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President's Message
The Good News About SPA

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To be seventy years young is sometimes far more cheerful and hopeful than to be forty years old.—Oliver Wendell Holmes

As the Society for Personality Assessment (SPA) approaches its 72nd year, it remains vigorous and vibrant in its outlook and activities. There is so much going on that our recent Board of Trustees Retreat required nearly 20 hours of face-to-face meeting time just to plod through our ponderous binders, full of committee reports, action items, discussion and planning sections, and other agenda items—and this despite ongoing communication on pressing matters throughout the year between meetings.

Those of you who regularly attend our Workshops and Annual Meeting already know that we're consistently offering more workshops you wish you could take; more symposia, case discussions, and round tables on issues you need to know about; and more opportunities to hobnob, kibitz, and collaborate with warm and approachable colleagues from around the country and around the world than you could possibly manage in a program that was twice as long. In fact, some of the comments we received after the March 2009 meeting actually begged us to offer a more limited program and reduce the choices. Sorry—that's just not our style. You're still going to have to make tough choices!

SPA's March 2010 extravaganza in San José will be no exception. Our workshops will offer opportunities to meet world-renowned experts who have never presented at SPA before, as well as top-flight presenters you've heard before but still can't get enough of. We've been listening to those of you who say you'd like more advanced and cutting-edge topics, so now no matter how much you think you already know, we've got workshops that are sure to teach you much that you didn't. Like last year, the symposia and paper sessions will be tracked, labeled, and staggered to help you follow some of your primary interests, but you can be assured you'll still often find yourself wishing you could be in two (or more) places at once. We're also going to be featuring a very special event—a Saturday night feast at a local restaurant honoring the incomparable Irv Weiner!

But we don't want you just to think about SPA every March or when you receive your copies of *Journal of Personality Assessment (JPA)* or the *Exchange*. We're very proud of our completely redesigned website (http://www.personality.org), where you can stay in touch throughout the year with the latest news and events; browse e-versions of current and past *Exchanges*; look up fellow members by name, interest, or location; place and read ads and announcements; link to and search for *JPA* articles; and much more. We're continuing to offer Fall/Winter Workshops around the country as well, the latest being an Introduction to Therapeutic Assessment, offered in collaboration with the Michigan Psychological Association by Dr. Steve Finn in Livonia, Michigan on December 4 and 5, 2009.

Another way to make your membership thrive is to join an interest group. At each Annual Meeting, various interest groups get together at special lunchtime sessions. Among the most successful have been the Therapeutic/Collaborative Assessment, Forensic Assessment, and Psychoanalytic Assessment groups. Interest group members can share passions and insights with each other throughout the year, plan workshops or symposia, collaborate on research efforts, develop special series for *JPA*, or even organize to nominate Board candidates.

With 173 international members from at least 24 countries, there are also rich opportunities to learn about practice, research, and culture from nearly every part of the world. As with interest groups, international members enjoy a lunchtime meeting in March each year. They also have a special connection to the Board of Trustees through the International Committee chair, currently Dr. Steve Smith.

To make the most of your membership, don't neglect to join an SPA listserv. Just go to http://groups.google.com/group/SPA-Community?hl=en&lnk and sign up. Links to special subgroups (e.g., international members, forensic assessors, students) can be found on the main page of the SPA listerv. Ask a question about an instrument, a new book, a teaching or training method, a statistical problem, or an interpretive conundrum; stir up a controversy; propose an advocacy project; start a new subgroup of your own. Make the listservs your own.

We're also always looking for members to be active in the everyday business of SPA. In addition to service on the Board of Trustees, there are a host of committees, task forces, and projects to which you might lend your talents. Interested in increasing the diversity of our membership, developing new program ideas, supporting new research, enriching our website, reviewing manuscripts or books for *JPA*, writing columns for the *Exchange*? Check with Paula Garber (manager@spaonline.org). She'll be sure to steer you in the right direction.

On the financial front, our new contract with the *JPA*'s publisher, Taylor & Francis, is helping to put SPA squarely in the black, giving us both the opportunity to build a

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In this issue...

Special Topics in Assessment

The Coached Client: A Dilemma of Forensic Assessment

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Psychological assessment is a daunting endeavor even with the most eager and cooperative of subjects. Still, introspective, insightful and articulate clients unwittingly present us with defenses, resistance and unconscious obstacles which impede our progress down propitious psychological roads.

Then there is forensic assessment, where there are more overt incentives for subjects to present themselves in, shall we say, alternative ways. These are situations where individuals have more at stake than their psychological equilibrium, such as in cases involving criminality or child custody. The motivation for subjects to know as much as they can about the assessment process, how it can impact them and what steps they can take to protect themselves is exponentially increased. To buffer this motivation, we have long advocated the importance of test security, an issue which has been brought to national attention recently with respect to the Rorschach (see Cohen, 2009). Rogers (2008) has described how helpful information about malingering measures can be easily acquired from the websites of test publishers, well within the reach of a motivated client.

Attorneys are similarly motivated to not only prepare their clients for forensic assessments, but to look for every reasonable advantage to advocate for them. Many attorneys feel ethically obligated to assist their client by, for example, alerting them to the nature of validity indicators on psychological tests (Wetter & Corrigan, 1995) and more actively coaching them (Victor & Abeles, 2004; Youngjohn, 1995).

Being aware that individuals may have been actively coached about how to present themselves raises challenging questions for assessment. What is the best strategy for approaching subjects whom we suspect have been coached? If most of our measures assume a naïve position regarding their knowledge of the tests we are administering to them (Cronin, 2009), how might we need to shift our approach? Is asking whether they have been coached within the scope of the forensic examiner, and is it helpful?[1]

This Special Topics in Assessment section offers two perspectives on this issue of coaching and assessment. Alan J. Lee, PsyD, provides thoughts about strategies to consider when assessing potentially coached clients. Robert Janner, PsyD, offers insights gained through his own experiences with clients and their attorneys. While there have been calls to develop new tests to stay ahead of the attempts to coach patients (Vagnini et al., 2006) and for experts from law and psychology to address the issue of coaching (see Lees-Haley & Courtney, 2000), these two psychologists provide some thoughts about how we might proceed more immediately with a subject we suspect has been coached.

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1. Before you venture a guess, Youngjohn, Lees-Haley, and Binder (1999) cite evidence that warning malingerers on neuropsychological testing results in their ability to malinger *more* effectively.

Front row: Drs. Radhika Krishnamurthy (SPA President-Elect), Virginia Brabender (SPA Past-President), Paula Garber (SPA Administrative Director), Robert E. Erard (SPA President), and Ginger Calloway (SPA Representative-at-Large). *Back row:* Drs. Bruce Smith (SPA Public Affairs Director) and Katherine Nordal (American Psychological Association Executive Director for Professional Practice).

Dr. Steven Smith and his research team. *Front row:* Jenss Chang, Ilyssa Silverman, Katrina Schnoebelen. *Back row:* Lisa Nowinski, Sara Walker, Jessica Little, Kaila Norman, Pilar Sumalpong, Sarah Patz, Dr. Smith.

Attorney Coaching and Dissimulation in Forensic Assessment

Alan J. Lee, PsyD
Alan J. Lee & Associates, LLC

Forensically based assessments are often laden with the potential of the examinee distorting their response style and responses, whether intentional or unintentional. As implied by the nature of the forensic assessment, there are often high stakes and risks to the examinee; issues such as financial settlements from personal injury, termination of parental rights, and competence to stand trial reflect only a sampling of such issues.

