

American College of Forensic Psychology
40th Annual Symposium
March 20-23, 2025
San Diego • The Westgate Hotel

OVERVIEW

The American College of Forensic Psychology is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The American College of Forensic Psychology maintains responsibility for this program and its content. This program will offer a maximum of 25 hours of Continuing Education credits. To earn CE credit for each session, attendees must attend the entirety of the session and sign in and out at the registration desk.

Goal: The goal of this symposium is to keep forensic psychologists abreast of important issues which lie within the interface of psychology and law, recent developments in psychology that require new knowledge for expert witnesses, and new case law affecting forensic practice. **Target Audience:** The program is intended to benefit practicing forensic psychologists, psychologists in other subspecialties, and attorneys who litigate civil and criminal cases involving psychological evaluations and expert testimony. **Objectives:** Participants should improve their knowledge and skills in the following areas: (a) evaluation or treatment of forensic litigants and individuals with other forensic psychological issues; (b) new and ongoing research and developments in the field of forensic psychology; (c) relevant concepts useful in testifying and educating the court on mental health issues, and in working within the legal system; (d) changes in the law that affect clinical and forensic practice; (e) legal and psychological aspects involving inmates in correctional facilities with psychological disorders. Please see below for the learning objectives for each individual CE session. All CE sessions are taught at an intermediate level, building upon psychologists' foundational knowledge.

Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest or Relevant Financial Relationships: The American College of Forensic Psychology does not receive financial or commercial support. All instructors were asked to disclose potential conflicts of interest, or relevant financial relationships with any commercial interest. All instructors reported that they have nothing to disclose.

The meetings each day will be in the Versailles Ballroom. Registration and continental breakfast each day will be outside the meeting room. Thursday night's welcome reception will be in the Riviera Room and Terrace, and the student poster session on Thursday will be held in Embassy Room, Riviera Room, and the surrounding hallways. The student poster sessions on Friday and Saturday will be in the Versailles Foyer. The events described in this paragraph are **not** CE events.

Although no changes are anticipated, it is possible that changes will be necessary to the program.

PROGRAM

Wednesday, March 19

4:00-5:30 PM **Early check-in for registrants; late registration** —Versailles Foyer

Thursday, March 20

7:15-7:55 AM **Registration Check-in and Sign-in** – Versailles Foyer

7:15-7:55 AM **Continental Breakfast** – Versailles Foyer

7:55-8:00 AM **Welcome and Announcements** – Versailles Ballroom

8:00-12:15 **Hot Topics in Forensic Psychology** – Versailles Ballroom

8:00-9:00 AM (1 CE – ethics)

Ethical Considerations in Using Generative AI in Forensic Practice

Kristine M. Jacquin, Ph.D.

For many years, forensic psychologists have encountered artificial intelligence (AI) in their everyday technology use, such as spell check in word processing software and autocorrect on smartphone messaging systems. More recently, generative AI has become available, yet forensic psychologists may not know whether to use it and how to use it ethically. In addition, some may not realize that generative AI has been incorporated into commonly used software, raising the risk of inadvertent ethical violations. This seminar provides an overview of generative AI and discusses possible applications to forensic practice. Then, the seminar helps attendees evaluate the ethics of using generative AI in forensic practice, including considerations of confidentiality, test security, and professional competence.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Explain the difference between traditional AI and generative AI.
2. Identify three ethical standards that are relevant to ethical decision-making about using generative AI in forensic practice.
3. Describe one approach to avoiding inadvertent ethical violations related to AI.

Kristine M. Jacquin, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist with a private practice as a forensic neuropsychologist. Dr. Jacquin is also a Professor of Psychology and Dean at Fielding Graduate University. She has conducted research, presented, and published on practice issues related to psychology ethics. In addition, Dr. Jacquin has spent many hours engaged in professional development related to generative artificial intelligence.

9:00-10:00 AM (1 CE - diversity)

Mental Health Diversion: Cultural and Psychological Perspectives

Baljit Atwal, Ph.D.

California's Mental Health Diversion under California Penal Code section 1001.36 and Senate Bill No. 1223 will be explored. Forensic psychologists must understand the changes in the mental health diversion legislation to provide useful psychological evaluations. These evaluations need to be informed by cultural, clinical, and appropriate test selection factors.

On January 1, 2023, the California Legislature passed California Senate Bill No 1223. This bill expanded the eligibility for persons seeking mental health diversion by shifting the burden to show a nexus between the allegations and the defendant's mental illness from the defendant to the prosecution. Specifically, Penal Code section 1001.36 now states that "the court shall find that the defendant's mental disorder was a significant factor in the commission of the offense unless there is clear and convincing evidence that it was not a motivating factor, causal factor, or contributing factor to the defendant's involvement in the alleged offense."

Dr. Atwal will present case studies where a Mental Health Diversion evaluation was requested. As we explore various aspects of mental health diversion cases, Dr Atwal will focus on the legal, psychological, and cultural aspects of these evaluations. The selection of psychological tests, awareness of cultural factors, treatment options, and other variables is critical to producing

effective diversion evaluations. In this presentation, attendees will follow a case from referral, report preparation, and provision of expert testimony. Dr. Atwal will walk the attendees through the process of conceptualizing a case from a legal and psychological perspective through the life cycle of the case. Additionally, attendees will be introduced to key factors in writing an effective forensic mental health evaluation. Additionally, a survey of relevant legal cases will be conducted to assist in understanding the legal interpretation of Penal Code section 1001.36 and Senate Bill No. 1223.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Describe the California Mental Health Diversion Legislation Penal Code Section 1001.36 and Senate Bill No 1223.
2. Analyze the cultural, legal, and psychological factors in a mental health diversion evaluation.
3. Define the legal meaning of "super strike."

Dr. Atwal has been providing forensic and clinical psychological services to the community for the past 25 years. Dr. Atwal has been retained for multiple mental health diversion evaluations in northern California, and has provided expert testimony in mental health diversion, competency, and risk assessments. She has a specific interest in conducting culturally competent forensic mental health evaluations. Dr. Atwal also has expertise in completing evaluations for professional licensing boards, adult and juvenile courts, and immigration/administrative courts. Additionally, Dr. Atwal has testified of psychological research in the following areas: child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome, memory, suggestibility, and best practices for interviewing child victims. In addition to providing forensic mental health evaluations for the legal community, Dr Atwal provides the following services: psychotherapy/counseling, training for pre-licensure psychology students, court testimony, and consultation to attorneys.

