

2016 SPA Candidate Statements

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SECRETARY:

Giselle Hass, PsyD

I have had the privilege of being Secretary of SPA for the past three years. It has been a wonderful and rich experience to work closely with two Presidents in shaping the present and future of SPA. I am very honored and excited to be nominated as a candidate for Secretary of SPA for another term. SPA is my professional “home,” and I look forward to continuing being of service and collaborating to make SPA a place where we can nurture and support each other to grow individually and as an organization. During the past three years, I have made it a point to work hard to fulfill the obligations of my role while trying to include and advocate for the perspectives of our diverse constituency. If elected, I will continue to work vigorously to attract ethnically diverse, international, and early-career psychologist membership, participation, and collaboration in order to engage a constituency that is diverse at all levels. If elected, it will be an honor to continue representing and advocating for the perspectives and concerns of a diverse constituency within the field of personality assessment and help meet the needs of SPA and its membership in the years to come.

John Kurtz, PhD

I have been a member of SPA since joining as a graduate student in 1991. I attended and presented research at my first SPA meeting in Washington in 1992, and I have not missed an SPA meeting since 1999. The annual meeting has become the highlight of my professional year. Students accompany me every year to the meeting and I am an active participant in symposia, interest groups, and discussions. I was Associate Editor of the Journal of Personality Assessment from 2006-2013 and I continue to serve on the Editorial Board of our flagship journal. Serving the SPA Board as Secretary would be a great honor for me and I would bring energy and enthusiasm to this opportunity.

I have been fortunate to have had some great assessment psychologists as my teachers and mentors. I received my Bachelor’s degree in psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, where I studied under Harrison Gough and Bill Meredith. I then worked as a research assistant for two years under Rudolf Moos at Stanford prior to pursuing a Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Vanderbilt University. At Vanderbilt, my dissertation adviser was Les Morey and I assisted with the construction, standardization, and initial validation studies of the Personality Assessment Inventory. I completed my clinical internship in 1994 at the Ann Arbor VA medical center and postdoctoral studies at Wayne State University School of Medicine. I joined the faculty at Villanova University in 1996 where I am currently Professor of Psychology, teaching courses in personality theory, clinical psychology, and psychological testing. I am also a licensed clinical psychologist in Pennsylvania since 1997, a professional consultant to assessment practices, and a member of the American Psychological Association since 1995. I recently served a term as President of Section IX (Assessment Psychology) of APA Division 12.

SPA is a very special organization because it brings together balanced proportions of academic researchers and professional clinicians. This confluence of expertise is particularly important for the field of personality assessment. There is still so much more to learn about how we can better understand people through our tests and procedures. At the same time, critical decisions are being made right now on the basis of personality assessment techniques. I think both agendas can be served most effectively if we respectfully educate one another and collaborate in meaningful programs of research. Participation in SPA is the best way to make this happen. Accordingly, it would be my privilege to serve SPA and the Board as Secretary and to assist in our efforts to increase the visibility and value of personality assessment to the broader discipline of psychology.

TREASURER:

Paul A. Arbisi, Ph.D., ABAP, ABPP, L.P.

As a Minnesota trained Clinical Psychologist, early in my professional development I observed the importance

of psychological assessment not only in clinical settings but also in the laboratory through development of measures to characterize theoretical constructs under investigation. For well over 75 years, SPA has remained an organization fixed on furthering personality assessment by fostering research on both self-report and performance based assessment techniques. I am honored to have the opportunity to contribute to SPA's mission through board service and ask for your support as Treasurer.

For the past 26 years I have been employed at the Minneapolis VA as a staff psychologist with a joint appointment at the University of Minnesota in the Departments of Psychiatry and Psychology. Consistent with my identity as a Boulder Model Clinical Psychologist, I conduct psychometrically based psychological evaluations, provide treatment to veterans, teach and supervise interns and post-doctoral fellows, as well as manage funded research programs. As such I have firsthand knowledge of the challenges faced by those in the applied assessment community as well as those in the academy. I remain an advocate for the integral contribution of personality assessment in both clinical diagnosis and treatment and the importance of providing resources for revision and update of existing instruments and development of new techniques or interpretive systems.

With regard to my qualifications for the position of SPA Treasurer, in the past I have served on the board of several organizations including the Minnesota Veterans Medical Research and Education Foundation where I served as chair of the finance committee with responsibility for oversight of the budget, yearly audit, and grant expenditures. While a member of SPA I have worked to promote personality assessment by serving as guest editor of two special series in JPA, serving on the membership committee, and serving as interim Secretary on the SPA Board to fill a temporary vacancy. Additionally, I have been active in governance of APA Division 12, Society for Clinical Psychology (SCP) and served as President and Board Representative for the Assessment section of SCP. For the past two years I have served on the finance committee for SCP and consequently I am familiar with oversight of assets and establishment of yearly budgets for an organization the size of SPA. If elected, I will support the mission of SPA to promote applied personality assessment and disseminate cutting edge research on assessment techniques by maintaining sound fiscal stewardship of members' dues and the assets of the organization including the Journal of Personality Assessment, while assuring the annual meeting continues to grow in impact and attendance. SPA is in an enviable position in that the organization is financially healthy and has the wherewithal to underwrite innovative research initiatives, disseminate novel empirically supported techniques, and provide training and encouragement to students interested in pursuing careers in assessment. As such it is an exciting time to join the SPA board and I look forward to contributing to the legacy of SPA through board service.