Examinees may actively seek information as to how best to respond in the assessment situation. It is plausible that examinees' attorneys may at times give information, whether explicit or not, to their client in the interest of his success in litigation. This might include perusing some major texts in academic and popular bookstores, attending college classes, and with some keystrokes on the Internet. Ruiz, Drake, Glass, Marcotte, and van Gorpe (2002) identified internet websites that contained information that violated the test security of psychological assessment instruments, including a small number (2–5%) that appeared to pose a "direct threat" to test security. There have been some varied findings on the effects of attorney "coaching." Neuropsychological tests may be impacted by the subject's knowledge of what the test assesses and feigning pathology in that area (e.g., feign memory problems on a memory test to show deficits in a personal injury claim). Most major self-reporting inventories, such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory–2 (MMPI–2; Butcher, Dahlstrom, Graham, Tellegen, & Kaemmer, 1989) and Personality Assessment Inventory (Morey, 1991), have long included various scales of test-taking style. Some research has suggested that coached participants are able to simulate a healthy profile. Arguably, some have proposed that "projective" measures such as the Rorschach (Exner, 2003) are less subject to but still vulnerable to dissimulation efforts (Schretlen, 1997). The clinical interview may be an area where the subject is most prone to dissimulate. Semi-structured measures such as the Structured Interview of Reported Symptoms (Rogers, 1992) have attempted to utilize a structured method of assessing for dissimulation. While it is beyond the scope of the current article to describe the plethora of research on dissimulation (see Rogers, 1997), the following are some views and practical experiences in dealing with possible coaching of an examinee.

Try to establish a collaborative relationship in which the examinee experiences your "professional neutrality." The forensic examiner should explain his professional commitment and obligation to evaluate and report on findings in an objective fashion. This might begin with a candid discussion of informed consent, but also with a genuine emphasis that the examiner is compelled to base his findings and recommendations on what test data and information he obtains. It may be helpful to explain, when true and supported, that the examiner is neutral and has been retained by a wide range of clients and examinees, and has even arrived at findings that may seem counter to the referral source's seeming position. Rogers (1997) has also suggested asking the examinee as to his motivation and goals of the evaluation (e.g., "What do you hope to accomplish by the evaluation?" [p. 9]), as well as exploring the examinee's perception of an adversarial process (e.g., "Was this evaluation your idea?" [p. 9]).

A thorough analysis of the various test-taking scales on self-reporting inventories can be an initial step helpful in identifying response styles as well as using a combination of methods (e.g., multiple self-reporting inventories and projective methods). The multiplicity of methods affords a more thorough and accurate "sampling" and measure of the suspected pathology, whether it may be under- or over-reported. While a dissimulating examinee may be able to dissimulate on one measure, it is more difficult to effectively dissimulate on multiple measures, especially if the measures assess pathology in different ways (e.g. MMPI–2 versus Rorschach). During the interview, there should be close attention to non-verbal gestures and congruence to the verbally reported symptom picture. Eckman (1992) discussed facial micro-expressions (e.g., eyebrows raised and pulled together as a sign of fear or worry) as a clue to deceit and to help assist in detecting possible discrepancies in examinee-reported information. In detecting these possible discrepancies, the examiner should initially and supportively inquire about the apparent discrepancies in ways that allow the examinee to "save face." Questions as to why there seemed to be some incongruence between their non-verbal cues and their reported statement (e.g., "When you said ____, it seemed very uncomfortable [for you] … is there something we should talk about to clear the air and be helpful?") can be fruitful. Active listening skills, such as reflecting, paraphrasing, and use of "I-messages," should be paramount in the interview process to allow the examinee to reduce his defensiveness with the examiner. Law enforcement interviewers and interrogators have long utilized these techniques as key in eliciting information from suspects in what is perhaps the quintessential adversarial process of getting the suspect to admit to his alleged role in a crime.

Following the initial interview, it may be useful to review the suspected areas of discrepancy or dissimulation. This could begin by asking the examinee to restate the reported pathology, and by focusing on congruence between the first and second accounts. Other general questioning might include an inquiry as to whether the person has become knowing of psychopathology through family members, schooling, reading, television programs, the internet, or persons who helped the examinee prepare for the interview. While it may be premature and counterproductive to do so early in the interview, later in the concluding sections of the interview it may be reasonable to confront the examinee with more challenging questions such as "what" his attorney has told him about the examination. This might be prefaced by some "normalization" that attorneys at times "prepare" their clients for the evaluation to pave the way for discussing possible coaching (e.g., "Many of the people who come in this situation have had their attorney tell them ____ about the evaluation … what did your attorney say to get you ready?"). Suggesting to the examinee that his candor in answering this line of questioning helps the examiner more clearly understand his test data and presentation has also often been helpful to elicit his candor.

Dissimulation is an almost inevitable issue to address in assessment; the issue the examiner tends to face is how to best manage and address dissimulation in order to develop reliable and valid findings and recommendations.

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On Coaching and Informed Consent

Robert Janner, PsyD
Psychological Affiliates

Recently, I had the opportunity to discuss with various members of the Society for Personality Assessment Board of Directors issues of coaching and confidentiality. The innocent enough email query sparked a blaze of thoughtful debate which I will attempt to paraphrase here. Initially, I wondered about the circumstances in which an evaluator might inquire as to the possible coaching of an examinee. Such questions sometimes make it into the evaluations I conduct. This has been largely dependent upon my informal assessment of the patient. That is, if he or she seems test-savvy I may inquire; otherwise I may not bother. Concerned with the lack of consistency I asked for feedback and as often happens when consulting with esteemed colleagues, the process has both challenged and educated me.

Early in practice I learned that I needed to consider the context of the referral. In the case of forensic evaluations, the court has ordered the patient to my office, usually to provide some direction with a case. My understanding was that within this framework my job as an evaluator is to find the objective truth, so that the court may make informed decisions regarding the individual. Patients' rights to confidentiality were certainly superseded by court order, as I would inform them at the outset. Ignorance was bliss. Over time, however, I found my job became complicated by issues of confidentiality and disclosure involving the legal system. Hearsay and rules of admissibility became factors in my testimonial and I learned that in some cases I could not ask certain things of patients without violating their legal rights. Issues of coaching began to arise in some evaluations as well. At this point, the consultation…

Among those whom I consulted there was some consensus that asking the ultimate question of coaching is usually appropriate. Research documents that *a priori* knowledge of validity scales (for instance) can alter an evaluee's performance on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory–2 (Butcher, Dahlstrom, Graham, Tellegen, & Kaemmer, 1989); it allows them to fake good or bad and to escape detection (Baer, Wetter, & Berry, 1995). Formal assessment of coaching through having every evaluee sign a form attesting to not having been coached or having researched the instruments was recommended. Of course the possibility exists they might lie; however, this would at least document that the evaluator knew to ask. Assuming the evaluee was truthful in responding negatively to the question, there could be some confidence in the validity of the results. If they lied it would probably never be known, and if they answer affirmatively the evaluator could choose not to do the evaluation, based on concerns regarding impression management; or the evaluator could complete the evaluation, possibly changing instruments administered and including a well-considered statement regarding the concerns raised.

In the specific case of coaching, I was reminded, there is the matter of attorney–client privilege. Attorneys who have been surveyed admit to informing their clients regarding the nature of psychological tests (Wetter & Corrigan, 1995). The question of whether or not the attorney for the client you are evaluating has done so may itself be a matter of attorney–client privilege. One may voice the sentiment that our purview is the evaluation itself and not the legal use. After all, the APA Ethics code only commands that psychologists inform persons for whom testing is mandated by law about the nature and purpose of the proposed assessment. This is somewhat problematic in terms of Principle E: Respect for People's Rights and Dignity; however, the latter is aspirational. Also problematic are 3.04 Avoiding Harm and 3.09 Cooperation With Other Professionals. It could be argued that the psychologist is not working to minimize harm to the client, nor is he or she cooperating with the client's attorney (American Psychological Association, 2002).

This brings us to an abrupt denouement. Having been unable to obtain definitive resolution of the previous issues, one can only reflect on the ways others have thought about these complexities and commit to conceptualizing future occurrences with the best insights available. This reality leaves one open to anxiety, criticism, mistakes, and more optimistically, revision and correction. The payoff is the progress, both individually and hopefully, collectively towards settling these matters and the assurance that in the interim one is achieving an approximation of "best practice." In summary, the advice is to ask the patient the question, remember the research and ethics, and decide based on the answer.

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Thank you to members of the Board of Directors for their input on these issues and to Alan Schwartz, PsyD, for his editing direction.