10:00-10:15 AM **Coffee Break**

10:15-11:15 AM (1 CE)

“The Owl Hoots Twice”: Psychosis and Family Murders

Rebecca Smith-Casey, J.D., Psy.D., and Anna Casey, B.S.

Familicide, often referred to as family annihilation, is defined as the killing of spouse and children by a family member, with some definitions indicating there must be at least three victims, excluding the perpetrator (Frei & Illic, 2022). Other definitions point to familicide as meaning the killing of one’s spouse and at least one offspring of the couple in a single event (Liem & Koenraadt, 2008). A recent systematic literature review revealed that familicides were almost exclusively committed by men and about half of the familicide cases led to the suicide of the perpetrator (Karlsson et al., 2021). A study of mass murder in Switzerland, which included twenty instances of familicide, found a total of four instances with a mentally ill and/or psychotic perpetrator, including three perpetrators with a diagnosis in the schizophrenia spectrum (Frei & Illic, 2022). Notably the same study found that among nine instances of public mass murder, eight of the perpetrators suffered from a psychotic disorder (Frei & Illic, 2022).

Infanticide and filicide involve the killing of children by a parent, where research related to female perpetrators consistently demonstrates increased evidence of mental health concerns, particularly related to psychotic symptoms. For example, research in Michigan found that 48% of women who killed their children were diagnosed with schizophrenia and 35% were diagnosed with major depressive disorder with psychotic features (Lewis & Bunce, 2023). A similar study in France found 41% of women had a diagnosis of a mood disorder and 41% were diagnosed with a psychotic disorder (Raymond et al., 2022), and a study in the Netherlands found more than 50% women who

killed their children experienced significant mental illness at the time of the offense (Liem & Koenraadt, 2008).

When looking at instances where murder is committed within a family system, to include instances where parents and/or siblings are murdered by a child or sibling, research suggests higher levels of psychotic disorders about these perpetrators (Gondwe, 2021). During the COVID pandemic there is evidence that lack of access to appropriate psychiatric care leading to increased psychosis contributed to episodes of homicide within family units, specifically related to lockdown conditions (Campanha & Telles, 2023). When looking specifically at parental homicide, research has demonstrated an association between schizophrenia spectrum disorders among adult perpetrators and a history of child abuse and/or family violence in adolescent perpetrators (Trotta et al., 2020).

Forensic evaluators tasked with assessment of perpetrators of various types of murder of family members should explore mental health concerns related to psychosis, particularly consideration of diagnoses that might include schizophrenia spectrum disorders, post-partum psychosis, and depressive disorders with psychotic features. This presentation discusses these issues.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Define various types of familial killings, including filicide, parenticide, and familicide.
2. Describe risk factors for familial killing, including the links between various types of psychotic symptoms and murder of family members.
3. Explain the primary elements in an assessment of individuals facing charges related to family murder, with specific emphasis on assessment of schizophrenia spectrum disorders, post-partum psychosis, and depression with psychotic features.

Rebecca Smith-Casey, J.D., Psy.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, a certified school psychologist, and a current professor in the Master's in forensic psychology program at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. She is the author of the New Jersey Competency Assessment Tool (NJ-CAT). Rebecca is the principal psychologist at River Valley Psycholegal Consulting, where her work focuses on assessment in civil and criminal forensic matters, trauma, law enforcement evaluations, educational testing, diagnostic clarity, and providing gender affirming care for transgender youth.

Anna Casey, B.S. is a 2024 graduate of Pennsylvania State University where she earned her B.S. in Bio-Behavioral Health. Anna is an intern with River Valley Psycholegal Consulting and is interested in the biological impacts of cancer on patient functioning.

11:15-12:15 PM (1 CE)

Volition and Folk Psychology in Death Penalty Mitigation

Jonathan Venn, Ph.D.

"Volition" refers to the process by which individual human beings choose and direct their own behavior. This concept is central to a retributive model of criminal justice which emphasizes individual moral responsibility and functions by identifying, accusing, blaming, and punishing individuals. Impairments of volition due to mental illness are invoked in mens rea defenses, the insanity defense, the plea of guilty but mentally ill, the civil commitment of sexually violent predators, and mitigation. Some experts have written that volitional impairment cannot be assessed at a level that is suitable for forensic work (American Psychiatric Association, 1983; American Medical Association and American Psychiatric Association, 1985). Other experts have

developed methods that are used to assess volitional impairment. Guidelines developed by Rogers and Shuman for the assessment of volitional incapacity will be presented.

Folk psychology is a branch of philosophy that studies the attributions that are made by untrained persons regarding the causes of human behavior. Folk psychology is both universal and flexible: It is present in all human interactions, and it can be shaped, for example, by mitigation testimony. The dominant model in the philosophy of folk psychology is the BDI model (beliefs-desires-intentions) developed by Michael Bratman of Stanford University. This model emphasizes the role of conscious mental processes in human volition. The science of psychology, on the other hand, demonstrates the existence of numerous deterministic factors that influence human behavior and decision-making.

A case is presented in which mitigation was argued before a federal jury in a capital trial. The defendant is one of the thirty-seven federal death-row inmates whose sentences were commuted by President Biden on 12/23/2024. We will analyze this mitigation testimony in terms of volition and folk psychology.

A probability-based and step-wise model of causation is presented for use in mitigation testimony. A series of slides that were developed by Mark Cunningham, Ph.D., of Seattle, WA, is presented to illustrate this model of causation.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Outline a process for assessing volitional impairment.
2. Explain how juries, prosecutors, and defense attorneys are likely to approach the issue of volition.
3. Describe a probability-based and step-wise theory of volition that describes the role of mental illness in criminal behavior.

*Jonathan Venn, Ph.D., ABPP, has provided psychological services since 1971. He has evaluated thousands of criminal defendants, convicted felons, and justice-involved youth. He has testified in hundreds of litigated proceedings. He has been affiliated with seven universities and has published original articles in peer-reviewed journals. His book, *Crime and Psychology: Foundations of Forensic Practice*, Routledge (2024), was a #1 best seller in Forensic Medicine. He holds ABPP certifications in clinical psychology and forensic psychology. He is licensed to practice psychology in four states including California.*

12:15-1:30 PM **Lunch Break** (on your own)

1:30-4:45 PM **Mental Health Diversion and Forensic Neuropsychology** – Versailles Ballroom

1:30-2:30 PM (1 CE - ethics)

Case Study of Mental Health Diversion in the Courtroom: Promoting Integrity of the Court Systems with Expert Psychological Opinion

Mark Burdick, Ph.D., and Charles Baum, J.D.