Leonard J. Simms, Ph.D.

It is my pleasure and honor to be nominated for the position of Treasurer for the Society of Personality Assessment. I earned my PhD in Clinical Psychology from the University of Iowa and have been faculty at the University at Buffalo for the past 13 years. I currently serve as Director of Clinical Training and Associate Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry. In addition to teaching and my research focused on psychological assessment and empirical, psychometric models of personality and psychopathology, I am committed to service to the field. I currently serve as Associate Editor of *Assessment*, am on the Boards of the Society for Research in Psychopathology and Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology, and remain active in other professional societies and journals. In addition, I previously was awarded the Samuel J. and Anne G. Beck Award from SPA for excellence in early career research.

I have been involved in basic and applied research regarding personality assessment since my days as a graduate student under the mentorship of Lee Anna Clark and David Watson. Since that time, my research has evolved to cover new models and measures, and my current interests reside in translating modern personality models and measures into forms that can and will be useful for practicing clinicians in the field. As such, SPA is a natural home for me and my work, and I would look forward to serving the organization as treasurer and being part of its evolution moving forward.

REPRESENTATIVE-AT-LARGE:

A. Jill Clemence, PhD

To me, SPA is more than the foremost psychological assessment organization. It is also my professional home.

In 1998 my mentor and friend Len Handler introduced me to SPA. Len taught me to value personality assessment both for its sophisticated ability to address a referral question and for its potential for changing the way people view themselves and their place in the world. In line with his passion for assessment, Len also taught me much about the importance of pursuing research as a way to maintain the visibility and viability of assessment practices. I very much feel his influence in all of my work, and since the time of my first conference, SPA has been the holding environment for much of my professional development as it has been for many in the field of personality assessment.

As a long-time member of SPA, I have sought to advance the mission of the organization through service, research, and teaching. Currently, I serve on the board as Representative-at-Large and in that role have taken a lead in organizing and promoting interest groups as a way to foster member involvement and provide opportunities for supporting research and training within the organization. In addition, I feel strongly about the importance of advocating for multidisciplinary collaboration across fields outside of psychology and broadening our scope as an organization through increased student engagement and community outreach. Furthermore, my role as associate editor of the *Journal of Personality Assessment* has given me a unique perspective on the current nature of research in our field. I have learned much about the concepts personality assessment researchers are most interested in studying as well as what gaps remain in the field. I hope to represent these interests in a way that at least strives to bridge the often wide gaps between research and clinical work as evidenced in training and practice.

As a result of early influences and related to my identity as a “clinician who does research,” I have been quite committed to advocacy for expanding the scope of personality assessment across treatment settings. My professional positions in medical settings have afforded me an opportunity to collaborate with disciplines outside of psychology and to create programming that makes assessment central to medical decision making at both the inpatient and outpatient levels of care. Indeed, it is exhilarating to see the degree to which an assessment can affect the outcome of medical decision-making and can enhance treatment. In my opinion, we are just on the verge of understanding the ways in which assessment will become integral in fields beyond psychology and psychiatry.

I am honored to be nominated for the position of Representative-at-Large and am excited for the chance to serve in this capacity. If elected, I would work to promote an understanding of what assessment has to offer other disciplines as a way to advance the field and to continue to uphold SPA as a thriving organization where clinicians’, researchers’, and students’ interests are well-represented. Thank you for your consideration.

Aaron L. Pincus, Ph.D.

Although I published my first paper in JPA in 1990, I didn’t attend an SPA annual meeting until 2006. I have not missed a meeting since then and don’t plan to! I quickly came to learn just how amazing SPA is as a scientific society. Over the last 10 years I have seen SPA evolve into a an ever more thriving, interdisciplinary, and supportive professional organization that truly succeeds in integrating assessment science and practice, as well as professional advocacy and training. I also appreciate the vigorous graduate student association (SPAGS) and how well students are integrated into our convention program and governance. I am running for the board because my students and I have so greatly benefitted from our membership and involvement in SPA that it is certainly time to give something back. And given 2 of my graduate students have served as SPAGS presidents, it’s time for me to step up to the plate. I believe I have the skills and previous experience to serve on the SPA board. I previously co-founded the Society for Interpersonal Theory and Research (SITAR) and served in every officer position for the society. Thus I have experience governing and am familiar with the needs and challenges of running a scientific society. I currently serve as the Editor-in-Chief of Assessment. Although it is JPA’s “competitor,” I don’t view the relationship that way. My experience as editor has exposed me to a wide range of scientific and practice approaches that can inform me as a board member. As I have said many times, like my mentor Jerry Wiggins, I am ecumenical in my attitude toward different assessment approaches and

psychological theories. I am also the incoming Director of Clinical Training for the doctoral program at the Pennsylvania State University and have taught our graduate seminar in personality assessment for over 20 years. These experiences keep me attuned to national training expectations and the realities of teaching and supervising personality assessment at the graduate level. As a member of the SPA board, some of the most important things I would value include expansion of proficiency, continued provision of outstanding Continuing Education and other training opportunities, support of SPAGS initiatives, publishing an excellent journal, expanding our social media presence and webinars, and putting on a great annual meeting. In the end, above all else, I am running for the SPA board because of the people involved, both on the board and the membership at large. I am truly excited to join the current board and work with such great colleagues, serve the membership's needs, and continue to help SPA evolve. Thanks for your consideration.

