

SPA Exchange

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Presidential Address... Society for Personality Assessment, Midwinter Meeting, 1996

Personality Assessment and Research: The State of the Union

Barry Ritzler, Ph.D.

During Mary Cerney's tenure as president, the Society increased its emphasis on political action and issues concerning the clinical practice of assessment. Now that we are well situated in Washington, DC, this emphasis will continue, but in my first presidential address, I want to turn attention to the science of personality assessment. In doing so, I will present some data that I believe illustrates where we stand in the study of personality assessment methods.

Projective Method Validation Discrepancies

To begin, a count of the separate references of empirical validation studies of the Rorschach Comprehensive System in Exner's first volume,

edition three, reveals 506 separate references. When the same count is performed on Lerner's text on the Psychoanalytic Interpretation of the Rorschach, the result is 186 separate validation studies — not bad for an approach that professes to be primarily theoretical.

Another very frequent validated assessment method is the MMPI (or MMPI-2). This is so much the case that a tally of any recent text on these most popular self-report methods is more than anyone would care to count.

In contrast, the popular text by Hammer usually cited as the major reference for interpretation of figure drawings, has only 84 citations of empirical validation studies, none published after 1958. A literature review by Handler and Habenicht of kinetic family drawing empirical validation studies published prior to 1994 covered only 68 studies, 28 of which were unpublished dissertations.

Another popular so-called projective technique that fares somewhat better than figure drawings is the TAT. Since 1990, 110 empirical validation studies appeared in the literature with only 10 in Dissertation Abstracts. No other projective methods have much published empirical support with the possible exceptions of the TEMAS and the Early Memories Procedures that are beginning to accrue some published validation. All of the studies that have appeared to date, however, have been pub-



Barry Ritzler

lished by the originators of the methods, Constantino and Bruhn, and their colleagues.

Clearly, with the exception of the Rorschach, the methods commonly referred to as projective techniques have not received sufficient attention in the literature even though clinicians continue to use them on fairly frequent basis.

How do the so-called objective techniques compare to the projectives for published empirical validation? A good estimate of the attention given these measures can be obtained from a tally of articles appearing in the *Journal of Personality Assessment* from 1990 through 1995 (See Table 1).

A review of Table 1 reiterates the projective method imbalance — not so much in the high frequency of the Rorschach studies (the *Journal of Personality Assessment* has always been the primary Rorschach

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The SPA Remembers Mary

Mary S. Cerney
(1929-1996)

Paul Lerner, Ph.D.



"To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silent, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."

— Ecclesiastics

In the early morning hours of Monday, February 19, 1996, Mary S. Cerney died. It was her time to die, and now it is our time to weep and mourn. Her death was sudden, unexpected, and painfully premature.

Mary was a nun, a psychologist, a psychoanalyst, and, as reported in the *Topeka Capitol Journal*, a pioneer in the treatment of grief. She developed a unique grief therapy, using imagery, to help others accept their own impending death and the death of loved ones.

Mary was part of the foundation of our SPA professional family. She was our past-president, our valued colleague, and our loved friend. We basked in her quiet presence and were lit up by her radiant smile. Mary was not our conscience, but she was our ideal of ethicalness, propriety, and respectfulness. She exemplified and set the tone for how we should regard and treat each other.

To everyone there are four seasons.

The oldest of four, Mary was born April 23, 1929, in Detroit, Michigan. Her spring, the early years of her life, were spent in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Stephen, Mary's father, a machinist and foreman at International Harvester, was of Hungarian origins. Mary Neigoot Cerney, her mother, was of Slovak decent. Until her children were of school age, she was a homemaker. She then returned to work to help pay for her children's future college educations.

Mary's heritage, her eastern European ancestry, midwestern upbringing, and working-class family, permeated her being and defined her personhood. She was unpretentious, intelligent but not alienatingly intellectual, hardworking to a fault, and available to all. She did not aspire to power, status, or position. That was not her way. However, because of who she was, they came her way.

Mary accorded everyone, regardless of station, education, or background, dignity and respect. Her interest in and concern for others was deep, genuine, and catholic — meaning universal. She accepted others for their selfhood, not their external adornments. As my brother Howard puts it, "Mary was real people."

Embarking on the summer of her life, at age 16, Mary entered St. Francis Convent in Tiffin, Ohio. Her goal was to become a nun and to teach. Majoring in music, she graduated from St. Francis College, summa cum laude.

For the next 15 years Mary traveled throughout the Midwest, teaching at various schools, while she also played and taught the organ. She swam too, an activity she would pursue for the remainder of the life.

Mary returned to school for graduate work and completed her Ph.D. in psychology at Catholic University of American in Washington, DC. She then went to Topeka, Kansas, to work as an intern at Topeka State Hospital and began her long and fulfilling association with the Menninger Foundation.

It was while at Menninger that Mary burst into the autumn of her life. For Mary, her years at Menninger were of growing, maturing, producing, and being therapeutic and generative with others. She held a number of positions, from a section psychologist on a long-term inpatient unit, to a supervisor of post-doctoral psychologists, to a coordinator of a grief therapy service she, herself, had begun.

During her association with Menninger, Mary entered psychoanalytic training. After a long and arduous struggle, she earned accreditation as a psychoanalyst. Mary handled the struggle with grit, determination, perseverance, tolerance, and her usual dignity.

It was also during the autumn of her life that Mary involved and invested herself in SPA. In 1976 she became a member, and in 1981, five years later, she was awarded fellow status. Mary was elected to the board as treasurer in 1980. She served on the board, until her death, for 16 consecutive years. Her longevity, reliability, and durability, in my mind, earned her the title — "Lou Gehrig of the SPA Board."

In 1991, the membership recognized and honored Mary by electing her president. During her presidential tenure, she stewarded the move of our central office from St. Petersburg, Florida, to Washington, DC, spearheaded the hiring of our central office staff, and led and governed in an authentically democratic way,

Winter began for Mary in June, 1995. Recurring and severe back pain was diagnosed as osteoporosis. Despite worsening pain and debilitating fatigue, this past February she attended a board meeting of the International Rorschach Society in Barcelona. Soon after returning from Spain, she was hospitalized in Topeka. A large, aggressive, advanced mass was discovered, and within days, Mary died.

Her final days were spent in the hospital, in her sister Jeanette's arms, saying good-bye to her patients and friends. Following services and ceremonies in Topeka, Mary was laid to rest at the St. Francis Convent in Tiffin, Ohio, beneath the ground she loved.

For Mary Cerney, there was a fifth season — the season of love. Each of us felt the warmth and nourishment of Mary's love. She expressed her love in any number of ways, all sensitively tuned to the individual and particular needs of the other. Reciprocally, we loved her deeply, and many of us were able to find a special part of Mary to uniquely cherish.

My brother Howard adored Mary's consistency, reliability, and unfailing availability. For Howard, Mary embodied a special blend of concern with competence, compassion with strength. Recognizing Howard's deep investment in his children, Mary always began their conversations by asking about his children. Mary held on to Howard, and all that was important to him, within her interior. Howard will look for Mary at this meeting and future ones, and will be pained by her absence.