California Assembly Bill 1810 created the legal foundation for Mental Health Diversion in California. The law went into effect in 2018 to allow defendants with mental health disorders to be diverted to treatment, with the goal of improving their mental health while reducing recidivism and criminal behavior.

Over nearly a decade, California's Mental Health Diversion (MHD) has become the preferred option for criminal defense attorneys, serving as a legal tool for defense attorneys to utilize with clients facing severe legal repercussions. The central question addressed in this presentation, supported by a case study from Santa Cruz County, is whether MHD is always ethically sound in its application. A defendant diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) presents a compelling case for MHD when facing a substantial number of felonies, exceeding fifty.

Under Penal Code Section 1001.36, the MHD law in California provides a legal framework for certain defendants with treatable mental disorders to receive treatment instead of incarceration. However, this provision is not applicable to all defendants. Legal parameters outlined in PC Section 1001.36 are established at the county level to ensure the appropriateness of the MHD process for each jurisdiction.

Recently, the County of Santa Cruz Office of District Attorney objected to a specific case involving military PTSD. This case centered around an individual with over fifty-two felony charges, leading to intense SWAT team and law enforcement confrontations. The outcome of this case suggests that antisocial personality disorder may be a more fitting diagnosis to determine whether the defendant's condition warrants MHD.

California's MHD law provides a legal framework for certain defendants with treatable mental disorders to receive treatment instead of incarceration. However, this provision is not applicable to all defendants, such as those with antisocial personality disorders. The joint legal-medical question herein asks why certain diagnoses are treatable and others are not. The answer may come from the ongoing research outcomes that are still under investigation by such entities as Rand Corporation and other long-term state and federal research projects.

Until questions of effective alternative treatment through MHD are answered through investigative research, should citizens in neighborhoods throughout California be on alert that their communities may not be safe?

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Describe the evolution of mental health diversion (MHD) into a mechanism that facilitates the rehabilitation of non-violent criminals through effective treatment.
2. Analyze approaches to MHD that prioritize ethical considerations and provide effective rehabilitation for criminal offenders.
3. Explain the role of expert psychologists in evaluating questions of MHD in the criminal justice system.

Dr. Mark Burdick is a Board-Certified Forensic Psychologist, with decades of experience in delivering opinions before Santa Cruz Superior Courts as an expert evaluator. Dr Burdick has served as Chair of the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) State of California, as well as the American College of Forensic Psychology (ACFP).

Charles Baum is a tenured Assistant District Attorney in Santa Cruz Superior Court. He is a military veteran with knowledge, perspective, and opinion on how MHD can work and how it doesn't work with defendants facing criminal charges entering back into the public.

2:30-3:30 PM (1 CE)

Neurotoxicology Applied to Forensic Neuropsychology

Raymond Singer, Ph.D.

This presentation describes applications of neurotoxicology to the forensic arenas of disability, personal injury, and criminal responsibility. In addition, this seminar examines why a neuropsychological exam is crucial for such forensic cases. Relevant forensic cases will be discussed.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Explain the relevance of neurotoxicology to forensic psychology practice.
2. Describe the adverse neuropsychological outcomes associated with neurotoxicity.
3. Evaluate the importance of a neuropsychological exam in legal cases related to neurotoxicology.

Raymond Singer, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist and Fellow of the American College of Professional Neuropsychology. Dr. Singer has served as an expert witness in legal cases involving neuropsychology and neurotoxicology. He has published on the topic of neurotoxicology, including the “Neurotoxicity Screening Survey” and the book, “Neurotoxicity Guidebook.”

3:30-3:45 PM **Break**

3:45-4:45 PM (1 CE)

Homicide: Life on the Neuronal Street

John White, Ph.D.

For most of us, it is difficult to imagine an act more vile than murder, especially sexual homicide, serial or mass murder. Humans generally kill each other out of anger, jealousy, revenge, sex, and for financial gain. But some go far beyond just killing. Many serial killers like John Wayne Gacy lived among the corpses they collected and their actions vary greatly from the typical day-to-day homicides we see on the nightly newscasts. Mass murderers like Stephen Paddock kill multiple people at one location at one time. Although motives and behaviors may be similar and placed neatly into categories, each murder, from both a neuropsychological and crime scene perspective, is different with a specific beginning, middle, and end. What can a neuropsychologist acting as a police consultant offer relative to the personality of the perpetrator based on behaviors at murder scenes?

From a crime scene perspective, murder scenes can be classified as organized, disorganized, or mixed. Organized crime scenes are well-planned and controlled by the perpetrator, and he leaves very little evidence. From a neuropsychological perspective, an organized crime scene indicates the perpetrator has good prefrontal functioning in the dorsomedial and dorsolateral areas. His ventromedial prefrontal cortex is receptive to the warnings of his somatic markers. The perpetrator stays within his comfort zone and, if he transports the body, the disposal site is planned ahead of time as his spatial processing is intact. As he decides to carry out his murder, his orbitofrontal cortex and anterior cingulate cortex refuse to put the brakes on and they give the okay to initiate the motor movements needed to physically commit the act. They refuse to put the brakes on because of the dopamine rush provided by the nucleus accumbens, a tremendous operant conditioning reinforcement. If the murders are the result of a predatory killer, other brain areas relative to feelings of empathy may be compromised as the killer could be a psychopath.

If the crime is disorganized, the police investigator usually finds a bloody crime scene in disarray with overturned furniture. Weapons used come from the scene where the murder occurs. Signs of overkill are often found on the victim as a result of rage as well as undoing, a sign of remorse. Disorganized crime scenes indicate to the neuropsychologist that the subcortical limbic areas hijacked the prefrontal cortex, compromising executive functioning. If the perpetrator blitzes the victim, his language skills may not be adequate enough to con or lure the victim. Subtle features of a psychotic break or ongoing mental illness or aspects of a paraphilia may be evident to the neuropsychologist. Other neuropsychological domains such as speed of processing, memory, and attention may be compromised. Finally, studying the developmental history of a suspect may help match a suspect to the crime scene behaviorally, enhancing the profiling process.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Describe areas of the brain that contribute to both disorganized and organized crime scene behaviors.
2. List the behaviors most amenable to the profiling process from a neuropsychological perspective.
3. Describe psychopathic behaviors.

