psychology with a focus on intelligence, personality, and interests. She is very interested in studying the development of interests in young children. "I am building a database looking at children's understanding of the world-of-work, identifying factors that may account for differences in their understanding and aspirations." Interestingly, she says, "This has led surely and firmly to socio-economic and familial factors rather than cognitive bases [for interest development]."



"The role of vocational psychologist is relatively unknown in Australia," she continued. Vocational psychology is not taught in mainstream psychology curricula, and there are few vocational psychologists engaged in academic research. "In terms of practitioners, the title 'career counsellor' is probably more commonly used." She stated that in schools, either teachers or psychologists offered career guidance services, with these services depending on the type of school and region of the country.

I asked Esther what she thought North American vocational psychologists most needed to know about vocational psychologists in Australia. She was thoughtful for a moment. "In Australia, we tend not to label ourselves as this or that type of psychologist. Given the lack of emphasis on vocational guidance at a national level, we are not a large group. Nor do we identify as a group—unfortunate, but probably due to the great geographic distances between us. You need to remember that Australia is as large as the continental U.S. but with only 20 million people! This means that

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we do not have the large market demand which can lead to specific group identities to the same extent that you have." This small population base also means that things such as test development, for example, are not always financially feasible. "Think about the huge resources that have gone into the development of the Strong, for example; no publisher in Australia would be able to achieve a return on such development to make it a viable financial proposition. Notwithstanding this, however, we are gradually developing good, sound, and Australian (!) measures."

She wishes there were more funding for vocational guidance in her country and more knowledge about it. In that way, I suppose, Australian and North American psychologists probably have much in common.

Esther enjoys camping with her family in the outback of Australia or northern Queensland. Also, don't be surprised if you see her on the slopes of Aspen some day, as she says she travels to North America every year or so for her major interest, skiing. As we swelter in the humidity of Toronto in August at the next APA convention, Esther may be enjoying the cool brisk air and snowy slopes of Australian winter...

(Editor's note: Do you know someone who you think we should Spotlight? Please send your ideas to either Paul Gore (pgore@siu.edu) or Camille DeBell (dcamill@okstate.edu)

Announcement

Graduate Student Research Award in Vocational Psychology

**Nomination Deadline:
April 15, 2003**

This award honors student contributions to Vocational Psychology. To be eligible, a student must be lead author of a manuscript under review for publication and must have been a student at the time the manuscript was submitted. Manuscripts are eligible for submission within one year of graduation.

The nomination letter from a faculty member must include information regarding when and where the manuscript was submitted for publication and contributions of the student with regard to conducting the research and writing the manuscript. Clear demonstration of the contributions the nominee made to co-authored work must be described in the letter.

Submit four copies of the manuscript to W. Bruce Walsh, Department of Psychology, 1885 Neil Avenue Mall, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1222.

Submissions must be postmarked by **April 15, 2003**. Questions about the award may be directed via e-mail to Brucewalsh@aol.com; however, e-mail submissions of nominations will not be accepted.

CCPTP, Sections, and SAG Call for Posters

**Postmark Deadline for
Proposals: April 6, 2003**

Proposals are now being accepted for a Student Poster Session co-sponsored by the Council of Counseling Psychology Training Programs (CCPTP), Division 17 Sections, and the Division 17 Student Affiliate Group (SAG). Presentations may be empirical

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Don't end up in the lost and
found, send change of
address notices via email to

pgore@siu.edu



Newsmakers

Section Member News and Notes



Drew Carson writes that the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales, Fifth Edition (SB5), of which he's project director at Riverside Publishing, will be published in February of 2005. The SB5 is normed for ages 2-85+, and if SVP members want to carry out research using the measure please contact Drew at Andrew_Carson@hmco.com. Possible vocational uses might include school and work adjustment, interdomain research (using the five factors of the SB5), retirement planning, and validity studies of the Abbreviated Battery IQ (takes approx. 20 minutes to administer). He also notes that he's added more resources to his own website, VocationalPsychology.com, including an expanded Dictionary of Vocational Psychology, more career/vocational course syllabi, more essays, and a Blog called "Work in Progress."