Marlene Kocan cherished Mary's primary need to understand others in their uniqueness and complexity. It was from such an understanding, Marlene adds, that Mary attempted to nourish growth and development in others. For Marlene, this thread weaves through Mary's life as a nun, a teacher, an assessor, and a therapist. It was Mary, she says, who was the first to encourage her to write and to present. Because of that encouragement, Marlene has made significant professional contributions.

As part of our friendship, Mary and I were also playmates. At meetings we set time aside to take city bus tours and find other ways of exploring and enjoying our unfamiliar surroundings. We spent an evening together at EPCOT in Orlando, had our private tour of San Francisco, and celebrated her 65th birthday in a funky Italian restaurant in Chicago.

Professionally, Mary was neither a heady theoretician or a rigorous researcher. More than a clinician, she was, in the truest sense, a healer. I loved that part of her too. Human suffering was her enemy, and human pain her nemesis. The human condition was Mary's cathedral, and every day of her professional life, she struggled with the forces of grief, loss, and trauma.

Fueling Mary's war on pain and suffering, in Marlene Kocan's words, was an unending "search for God." Marlene means by this, that Mary relentlessly searched for that which was good and authentic in people and in the world.

It is ironic that although Mary could assist others with their grief and losses, she cannot help us with our grief from her loss. Nonetheless, it is my understanding that imagery was a major part of her grief therapy.

Holding that in mind, I would ask each of us to imagine Mary swimming among the stars. She is doing her celestial laps. Every so often she lifts her head out of the Milky Way and gazes down upon us. She is smiling that familiar smile, and is checking to see that we are regarding and treating each other as she would have — with respect and dignity.

At times such as these, I find Christina Rosseti's poem, "Sleeping At Last," particularly comforting:

"Sleeping at last,
the trouble and tumult over,
Sleeping at last,
the struggle and grief past.
Cold and white,
out of sight of friend and of lover,
Sleeping at last.
No more tired heart
downcast or overcast,
No more pangs that wring
or shifting fears that hover,
Sleeping at last in a
dreamless sleep locked fast.
Fast asleep.
Singing birds in their leafy cover
Cannot wake her,
nor shake her the gusty blast.
Under the purple thyme
and the purple cover
Sleeping at last."

Good-bye dear friend.



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Highlights from The 1996 Midwinter Meetings

Ross Keiser, Ph.D.

The 1996 SPA Midwinter Meetings were held at the Marriott City Center in Denver, Colorado, from the 6th through the 9th of March. As usual, they were a great success, with more than 240 registrants for the conference, 180 of whom attended the seven workshops.

This year's meetings began on a very somber note. Participants were greeted at their arrival with a letter notifying them of Mary Cerney's recent and unexpected death. All were shocked and saddened, and the loss was felt even more keenly because, as past president, it was she who was to provide the introduction at the opening plenary session. Such a tragedy could easily have spoiled the conference for many. However, the leadership of the SPA demonstrated that their skills are not only in personality assessment, but that they can also make masterful therapeutic interventions. They handled the situation in a very sensitive and constructive manner, which provided a sense of closure and healing, not only for the individuals present, but for the Society as well.

The unwritten, and even unspoken, theme of this conference became that of dedication to our field and our organization, and of the generosity which is the hallmark of that commitment. There were repeated instances of giving and sharing of time and energy, and of unselfish contributions. That at least some of this may have been inspired by the example of Mary Cerney is as fine a monument as ever could be erected.

President-elect Bruce Smith opened the meetings with a welcoming statement, and Barry Ritzler gave an abbreviated presidential address, graciously providing time for a

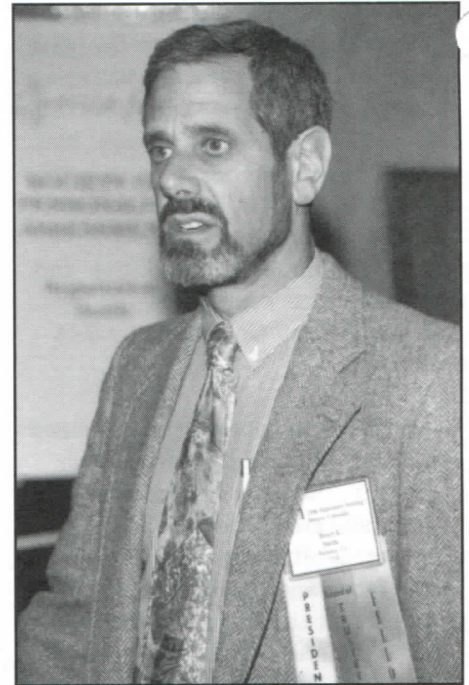
memorial for Mary Cerney. After announcing that a fund was being established for an award in her name (See page 14), he turned the session over to Paul Lerner.

Dr. Lerner gave a beautiful and moving eulogy. It was especially poignant in his praise of her as a person, a professional, a clinician, and a healer. He noted her hard work and dedication to her science and to the SPA, and how she never sought honors, but that the honors found her because of her qualities of dedication and benevolence.

We were particularly honored to have Mary Cerney's sister, Jeanette, with us at this session. She thanked the members for their love and support, and mentioned how important the SPA had been to Mary, just as she was so important to us.

The session continued with the Marguerite Hertz Memorial Presentation, which was given by Marvin Spiegleman in honor of Bruno Klopfer. Again, the theme was of openness and generosity, with numerous examples of supportive contributions to others without thought of self. The presentation was concluded by Frederick Klopfer, who gave a life history of his grandfather, with amusing anecdotes which painted a picture of a firm-willed, uncompromising man, but one who was creative, not just in his own career, but in assisting others in theirs.

The plenary session ended with continued demonstrations of selfless dedication. John Exner made a special presentation in which he discussed his research on the Rorschach Archives. He did not mention that this difficult work could prob-



President-elect Bruce Smith

ably not be accomplished by anyone else, but it was apparent that this was a labor of love, and a large sacrifice of time and effort for him. Again, the spirit of magnanimity was evident, and amplified when a request was made for financial assistance in binding a set of the *Journal of Personality Assessment* for the archives. Larry Erlbaum immediately volunteered, but quite inconspicuously, so as not to draw attention to his beneficence.

Following the scientific sessions, Barry Ritzler presented Paul Lerner with the Bruno Klopfer Award and the sobriquet of "a hell of a guy." He continued the theme by noting Dr. Lerner's taking on the duties of past president as typical of his continuing willingness to give of himself.

Paul Lerner then gave a carefully crafted lecture on the development of clinical perspectives and psychoanalytic and other approaches to the Rorschach. Like so many of the other presentations, this one alone would have made the trip to the conference worthwhile.

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Other major presentations included the Beck Early Career Award, and the Walter Klopfer Award for outstanding research article, which was presented by Bill Kinder to Allan Frankle. The Beck Award was presented by Rebecca Reiger to Yossef Ben-Porath, who thanked his mentors for their unselfish contributions to his career. He then discussed his work on the MMPI 2 Content Scales, and made a prediction that the Rorschach and MMPI 2 will continue to be leading instruments.