John H. White, Ph.D. began his career in the Identification Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) before continuing his law enforcement endeavors as an investigator sergeant for the Dallas, Texas Police Department, where he worked in patrol, the Psychological Services Office, Internal Affairs Division, and the Fugitive and Special Investigations Division. After receiving a Ph.D. from the University of North Texas, Dr. White began teaching at Stockton University where he developed forensic psychology tracks for the criminal justice and psychology programs. He is a licensed forensic and neuropsychologist in New Jersey where he specializes in the evaluation and treatment of both adult and juvenile sex offenders. He also conducts competency tests and insanity evaluations for those standing trial and he conducts neuropsychological evaluations of children and adolescents who are experiencing problems in school and with their families. He has been inducted into the Vidocq Society in Philadelphia, an organization that meets once per month to discuss cold case homicides. He is the former Director of Psychology at Encompass Rehabilitation Hospital of Vineland where he conducted psychological and neuropsychological assessments of patients. He was a consultant/presenter to the technical advisors and writers of the TV show Criminal Minds and was the technical advisor to the show Killer Profile on A&E. He earned a Clinical Neuropsychology Certificate from Fielding Graduate University in New York City. Dr. White has written numerous articles on serial murder, paraphilia, and sex offenders. He continues to consult with police departments regarding atypical homicides. He is also a former associate member of The Academy Group, a forensic research and training organization.

5:30-6:30 PM **Student Poster Session** - Embassy Room (no CE)

5:30-7:30 PM **Welcome Reception** - Riviera Room and Terrace (no CE)

Friday, March 21

7:15-8:00 **Registration and Continental Breakfast** – foyer outside of Versailles Ballroom

8:00 AM - 12:15 PM **Competence to Stand Trial & Ethical and Legal Issues in Forensic Psychology** – Versailles Ballroom

8:00-9:00 AM (1 CE)

Competence to Stand Trial Issues

Albert Kastl, Ph.D., and William K. Marek, Ph.D.

The question of competence to stand trial is frequently addressed by forensic psychologists and psychiatrists. In the 1980s, it was thought that there were 25,000 such evaluations performed annually, but a current figure is not available. The fees for these evaluations are low, and generally one has an hour to review the file, an hour to examine the defendant, and an hour or so to write a report. There is little time for reviewing statutes and case files and for administering psychological tests. Standards vary from state to state, and county to county. This presentation will focus on the San Francisco Bay Area.

The seminar will begin with an overview of the history and context of competency to stand trial issues. Most of the presentation will focus on five areas of competence to stand trial issues. The first is to identify the nature of the defendant's mental disorder. This must be stated even if it is tentative, and medical records are not available. The second is if the defendant can understand the nature of the criminal proceedings, what they are being charged with, what possible penalties and pleas are available, etc. Third is if the defendant can assist counsel with a sound defense strategy. Fourth is the issue of ongoing dangerousness. The fifth consideration relates to the defendant's capacity to make sound decisions regarding psychotropic medication. If there is a question in this area, a referral to a psychiatric consultant is likely indicated. Information that is usually included in a report (but is just not available to the reviewer) should be commented on, with any pertinent caveats that the lack of information might have on the conclusions in the report. Illustrations of the challenges of real-world reports and testimony will be discussed.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Discuss the historical context of competence to stand trial evaluations and why that is currently still important.
2. Explain three ways to increase report validity and reliability.
3. Discuss the problems associated with writing a report under the current psycholegal system.

Albert Kastl, Ph.D., is a California psychologist, a member of the ACFP Advisory Board and an ACFP Fellow. He has performed hundreds of competency evaluations.

William K. Marek, Ph.D., is a California psychologist. He is retired from the Federal Bureau of Prisons, but teaches at two local universities and has a private practice.

9:00-10:00 AM (1 CE)

The Assessment of the Accused's Ability to Assist Counsel Revisited

John Philipsborn, M.Ed., M.A.S., J.D.

In criminal cases nationwide, the assessment of the accused's competence to stand trial is the most frequent reason for the involvement of a psychologist or psychiatrist in the criminal court process. Since the United States Supreme Court's ruling in *Dusky v. United States* in 1960, there have been notable developments in the methods and tools available for mental health professionals to use in assessing competence to stand trial. But there remain differences in the ways that courts, lawyers, and the mental health professions assess the accused's ability to consult with counsel with a reasonable degree of rational understanding. This presentation will review the differences in approaches, and will recommend ways that forensic psychologists (and

psychiatrists) can more completely and reliably address and assess the ability to assist component of the competence to stand trial requirement.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. List the caselaw, practice standards, and literature that describe the ability to consult and assist with a reasonable degree of rational understanding.
2. Evaluate why the competence assessment tools and semi structured interviews commonly used in today's competence assessments incompletely address the ability to consult and assist.
3. Explain how the use of multidisciplinary assessment methods enhance the reliability of competence to stand trial assessments.

John Philipsborn has been a criminal defense lawyer for more than 45 years during which he has been involved in the trial and litigation of many cases, including death penalty cases, involving forensic mental health evidence. His work has been recognized through a Lifetime Achievement Award from California Attorneys for Criminal Justice, and in 2024, the Forensic Mental Health Association of California named its Legal Excellence in Forensic Mental Award after him. He has litigated cases before the United States and California Supreme Courts, and continues regularly to publish literature for and to present training and continuing education to lawyers and mental health professionals. He has been a frequent presenter to the members of the College.

10:00-10:15 AM **Coffee Break**

10:15 AM - 12:15 PM (2 CE – ethics)

Forensic Skills Workshop: Addressing Ethical and Practice Issues in Forensic Psychology

Mark Ackerman, Ph.D. (Moderator), Valerie McClain, Psy.D., and John Philipsborn, J.D.

This forensic skills panel focuses on issues in civil and criminal law that interface with psychology and expert testimony by psychologists. This is an interactive session involving moderator, panelists, and audience on advanced ethical and practice issues confronting the forensic psychologist. Vignettes submitted to the panel by practicing forensic psychologists are read aloud and discussed. The vignettes describe problems and experiences that forensic psychologists often confront in their practices and in court. Attendees are exposed to a wide variety of forensic cases and problems in civil and criminal areas.

At the end of this workshop, the learner will be able to:

1. Describe how to approach ethical and professional issues in practice and in court.
2. Explain how to address ethical dilemmas that arise in difficult cases.
3. Analyze forensic case dilemmas from an ethical perspective.