New SPA Fellows

Congratulations to new SPA Fellows: John N. Briere, PhD; Joni L. Mihura, PhD; Richard Lewak, PhD; Jan H. Kamphuis, PhD; John Stokes, PhD; and David L. Pogge, PhD. Biographies will follow in the next issue of the *Exchange*.

The Ambiguous Role of Social Desirability in Test Development and Validation

John Kurtz, PhD
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In previous columns, I have called attention to certain "old habits" in research on personality assessment, methods of constructing or evaluating personality tests that have been in use for decades but whose continued use is increasingly questioned. For example, rigid adherence to null hypothesis significant testing and benchmarks for coefficient alpha may inhibit progress by causing us to overvalue weak measures and to dismiss promising measures. This column will examine the utility of the social desirability (SD) measures in the development and validation of personality assessment methods.

The use of SD measures in test validation research continues to be widely practiced despite evidence that should raise concern about this practice. I searched the peer-reviewed journal literature with PsycINFO using the name of one of the more frequently used SD scales, the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability scale (MCSD; Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). There were 1,827 articles identified, with more than 500 published after 2005. What does this measure tell us about the validity of other personality measures? Consider this familiar scenario: Dr. S. is constructing a self-report scale to assess the need for attention from others, the Attention Seeking (AS) scale. Part of the evidence Dr. S. gathers in support of this new scale is its correlation with the MCSD. The small and nonsignificant correlation between the AS and MCSD scales (r = .20) leads Dr. S to favorably appraise the AS scale as a measure that is unaffected by the tendency to give socially desirable responses. He might even go so far as to conclude that AS scores are valid despite any differences in examinees' ability to give honest or accurate responses.

Is this a reasonable inference from these data? Before looking at this more closely, consider another related use of the MCSD in personality assessment research: Dr. T. is evaluating the validity of a relatively well-established self-report measure, the General Anxiety (GA) scale. On the basis of a large, statistically significant correlation (r = −.60) between the GA and MCSD scales, Dr. T. offers an unfavorable appraisal of the validity of the GA scale. Dr. T. concludes that this test is overly saturated with social desirability bias, so much so that scores on the GA scale may measure little more than the ability of examinees to give honest responses about their emotional state.

I would argue that the inferences made by Dr. S. and Dr. T. about these measures are not well supported by the data, because correlations between self-report measures and the MCSD say very little about the validity of those measures to predict relevant criteria. The meaning of these correlations is so ambiguous that it is probably a waste of respondents' time to include the MCSD in test batteries for validation studies. Let's begin by focusing on the central proposition that the MCSD detects a bias in responding to personality test questions in general. A corollary of this proposition is that respondents with high MCSD scores give less accurate responses to other personality tests and produce less valid scores on these tests. This proposition is easily tested with empirical research. However, applications of the MCSD similar to those of Dr. S. and Dr. T. far outnumber the studies that examine this core assumption about the MCSD itself.

Fortunately, some researchers have examined the simple hypothesis that high scores on measures of SD are associated with less accurate responses on other substantive measures of personality. This body of research has consistently demonstrated that scores on SD measures do not moderate validity correlations. That is, personality test scores from high MCSD respondents predict criteria as well as the scores from low MCSD respondents. Not surprisingly, attempts to statistically correct test scores using measures of SD do not improve their validity for predicting various criteria. If anything, such corrections reduce predictive validity relative to uncorrected scores. Most of this research has operationalized validity using agreement between self-ratings and ratings of the same traits by well-acquainted informants (e.g., Dicken, 1963; McCrae & Costa, 1983; Piedmont, McCrae, Riemann, & Angleitner, 2000), but others have used non-test criteria such as clinician judgments (Block, 1965) or job performance in organizational settings (e.g., Hough, Eaton, Dunnette, Kamp, & McCloy, 1990). A benefit of using informant personality ratings as criteria is that these data provide some insight into the substantive content in measures like the MCSD. In a recent study completed with my students (Kurtz, Tarquini, & Iobst, 2008), we found that self-ratings of college students on the MCSD correlated positively and significantly with informant ratings of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness made by both roommates and parents. In summary, the MCSD does not measure response validity. Rather, it is a measure of personality (just not a very good one) that blends together multiple orthogonal trait dimensions.

So, why does the MCSD fail to assess the honesty of respondents and the validity of personality measures? To be fair, the identification of defensive or socially desirable responding versus normal good adjustment is possibly the most difficult discrimination that we attempt to make in psychological assessment. Virtually every human characteristic that we try to assess is more or less desirable in society. The logic of Crowne and Marlowe (1960) was to include absolute qualifiers in the wording of test items (i.e., "always," "never," etc.) in order to make the literal truth of a "true" or "false" response highly improbable. It is an appealing idea that seems logically sound. The problem is, according to McCrae and Costa (2003), "test takers are not literalists" (p. 45). The approach of the average person is to choose the *more correct* answer rather than the literal truth. For example, one MCSD item reads: "I am always careful about my manner of dress." Now, think of someone you know who is a really snappy dresser. Should this person really say "false" to this question? She would probably only do so if she was sophisticated enough to detect our subtle ploy to catch her exaggerating the truth. Instead, our faithful respondent will only do what we explicitly asked her to do; that is, answer these questions so that we understand what she is like as a person. We

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How Long Do I Need To Keep This?

Linda K. Knauss, PhD, ABPP
Widener University

Recently a member of the Society for Personality Assessment commented that he was talking with a colleague who was also actively engaged in assessment in his practice, and they were both running out of storage space for the assessments they have completed. After 20 years (or more) in practice it is easy to accumulate a lot of files with test data, interview notes, reports, and other information. It is likely that others in our field struggle with this issue as well. This leads to the question of how long should records be kept, and how much of the record needs to be kept?

A good place to start to answer this question is the recently adopted American Psychological Association Record Keeping Guidelines (APA, 2007). With regard to the retention of records, the Guidelines state:

> In the absence of a superceding requirement, psychologists may consider retaining full records until 7 years after the last date of service delivery for adults or until 3 years after a minor reaches the age of majority, whichever is later. In some circumstances, the psychologist may wish to keep records for a longer period, weighing the risks associated with obsolete outdated information, or privacy loss, versus potential benefits associated with preserving the records. (p. 999)

The previous APA Record Keeping Guidelines (APA, 1993) suggested keeping complete records for a minimum of 3 years after the last contact with a client and then at least a summary for an additional 12 years (Knauss, 2008). However the current guidelines do not suggest keeping a summary after the suggested time period for keeping the entire record.

A very important provision of this section of the Record Keeping Guidelines is the statement "In the absence of a superceding requirement…". The Guidelines remind psychologists to be aware of applicable laws and regulations to retain records for the period required by legal, regulatory, institutional, and ethical requirements (APA, 2007). This means that if a state law specifies the length of time a psychologist is required to keep records, the state law supercedes the APA Record Keeping Guidelines regardless of whether that law requires the records to be kept a shorter or longer period of time. An example is the Pennsylvania law that states that professional records should be maintained for at least 5 years after the last date that service was rendered.

It is also important to know whether an institution or agency in which you work or a contract that you may have with a provider requires records to be retained for a longer period of time than is required by state law or the APA Guidelines. For example, many hospitals and medical facilities require records to be kept for at least 7 years, and Medicare requires keeping records for 7 years after the last date of service. This is consistent with the APA Guidelines but may be longer than a state requirement, such as in Pennsylvania. In addition, provider participation contracts with insurance companies may require keeping records longer (Baturin & Knapp, 2009). Thus, it is important to know the laws in the jurisdiction in which you practice as well as the requirements of any organization in which you work or participate.

The reason for keeping records 3 years after a minor reaches the age of majority (which is usually age 18) is to ensure that records are maintained beyond the state statute of limitations for filing a lawsuit against the psychologist. In most states the statute of limitations for filing such a lawsuit is 2 years, which is also consistent with the time frame for filing a due process complaint under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (Jacob & Hartshorne, 2007). Another reason that psychologists may choose to keep records of children for a longer period of time is that some children may have disorders so severe or pervasive that their records may be relevant in helping to make a determination of eligibility for Social Security Disability (Baturin & Knapp, 2009) or in making a diagnosis of mental retardation which requires onset before age 18. Even in adults, a variety of circumstances can trigger requests for records beyond 7 years after the last contact with a client. An earlier record of symptoms of a mental disorder may be useful in many ways in later diagnosis and treatment.