Besides the presentations noted above, this year's meetings were packed with information and activities. There were thirty-three scientific sessions, including symposia, paper and poster sessions, and round table discussions. The Board of Trustees met, and determined next year's meetings would be in San Diego in early March. There was much discussion of the International Rorschach Congress to be held July 8-12 in Boston, especially during the receptions and informal gatherings.

In sum, the Midwinter Meetings were a success. Not only for the usual reasons of sharing information about personality assessment, and the camaraderie with like-minded



Barry Ritzler presents the 1996 Bruno Klopfer Award to Paul Lerner

professionals, but perhaps more importantly, this meeting gave rise to a greater awareness of the grand sense of generosity and generativity within the organization. So many contributions are often overlooked or taken for granted. Necessary but unsung efforts include the efficiency of Manuela Schultz in running the central office, Gene Nebel in recording the sessions, and Bill Haire of Travelink in precluding problems with the physical accommodations.

So, too, are the quiet encouragements given by the more experienced members to the others, along with the opportunities for inclusion in governance of, and service to, the organization.

This meeting was about personality assessment, but it was also about an organization of generous individuals who have a sense of continuity. Looking back and honoring our predecessors, respecting our senior colleagues, and looking forward to the future by unselfishly aiding the development of the next cohort, the Society for Personality Assessment mourned the passing of Mary Cerney, and celebrated the spirit of those who take up her work. ❧



SPA members chat during a break at the Midwinter Meeting

Put your money
where your mouth is!

Mary Cerney's Legacy

In a column entitled "Some Beginning Thoughts" (*SPA Exchange*, Fall, 1993), the late Mary Cerney issued a request for proposals to review the research on various assessment procedures to determine their effectiveness. The findings were "to be used by our state organizations and by our legislators to inform them and the public of the contribution assessment and appropriate treatment can make in the lives of individuals." The impetus for the study, the article said, was the need for "hard data" to convince legislators and managed care personnel that assessment procedures were valid and should be included in health plans.

Although the initial stimulus seemed to be an attempt to salvage assessment procedures for insurance reimbursement, especially for inclusion in a National Health Plan, there was also a strong value expressed that these procedures are vitally important to inform the therapeutic process. Yet, this assumption has not been made figural in many graduate programs and internship sites, with the result that there has been serious erosion in the use of assessment to inform psychotherapy. There are thousands of studies in the literature that deal with the validity of various tests and scales. However, data concerning the utility of assessment procedures for treatment planning have not ever been immediately identifiable because they have not been systematically organized. While many applied clinicians take the use of assessment in this manner for granted because they see its relevance in their psychotherapeutic work, some psychologists in academic settings believe there is a lack of objective

findings for the validity of these procedures, particularly with reference to projective techniques. The result has been an erosion of the use of assessment tools in various training sites across the country. Projective measures seem to have been particularly hard hit in some doctoral training programs, and some internship sites no longer use the Rorschach and other projective tests.

The implications for this movement are very frightening; they go beyond any more political concerns and managed care contracts, striking at the heart of the assessment process itself. Calling the process irrelevant, unreliable or invalid sets up a self-fulfilling prophecy — many students are therefore poorly taught to do projective assessment. Thus, some psychologists have little knowledge or interest in these techniques. Therefore, the research in the area is often poorly conceived and poorly executed, often reducing the complexity of the process to the investigation of single variables, unguided by theory, using over-simplified methods and small numbers of subjects to study complex relationships. The resultant research could not hope to effectively validate the assessment process, thereby allowing it to sink into a morass of disrepute. And so the circular process continues, as academic psychologists point to the resulting poor outcome studies.

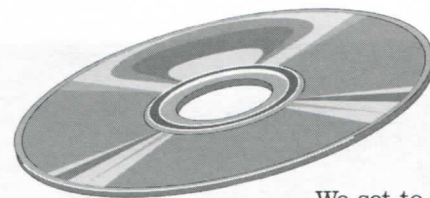
The reduction in precious teaching time that we experience in the crowded graduate curriculum also threatens to strike at the very heart of the assessment enterprise, because it will typically produce a series of

Leonard Handler
University of Tennessee
Gregory J. Meyer
University of Alaska, Anchorage

graduates who are less familiar or even unfamiliar with many aspects of assessment and, especially, projective assessment. SPA and Rorschach Workshops recognized this threat from *within* our discipline as the more important problem, compared with the political issue. As Mary said in her column, "We all know the saying: 'Put your money where your mouth is.' The Society for Personality Assessment [and Rorschach Workshops] is doing just that...by setting up a....grant to underwrite a comprehensive literature review study."

It seems quite humorous to us now, but the proposals were to be submitted by January 1, 1994, and the material was to have been ready by the time SPA met in April of that year! It was obvious that few of us recognized the enormous undertaking that such a comprehensive review of the literature would entail.

Somewhere in February of the following year two proposals were selected, one submitted by each of us. SPA suggested we work together on the project to provide double the resources. This was a fortuitous suggestion because, indeed, the project *is* enormous.



We set to work reviewing the literature using the PsycLit CD-ROM computer database. The first problem was to define criteria for the actual tests to be included in the survey. Should only projective test data be examined or should objective test data also be included? One suggestion made to us was to stick to just a few of the "traditional" instruments. We chose to be more inclusive, however, because there were many approaches to assessment we would not tap if we reviewed only these; we cast a wider net, including

some of the newer and more important inventories. We wound up with a list of about 50 tests, from the familiar Rorschach, TAT, and MMPI, to other often-used tests such as the Beck Depression Inventory, the California Personality Inventory and the Achenbach Behavior Checklist, to name just a few. In addition, we decided that we would eventually produce a stronger document if we also expanded the focus to include not only psychotherapy but predictive studies in medicine, law enforcement and other areas of life functioning.

The enormity of our task became apparent when we discovered that our PsycLit search identified over 13,000 articles that seemed relevant to our purposes, each of which needed to be systematically and reliably coded by at least two raters, with a user-friendly three-point scale — “definitely useful,” “possibly applicable,” and “not applicable.” Unfortunately, we also soon discovered that our computer search was not sufficient to identify all of the available literature in spite of the fact that we searched on PsycLit with a large number of focused descriptors. To counter the limitations of PsycLit, we also reviewed a number of texts and bibliographies and an extensive number of review articles. We also began reading the introductions and discussions of relevant articles in order to find additional studies; we now have about 70-75 percent of the relevant articles. We will continue our search procedures until we reach about 90 percent.

So what kind of studies are being included in our review? We are not interested in validity studies *per se*, but rather, studies in which assessment procedures or assessment instruments were used in a longitudinal fashion to predict some aspect of the therapy, or some aspect of medical, legal, or life outcomes. A study is included if it is truly longitudinal, if it uses one or more tests

from our list, if the test is administered at baseline, and if an effort is made to relate the test scores obtained at baseline to some outcome criteria obtained at a later point. Each of the abstracts and articles is being reviewed by the two teams of researchers, including a number of very able graduate students. Since there are two groups at two different sites doing the ratings, we also obtained reliability data on the thousands of ratings. To date, we have obtained over 1500 articles that fit our criteria; many more will eventually be identified. However, the final database will be much smaller than this because each study will have to meet more restrictive criteria to be included in the meta-analysis.