Piero Porcelli, Ph.D.

I am running for Representative-at-Large in the current Board Elections for the first time, and I am asking for your vote. I live in southern Italy, in the heel of the "boot". Coming from a small corner of the world at its periphery, I look at the world in terms of opportunities, exchanges, interpersonal networks, and relationships. This has been SPA for me: a place where professional exchanges and warm friendships make me feel part of the larger world of assessment psychologists. I became a member of SPA in 1995, a Fellow in 2010 and in the last several years I have attended almost all SPA meetings. I also served as Editor of the Bulletin of the International Rorschach Society from 2003 to 2010.

My main clinical and research interests are focused on psychosomatic medicine and personality assessment, often jointly. I am head of the Clinical Psychology Unit of a research-based medical hospital and associate professor of Psychosomatic Medicine and Personality Assessment at the post-graduate school of Clinical Psychology at the University of Rome Sapienza. I received the qualification of "psychosomatic specialist" by the International College of Psychosomatic Medicine in 2009 and have more than 100 publications, including papers, books, and chapters. I am also a member of the editorial board of several international journals, including *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* and *Rorschachiana*. At the cross of psychosomatics and assessment, my recent research interests have focused on the development of the Rorschach Alexithymia Scale and the investigation of the neurobiological basis of the Rorschach using multiple neuroimaging techniques as EEG and fMRI, particularly the relationship between human movement and mirror neurons. Furthermore, I have published a book on the Rorschach in psychosomatics (2004) and have been one of the associate editors of a special issue of the JPA on *Personality Assessment in Medical Setting* (2007). I also had the honor of co-authoring an Italian book on the Comprehensive System with John Exner.

I can offer SPA as a Representative-At-Large all my efforts to promote recruiting members outside the US, to facilitate the dialogue between research and clinical domains, and to bring an international perspective to the Board. Particularly, because of the corner from which I see the world, I will try to find effective ways to bring current and future international members nearer to SPA activities in all its forms as meetings, workshops, online channels and webinars.

A. Jordan Wright, PhD

I am honored and thrilled to be nominated for the SPA board. I have a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Columbia University, as well as a diplomate from the American Board of Assessment Psychology and Fellow status at SPA. I identify very strongly as an assessment psychologist, and SPA has been my 'home' society for many years. I am currently part of the SPA Proficiency and Student Matters Committees, as well as the teaching and training interest group. Beyond SPA, I have worked extensively with the APA Board of Educational Affairs, and I believe the relationship between SPA and BEA is strong and should be utilized even more by the society to further our agenda of promoting excellence in assessment and assessment education in our field. I am also currently the President of Section IX of Division 12 at APA (psychological assessment). I have been an assessment professor, supervisor, scholar, measure developer, and practitioner throughout my professional career, which gives me multiple perspectives on the field, and I am deeply committed to understanding the

unique contribution of culture to personality, as well as the struggle to assess and integrate it into our understanding of individuals.

I authored *Conducting Psychological Assessment: A Guide for Practitioners* (Wiley, 2011), primarily because as a faculty member at Teachers College, Columbia University, in charge of the psychological testing and assessment curriculum, I saw a need for a comprehensive guide for the process of assessment, including integration of data and report writing. I just completed co-authoring the 6th edition of the *Handbook of Psychological Assessment* (Wiley, 2016) with Gary Groth-Marnat, a project which has deepened my knowledge and respect for the field of assessment even more than I had expected. At SPA, I often present on multicultural and diversity issues in assessment, including intersectionality and assessment within LGBTQ populations, and I have a chapter in the recently published *Handbook of Gender and Sexuality in Psychological Assessment*, edited by Virginia Brabender and Joni Mihura (Routledge, 2016). I am also the author of the Homonegative Microaggressions Scale, which evaluates the self-perceived frequency and impact of minority stress experiences on sexual minority individuals.

More than anything, I credit SPA with introducing me to phenomenal colleagues and collaborators. It was at SPA that I met and began my collaboration with multiple amazing assessment psychologists, and over the past ten years I have forged many fantastic relationships with colleagues and friends within the society. I am a better scholar, teacher, and practitioner because of the knowledge I've gained and relationships I've built at SPA. I've had an odd journey to psychology and assessment, from middle school teaching (math!) to performing (singing and acting), and I have truly never felt more 'at home' in an organization than at SPA. I hope to be a part of the society's future, helping it spread its influence more broadly into training programs and beyond, and as a board member I believe I can help push SPA's professional presence even further.