Mark D. Ackerman, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist in Georgia and Florida. His practice emphasizes forensic assessment and psychological testing and treatment. Dr. Ackerman holds adjunct faculty status with the Department of Veterans Affairs - Atlanta and Emory University School of Medicine.

Valerie R. McClain, Psy.D., is a licensed forensic psychologist who practices in Tampa, Florida. She conducts evaluations for both circuit and federal court and has been in private practice over thirty years. She conducts both court-ordered and confidential evaluations.

John Philipsborn has been a criminal defense lawyer for more than 45 years during which he has been involved in the trial and litigation of many cases involving forensic mental health evidence.

12:15-1:30 PM **Lunch Break** (on your own)

1:30-4:45 PM Trauma Informed Care & Sexual Offender Cases: Ethical and Professional Practice Issues – Versailles Ballroom

1:30-2:30 PM (1 CE)

Trauma Informed Care in Correctional Settings

Rebecca Smith-Casey, J.D., Psy.D., and Erica Jennett, M.A.

Upwards of 20 percent of inmates show a need for mental health treatment, but research suggests that approximately half of them will receive no treatment during their incarceration and 30 percent will have their mental health needs unmet even following release (Severson et al., 2020). The National Institutes of Health estimate 18 percent of male inmates and 40 percent of female inmates meet diagnostic criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Research has consistently demonstrated that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are linked to increased rates of incarceration and inmates have higher ACEs scores as compared to the general population. This association between high ACEs score and contact with the justice system begins in juvenile populations, with systematic reviews of research suggesting that estimates of the adjusted odds ratio of justice system contact per 1-point increase in ACE score ranged from 0.91 to 1.68 (Graf et al., 2021).

Trauma-informed care shows promise in increasing responsiveness to cognitive-behavioral programs designed to reduce recidivism, however, efforts to expand this type of programming into correctional settings demonstrates the complexities of translating trauma-informed principles into practice and emphasizes the importance of continuous refinement of approaches to improve outcomes in correctional settings (Auty et al., 2022). Research looking at the introduction of trauma-informed care for incarcerated women has focused on exploring the effectiveness of various programs, such as Seeking Safety and STAIR, and their impact in addressing mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, and coping self-efficacy. One such study demonstrated statistically significant improvements across all these areas, with Seeking Safety proving more effective in enhancing coping self-efficacy (Tripodi et al., 2022). Trauma-informed programs play a critical role in improving incarcerated women's mental health, emphasizing the importance of screening for trauma and offering targeted programming to aid in their recovery and successful reintegration into society.

Recent work looking at trauma and interventions for trauma in correctional settings advocate for considering trauma-treatments when developing both correctional programs and correctional policies. Trauma-informed care, guided by SAMHSA's core principles of safety, hope, autonomy, respect, and empathy (SHARE), can significantly enhance the effectiveness of correctional rehabilitation (Levenson & Willis, 2018). Research underscores the potential of trauma-informed practices to improve outcomes such as reduced recidivism and successful reentry, suggesting that aligning correctional goals with trauma recovery is essential for long-term success (Levenson & Willis, 2018). Research specifically looking at female incarcerated populations found a strong correlation between participation in trauma-informed programs and lower recidivism rates (Lehrer, 2021), emphasizing the potential of trauma-informed approaches to reduce recidivism, improve the lives of incarcerated women, and positively impact their families. Given the known association

between traumatic experiences and involvement in the criminal justice system, trauma informed care in correctional settings is a crucial step in reducing recidivism and improving overall functioning. However, there are specific complications that come with attempting trauma-informed care in these types of settings. For example, there are unique challenges faced by correctional institutions in addressing trauma, such as abrupt detoxification, pervasive authoritative environments, and sensory triggers that can destabilize both individuals and the institution (Miller & Najavits, 2012). This presentation describes these and other facets of trauma-informed care in correctional settings.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Explain the links between trauma, post-traumatic distress, and criminal justice contact.
2. Discuss the benefits of trauma-informed care in correctional settings, particularly related to recidivism.
3. Describe differing needs of those with trauma histories and/or high ACEs scores in correctional settings.

Rebecca Smith-Casey, J.D., Psy.D. is a licensed clinical psychologist in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, a certified school psychologist, and a current professor in the Master's in forensic psychology program at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. She is the author of the New Jersey Competency Assessment Tool (NJ-CAT). Rebecca is the principal psychologist at River Valley Psycholegal Consulting, where her work focuses on assessment in civil and criminal forensic matters, trauma, law enforcement evaluations, educational testing, diagnostic clarity, and providing gender affirming care for transgender youth.

Erica Jennett, based in Gallatin, TN, is the Program Coordinator for Sumner County Behavioral Health Court. She ensures court participants receive appropriate mental health treatment and support. Erica collaborates with mental health professionals, monitors compliance, and develops programs to improve outcomes for justice-involved individuals. She holds dual bachelor's degrees in criminal justice/political science and psychology from Austin Peay State University (2017), a master's in forensic psychology from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology (2021), and completed her licensure certificate in 2024. Erica is currently pursuing her LPC-MHSP license.

2:30-3:30 PM (1 CE - ethics)

Clinician Bias Against Sexual Offenders: Professional, Treatment, and Ethical Implications

Rebecca Smith-Casey, J.D., Psy.D., and Hannah Pitchford, B.S.

The treatment of sexual offenders provides points of controversy related to public support and perception, as well as clinician bias related to the prospect of engaging in a therapeutic relationship with someone who has been convicted of a sexual offense. The public at large holds very negative views of sexual offenders, which often times means that the public does not support community-based interventions that have been designed to reduce sexual recidivism, however, there is often widespread support for punitive policies that are lacking empirical evidence to suggest they are effective means of reducing re-offending behaviors (Harper & Hicks, 2022). When it comes specifically to clinicians, there is often a desire to avoid clinical work with these offenders for personal and professional reasons. However, it is notable that some research suggests that professionals who do work with sexual offenders have more positive views of the population than the general public, although there is evidence of adverse impact on these professionals that increases with the length of time working with this population (Woodhouse & Craven-Staines, 2021).