A small complicating factor was that Greg moved from the University of Chicago Medical School to the University of Alaska, Anchorage, in the middle of the project, forcing Len to develop true 20th century communications using e-mail. “Len,” Greg said, in his lightest-hearted teaching tone, “You’re supposed to check your e-mail *every day!*”

We are now in the phase of making the many decisions involved in doing the meta-analysis. Greg has reviewed a number of meta-analytic studies in related areas and four different approaches to meta-analysis. We have decided to use a combination of the approaches designed by Hunter and Schmidt and Rosenthal because they provide a blend of conceptual sophistication and appropriateness for our data. Hunter and Schmidt recommend evaluating the extent to which eleven different sources of error or bias enter into the meta-analytic statistics. They advocate that researchers correct these sources of bias prior to conducting the analysis. In order to do this analysis, we must extract certain data from each study, a procedure that we estimate will take about 45 minutes for each study. More important, however, is the task to be accomplished before we begin the

data coding. We must work out a meaningful way to organize the types of tests, types of constructs, and types of outcomes in our database. Greg is currently completing a coding manual to organize the relevant study parameters. We will examine the general question of testing effectiveness, as well as more molecular questions concerning specific tests, depending upon the data available for each analysis.

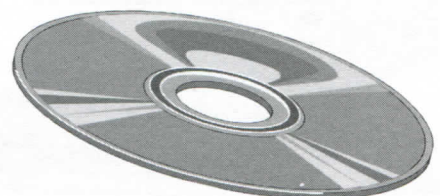
In a recent report (March, 1996) to the SPA board, we appended a laundry list of things we had yet to finish before we could conclude the project. The list took up half of a single-spaced page. However, we have already calculated some preliminary data on the Rorschach and the findings look very promising, particularly when the research is done with a sound theoretical rationale. As a result, we are preparing a small meta-analysis on the Rorschach Prognostic Rating Scale, which was constructed by Bruno Klopfer to predict progress/success in psychotherapy. We are, of course, continuing to work toward the completion of the larger met-analytic study. If all this sounds like a great deal of work, you’re correct. Therefore, with the permission of Rorschach Workshops and the SPA Executive Board, we have recently added a third researcher, Mark Hilsenroth, who will begin teaching at the University of Arkansas this fall

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Assessment on the Internet

Gregory J. Meyer, Ph.D.

Do you ever wish you could instantaneously discuss assessment issues with colleagues from around the world? You can if you join a discussion group on the Internet. It's simple, it's easy, and, best of all, it's free.

What is a discussion group?

A discussion group is a "place" where like-minded colleagues exchange ideas by sending and receiving electronic mail. As long as you have e-mail capabilities, either through your university or through a commercial carrier (e.g., CompuServe, American On-line, etc.), you can join these discussions with ease. Just because you join, however, doesn't mean you have to contribute to the discussion. In fact, many people join discussion groups simply to listen in on a topic they find interesting.

How does it work?

Once you "subscribe" to a discussion group, your e-mail address is placed on a master list. This master list is housed on a computer devoted to managing the day-to-day traffic for that discussion group (along with many other discussion groups). Subsequently, whenever someone sends a message destined for the discussion group you belong to, the computer "broadcasts" the message

to the e-mail address of everyone on the master list. After you receive the broadcast message, you can either delete it or, if you're so moved, you can respond by sending your own message, which in turn will be broadcast to the entire group.

How much mail does a discussion group generate?

This all depends on the list. In general, the amount of "traffic" depends on how many people subscribe to the list. However, it is also a function of how much a particular topic engages the list members and motivates them to write comments and reactions. Some of the larger discussion groups may generate five to fifteen messages per day when an issue captures the attention of some group members. Also, more than one topic may be discussed in on-going dialogues at any one time. Many times, however, a discussion group will go for days or even weeks without generating more than a minimal amount of traffic.

There is probably a discussion group for any and every topic you could think of. With respect to assessment, there are some groups that are broadly focused on personality or neuropsychological assessment issues, as well as other groups that are devoted to specific tests (e.g., Rorschach, MMPI, PAI).

What follows is some information on a few discussion groups oriented toward personality assessment, as well as some information on how to access other discussion groups. A point of clarification first. To join any of the following groups, you cannot subscribe by sending a message directly to the group.

Rather, you have to send a subscription request to the computer that manages the master list for the group. This computer is called the "listserver." Many listservers manage hundreds of lists; you need to let your listserver know what list(s) you want to belong to. Because this is all done

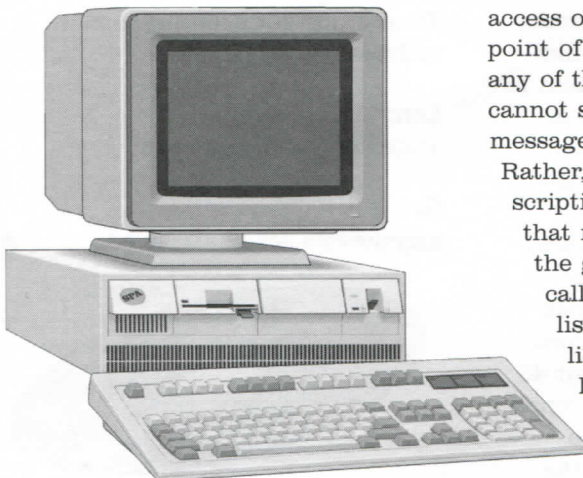
automatically by commands, you don't actually talk to anyone at the listserver. The process is akin to being in a restaurant — you can't just point at an item on the menu and receive it. Rather, you have to tell the waitperson that you'd like to order it.

Before getting into specific lists, you should know there are many large listservers on the Internet, each of which provide a huge menu of options. The listserver at St. John's University, for example, is oriented toward psychological topics and it manages about 300 discussion groups. Another large academic listserver — Mailbase — is housed at the University of Newcastle. It manages about 1,200 different discussion groups. Finally, there is a large non-academic listserver — Netcom — which manages over 1,200 lists.

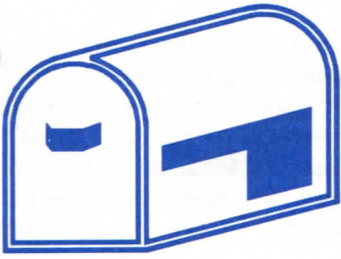
For general assessment issues, one of the more active lists is the "assessment-psychometric" list. This list has about 600 subscribers and covers a broad range of topics. It is run by David DiLalla at Southern Illinois University. You can join by addressing an e-mail message to the listserver at St. John's University. The address should read: `listserv@sjvum.stjohns.edu`

Note that the word "listserver" is truncated to eight characters. It won't work if you try to type in anything but those eight characters. The *text* of your message should read: `subscribe assess-p yourfirstname yourlastname`

To be on the safe side, you should make sure nothing else follows the text of your message. If you want to find out about other discussion groups managed by St. John's listserver, send the command "lists" to the listserver address. This command will give you the title of all the discussion groups managed by the listserver. If you want more detailed information about each of the groups, send the command "lists



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Letters to the Editor Responses to Changing D-A-P Instructions: "Opposite Sex" to "Other Gender"!?