There are also some concerns about keeping records that have become obsolete. Standard 9.08a in the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA, 2002) states "Psychologists do not base their assessment or intervention decisions or recommendations on data or test results that are outdated for the current purpose" (p.1072). One indication that test data or results are outdated may be determined by whether the test from which the scores were derived is itself obsolete. Even if the test results are derived from currently used tests, they may be obsolete for current purposes if there is a reason to believe the person being tested might score differently or require a different test. This could be due to maturational or developmental changes, educational advancement, job training, an accident, or change in work status (Fisher, 2009). In some situations it may be helpful to keep test data beyond the minimum requirements as a basis of comparison with new test results or to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of an educational program or intervention (Fisher). If outdated data is used, test reports using that data should include an explanation for the use of these test results and their limitations. However, the 2002 APA Ethics Code does not indicate that obsolete test data should be removed from the record, just that it should not be used as the basis for decisions. Thus, the time frames discussed above should be used regarding the retention of records. In addition to the issue of obsolete test data, there are other reasons why it may be in the client's best interest to dispose of records as soon as allowed. One example is behavior that a client may have engaged in as a minor that, if later disclosed, may prove embarrassing (APA, 2007). As mentioned earlier, keeping records for many years can be logistically challenging. Each psychologist must make his or her own cost benefit analysis in making decisions to retain or dispose of records.

Record retention in school settings has a separate set of considerations. How long should psychological records be maintained in schools? There is no federal guidance with regard to how long school psychological records should be maintained, except that a school may not destroy records if a request to review them exists (Jacob & Hartshorne, 2007). Thus, there is no minimum amount of time that test protocols and other test data must be kept by schools even for the purposes of comparison to later evaluations. However, it is advisable to retain a student's test protocols until there is a pattern of relatively stable findings across multiple re-evaluations before destroying protocols and other raw data from early evaluations. Practitioners should consult state education laws and district policies for guidance about

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Advocacy Corner

Bruce L. Smith, PhD
Public Affairs Director

As a quick perusal of the popular media can attest, this has been a busy few months for our advocacy efforts on behalf of assessment psychology. Of course, much of our efforts have been taken up with the Rorschach–Wikipedia controversy, which seemed to capture the attention of the press for a time this summer. Because this issue was so front and center, I have written a separate article about it in this issue of the *Exchange*. Suffice it to say that, for a time, psychological assessment was very much in the public eye, and walking the line between expressing our serious concerns about breaches of test security such as the posting of the Rorschach plates on Wikipedia, and making it clear that such postings would not invalidate our use of instruments such as the Rorschach, was a tricky business indeed.

On other fronts, the Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) coding work has been quiet for the past several months. Most of the remaining problems with coding and reimbursement for specific testing codes appear to be the province of our neuropsychological colleagues. The original Task Force continues to meet by conference call occasionally, but our work is now primarily focused on developing educational documents such as FAQs for users of the new codes.

Our primary focus is about to change, however. By the time you read this, it is likely that some version of President Obama's Health Care Reform initiative will have passed. How psychology in general and assessment in particular will fair under this new legislation is critical to the future health of our profession. In particular, the Comparative Effectiveness Research proposal will be allocating significant federal funds for research on the effectiveness of various procedures. We are trying to work with the American Psychological Association (APA) to ensure that assessment is represented at the table and that assessment research has a prominent place. It is my belief that this initiative represents a golden opportunity, as it is accepted that effective and cost-effective treatment interventions depend upon accurate diagnosis. It is our task to provide the evidence that personality assessment enhances accurate, timely, and cost-effective diagnosis not only in the sphere of mental health, but equally in the spheres of behavioral medicine and primary care. While we believe that we are on solid footing in asserting this, we hope to develop an empirical research base to bolster our case.

Finally, APA is developing a work group on treatment guidelines for psychological treatment. The impetus for this effort is the fact that most published guidelines are currently medical and involve medical interventions (e.g., medication, ECT, etc.). These guidelines will be general and not modality-specific. We have been invited to consult with the work group around beginning to develop guidelines for assessment practice as well. Such guidelines would *not* involve prescriptions for specific instruments or testing protocols; rather, they would articulate principles that constitute effective practice in broad functional areas (e.g., cognitive disorders, mood disorders, personality disorders, etc.). Those of you who were at the Annual Meeting in Chicago last March know that we now have an enthusiastic ally in APA Practice Director Katherine Nordal. It was Dr. Nordal who suggested our involvement in this process.

Notes From the Foundation

Bruce L. Smith, PhD
President, SPAF

The biggest news from the Society for Personality Assessment Foundation (SPAF) has been the awarding of the 1st Annual John E. Exner Scholar Award (see announcement in this issue of the *Exchange*). This award was made possible by the generous gift from the Exner family as well as contributions to the fund from members of the SPA. We encourage the membership to continue to contribute to this fund. Our long-term plan is for the fund to grow to the point that the stipend it provides will be substantial enough to make a significant difference for the research efforts of the recipients.

In other news, the Utility of Assessment research project, currently being led by Steve Smith, has moved into the data collection phase. We are confident that this project will be carried successfully to its conclusion, and

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The Rorschach–Wikipedia Controvery

Bruce L. Smith, PhD
Public Affairs Director

There is an old Hollywood adage: "There is no such thing as bad publicity." To the extent that this is true, the recent controversy over the display of the Rorschach plates on Wikipedia must be considered a real boon to our field. To briefly review the controversy for those of you who may not be as familiar with it, it began when a young emergency room physician in rural Canada decided to add copies of all ten Rorschach plates to the article on the Rorschach in the online "encyclopedia" known as Wikipedia. Wikipedia differs from more traditional encyclopedias in that it recognizes no expertise and allows anyone to edit articles regardless of their credentials. Once these plates were posted, assessment psychologists were, predictably, up in arms. Assessment with psychological tests—including the Rorschach—presumes a relative unfamiliarity with the stimulus materials on the part of the subject. Having the plates, as well as a list of popular responses, available on the most frequently consulted online resource is a source of concern. A lively debate on the Wikipedia site itself ensued, with some insisting that "freedom of information" trumped any concerns about harm to potential patients or clients, with others taking the position that free speech must be balanced against potential harm. The validity of the Rorschach was also called into question, with one individual actually arguing that since the Rorschach was obviously "bogus" it was the duty of Wikipedia to do everything possible to destroy it. As the debate heated up, positions became more extreme. Another poster suggested that the dissemination of information was such an absolute good that he would be willing to post the whereabouts of radioactive material, even if it meant that a terrorist group would target his own home city. It is well to remember that Wikipedia as an organization is in its adolescence, and most of those who are active editors are college-age or in their twenties. As with most adolescents, they tend to view the world in over-idealized, black-and-white terms, and this was evident in the debate.

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Finding Funding: Some Suggestions for Graduate Students

Christopher J. Hopwood, PhD
SPAGS President

Although the importance of personality assessment is becoming increasingly clear to members of related fields such as economics and medicine, and the recognition of its centrality in clinical psychology is re-emerging, personality assessment continues to be poorly understood in many quarters and there remains a bias against funding personality assessment research as it is traditionally conducted. I believe that the Society for Personality Assessment (SPA) and Society for Personality Assessment Graduate Student Association (SPAGS) members are obliged to help psychology, related fields, policy makers, and funding agencies appreciate the benefits of personality assessment for the mentally ill, the legal system, and anyone interested in understanding human behavior, and that obtaining research funding is a critical element toward this goal. At a more personal level for graduate students, research funding facilitates professional development in a variety of concrete ways. Grants can help defray the costs of graduate school, provide money for travel to conferences, assist in the development of collaborations and mentorships, open up opportunities for better research, and represent very attractive window dressing on job applications. Thus, I am devoting my second and final *Exchange* article as SPAGS President to this topic. Although I am hardly an expert on obtaining research funding, I can offer some potentially helpful advice based on my experiences having worked on several of my advisor's grant-funded projects as a graduate student and obtaining federal and local grants for my own research. I have also spent a good deal of time discussing this issue with grant-funded colleagues and National Institutes of Health (NIH) program officers in the last couple of years. From this somewhat limited background I offer the following advice.