Larry Gerstein and **Jeanne Hinkelman** are helping the Tibetan Youth Hostel (TYH) in Delhi, India set up a career library. The Tibetan Youth Hostel is a residential community for 180 young Tibetans attending colleges in Delhi. The Hostel is in great need of career resources. For your information, the unemployment rate among Tibetan college graduates in India is rising dramatically as is the underemployment rate. As a result, the Tibetan community is facing many of the same so-

cial problems that we experience in the West (e.g., alcohol & drug usage; crime; discouragement; hopelessness). The staff of the TYH want to implement some type of career education program to address these challenges.

We are gathering resources to send to the TYH including items such as career-related books and pamphlets, software programs, magazines, career tools, etc. (some of which would/could be used with the guidance of a local psychologist). Please consider sending us materials. Further, if you have contacts with other professionals who might contribute items, or companies that might give free resources, please contact them and let them know about our resource drive. We would also be happy to communicate with these individuals if you forwarded their contact information. If you have experience establishing career libraries in developing countries, we welcome your input as well. Thank you for considering our appeal. Please send materials to:

Larry Gerstein, Ph.D.
Ball State University
CPSY Dept TC 622
Muncie, IN 47304 USA

For further information:
Larry Gerstein (rangzen@aol.com)
Jeanne Hinkelman (Jeanne-hinkelman@utulsa.edu)

Dr. Howard E. A. Tinsley, a Mukilteo psychologist, returned recently from a 10-day trip to the Netherlands where he delivered a series of lectures and conducted a graduate seminar.

Tinsley spoke to graduate students in the World Leisure International Center of Excellence and the Leisure and Environments master's degree program, both of which are housed at Wageningen University. His talks focused on social psychological perspectives on leisure, recreation and work; his seminar explored constraints that limit participation in leisure and recreation activities. Students from China, Columbia, France, Georgia, Ghana, Holland, Indonesia, Jamaica, Lithuania, Nederland, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, Taiwan, Tartarstan, Turkey, Uganda, and Vietnam participated.

Paul A. Gore has accepted a position as the Director of the Career Transitions Research Department at ACT in Iowa City, IA.

Drs. Kevin Field and **Betsy Bizot** of The Ball Foundation recently collaborated with Dr. Frederick Oswald and his colleagues at Michigan State University to develop a computerized application of O*NET data for aptitude-based career exploration. This application employs algorithms that match individuals' aptitude score profiles to occupations' predicted aptitude profiles, and the resulting occupational recommendations can assist career professionals by providing empirically-based information to supplement their own professional judgment. Those interested in learning more

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about this new profile matching system can contact Dr. Kevin Field (kfield@ballfoundation.org).

Furthermore, The Ball Foundation has recently instituted a Co-Lab (short for collaboratory), which is a computer-supported system that allows scientists to work with each other, sharing facilities and databases without regard to geographical location. Through the Co-Lab, we hope to partner with researchers in academic, government, and corporate settings who share our interest in individual differences in aptitudes and other personal attributes that should be considered in career and educational planning. For more information about our research program go to <http://www.careervision.org/Research/index.html> or contact Dr. William Tirre (btirre@ballfoundation.org).

Chris Robitschek and Camille DeBell headed up a series of articles in the November 2002 issue of *The Counseling Psychologist* on reintegrating vocational psychology and counseling psychology. They were joined by Society members **Jane Swanson, Thomas Krieschok, Paul Gore, Wade Leuwerke, John Krumboltz, Mary Heppner, Meghan Davidson, and Rosie Bingham**. **Chris Robitschek** also reported that her Personal Growth Initiative Scale was recently translated into Chinese.

Jane Swanson is the recipient of two grants extending vocational psychology into new arenas: She is the principal investigator on a grant from the Department of La-

bor regarding how patterns of health insurance influence retirement decisions, and is co-investigator on a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services that supports a mentoring program for at-risk adolescents. She also assumed the role of director of a newly-launched career counseling agency within the Department of Psychology at Southern Illinois University, and recently published a chapter with Karen O'Brien on training career counselors in the third edition of NCDA's "Adult Career Development."