In Volume 5, Number 2, the 1995 Fall/Winter *SPA Exchange*, Dr. Constance Fischer submitted an article titled *D-A-P Instructions: From "Opposite Sex" to "Other Gender."* As a result of this article, the editor has received two letters from members responding to this suggestion. The editor has also given Dr. Fischer the opportunity to respond to these "letters to the editor."



From Marvin W. Acklin, Ph.D.:

Dr. Constance Fischer's recent comments in the *SPA Exchange*, Volume 5, Number 2, about changing the instructions on the Draw-A-Person technique from "opposite sex" to "other gender" deserve comment. Dr. Fischer's reasoning for this change is that psychologists have a "social responsibility" in their use of language, that use of the term "opposite sex" is "archaic" and casts one "gender against the other," and that sex and gender are distinguishable concepts. Use of the word "sex" to refer to people, furthermore, is "habitual and unreflective..." Dr. Fischer's suggestions deserve comment because she is a member of the SPA Board of Trustees and an influential and respected contributor to the field of personality assessment.

"Sex" is among the growing list of words that are accumulating on the list of proscribed terms, including masculine pronouns, woman, history, seminal, neuter, and others. Other commentators have referred to this as "feministspeak," a form of language reconstructionism that is fundamentally ideological in nature. The most readily available examples

of this are found in George Orwell's *1984* and the language systems of totalitarianism.

Sexual differences are rooted in the fundamental biological dimorphism that characterizes most living entities including, and I hope Dr. Fischer hasn't forgotten this, human beings. In humans, with the exception of genetic and biological anomalies, primary distinctions between men and women are found in secondary sexual characteristics and the fact that women bear children.

Neither do men, the last I heard, menstruate. Consequently, given the dimorphism of sex in humans, the word opposite continues to have salience. (Perhaps Dr. Fischer would prefer the use of "complementary," a more accurate but less likely to be understood term.)

Sex and gender are not synonymous, as Dr. Fischer asserts. Awareness of the distinctions between male and female (sex) and masculine and feminine (gender) has psychodiagnostic significance. A firmly rooted sense-of-self-as-gendered, based on identifications with parents who are themselves comfortable and accepting of their sex and gender, is a significant developmental achievement, the foundation of personal identity, and the absence of which is a source of painful and intractable psychopathology. Dr. Fischer may want to check out the works of Drs. Robert Stoller and Otto Kernberg in this respect. One of the virtues of the D-A-P is its ability to allow for an assessment of perceived sexual differences and conceptions of social roles that attend sexual distinctions in every social and cultural group.

I applaud Dr. Fischer's exhortations for psychologists to be responsible and renounce their archaisms. I would have preferred, however, since Dr. Fischer is an SPA Board member,

that she base her suggestions on behavioral science rather than ideological foundations (perhaps a note of disclaimer would have been appropriate). The issue of sex and gender and the D-A-P, and potential changes in instructions, generates a number of interesting and potentially fruitful testable hypotheses. It would seem incumbent to base any changes in the logic of empiricism rather than ideological purity.

Until such time as Dr. Fischer or others offer the data, I hope that SPA members who are still capable of thinking for themselves will give this proposal exactly the sort of consideration it deserves. ☘



From Leonard B. Olinger, Ph.D.:

I am assuming that it is with a straight face that Constance Fischer wrote her thoughtful and well intended article on page 3 of the *SPA Exchange's* last issue (Volume 5, Number 2). It dealt with suggested changes in the instructions for the D-A-P, complete with rationale. I confess it was hard to keep my own face straight.

She apparently anticipates this reaction by conceding that the point "indeed can be a smaller matter." Nonetheless, she recommends the new wording, referring to the APA's 1994 policy statement "avoiding sexist language." She appears to be concerned that "sex" and "gender" might be too readily used interchangeably, since the former is a biologically determined matter while the latter belongs in "the social realm."

Dr. Fischer offers the idea that the old form — "Now draw a person of the opposite sex." — following completion of the first drawing, be replaced. The substitute? "Now, please draw a person of the other gender." Let's forget for a moment whether this would necessarily be found less offensive by all examiners

continued on next page

Responses to Changing D-A-P Instructions: "Opposite Sex" to "Other Gender"!? continued from page 9

or all subjects; for the present, this is untested. Fischer even recognizes that some explanation to the subject might be necessary in the case of the modified instructions. Should a substitution require clarification? Is it worth it?

The proffered modification is presented with a respectful nod in the direction of "concern for our profession's reputation" as well as a fear that we would be "perceived as naive and as insensitive to social issues." This is as if it were an issue prior to the introduction of the suggested changes. Additionally, Fischer declares that the old instructions could be conducive to our being viewed as using "archaic expression in a habitual, unreflective manner."

Further, we are informed that failure to adopt the proposed change in instruction "may weaken working relations with clients." Perhaps she is right, perhaps not. With all due respect to the importance of word choice and the sensitivities of clients, I wonder if it's not time to call a substantive truce in the widening gender war, including a sensible curb on new regulations drafted in alleged responsiveness to ever-growing sensitivities. Fischer's suggestion focuses on how to conduct testing with the D-A-P. What will be next? (I can already imagine some gender-sensitive variations on how the Rorschach Inkblot Test should be administered.)

Anyone familiar with the therapeutic process or with objectivity in interviews would probably agree that the true and beneficial relationship between subject and examiner, or between client and therapist, continues to reside in the genuineness of the interaction and the integrity of the individuals. A faddish self-consciousness about the possibility of suspected sexism seems unwarranted.

The well-meaning and unprejudiced examiner is not apt to have sexist attitudes unjustly attributed to him or her. Nor is the truly sexist examiner likely to escape detection for long.

Certainly, the pinched face of respectability and "sensitivity" that PC demands ought by now to be replaced by the relaxed good-naturedness of non-sexist casualness. But neither casualness nor informality can be used to justify rudeness, dominance or lack of respect for the other. Fischer worries that retaining Karen Machover's original directions might be misinterpreted. She seems troubled that those directions might lead to the impression that we are not being "psychologically cognizant of our social influence and responsibility." Clients, I believe, sense our "social influence and responsibility" via subtler communications.

Finally, Fischer explains that "continued use of old wording indicates that clinicians ignore the work of colleagues in science and in feminism..." She refers here to the sex and gender distinctions in biology and the social sciences, respectively. It is odd, I think, to invoke feminism as a bias for changing essentially innocuous test instructions. Odder still is the claim there is a scientific basis for these alterations. Have I missed the relevant literature?

Ordinarily, a refinement or enhancement of a testing technique would be enthusiastically welcomed, even ardently embraced. And the author tendering such innovations merits high commendation for both creativity and courage; after all, such proposals are often subjected to klieg-light scrutiny. In the present instance, however, we're being gifted with a remedy in the absence of an ailment. It's not as if this were a long-overdue corrective action taken to prevent harm, such as was necessary when, up to as recently as a half-century ago, boys would be unfairly favored for classroom prizes or other school awards (frequently

by their female teachers) over girls whose academic, grooming, and citizenship performance was equal — and even superior — to that of their male classmates. What kind of wrong, then, is it that here needs to be redressed?