1. *Look for grants*. Graduate students have enough to do as it is, and the thought of adding grant searching and grant writing to the list can seem daunting. At the same time, students rarely receive what they do not ask for. There are several natural places to look for grant funding, such as the NIH and the National Science Foundation (NSF). These agencies have specific programs designed to fund graduate student research, such as the NIH National Research and Service Award and NSF Graduate Student Fellowship Program. More generally, requests for applications or program announcements can be searched to identify funding mechanisms that are most likely to be appropriate for a given research idea. It pays to peruse listings for grants regularly and to be familiar with the larger mission statements and strategic plans of these institutes, as research that is most consistent with their broader goals has the best chance of being funded. Descriptions of previously funded projects are also available online. Several professional societies, including SPA, also offer research or travel funding for graduate students. Information about the SPA Mary S. Cerney Award and Dissertation grant are available on the SPAGS tab of the SPA website, and details regarding the SPA student travel award are made available with other information about the yearly conference. Links to several other opportunities will be available on the SPAGS tab soon. In addition, most universities have funds available for graduate student research, and multiple foundations may be relevant depending on the content of student research. The SPAGS listserv (http://groups.google.com/group/spags) is a great way for students to communicate with one another about such opportunities. Another excellent way to learn about funding is to check out the Curriculum Vitae of successful personality assessment researchers, which are often available online. These documents represent helpful templates for professional development generally, but can also point to funding sources and give students ideas about the kinds of projects that are likely to be funded.

2. *Take grant-writing workshops*. Even after an appropriate mechanism has been identified, the process of developing a fundable idea and preparing a grant application can be imposing. First, navigating the grant system requires learning a new lexicon and syntax; funding agencies do not tend to make things simple. Moreover, graduate students who likely view themselves as good general writers, and who also learn quickly that psychological reports and empirical studies require new and different skill sets, must understand that grant applications require yet another language, format, and approach. Given the limited time in and other responsibilities associated with graduate school, the learning curve is steep. In order to help students navigate this difficult course, many universities, professional societies, and even funding agencies offer grant-writing workshops that can be helpful in terms of familiarizing students with the funding process and providing a framework for preparing an application. Such workshops can demystify a potentially confusing process, and I highly recommend exposure to as much information about grant writing as possible.

3. *Discuss grant ideas*. Science, as a creative process, can be a bit intimidating. Particularly when we are first starting out, it is difficult to evaluate objectively the "goodness" of our ideas, and research proposals are often colored by self-doubt. This difficulty extends to the "fundability" of our ideas. While too much self-doubt is probably maladaptive, it is also true that it can be well-founded; after all, most of us have never done this before! It is therefore critical in the preparation of a solid grant application that students gather as much advice about their potential projects as possible and be open to any feedback they receive. This includes discussing ideas with advisors, other mentors (including at SPA), and program officers at funding agencies. My experience has been that senior researchers generally relish the opportunity to help students find research funding, but that it is the student's responsibility to reach out to them. Further, developing these relationships early on can be very helpful throughout the grant process.

4. *Start now*. Like graduate school and psychological research, grant preparation takes longer than we think it should. Preparing a grant requires an extensive literature review; the development of a novel, important, and testable idea; articulation of appropriate research methods; the identification of a funding source; dialogue with research mentors and program officers; writing an application; and navigating submission guidelines that are often surprisingly complex. To compound the issue of time, it often takes several months for funding agencies to review the application and provide feedback; multiple submissions are often required. Usually data collection does not start until after the grant has been funded, and waiting for funding can delay dissertation projects and internship preparation, particularly if the dissertation design depends upon the funding

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SPA Annual Meeting

March 24–28, 2010

The Fairmont Hotel

San Jose, CA

Located in the heart of the Silicon Valley, San Jose defines the area that surrounds it. The population is greater than that of San Francisco, making this the 10th largest city in the United States. Once an agricultural stronghold, San Jose has become a mecca for arts and culture as well as a rapidly growing center for technology. The hands-on Tech Museum of Innovation is a popular illustration of the art of technology. Downtown, art galleries and arts organizations south of First Street keep their doors open late the first Friday of every month. This provides the opportunity for patrons and aficionados to meet the talents who are responsible for the extraordinary works of art. Here, California casual is always in style. Visitors are also assured of excellent shopping and fine dining. The diverse nightlife scene has it all: dance clubs, ultra-cool lounges, even casual pubs. Health and fitness is an obvious lifestyle choice in this vibrant city, and for a round of concentrated exercise or the chance to "Zen out," many spas, fitness centers, and yoga houses welcome drop-ins. Adding to the never-ending list of fun activities are over 15 local and championship golf courses, more than 20 vineyards, 150 parks and gardens, and theme parks.

The SPA Annual Meeting offers:

- Excellent workshops, symposia and discussions on psychological assessment: MMPI–2, PAI, MCMI–III, Rorschach, TAT, and other instruments
- Empirical, theoretical, and case study formats
- Many presentations by nationally known experts

For Students:

- Reduced fees
- Volunteer opportunities (with perks)
- A student luncheon
- See and hear your favorite textbook authors

Master Lectures:

- Master Lecture I: *John Briere, PhD*
- Master Lecture II: *Phil Erdberg, PhD*

Annual Meeting Registration Fees:

	Pre-Registration by 2/24/2010	After 2/24/2010
Member/Fellow/Associate	$215	$265
Non-Member	$285	$335
Student	$75	$90
Member/One-Day Fee	$145	$145
Non-Member/One-Day Fee	$165	$165
Student/One-Day Fee	$50	$50
Student Volunteer	$50	$50

Workshop Fees:

Member or Conference Registrant	Full-Day $175	Half-Day $105
Non-Member or Non-Conf Registrant	Full-Day $225	Half-Day $140
Student	Full-Day $90	Half-Day $50

Workshops:

Workshops will be held on Wednesday, March 24; Thursday, March 25; and Sunday, March 28. No workshops are held on Friday, March 26, or Saturday, March 27. Enrollment in the workshops will be filled on the basis of completed workshop registration forms and fees received. Seven CE credits are offered for the full-day workshops and 3.5 CE credits for the half-day workshops.

Accommodations:

The Fairmont Hotel: Located in the heart of Silicon Valley just a short drive to more than 30 wineries and the famous Monterey peninsula golf courses, The Fairmont San Jose venue infuses high-tech perfection with timeless elegance. For more information, visit http://www.fairmont.com/sanjose. Hotel reservations must be made directly with the hotel. To get the special conference rate, please inform the hotel that you are with the Society for Personality Assessment (SPA).

The Fairmont Hotel

170 South Market Street

San Jose, CA

Tel: 408-998-1900

Online Reservations: Use Group Code MM0308

Reservation deadline to receive the conference rate: March 1, 2010

Rates: $149 single; $159 double; $25 for an additional person; children up to 18 years of age who share with their parents stay free of charge.

Fairmont President's Club: Fairmont Hotels & Resorts exclusive guest recognition program, Fairmont President's Club, offers special benefits and privileges designed to reflect your individual travel preferences and offer an enhanced level of service. Membership is **complimentary** and your Fairmont President's Club experience begins the moment you arrive at any of our properties with express check-in at our private reception desk and continues during your stay with **complimentary high-speed Internet access,** free local calls, complimentary health club access, complimentary use of TalyorMade golf clubs, use of Fairmont Fit, and so much more.

ISR Congress

Norika Nakimura, MA, has announced that the 20th International Society of the Rorschach Projective Methods (ISR) Congress will be held in Tokyo, Japan, July 17–20, 2011. The conference information was announced in the Summer 2009 issue of the *SPA Exchange* and can be found on the SPA homepage at http://www.personality.org.