When looking at the research on sexual offenders, there are significant inconsistencies in outcome studies looking to determine what interventions are most effective in reducing recidivism (Lussier et al., 2023), which may contribute to the reluctance of some providers to work with this population. In essence, the inconsistency may contribute to the idea that the risk of working with this population is too great because it is harder to predict what will “work” to make treatment most effective. Similarly, the negative perception the public holds of sexual offenders may translate to challenges in navigating one’s personal and professional life if one works predominantly with such clients. For example, healthcare providers in Germany noted that media coverage related to pedophilia perpetuated public stigma and created inaccurate expectations related to clients and treatment (Stelzmann et al., 2020).

Researchers have demonstrated that many therapists who learn that their clients have sexual attraction to children experience a variety of negative responses, including revulsion, anxiety about liability, and doubt about whether they can even help the client (Jahnke, 2018; Lasher & Stinson, 2017; Stiels-Glenn, 2010), which in turn leads to a decision not to work with this population. As to other personal impacts of treatment on providers, research among counselors who work with sexual offenders found counselors reported changes to specific thoughts about themselves and others, challenges in interpersonal relationships, changes in sexual activity, and depression (Evans et al., 2019). Further research has suggested that when working with sexual offenders, male therapists are more likely to suffer from vicarious traumatization, female therapists are more like to experience adverse emotional reactions, and male and female therapists show similar rates of burnout and impact on their sexual lives (Baum & Moyal, 2020). Interestingly, in terms of gender differences among clinicians, research suggests that female providers hold more positive perceptions of sexual offenders (Woodhouse & Craven-Staines, 2021). There are additional ethical and legal issues that can arise in working with these clients, which can include concerns about mandated reporting, mandated treatment guidelines, therapist competency, lack of access to appropriate supervision, issues related to personal bias, and concerns about liability if the client engages in a sexual offense during or after treatment.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. List potential sources of professional bias in working with sexual offender populations.
2. Explain the links between professional work with sexual offenders and personal impacts for clinicians.
3. Analyze potential ethical and legal issues that contribute to provider bias related to sexual offender populations.

Rebecca Smith-Casey, J.D., Psy.D. is a licensed clinical psychologist in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, a certified school psychologist, and a current professor in the Master’s in forensic psychology program at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. She is the author of the New Jersey Competency Assessment Tool (NJ-CAT). Rebecca is the principal psychologist at River Valley Psycholegal Consulting, where her work focuses on assessment in civil and criminal forensic matters, trauma, law enforcement evaluations, educational testing, diagnostic clarity, and providing gender affirming care for transgender youth.

Hannah Pitchford is a current student at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology and is pursuing her Master of Arts in Forensic Psychology. Hannah is a 2023 graduate of Clemson University where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice with a minor in Psychology in three years. She is from Charleston, South Carolina and currently resides in Greenville, South Carolina. Hannah is passionate about working with the veteran population and hopes to work for the Department of Veterans Affairs as a licensed professional counselor in the future.

3:30-3:45 PM **Break**

3:45-4:45 PM (1 CE)

Forensic Risk Assessment of Sexual Recidivism: Research Update and Practical Implications

Brian Abbott, Ph.D.

Research into the assessment of sexual recidivism risk via static, dynamic, and protective actuarial measures has continued to evolve and has produced important implications when conducting forensic evaluations. The presentation will discuss recent research related to factors associated with the reduction in sexual recidivism risk, including advancing age, time elapsed since the date of the index offense, and protective factors. A critical examination of the concept of lifetime sexual recidivism rates and time free in the community will be explained. The presentation will discuss how to integrate the advances in sexual recidivism risk assessment into forensic practice when reporting the likelihood of sexual reoffense, considering risk management, and sexual offender treatment planning.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. List three age-related factors that influence the rate of sexual recidivism over time.
2. Analyze two strengths and two limitations of lifetime sexual recidivism rates and residual sexual recidivism risk related to time free in the community.
3. Describe the procedure to integrate protective factors with static risk factors and the implications for risk management.
4. Explain two ways to integrate advances in sexual recidivism risk into forensic practice.

Brian R. Abbott, Ph.D., holds a doctorate in psychology and a master's degree in social work. He is licensed by the states of California and Washington as a clinical psychologist and as a clinical social worker in California, as well as a licensed sexual offender evaluator in Illinois. Dr. Abbott is in independent practice based in San Jose, California and he has worked forensically in nine states and the Federal Eastern District of North Carolina. Over his 44-year career, Dr. Abbott has performed more than 2,400 forensic evaluations for criminal, civil, dependency, delinquency, and family courts in a wide variety of areas. For the past 20 years, Dr. Abbott has conducted sexually violent predator ("SVP") evaluations, and he has provided consultation and training to forensic practitioners and attorneys. Dr. Abbott has been sought out to testify as an expert in Daubert and Frye admissibility hearings in multiple states related to diagnosis and risk assessment issues with sexually violent predators. He has conducted research and has authored or coauthored 10 peer reviewed journal articles related to risk assessment of sexually violent predators.

4:45-5:30 PM **Student Poster Session** - Versailles Foyer (no CE)

Saturday, March 22

7:15-8:00 **Registration and Continental Breakfast** – foyer outside of Versailles Ballroom

8:00 AM - 12:15 PM **Family Law and Professional Practice in Forensic Psychology** – Versailles Ballroom

8:00-10:00 AM (2 CE - diversity)

Viewing the Impact of Different Parenting Styles and Values through Developmental Science

April Harris-Britt, Ph.D.

Family systems have become increasingly diverse, with individuals from multi-faceted backgrounds partnering and raising children with a blending of parenting styles, values, and cultural identities. Notably, parents often struggle with accepting and supporting the pre-existing differences post-divorce and in high-conflict custody matters, feelings about different parenting styles and values become polarized. For the children in transition, they are often challenged to adjust to these differences, on top of the typical stressors associated with living in two homes. This workshop will explore various ways in which differing parenting values and cultural values can impact children's adjustment from a risk and resilience framework and through the lens of developmental science. For example, what are the developmental impacts on children when consistency, regularity, and predictability become too far apart? Under what circumstances might the differences across homes produce more cognitive, emotional, and social flexibility for the child(ren)? And, are there situations in which navigating discrepant cultural values and parenting styles might actually result in a level of burden that could result in detrimental long-term impacts for the child(ren)? This workshop will assist family law professionals to understand and be able to critically evaluate interactive effects of differences and the relevant scientific literature regarding children's development. Participants will apply these concepts to case examples.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Explain how polarized parenting differences can magnify the typical adjustment difficulties for children in transition.
2. Analyze the impact of parenting differences on children's adjustment through the lens of developmental science.
3. Describe the circumstances under which parenting differences across homes might produce more psychological flexibility for children.