Those of us who knew Bruno Klopfer or Karen Machover might easily guess that an indulgent smile would be their tactful response to these proposed revisions of instructions; whether they would endorse them is another matter. Thus, it seems to me that a new orthodoxy is not sufficient reason to expect a higher level of confidence in our testing results, based on a putative improvement in examiner-subject rapport. There — maybe I can straighten my face now. And is mine the lone dissent? ☘



Fischer Replies:

Philosophical Context and Social Responsibility

Constance T. Fischer, Ph.D.

My suggestion in the last issue of the *SPA Exchange* was for a shift in the D-A-P instructions from "Now please draw a person of the *opposite sex*" to "Now please draw a person of the *other gender*." I regarded the suggestion as innocuous and inoffensive. However, Drs. Olinger and Acklin appear to have assumed that my suggestion was in the spirit of "the widening gender war" and of "feministspeak." Neither noted my principal concerns that "Speaking in terms of opposites reinforces our culture's general inclination to deal with social differences by positing 'us-them' polarities," and that "Our language not only reveals but perpetuates views of reality." I am pleased for the opportunity to speak beyond the small instance of D-A-P instructions to address more explicitly the underlying issue: epistemology.

But first let me respond to specific points by Olinger and then by Acklin.

(a) Contemporary research documents that gender bias in classrooms did not come to an end a "half century ago."

(b) There *is* an "ailment" that calls for a "remedy": our cultural inclination to categorize and totalize differences at the cost of acknowledging common ground, similarities, ambiguities, and challenges to preconceptions. Indeed, in the above letters to the editor, preconceptions about feminists have reduced me to "one of them," and my variance from positivism has cast me outside of scientific psychology. In short, the authors have illustrated the concerns that led to my suggested D-A-P instruction.

(c) Moreover, the "ailment" of reducing groups to opposites far exceeds gender matters. Think of the totalizing that occurs in regard to members of different races, religions, ages, life styles, political parties, etc.

(d) My "other gender" instruction continues to imply the other one of two, affirming "biological dimorphism," while not reducing social persons into opposites based on chromosomes. And "other gender" drawings of course do reflect the assessee's level and style of integrating biology and social life.

(e) Calling for any change in D-A-P instructions to be based in the "logic of empiricism" is itself an instance of an "ideological purity" I am accused of.

(f) I made no claims that the changed instruction would affect the drawings. That is indeed an empirical question. However, I did not base this particular suggested change of instructions on "behavioral science." Rather, I base my suggestion within social responsibility consonant with contemporary philosophies of knowledge and science.

As assessment psychologists we risk functioning as technicians rather than as reflective scientists-professionals when we act as though allegiance to logical positivism and philosophical realism is the only way to be empirical, scholarly, and scientific. As we retain, and extend beyond, our experimental method, its data, and achievements, it is incumbent upon us to take a more circum-spect view of how we construct science and how we construe knowledge. It seems to me that we remain responsible for the social worlds advanced by our choices of how to be scientific.

My own choices, including the suggested change in D-A-P instructions, are grounded in the work of diverse transdisciplinary scholars who contend with the implications of acknowledging that as humans we can know only in human ways; that we form and interpret our data within our historical and cultural contexts; that language not only expresses but also shapes our thought; that our bodily being and meaning-making are mutually influential; that science cannot be value-free; that in so far as our formulations are taken up by society, we shape our society. Discussions of such understandings can be found in the literatures of the philosophy of science, linguistics, hermeneutics, comparative methodology, and so on. Among the positive developments from these investigations are the increase in qualitative research theories and methods, the differentiation of psychology as a human science from psychology as a classical natural science, and the growing acceptance of collaborative psychological assessment techniques and outcomes.

I appreciate this occasion to advise Dr. Olinger of the literatures he wonders if he has missed, and to affirm Dr. Acklin's hope that my proposal receive the consideration that it deserves. ☘



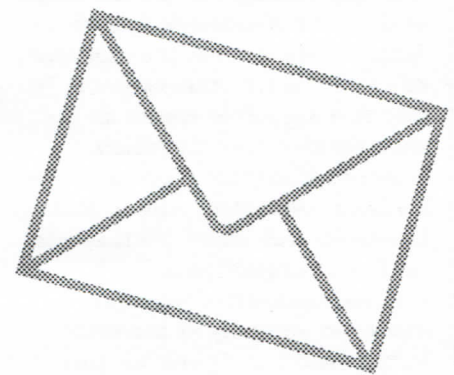
From Harrison
Voigt, Ph.D.:

Dear Editor,

I am a long-standing member of SPA, and try to attend as many SPA annual conventions as I can. When I cannot attend in person, I make good use of the convention program, reviewing the presentation titles and writing to the presenters for copies of their papers.

It is with considerable concern that I report to you my singular lack of success in obtaining a reasonable success rate in response to my requests for copies of papers presented at the March, 1995 SPA meeting. I sent away for 16 papers. To date, I have received exactly 3, plus one letter of apology from one presenter indicating that writing up the paper was on her "to do" list for the summer.

I do not think that it is unreasonable to expect an SPA presenter to prepare and make available copies of presentations from SPA conventions. Further, I urge SPA to adopt a policy that requires every presenter to prepare and make available copies of papers accepted for presentations at SPA conventions. Also, it would be very helpful if presenters' full mailing addresses could be published in the convention bulletin so as to facilitate the request-making process by mail. ☘



SPA Exchange

Personal Column

Joan Weltzien, Ed.D.

Dear Members:

In this issue's column, I have included several "non-strictly" professional items as they were so interesting and the letters conveyed so much warmth.

Victor Alpher

was awarded a Diplomate in Clinical Psychology, was elected fellow in the Academy of Clinical Psychology and was appointed Consulting Reviewer for the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*.

From The Editor...

This issue of the *SPA Exchange* makes an editorial transition from Robert Lovitt to myself as editor. All of the members of SPA who have enjoyed reading the articles of *SPA Exchange* over the years owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Lovitt for responding positively to the Board's request to develop a newsletter. Unfortunately, the death of his mother prevented Dr. Lovitt from attending the mid-winter meeting at which time our President, Dr. Ritzler, had intended to recognize Bob for his enormous contribution. So let me take this opportunity to pay tribute to Bob.

It was Bob's task in conjunction with the Board to define the scope of the *SPA Exchange* and to differentiate it from the *Journal of Personality Assessment*. It also was his job to create an effective structure by which articles within this scope could be solicited, evaluated, edited, and ultimately published. To this end, Dr. Lovitt organized a small editorial committee which he convened annually at the mid-winter meeting. There, he also served as talent scout extraordinaire, identifying presenters whose work might be of interest to newsletter readers. Dr.

Claire Ames-Klein

is the new Coordinator of Training and Assessment at The Oakes Children's Center in San Francisco — a therapeutic educational program for emotionally disturbed children.

R. Mark Binderman

wrote a chapter in the 14th annual volume of the *Innovations in Clinical Practice* — a source book on identifying violence risk factors. The chapter describes the empirical and theoretical basis for sixteen factors and explains the ethical and conceptual aspects of a violence risk assessment and of related court testimony as an expert witness.