2010 SPA Annual Meeting Tentative Schedule

Wednesday, March 24, 2010	
8:00 am–4:00 pm	Registration
8:00 am–4:00 pm	Full-Day Workshops
8:00 am–11:30 noon	Half-Day Workshops
11:30 am–1:00 pm	Lunch Break
1:00 pm–4:30 pm	Half-Day Workshops
4:30 pm	Board of Trustees Meeting
5:00 pm–8:30 pm	Half-Day Workshop
Thursday, March 25, 2010	
8:00 am–4:00 pm	Registration
8:00 am–12:00 noon	Board of Trustees Meeting
8:00 am–11:30 noon	Half-Day Workshops
11:30 am–1:00 pm	Lunch Break
1:00 pm–2:00 pm	Forensics Consultation
1:00 pm–2:00 pm	Ethics Consultation
1:00 pm–2:00 pm	Psychoanalytic Cases Consultation
1:00 pm–2:00 pm	Therapeutic/Collaborative Assessment Consultation
1:00 pm–2:00 pm	ABAP Preparation
2:00 pm–3:00 pm	Opening Plenary Session w/President's Address
3:00 pm–4:00 pm	Bruno Klopfer Award
4:15 pm–5:15 pm	Master Lecture I: *John Briere*
5:30 pm–6:30 pm	Hertz Memorial Presentation
6:45 pm–7:45 pm	SPAGS Board Meeting
6:45 pm–8:00 pm	Book Signing
6:45 pm–8:00 pm	President's Welcome Reception
6:45 pm–8:00 pm	Poster Session I
Friday, March 26, 2010	
7:30 am–8:30 am	Journal Editorial Board Breakfast
8:00 am–4:00 pm	Registration
8:30 am–10:30 am	Scientific Sessions (5)
10:45 am–11:45 am	Master Lecture II: *Philip Erdberg*
11:45 am–1:15 pm	Lunch Break
11:45 am–1:15 pm	Lunchtime Special
12:00 noon–1:15 pm	International Members Meeting
12:00 noon–1:15 pm	Interest Groups
1:15 pm–3:15 pm	Scientific Sessions (5)
3:30 pm–5:30 pm	Scientific Sessions (5)
5:45 pm–7:00 pm	Awards Reception/Klopfer, Mayman, Beck, Cerney
7:30 pm	Honor Irving B. Weiner Dinner
Saturday, March 27, 2010	
7:30 am–8:00 am	Exchange Editorial Board Meeting
8:00 am–10:00 am	Scientific Sessions (5)
10:15 am–12:15 pm	Scientific Sessions (5)
12:15 pm–1:30 pm	Lunch Break
12:15 pm–1:30 pm	Lunchtime Special
12:15 pm–1:30 pm	Student Lunch
12:15 pm–1:30 pm	Interest Groups
1:30 pm–3:30 pm	Scientific Sessions (5)
3:45 pm–5:45 pm	Scientific Sessions (5)
6:00 pm–7:00 pm	Farewell & Reception for Journal Reviewers
6:00 pm–7:00 pm	Poster Session II
Sunday, March 28, 2010	
8:00 am–4:00 pm	Full-Day Workshops
8:00 am–11:30 pm	Half-Day Workshops
1:00 pm–4:30 pm	Half-Day Workshops

International Updates

Steve Smith, PhD
University of California, Santa Barbara

Greetings! I'd like to introduce myself as the SPA Representative-at-Large who will help address the needs and interests of the international members. I applaud Jane Sachs for helping to structure these discussions in the past and I look forward to assuming this role. As the world becomes smaller and clinical and training issues are increasingly global, our discussions will be all the more important. I look forward to addressing issues of internationalization, diversity, and differential clinical practice over the coming year. I urge all SPA members interested in international and/or diversity issues to contact me directly at ssmith@education.ucsb.edu with their thoughts, concerns, and agenda items. I look forward to chatting in San Jose!

Highlights of the SPA September 2009 Board Meeting

- The Board welcomed three new members, including two Representatives-at-Large, David Nichols and Steven Smith, and the new SPAGS President, Christopher Hopwood.
- The Board elected not to increase either 2010 membership dues or conference registration/workshop fees for members and non-members, except for a small increase in one-day registrations.
- SPA is going green! Look for postcard and email notifications from SPA, directing you online for announcements, communications, conference submissions and registration, and more.
- The Board invites you to visit the SPA Community website to sign up for the free listserv/eMail list. You have options for receiving responses (digest, individual emails, forum only, etc.) and even the opportunity to develop a personal profile. Most importantly, it is a secure place to discuss issues of assessment with other SPA members. Please go to the SPA website and click on the SPA listserv link.

Continuing Education in San Jose: Assessment in Context

Robert F. Bornstein and Ginger C. Calloway

On behalf of the Continuing Education (CE) Committee, and the entire Society for Personality Assessment (SPA) Board, welcome to San Jose! We have a terrific lineup of presentations this year—enough to keep you busy from early Wednesday until late Sunday—thanks in no small part to the efforts of our hard-working colleagues on the CE Committee: Anita Boss, Greg Meyer, and Steve Strack. As always, they went beyond the call of duty, offering recommendations, contacting potential presenters, and helping fine-tune proposals. When you see them in March, please join us in thanking them for a job well done.

The theme of this year's CE program is "Assessment in Context." Talks will span a broad array of topics, with workshops on high-risk populations, integrative assessment strategies, and a broad array of specific assessment tools. Separately and together, these presentations remind us once again that what we do not only has a tremendous impact on the lives of patients but also plays a central role in advancing psychological science in the 21st century.

A number of CE talks this year deal with forensic issues, with John Briere presenting a full-day workshop on trauma-relevant psychological assessment, Robin Deutsch doing a half day on assessment of domestic violence in child custody disputes, and Reid Meloy presenting a Wednesday evening workshop on threat assessment of low-frequency, high-intensity violence (our only evening CE talk this year). Ron Ganellen and Corine de Ruiter will be speaking on forensic assessment of violent offenders (they've subtitled their talk "Sex, Lies, and Videotapes"), while Margaret Lee and her colleagues will present on advanced issues in child custody, with a focus on attachment, personality pathology, sexual abuse, and other core issues.

A centerpiece of our forensic program—and our entire CE lineup—will be Jeff Younggren's full-day workshop on legal and ethical issues and risk management in professional practice. This workshop counts as 6 hours of ethics training, and participants who complete the workshop will receive a substantial discount on malpractice insurance purchased through the American Psychological Association Insurance Trust (APAIT).

We have a diverse program of workshops discussing specific assessment models, strategies, and techniques, including Mark Blais's half-day workshop on personality-focused assessment, and Dave Streiner's half-day talk on meta-analysis for clinicians (otherwise known as Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Meta-Analysis, But Were Afraid to Ask). Tad Gorske and his colleagues will discuss case studies in collaborative neuropsychology, while Steve Finn presents a full day Sunday workshop on therapeutic assessment of adolescents and families. Phil Erdberg will do a full-day workshop on multi-method assessment of personality disorder, including strategies for integrating self-report and free-response test data.

Five workshops deal with specific assessment techniques, including Arnold Bruhn's presentation on the early memories procedure, Sharon Lee Jenkins's workshop on storytelling techniques, Chris Hopwood's talk on advanced PAI interpretation, and Richard Lewak's live (you read that right—live!) demonstration of positive marital feedback using the MMPI–2. On Sunday Jay Flens will present a full day workshop on the use of MMPI–2 and MCMI data in child custody evaluations.

Of course, it would hardly be SPA without a few Rorschach talks, and this year we have some terrific ones. Tony Sciara and Barry Ritzler will discuss advanced Rorschach interpretation, and Don Viglione and his colleagues will discuss how emerging and existing data can be used to improve Rorschach validity and utility. On Sunday afternoon Bob Erard will tell us how to make the Rorschach come alive—a fitting ending for a conference packed with cutting-edge presentations on the latest assessment issues.