NCDA GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD

The Graduate Student Research Award is offered on behalf of the National Career Development Association. Applications receive a blind review by members of the NCDA Research Committee. A \$500 award has been established to honor graduate students who undertake exemplary research addressing topics related to career information, career development, and career planning. The award is for work on a doctoral dissertation or master's thesis approved by the student's institution, which may or may not be completed at the time of application. The student's dissertation/thesis advisor must endorse the award application in writing. Relevance, significance, and research design will be given primary attention in determining the award recipient. Applicants need not be NCDA members.

Applications for the 2002 NCDA Graduate Student Research Grant are due

April 12, 2003

For additional information about the research grants program and to receive application materials, contact Dr. Donna Schultheiss, NCDA Research Committee Chair, by email at d.schultheiss@csuohio.edu or by mail at Dept of Counseling, Administration, Supervision, and Adult Learning, RT 1419, Cleveland State University, 2121 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH, 44115.

Nominations for Society Communications Officer Solicited

The term for Paul Gore as Communications Officer will expire in August. We need to elect a new Communications Officer at this time.

Thus, in accordance with our bylaws, it is time to nominate yourself or a colleague for this important section office. Section Officers must be Members of the section. The other primary qualification is the desire to act as a steward for and to contribute to the ongoing development of the section. Willingness to stand for election as Communication Officer involves making a two year commitment to the section. Additional details about this office and the election process are in our bylaws which may be accessed on our homepage and are included in our membership directory. Please forward all nominations for this office to W. Bruce Walsh, Department of Psychology, 1885 Neil Avenue Mall, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1222 or to Brucewalsh@aol.com by **April 1, 2003**.

Journal Spotlight

Journal of Career Assessment

The previously announced special issue on ethical and professional issues in career assessment will appear in Volume 11, Issue 1, 2003. Six manuscripts will explore ethical and professional issues in career assessment on the internet, computer based test interpretation, self-help career assessment, ethical implications of career assessment with women, ethical issues in career assessment with diverse racial and ethnic groups, and ethical and professional issues in the career assessment with lesbian, gay and bisexual persons. Authors in this special issue include Azy Barak, Jim Sampson, Page Purgar, Jonathan Shy, Jeffrey Prince, Robert Most, Diane Silver, Sue Whiston, Jennifer Bouwkamp, Lisa Flores, Lisa Spanierman, Ezemenari Obasi, and Barry Chung.

A second special issue focusing on cognitive career assessment is scheduled for Volume 11, Issue 2, 2003. The seven manuscripts and their authors are listed below: The Challenge and Promise of Cognitive Career Assessment by Linda Gottfredson; Implications of the Theory of Successful Intelligence for Career Choice and Development by Robert Sternberg; Emotional Intelligence and the Career Choice Process by Robert Emmer-

ling and Cary Cherniss; Career Assessment of Gifted and Talented Students by Barbara Kerr and Sandro Sodano; Multiple Intelligences and Business Student Diversity by Joyce Martin; Intelligence, Personality and Interests in the Career Choice Process by Phillip Ackerman and Margaret Beier; and Integrating Abilities and Interests in Career Choice: Maximal *versus* Typical Assessment by Maria Darcy and Terence Tracey.

For additional information regarding *JCA* contact W. Bruce Walsh, Department of Psychology, 1885 Neil Avenue Mall, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1222.

Australian Journal of Career Development

**Volume 12, Number 1,
Autumn 2003**

Editorial

Gregory Murphy & Amanda Young

CAREER PROFILE

Interview with Jane Renshaw

ARTICLES

Career Development Of People With Disabilities: Some New And Not So New Challenges
Edna Mora Szymanski & Jeff Vancollins

Vocationally-Orientated Rehabilitation Service Requests: The Case Of Employed Persons Experiencing A Spinal Cord Injury
Amanda E. Young & Gregory C. Murphy

The Determinants Of Work Adjustment Following Traumatic Brain Injury: A Focus For Career Counsellors Elizabeth Kendall & Patricia Murphy

Reconceptualising The Vocational Rehabilitation Process Using A Career Development Approach
Nicholas Buys, Sharon Hensby & Jocelyn Rennie

Self-Employment For People With Disabilities In The United States: A Recommended Process For Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies
Nancy Arnold, Tom Seekins, Catherine Ipsen & Kyle Colling

Acquired Brain Injury And Return To Work In Australia And New Zealand
James A Athanasou