Lovitt also had to issue frequent but always gentle reminders to our contributors about the deadlines for submission for the spring and fall issues. Finally, Dr. Lovitt was a constant presence at the Board meeting in order to solicit feedback from the Board on their reactions to each *SPA Exchange* issue as well as to garner information for future issues.

In his energetic, orderly, collaborative, and always understated way, Dr. Lovitt performed this array of tasks and thereby, created a vehicle which has become a communication staple of the society and a key membership benefit. He also provided an opportunity for newer members of the society to put their ideas into writing. Although he has decided to step down from the editor position, with his usual graciousness and generosity, he has agreed to stay on the editorial committee. For that, I personally am very grateful.

And so, on behalf of the Board and all of the members, I thank Bob Lovitt for his remarkable contribution to the Society for Personality Assessment.



Robert Lovitt

Rita Corley

has been granted the designation of Approved Supervisor by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

Stephanie Dudek

spent a month in India with her husband who is an artist. They photographed mosques and temples in many of the major cities. She hopes to present a paper on the basis of these slides at the 1997 SPA meeting.

Steven Finn

has a new book, *A Manual for Using the MMPI-2 as a Therapeutic Intervention*, which will be published in the spring of 1996 by the University of Minnesota Press.

Joseph Finney

wrote to thank the members of SPA who have been so helpful to him and his wife during his cancer surgery. Additionally, he wrote a most interesting letter regarding his fifteen-day trip to Fiji and Tuvalu, a country in which he had done field work in 1971. It was a delightful letter.

Ron Ganellan

passed the examination for the ABPP in Clinical Psychology and noted that the most important event of the year, however, was the birth of his daughter, Rebecca, in August.

Leigh Hagan

received a Diplomate in Forensic Psychology from ABPP.

Emanuel Hammer

is at work assembling several new papers and the best of the contributions — since the appearance of his original book — for the book entitled *Advances in Projective Drawing Interpretation: Collected Papers* which will be published by Charles Thomas.

Molly Harrower

will be ninety (90) years old in January. She recently published *The Quest for the Nazi Personality: A Psychological Investigation of Nazi War Criminals* (Erlbaum, 1995) with three co-authors and has republished *The Therapy of Poetry* in soft cover plus an article in *Voices*.

**Carl Hoppe
with Lynne Kenney**

spoke about intercorrelations between Rorschach constellations and MMPI-2 scales among defensive test takers (all child custody litigants) at APA in New York, 1995. He's also written a chapter on psychoanalytic child therapy in *Reiss Davis Handbook of Child Therapy*, published by Aaronson, 1995.

Patricia Landis

passed "unconditionally with honors" at her oral defense of her dissertation entitled "Detection of Simulated Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Validation Study of the Inventory of Problems" which was held February 16th. She was awarded her Ph.D. February 20th, 1996, and presented a paper at a mid-winter conference regarding her study.

John Long

of the University of Tulsa was accepted as the post-doctoral fellow in clinical psychology for the 1995/96 year as reported by Raymond Costello.

Reggie Matias

was awarded a fellowship sponsored by the American Psychoanalytic Association which is a hallmark in that this is the first year that psychologists have been permitted to participate. He is one of six psychologists so honored. As a result, he's leaving his faculty appointment at DePaul University to pursue full-time clinical work at the Porteq-Starke Counseling Center in Valparaiso, Indiana. He noted that when he accepted his faculty position, he asked Irv Weiner for advice and was told, "Don't let the bastards get you down." They did...and he left his position.

Mark McMinn

is co-author of *Rorschach Trainer*, a Windows-based software program designed to teach Exner's Comprehensive Scoring System to graduate students and professional psychologists wishing to update their scoring skills. It was published early in 1996 by PAR.

John Murray

is now an Assistant Director of Psychology in the Juvenile Division of the Forensic Clinical Services of Cook County Courts in Chicago.

Charles Newmark

has edited a book entitled *Major Psychological Assessment Instruments: Second Edition*, published in February by Allyn and Bacon.

David Nichols

reports that after twenty-three years at Dammasch State Hospital in Wilsonville, Oregon, his work location has changed. Due to downsizing, the hospital closed in 1995. The remaining fifty-five patients and hospital staff moved to a new facility in Portland where the bed capacity is now sixty-eight instead of the former four-fifty. He now has a long commute — his new work address is: Oregon State Hospital, Portland, 1121 N.E. 2nd Ave., Portland, Oregon, 97232. Phone is (503) 731-8656.

Charles Peterson

has been appointed to the five person National Advisory Committee for the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements.

Robert Rowland

was one of two army psychologists chosen for promotion to Colonel during last year's selection board. He was honored with the "a" level proficiency designation in clinical psychology by the Surgeon General. A final recognition was his induction into the Order of Merit in Military Medicine.

**M. Concepcion Sendin
and John Exner**

have published a new book entitled, *Interpretation Handbook of Rorschach for the Comprehension System* which attempts to offer a practical guide for interpretive Rorschach work. At this point, the book is available only in Spanish. It's been published by Psimatica Editors in Madrid.

Poonam Sharma

completed her post-doctoral fellowship in clinical psychology at UTHSC-San Antonio and accepted a position in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine as an Assistant Professor.

Michael Sperling

was selected to be a fellow of the American Counsel on Education. The aim of the fellowship is to learn more about senior administration in higher education through placement at a host institution for one year. He has been working with the president at Baruch College/CUNY and next year will return to an administrative position at Fairleigh Dickinson University. He has also just completed a book on psychodynamics and managed care to be published this summer by Guilford Press.

Chris Stout

will be teaching the first graduate level psychology course devoted to practicing within managed care. It will be taught as an elective at Finch University of Health Sciences at the Chicago Medical School this fall. He has been invited to write a national column, "Thriving on Managed Care" that appears in *The Psychotherapy Letter*. He also has a letter coming out in the *SPA Exchange* and is an invited speaker at the Institute for International Research Conference on information systems and managed behavioral health care at the IPA annual meeting.

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SPA Exchange

Personal Column

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David Streiner

recently published the second edition of *Health Management Scales: An Introduction to Their Development and Use* (Oxford University Press).

Jane Woodrow

has been named the new president of the Ohio Psychological Association, an organization of seventeen hundred members. She had been honored for her leadership with the association's Special Projects Award in 1993.

Jed Yalof

has written a book called *Training and Teaching the Mental Health Professional: An In-Depth Approach*. The book is to be published in 1996 by Jason Aaronson.

Robert Yufit

became the second president of the New Clinical Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) in January of 1996. He's also pleased with the birth of his grandson, Benjamin, to his psychologist daughter and physician son-in-law. ☼

Announcements

News from the Central Office...

The Mary Cerney Fund

THE MARY CERNEY FUND will be awarded for the best paper on personality assessment submitted by a student. The money awarded from the fund to the winning student will help to defer the cost of attending the mid-winter meeting. Contributions to THE MARY CERNEY FUND should be sent to the SPA Central Office.

Attention members... if you teach or present and would like to offer information about the Society:

We now have a new SPA Brochure with an application for membership included. If you would like to order copies of the new brochure for distribution at your next event, please contact Manuela Schulze at: SPA Central Office, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002.