With this meeting Bob Bornstein will be stepping down as CE Chair, and Ginger Calloway taking over, though we'll continue working together with the rest of the CE committee to put together a terrific lineup for Boston in 2011. In the meantime, we look forward to seeing you in San Jose…

President's Message

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financial cushion against hard times and the serious prospect for the first time of building an endowment with which we could continue to support major initiatives, like our ongoing Utility of Assessment Research Project. We know that, meanwhile, many of our members have needed to tighten their belts in the past year, so we're also offering a financial cushion *for you*. We're pleased to announce that for 2010, our membership dues are holding steady at 2009 rates, and most of our Workshop and Annual meeting rates are staying the same as well. SPA Administrative Director Paula Garber and our meeting consultants have also negotiated a ridiculously low rate at the Fairmont (yes, the *Fairmont*) hotel in San Jose starting under $150 per night. For those of you who are American Psychological Association (APA) members, SPA has recently joined the Federation for the Advancement of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (http://www.fbpcs.org), which educates the public on our research and lobbies for federal grant funds. You are now eligible for the APA Discount Membership Program, which will reduce your basic APA member rate by 25% (more than $70).

Speaking of APA, we're pleased to report that Dr. Katherine Nordal, APA's Executive Director for Professional Practice, has become an SPA Fellow. Many of you might have had a chance to meet her at our 2009 conference in Chicago. SPA leaders have been meeting regularly with Dr. Nordal to ensure that the concerns of assessment psychologists have a place at the table as APA lobbies with government officials on the place of psychology in healthcare reform and as CPT codes, practice guidelines, and other critical items influencing insurance reimbursement for professional services are developed. We're also jointly participating in developing training guidelines and surveying practitioners on their assessment practices. Meanwhile, we are busy tweaking and fine tuning our application to have the APA Council of Representatives recognize Personality Assessment as a Proficiency in psychological practice, hopefully by August 2010. With such formal recognition, we expect that SPA will greatly magnify its influence on training standards and promoting high-quality assessment practice, and probably substantially grow its membership as well.

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President's Message

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SPA is exceptional among learned societies for its member loyalty and longevity, to the point where one might fancy our eventually becoming a Society in which *everyone* was a retired Life Member. Happily, such a scenario is becoming increasingly remote. The SPA Graduate Student Association (SPAGS), currently under the capable leadership of Dr. Christopher Hopwood, has become an increasingly visible presence in SPA and now includes a voting representative on the SPA Board of Trustees. SPAGS also has its own page on our website (http://www.personality.org/spags.php) and its own graduate student listserv. For several years now, student participation in our Workshops and Annual Meeting has expanded almost geometrically. We are working to ensure that our current student members become regular members and future leaders of SPA, so that in another 72 years, we continue to be a youthful, if venerable, Society. In case you have any doubt—you'll be glad to know that the T-shirts are coming back. Indulge your inner 16-year-old!

The Ambiguous Role of Social Desirability in Test Development and Validation

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would surely be missing an opportunity to learn how important appearance is to the respondent if she was clever enough to give the "correct" answer to this item. In the end, this item does not measure the tendency to give inaccurate responses on personality tests; it measures conscientiousness. Truly conscientious individuals are careful about their manner of dress and about giving the right answers on a test.

A prominent personality test developer has remarked that social desirability is like one of those old movie monsters that will not die even after repeated assaults. Let's hope someone lands a fatal blow soon so we can start making headway in personality assessment research.

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How Long Do I Need To Keep This?

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the periodic review of files and the destruction of obsolete information. Upon parent request, obsolete records must be destroyed; however, schools are recommended (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2000) to advise parents that their child's records may be needed for purposes such as securing Social Security Benefits. Parents should be notified in advance of a school district's intent to destroy their child's records (APA, 1993).

Also relevant to the question of how long to keep records, another psychologist asked, if he had been seeing a client for 20 years, did he need to keep the entire record? Both the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA, 2002) and the APA Record Keeping Guidelines (APA, 2007) are silent on this issue. Thus from a risk-management perspective, it would seem wise to maintain the entire record.

In reference to the original issue of storage space for records, computerized record keeping makes it easier to store and transmit psychological information. Older records as well as test protocols and raw data can be scanned for electronic storage. This reduces storage space for the records that are still relevant and must be kept in accordance with laws and APA guidelines. Unfortunately, electronic record keeping increases the risks of unintentional disclosure of confidential information (Knauss, 2008). Therefore psychologists need to develop security procedures consistent with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act security rule. There is also the possibility of the loss of client records due to equipment failure unless adequate measures are used to back up electronic data.

When it is time to dispose of psychological records, psychologists have two responsibilities. The first is to dispose of records in a way that preserves their confidentiality. Shredding prevents the recovery of paper documents; however, the disposal of electronic records is more challenging. It is necessary to fully delete or erase records before disposing of a computer hard drive, external backup storage device, or other repository for electronic records (APA, 2007). Even then, the records may be accessible to those with specialized expertise. The APA Record Keeping Guidelines (APA, 2007) recommend consultation from someone with technical expertise regarding adequate methods for the destruction of electronic records.

The psychologist's second responsibility is to develop a disposition plan or professional will that would designate a person or agency to be the custodian of the records upon their death or disability. According to Baturin and Knapp (2009), "Without a professional will a spouse becomes the keeper of the records and is responsible for advertising the death of the psychologist and where patients can get the records; is responsible for storing the records; and is responsible for destroying the records after the proper time has elapsed" (p. 4). A professional will may also include information on where to find a list of the psychologist's current clients, keys to the file cabinet, and the password to computer files.

In conclusion, there are a number of considerations in making decisions to retain or dispose of records. The APA Record Keeping Guidelines, state laws, agencies that employ psychologists, school districts, and provider contracts all offer guidance on record retention. Records are essential to document diagnosis, treatment provided, and client progress. However, keeping obsolete records can be detrimental to clients and logistically challenging.

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Notes From the Foundation

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we look forward to reporting on the results to the membership.

Although I realize that in these difficult economic times, it is difficult to donate as much as one would like, it should be remembered that it is equally difficult for those who depend upon grants. In particular, this is true of students. The Foundation supports graduate students in several ways, including dissertation grants, the Mary Cerney Award, and travel grants to allow students to present their work at the Annual Meeting. These are extremely important not only for the students themselves, but for the future of personality assessment. I encourage you to donate generously to these funds. If you don't have any particular area that you wish to support, please consider making an unrestricted gift to SPAF; unrestricted gifts can be used by the Society to cover the areas of greatest need.

Once again, I thank you for your support.

The Rorschach–Wikipedia Controvery

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At some point, a reporter for the *New York Times* became interested and contacted me as well as the physician who initially posted the plates, and Trudi Finger, of Hogrefe, the publishers of the Rorschach plates. Surprisingly, his article made the front page and was subsequently picked up by many other media outlets, including the *Toronto Sun*, the *Guardian*, BBC, Fox News, *Die Welt* in Berlin, and a number of local radio stations. For about a week, it appeared that most of my free time was taken up giving interviews about our view of the controversy. Not surprisingly, familiar Rorschach critics Lilienfeld, Wood, and their colleagues got into the act, opining in letters to editors that the controversy was irrelevant, as the Rorschach was invalid anyway. Although the controversy remained in the news quite a bit longer than I would have predicted, it eventually faded, and the controversy appears over. The plates remain on the Wikipedia site, Hogrefe continues to explore possible legal channels to get them taken down, and in a side note, one psychologist and one psychological society in Canada have filed an ethics complaint against the physician who originally posted the images with his provincial medical society, alleging that by flouting the ethical principles of another profession and making statements about the Rorschach outside of his area of expertise, he violated his own code of ethics.

What do we make of this contretemps? In a communication to the membership I referred to the controversy as a "tempest in a teapot." While I do believe that posting the Rorschach images on Wikipedia is unfortunate, I have been careful to state that such availability does *not* pose the risk of rendering the instrument invalid. Casual encounters with the blots are not going to affect one's responses in any significant way (although research on this topic might be a good idea). What is likely to happen is that those who are motivated to defeat an assessment might find that task a bit easier. In this context, while I don't believe that it is easy to malinger—either positively or negatively—on the Rorschach, it is possible if one memorized a set of responses to give a clearly invalid protocol. I do think that the greater risk is to other psychological instruments, the publication of which might seriously damage their validity (e.g., most intelligence scales). Fortunately, most of these are protected by copyright.