April Harris-Britt, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist who conducts forensic evaluations and provides expert forensic services. Areas of expertise include trauma, ADHD & autism spectrum disorders, risk and resilience across the lifespan, and multicultural issues. Dr. Harris-Britt is on faculty at Fielding Graduate University where she serves as the Lead Faculty for the Forensic Concentration. She is currently a member of the APA Board of Professional Affairs, the AFCC Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and previously the AFCC Task Force which revised the 2022 Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations. She is currently President for the North Carolina Chapter of AFCC.

10:00-10:15 AM **Coffee Break**

10:15-11:15 AM (1 CE)

Assessing Allegations of Parental Alienation Child Abuse During Child Custody Evaluations

Shawn Wygant, M.A., Ph.D. Candidate

The practice of conducting child custody evaluations is not well-defined in the scientific literature, leading to a lack of standardized guidelines for evaluators, particularly in cases involving serious allegations of a specific form of child psychological abuse: parental alienation. Evaluators often rely on methodological approaches that neglect the application of scientific principles during data collection, analysis, report writing, and expert testimony. This problem is compounded by an

overreliance on psychometric instruments that are unable to accurately assess whether parental alienation child abuse has occurred.

For nearly four decades, courts and evaluators have approached allegations of parental alienation in child custody cases in two ways: (1) waiting for symptoms of parental alienation to appear in the child before intervening, and (2) intervening when there is evidence of parental behaviors likely to cause parental alienation symptoms. Over time, a consensus has emerged among courts and evaluators that exposure to parental alienation behaviors constitutes a serious form of psychological abuse that warrants a child protection response. The primary challenge for courts and evaluators is determining which approach results in the fewest type 2 errors. A type 2 error occurs when an assessment concludes that parental alienation is not present when it actually is.

A recent analysis of 398 appellate court decisions from 16 states, where parental alienation was alleged, found that trial courts ruled out parental alienation 55% of the time. In 31% of cases where the court determined that parental alienation required a protective response, the court or an expert evaluator based their findings on the premise that parental alienation only exists if demonstrable harm to the child is evident through observable symptoms. In the remaining 15% of cases where parental alienation was found, the court or expert relied on the parental alienation child abuse model. This model posits that a child's exposure to parental behaviors likely to cause parental alienation symptoms justifies a protective response. Recent scientific reasoning from child abuse experts suggests that waiting for demonstrable harm is a form of neglect, which can increase the likelihood of type 2 errors. This is reflected in the 25% type 2 error rate found in appellate court decisions where parental alienation was ruled out despite clear evidence of exposure to behaviors likely to cause parental alienation symptoms.

This workshop analyzes the methods used by trial courts and child custody evaluators when assessing allegations of parental alienation by unpacking cases where the relevant science was applied correctly and where it was misapplied. Because many evaluations involving allegations of parental alienation as a form of child abuse result in a trial where the evaluator is called to testify, a portion of this workshop will be devoted to exploring how to present scientifically defensible expert testimony during direct and cross examination.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Distinguish between cases in which the relevant science regarding the assessment of parental alienation child abuse was applied correctly and where it was misapplied.
2. Explain why waiting for symptoms of parental alienation to appear before intervening is a form of child neglect
3. Describe how to present scientifically defensible expert testimony during direct and cross examination.

Shawn Wygant is a highly skilled forensic psychologist and child custody evaluator/trainer who specializes in the assessment and treatment of parental alienation and other complex forms of psychological child abuse. He shares his expertise with family courts across the country assisting triers of fact in unpacking complicated behavioral science evidence. He has worked tirelessly with Dr. Demosthenes Lorandos for the past 11 years to put the essential research concerning parental alienation into the hands of family law professionals through ongoing training seminars.

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM (1 CE)

Starting and Building a Forensic Psychology Practice

Mark Burdick, Ph.D., April Harris-Britt, Ph.D., and James Schutte, Ph.D.

Many psychologists aim to start or grow their own practice but do not receive specific training or expert advice about doing so. This is especially true within specialties such as forensic psychology. In this panel discussion, forensic psychologists will share their experiences and recommendations about starting and building a forensic practice and will answer audience questions.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Summarize methods for starting a forensic psychology practice.
2. Describe useful approaches for building a forensic psychology practice.
3. List factors to consider when starting and building a forensic psychology practice.

Dr. Mark Burdick is a Board-Certified Forensic Psychologist, with decades of experience in delivering opinions before Santa Cruz Superior Courts as an expert evaluator. Dr Burdick has served as Chair of Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) State of California, as well as the American College of Forensic Psychology (ACFP).

April Harris-Britt, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist who conducts forensic evaluations and provides expert forensic services. Areas of expertise include trauma, ADHD & autism spectrum disorders, risk and resilience across the lifespan, and multicultural issues. Dr. Harris-Britt is on faculty at Fielding Graduate University where she serves as the Lead Faculty for the Forensic Concentration. She is currently a member of the APA Board of Professional Affairs, the AFCC Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and previously the AFCC Task Force which revised the 2022 Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations. She is currently President for the North Carolina Chapter of AFCC.

James W. Schutte, Ph.D., is a bilingual psychologist in private practice in El Paso, Texas. His practice primarily involves psychological assessments for matters of Social Security disability, child protection, vocational rehabilitation, criminal and civil litigation, readiness for admission to the Catholic seminary, and evaluation of autism spectrum disorder and ADHD.

12:15-1:30 PM **Lunch Break** (on your own)

1:30-4:45 PM **Ethics, Diversity, and Assessment in Forensic Psychology** – Versailles Ballroom

1:30-2:30 PM (1 CE – ethics)

Unresolved Ethical Challenges in Providing Mandated Sex Offender Treatment

Susan G. Goldberg, J.D., Ph.D., Giovanna Martinez, M.A., and Megan Spees, M.A.

Psychologists continue to have to manage complex ethical questions regarding mandated sex offender therapy or treatment to sex offenders on parole or probation in the community. Such treatment is often viewed as being part of a supervision “containment model.” Pursuant to this model, the task of treatment is to learn about the sex offender’s sexual history, sexual offending history, and sexual fantasy life. The provider must then disclose much of this information to the probation authorities. The ultimate aim of this practice is to determine the client’s risk of re-offense and to protect the community. Yet each element of this practice can be fraught with ethical issues. This presentation will discuss those ethical issues, challenging aspects of the theory, and ways to navigate the issues.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Explain the ethical issues implicated in mandated sex offender treatment.
2. Evaluate the ethical risks inherent in mandated sex offender treatment.
3. Describe when mandated sex offender treatment may be ethically compromised.