RESEARCH REPORTS

Investigating The Validity Of Adjustment Scales For Use In Career Assessment And Counselling
Robert G.L. Pryor



*Editors - submit your
contributions to the Newsletter by
June 15, 2003 for inclusion in
the July 2003 issue*

Membership Matters

Membership in the Society is now 292. I am very excited about the growth in membership that has occurred in the last 4 years. When I took over as Communications Officer in August of 1999 there were fewer than 200 registered members. This growth, I believe, represents a growing interest in career development and vocational psychology and a commitment on the part of professionals who are actively encouraging their students to get involved in the Society.

Welcome to our three most recent members:

Pascal Mallet
Université Paris X - Nanterre
Département de psychologie
Paris, France

Rachel Eddins
Houston, TX

William Scott Wallace
Cincinnati, OH

My goal for the balance of my term as Communications Officer is to achieve a membership roster of 300 persons. Please take a moment to think about professionals or students in your organization who are interested in career development and vocational psychology but who may not yet have joined the Society. Individuals interested in joining the Society can contact pgore@siu.edu.

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studies, theoretical or professional issues, counseling techniques,

training issues, etc. First author on the presentation must be a student (or have completed the project while a student or intern) and must either be an affiliate of Division 17 or sponsored by a Division 17 member.

Poster proposals should include the attached cover sheet and a 500- to 1000-word summary in APA style. The abstract should include some description of the nature of the presentation (empirical, theoretical, technique). Summaries of empirical studies should include a statement of the problem, participants, procedures, results, and conclusions; summaries of other types of presentations should include enough detail for reviewers to judge the overall format and contribution of the poster.

The proposals will be subjected to masked review, so please do not include identifying information on the summary. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Please send one copy of the cover sheet and three copies of the proposal to the appropriate contact for the Division 17 Section most applicable to your proposal. The Society for Vocational Psychology poster session program chair is:

W. Bruce Walsh, Department of Psychology, 1885 Neil Avenue Mall, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1222.

Notifications of acceptance, and presentation instructions, will be sent in early June.

Given that this poster session is internally sponsored by Division 17, and not part of the official APA convention program, presenters will not be eligible for APA travel awards or waived registration fees for the APA Convention.

Proposal Checklist (for your use—do not send with proposal):

_____ 3 copies of a 500-1000 word summary—of work completed as a student.

_____ No identifying information on the proposal.

_____ Self-addressed, stamped return envelope.

_____ Completed cover sheet, with sponsor signature if not a Division 17 affiliate.

A cover sheet is available for downloading at www.div17.org/vocpsych.

Students are strongly encouraged to submit their research for presentation at this poster session!

Looking for someone's e-mail address?

Try
www.div17.org/vocpsych/membership.html

Not on the list?
E-mail your request to
jlhitch@siu.edu
Please include in your e-mail the information you wish to have included.

Student Corner

Handling Rejection: Tips for Student Scholarship

By Tony Tatman, SVP Student Member

In an effort to enhance the Society's support of students the Newsletter Editor has instituted this ongoing column written by students for students. If you are interested in submitting a column for the next issue of the Newsletter, please submit your column one month prior to the published Newsletter deadline (to accommodate selection from among multiple submissions). Submit your column to pgore@siu.edu

Readers of this article understand how graduate students and new professionals are highly encouraged to publish research. Publishing research helps promote and expand our field, provides a venue for which to communicate new information, and potentially promote career opportunities for the author (s). Currently a graduate student myself, I understand the pressure to conduct and publish research. New professionals working in academic settings also share a similar, yet much more imperative, urge to publish in order to secure tenure. Despite all this encouragement and support to publish, many graduate students, and even new professionals, are unprepared for the high probability of manuscript rejection.