In all of my public statements, I have stressed three points. One, in making the decision to publish material such as the Rorschach images or popular responses, it is necessary to balance the potential benefit of informing the public against the potential harm to those who may be affected by such exposure. Neither professional prerogatives nor free speech are absolute. Two, while as psychologists we are committed to the protection of the security of our assessment instruments, we also recognize that the publication of the Rorschach blots on Wikipedia is unlikely to harm the instrument in any significant way. The Rorschach is far too robust a method to be damaged by such casual exposure. Three, and by far most critically, the Rorschach is an important and highly useful instrument, the validity of which has been established through thousands of empirical studies. By stressing this point in every interview that I gave, I believe I was able to stay ahead of the predictable criticisms that we might expect to be launched at the Rorschach. Indeed, a number of the articles in the popular press seemed to take the utility of the Rorschach for granted. Of course, there were the predictable attacks on the test, most of which stemmed from the popular distrust of psychology in general. (One obscure blog carried the headline, "Psychiatrists whine when voodoo dolls taken away.")

So where are we now? The controversy is essentially yesterday's news. The Rorschach is no longer in the public eye. It is my view that this public discussion was a net positive for us, as it allowed us to articulate the position that the Rorschach is a valuable tool in the psychologist's kitbag, and to call attention to the work we do in assessment and to its importance to the healthcare system. At the same time, we must remain vigilant in protecting the security of the instruments that are so essential to our work and to defending that work against the kinds of attack that periodically come our way. Toward this end, we are working with a Task Force at the American Psychological Association (APA) on test security. In the past, APA's response to breaches of test security has been fairly muted. Typically, they have dealt with such events by contacting the appropriate test publisher and allowing the latter to handle it through copyright law. It is now clear that such a response is inadequate. Test security is a responsibility of the psychological profession as well as the holders of the individual test copyrights, and we as a profession need a coordinated effort. I hope to be able to report to the membership in the near future of the progress of this effort.

Finding Funding: Some Suggestions for Graduate Students

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decision. For these reasons, waiting to think about funding until the final year of graduate school is an ineffective, although not entirely hopeless, strategy. Wherever you are in the graduate school process, I recommend that you start thinking about funding right now.

5. *Be realistic but persistent*. Although it is true that students rarely receive what they don't ask for, it is unfortunately also true that they don't always receive what they do ask for. More than half of the applications to federal funding agencies do not get funded. Although it makes sense to be realistic about the risks involved in pursuing funding, I would argue that we face similar risks as professional psychologists more generally. When we start a research project, we do not know whether the study will "work out," and if it does, we do not know whether the results will be in the direction we had hypothesized. Many clinical interventions also seem risky. We are often unsure about what we can say or do that will be most useful for our clients or which assessment method is most likely to provide the kind of information that will be most helpful. Yet we must take such risks to be effective. So it goes with grant funding. The scientific process and related progress is built upon the work of bold risk-takers who believe in their ideas. To continue moving personality assessment forward, we must both deal with our odds in a realistic manner but also be willing, individually and collectively, to push for research funding. That said, it is often easier to be bold and inspired when submitting an initial application than following negative feedback and a disappointing funding decision. Again, there is a direct analogy to writing up empirical studies. I have observed two general strategies in response to having papers rejected. Some of my colleagues appear to become depressed, begin to doubt themselves, and find it very difficult to work on the rejected paper or any others for some time. Others appear to become energized by the negative feedback and motivated to improve the paper and turn it around quickly. It is not surprising that there are meaningful differences across these groups in terms of their academic success. The lesson that I take from this observation is that persistence pays off, and this lesson would appear to apply equally well to grant funding as it does to journal articles.

I hope that this article encourages new students to begin thinking about grant funding, inspires more experienced students who have been on the fence about research funding to begin the process of finding and applying for grants, and urges those who are in the process to stick with it. If you have any questions about grant funding or any other topic pertinent to SPAGS, please feel free to contact me at hopwood2@msu.edu.

Drs. Bob Erard *(left)* and Virginia Brabender *(right)* taking in a baseball game.

Dr. Tony Young and students at the SPA Poster Session. *From left to right:* Jeanette Ellis, Dr. Young, Shelley Visconte.

From left to right: Drs. David Nichols, Alex Caldwell, and Radhika Krishnamurthy.

FABBS Representative Appointed

Aaron Pincus, PhD, has been appointed SPA's representative to the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS; www.fbpcs.org). FABBS is a coalition of Member Organizations and Academic Affiliates. It represents the interests of scientists who conduct research in brain and behavioral sciences, focusing its efforts on advocacy, education, and the communication of information to scientists. Dr. Pincus will represent SPA on the FABBS Council of Representatives, along with delegates from the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, the Psychonomic Society, and many other distinguished organizations, university departments, and corporate affiliates.

John E. Exner Scholar 2010 Awarded

The Board of Trustees of the Society for Personality Assessment Foundation is pleased to announce that the John E. Exner Scholar for 2010 is **Dustin Wygant** from Eastern Kentucky University. Dr. Wygant is currently engaged in research on the MMPI–2 in a variety of contexts, notably forensic applications and has an impressive track record of published work. Dr. Wygant was selected over two other nominees, both of whom had excellent credentials.

We congratulate Dr. Wygant and look forward to hearing about his work in the future. As a reminder, nominations for the 2011 Exner Scholar Award are due July 1, 2010. As always, self-nominations are welcome.

Dr. Bob Erard, SPA President *(left)*, accepting the gavel from Dr. Virginia Brabender, SPA Past-President *(right)*.

Dr. Charles Peterson *(left)* presents SPA's outgoing Past President, Dr. Irving Weiner *(right)*, with a hand-crafted gift at the 2009 Annual Meeting.

SPA Personals

Andrea Castiello d'Antonio, Doctor of Psychology (Laurea), psychoanalyst, clinical psychologist, organizational psychologist and forensic psychologist, is currently at the European University of Rome (Italy), Department of Psychology, professor of "Personnel Selection and Assessment." Formerly an Industrial and Organizational psychologist in two companies—IPACRI (bank company) and ALITALIA (Italian airways)—from 1987 to today he works as a professional psychologist in independent practice in the Organizational, Clinical and Forensic fields, together with his interests in aviation psychology and in the application of psychoanalysis to the organizational environments. He has written and published widely on the subject of clinical psychology applied to organizational settings and on the assessment of personality. His most recent published books are (in Italian language): *The Psychological Assessment of Human Resources: the Individual Interview* (2007), *The Psychological Assessment of Human Resources: Test, Questionnaires and Group Methods* (2008), and *The Hans Zulliger Projective Technique in the Context of Personality Assessment* (2009). Andrea Castiello d'Antonio is member of several international associations as International Society for the Rorschach and Projective Methods, American Psychological Association, British Psychological Society, International Association of Applied Psychology and Association for Aviation Psychology.

Virginia Brabender, PhD, will assume the presidency of Section IX (Assessment Psychology), Division 12 in January, 2010.

Doris Penman, PhD, was elected 2009 President of the California Psychological Association.

Editor's Note: Catherine Ott, Production Editor for Taylor & Francis. Ms. Ott does a wonderful job in assisting with the publication of the *SPA Exchange* and *Journal of Personality Assessment*.

From the Editor…

Jed A. Yalof, PsyD, ABPP, ABSNP

This issue sets the table for the upcoming Annual Meeting in San Jose, CA. Information is provided about the exciting CE workshops, symposia, and discussions. Robert Erard's President's Message updates everyone on what's "good" in SPA. Alan Schwartz, Alan Lee, and Robert Janner share their views on the role of "coaching" in assessment. Linda Knauss's article on record keeping and decisions to discard records is very informative, as is John Kurtz's article on the ambiguous role of social desirability in test development and validation. Christopher Hopwood has a very relevant SPAGS article on funding for students. Bruce Smith provides updates on SPAF and advocacy initiatives, and also offers some insights on the recent Rorschach–Wikipedia controversy. There is also information on the next ISR Congress in Tokyo, Japan; highlights of the recent SPA Board Meeting; and a few other items of note. Until next time…

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