XV International Congress of Rorschach and Projective Techniques July 8-12, 1996

It is with honor and pleasure we in the United States host and invite members of the International Society and of our own Society for Personality Assessment to the 1996 International Congress of the Rorschach and Projective Methods. Not since 1981 has the Congress been held in the United States.

The Congress will be held Monday, July 8th to Friday, July 12th in Boston at the Westin Hotel, Copley Place. Boston is a city steeped in history, culture, and tradition — one of the most popular visitors' destinations in the world.

A rich scientific program and a full and festive social program are planned. There will be three workshops — two pre-Congress on Sunday, July 7th, and one post-Congress on Friday afternoon, July 12th.

Scientific themes include:

- Training in Assessment
- Assessment and Treatment Planning or Outcome
- The Rorschach Comprehensive System 20 Years Later
- Cross Cultural Issues
- Innovations in Projective Methods (Theory and Methodology)

- Life Span Issues (Child, Adolescent, Adult, Older Adult)
- Psychopathology (including Forensic Psychology).

Interested members should address correspondence to:

XV International Congress
Society for Personality
Assessment Central Office
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

News from the American Projective Drawing Institute Summer Workshops

The American Projective Drawing Institute will be offering two summer workshops this year in New York City:

- (a) July 22-24 — BASIC;
- (b) July 24-26 — ADVANCED AND CASES SEMINAR.

Reading *The Clinical Application of Projective Drawings*, Hammer, E. F. (Ed.), Charles Thomas, Publisher, 2600 South First St., Springfield, IL 62717, is suggested as preparation for the workshops. For more information write:

Dr. Emanuel Hammer
381 West End Avenue
New York, NY 10024

H-T-P ViewPoint

Announcing the publication of the bulletin of the *International Network for Projective Drawing and Pictorial Symbolism*. The Network's mission is to foster professional, academic, and scientific inquiry in the field of projective drawing and the psychological interpretation of creative works in the graphic and visual arts. Topics include case studies, original and multi-disciplinary perspectives, research projects, and article/book reviews. If you're interested in receiving the bulletin or contributing ideas, send SASE to:

Stephen Safran, Ph.D.
Editor
H-T-P ViewPoint
6 Edgewater Lane
South Nyack, NY 10960

Presidential Address

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journal) — but more in the infrequent occurrence of validation studies of projective methods (with the possible exception, again, of the TAT).

Table 1
Measures Used in
Journal of Personality
Assessment
1991-1995

Rorschach	104
MMPI	75
MMPI-2	41
MMPI-A	10
Wechsler scales	24
TAT	19
Beck Depression	19
MCMII-II	15
MCMII	14
STAI	14
SCL-90-R	12
Rosenberg Self Esteem	11
DEQ	9
Marlowe-Crowne	9
Checklists	7
16PF	6
CPI	6
UCLA Loneliness	6
Myers-Briggs	6
Zung	6
NEO-PI	6
NEO-PI-R	5
Early Memories	5
Self Report (Other)	195
Interviews	42
Observational	26

The objective test data show that the MMPI (and MMPI-2) are the clear leaders, but other methods show more validation research than projective methods other than the Rorschach. Furthermore, when objective methods that appear infrequently are categorized into self-report methods, structured or semi-structured interviews, and direct observation methods, the results show frequencies that further establish that the non-projective techniques are more often subjected to empirical validation. Consequently, the first recommendation from this state-of-the-union survey is that more attention should be given to empirical validation of frequently used projective methods other than the Rorschach.

What Happened to Basic Science?

Even more dramatic is the dearth of studies on the basic science of personality assessment. That is, since Schachtel, little attention has been given to learning why and how assessment methods work. Exner's studies exploring the stimulus properties of the Rorschach blots and the studies contrasting high and low face-valid items of the MMPI are rare exceptions to this deficiency in the science of personality assessment. Therefore, the second recommendation is that more attention be paid to studying the assessment process *per se*.

The Comparison Deficiency

Another area where some improvement is needed is in the frequency of studies that compare and contrast different assessment methods. Much recent interest has been shown in comparing the Rorschach Comprehensive System with the MMPI-2, but even these studies seem overly simplistic in their contrasts of individual variables from the two methods. Integrative assessment, the proscribed method of both Comprehensive System and MMPI-2 interpre-

tation, has not found its way into research comparing the two methods. Also, approaches to the Rorschach other than the Comprehensive System have received no attention when the Rorschach and MMPI-2 have been compared.

Comparisons between methods other than the Rorschach and MMPI-2 are extremely rare. Much more comparison research is needed if we are to arrive at a sufficient understanding of how our popular methods overlap and complement — or contradict — each other.

A final area of personality assessment research that is regrettably under represented in the literature is the study of multicultural issues. Although we are aware that assessment results vary across cultures and adjustments need to be made when cross-cultural assessment is attempted, we have a poor grasp on the extent of the cultural effects and almost no understanding of how to effectively make adjustments for culture in test interpretation. Hopefully, new generations more sensitive to cultural issues in psychology will turn their attention to assessment research.

Although some deficiencies in personality assessment research can be enumerated, the state of the union is not in serious disrepair. For example, areas of research that have flourished in recent years are the integration of personality assessment and neuropsychological assessment, and the assessment of severe trauma. Surely, personality assessment is an area of concentration that has much to be proud of, even though some need for improvement is apparent. ❀

SPA Exchange

SPA Exchange:

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Associate Editors:

Robert Lovitt, Ph.D.
Joan Weltzien, Ed.D.
Judith Armstrong, Ph.D.

The text of your message should read: `subscribe rorschach yourfirstname yourlastname`

For more academically oriented discussions of personality, consider the Individual Differences and Assessment Net. This list has over 100 members from around the world and is run jointly by Paul Barrett at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, and Sean Hammond at the University of Surrey, UK. To subscribe, send your e-mail message to the listserver at Mailbase by using the following address: `mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk`

The text of your message should read: `join idanet yourfirstname yourlastname`

To get a listing of all the discussion groups available through the Mailbase listserver, send the command "lists" to the following address "`mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk`". Using the command "lists full" will give you a complete description of each list. Be careful, however, a description of 1,200 lists is a large message to receive.

Finally, if you want to receive information about the more than 1,200 lists available through the listserver at Netcom, send the command "lists" (or "lists full") in the body of an e-mail message to "`listserv@netcom.com`".

Hope to see you out there!



Errata: Correction to Correction:

SPA Exchange, Volume 5, Number 2, Fall/Winter, 1995, page 12. An error appeared in the errata of an error that appeared in the IN MEMORIUM notice in *SPA Exchange*, Volume 5, Number 1, Spring/Summer, 1995, page 14. Lawrence Edwin, Abt. Abt was co-author with Bellak of *Projective Psychology* (not Projective Techniques) and was a long-standing member of The Rorschach Research Exchange, a precursor of the SPA.

Assessment on the Internet

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detail" to the listserver. If you get confused or have problems, send the message "help" to the listserver address.

Another list that may be of interest to many in SPA is the Rorschach discussion list. This list currently has about 120 members and is run by Jack Gerber in Philadelphia. It also operates out of the listserver at St. John's. To join, follow the same procedures as above. Address your e-mail to: `listserv@sjuvvm.stjohns.edu`

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