Upon receiving my first manuscript rejection, I remember going through a sea of painful, angry, depressed, and bitter feelings, along with a degree of personal and professional self-doubt. I was a good student, always received high marks on course papers, and knew this paper was a 'masterpiece'. After hearing similar stories from many peers and faculty members I found that this line of thinking was very common, and generally found to increase the degree to which the rejection comes as a total shock. In addition to this high level of

success present in many new scholars, the lack of knowledge regarding the publication process also serves to motivate a naïve sense about rates and the process of manuscript rejection. Hearing many stories from those who have gone through similar experiences, as well as anxiousness from fellow graduate students who have not yet undergone such a process, I would like to provide information I found helpful regarding this process. The suggestions listed below may serve as useful tips for successfully negotiating the process of manuscript rejection. The following suggestions and tips originate from Piercy, Moon, and Bischof's (1994):

Have thick skin. Understand that the process of publishing research is *very* competitive, resulting in some journals having more than an 80% rejection rate.

It may be useful for graduate students or new professionals conducting research for the first time without an experienced researcher as a co-author to jointly conduct research. By conducting and publishing research as a team, rather than an individual, it may "spread the pain of rejection and facilitate support" (p. 238) to a greater degree than if it were just one author.

In this way a rejection is more collective, minimizing the potential self and professional doubt that may occur.

Get an outsider's opinion. Take your paper to a "3rd" party for feedback prior to submission.

There are a couple different methods for which researchers submit their work. For many new professionals and graduate students merely getting published is enough. In these cases many researchers initially target their article toward a higher-level or more prestigious journal, aware that the chances are quite high it will be rejected. If accepted, great you got a publication. If rejected, the feedback is used to better the paper, increasing the probability of acceptance within a lesser prestigious journal. Others do the opposite by initially submitting to a lower level journal. If accepted, again great a publication. If rejected, these authors will use the feedback to better the paper than send it to a higher-level journal. Supporting this method is the notion that with more prestigious journals generally comes better and more useful feedback.

Know the journal you are submitting to. Be familiar with the style of writing, target population, and general themes of articles published in your desired journal. Compose your paper to fit the style of writing and format generally found within articles in that journal. I was told once that in regards to style of writing and structure, "Give them what they want." There is no use trying to force a square peg into a round hole. Consult experienced colleagues, or on many occasions it is wise to contact the journal editor, to discuss the degree to which your paper fits. I have found editors or

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associate editors to be very helpful in communicating the level of fit with the particular journal.

What have you learned about the process? Identifying in what ways you have grown as a researcher and writer is a significant part of the process, and the piece many people forget to acknowledge. Dissect the experience and how you have developed. I found it useful to refer to papers I had written a couple years back and visually see the growth in ability over the years. In a way, rejection facilitates and motivates such growth.

Keep in mind that the reviewer is merely providing a different opinion. And as opinions go, they are all subjective. Many of our first manuscript rejections, where we are the sole or first author, comes from work composed out of a masters thesis or doctoral dissertation. Many, many hours are spent on these works, and it would be natural to take a rejection of this work personally. Keep in mind that it is merely someone else's opinion – not a judgment that is set in stone.

Process the feelings that arise from the rejection. As counseling psychologists we are aware of the importance of processing painful emotions – remember to allow yourself the same freedom. Allow yourself to feel whatever you feel. Process this with a trusted faculty or experienced researcher can be very valuable. They have been there, they know.

A request to revise and resubmit is a good thing. After being crushed by finding my first article rejection, I put the letter in a file and never looked at it again. Showing this letter to an advisor some time later, I

was informed that the feedback was primarily positive and could easily be addressed. Also to my surprise there was a strong recommendation to resubmit. Upon sharing this story with faculty members, I found that this reaction and outcome was quite common.

Consult an experienced researcher to help decipher the feedback. Experienced researchers are a great resource for graduate students or new professionals to efficiently sort out what the reviewer is communicating, and what comments can and cannot be addressed within a revision.

In addition to Piercy, Moon, and Bischof's article sharing helpful tips, it also provides quotes from highly prolific researchers who have experienced their share of manuscript rejections which serve to normalize the feelings and reactions many of us will and have experienced.

I hope the brief suggestions provided within this article are beneficial to new researchers as they begin the challenging, yet highly rewarding, process of research publication.

If you have comments or questions regarding this article, or would like information concerning another topic, please feel free to contact me at tonytatman@yahoo.com.
Tony Tatman

Piercy, F. P., Moon, S. M., & Bischof, G. P. (1994). Difficult journal article rejections among prolific family therapists: A qualitative critical incident study. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 20, 231-245.

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