Susan Goldberg, Ph.D., is a Core Doctoral Faculty member at Fielding Graduate University. She is also an attorney and forensic psychologist. She has written on legal and ethical issues in psychology.

Giovanna Martinez and Megan Spees are forensic evaluators and doctoral students in the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program at Fielding Graduate University.

2:30-3:30 PM (1 CE – diversity)

Gender Affirming Care in Forensic Settings

Rebecca Smith-Casey, J.D., Psy.D., and Erica Jennett, M.A.

There is a call to action worldwide to improve the healthcare of transgender individuals to achieve health equity for individuals of all gender identities (Lo & Horton, 2016). The Human Rights Campaign estimates that as of 2024, there were more than 2 million transgender individuals in the United States. Research consistently shows that transgender people are over four times more likely than cisgender people to experience violent victimization, including rape, sexual assault, and aggravated or simple assault. Modern research shows much higher numbers of transgender people than were apparent in earlier clinic-based studies, as well as biological factors associated with gender incongruence, with research demonstrating that many transgender people live on the margins of society, facing stigma, discrimination, exclusion, violence, and poor health (Winter et al., 2016).

In addition to social stigma, transgender individuals are likely to experience adversity in seeking mental health treatment, including discrimination targeting their trans identity from healthcare providers, victim blaming, and harassment, as well as healthcare providers who delay care or refuse to provide care specifically because the individual is transgender. Transgender individuals experience higher rates of sexual assault than the general population and have historically had significantly lower access to health care services able to meet their needs (DuMont et al., 2021). Research demonstrates that many providers, particularly in forensic contexts, feel underprepared for working with trans clients, with a specific need for additional trainings and guidance in working with these populations (Marlow et al., 2015).

There is limited empirical research related to numerous aspects of the involvement of transgender individuals in forensic settings, for instance, a lack of research related to sexual violence perpetrated by transgender individuals (Jumper, 2021), meaning that further research is warranted to ensure best practices are being addressed. Further, psychological evaluations are often a crucial step in the transition process for transgender individuals, meaning that evaluators appropriately trained in working with trans clients are crucial for them to access gender affirming care (Henrich, 2022). Additionally, given the high rates of victimization that occur in the transgender community, providers can anticipate a need to engage in gender affirming care related to trauma experiences. The presentation will address specific practical considerations related to gender affirming care overall, with a specific focus on assessment, therapeutic interventions, implications for sentencing and incarceration, trauma informed care, and ethical issues for practitioners.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Summarize the challenges related to access to medical and mental health care for the transgender community.
2. Explain how to provide gender affirming care to members of the transgender community in the context of assessments and therapeutic interventions.
3. Describe challenges related to transgender individuals in the criminal justice system, including challenges when incarcerated and when a victim of crime.

Rebecca Smith-Casey, J.D., Psy.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, a certified school psychologist, and a current professor in the Master's in forensic psychology program at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. She is the author of the New Jersey Competency Assessment Tool (NJ-CAT). Rebecca is the principal psychologist at River Valley Psycholegal Consulting, where her work focuses on assessment in civil and criminal forensic matters, trauma, law enforcement evaluations, educational testing, diagnostic clarity, and providing gender affirming care for transgender youth.

Erica Jennett, based in Gallatin, TN, is the Program Coordinator for Sumner County Behavioral Health Court. She ensures court participants receive appropriate mental health treatment and support. Erica collaborates with mental health professionals, monitors compliance, and develops programs to improve outcomes for justice-involved individuals. She holds dual bachelor's degrees in criminal justice/political science and psychology from Austin Peay State University (2017), a master's in forensic psychology from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology (2021), and completed her licensure certificate in 2024. Erica is currently pursuing her LPC-MHSP license.

3:30-3:45 PM **Break**

3:45-4:45 PM (1 CE)

The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fifth Edition (WAIS-5): Conceptual and Forensic Issues

James Schutte, Ph.D., and Christopher Schutte, A.B.

The recently published fifth edition of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS-5) marks a substantial revision to the most frequently-used measure of late adolescent and adult intelligence. With shorter administration time, a reduced number of subtests required to compute a Full Scale IQ (FSIQ), and the addition of numerous new subtests, the WAIS-5 will introduce a substantial change in the way intelligence is measured for at least the next decade. With the introduction of a revised version of such a commonly-used psychological measure, there exists a need for examination of its impact on both conceptual and forensic issues. This presentation will cover the changes to the structure of the WAIS-5, the potential for using the WAIS-5 as a substitute for other neuropsychological measures, and the impact that a revised intelligence test and updated norms is likely to have on matters of forensic interest, such as competency, insanity, death penalty eligibility, and performance validity. Attendees will be able to describe the updates present in the WAIS-5, develop a test selection strategy, and prepare to deal with cross-examination questions involving the use of this revised intelligence measure. Issues of cross-cultural assessment and second-language testing will also be discussed.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. List the changes from the WAIS-IV to WAIS-5.

2. Explain a test selection strategy for intelligence assessment of late adolescents and adults in forensic settings.
3. Discuss cross-examination, cultural, and language issues regarding the use of the WAIS-5.

James W. Schutte, Ph.D. is a bilingual psychologist in private practice in El Paso, Texas. His practice primarily involves psychological assessments for matters of Social Security disability, child protection, vocational rehabilitation, criminal and civil litigation, readiness for admission to the Catholic seminary, and evaluation of autism spectrum disorder and ADHD.

Christopher W. Schutte, A.B. graduated with honors from Brown University, and is currently a doctoral student in counseling psychology at Fordham University. His present research interests include cross-cultural perceptions of mental health services, as well as cross-cultural applications of psychological test instruments.

4:45-5:30 PM **Student Poster Session** - Versailles Foyer (no CE)

Sunday, March 23

7:15-8:00 **Registration and Continental Breakfast** – foyer outside of Versailles Ballroom

8:00 AM - 12:15 PM **Hot Topics and Professional Practice Issues in Forensic Psychology** – Versailles Ballroom

8:00-9:00 AM (1 CE)

History of Unacknowledged Sexual Victimization Influences Rape Trial Outcomes

Kasey Connors-Beron, M.S., M.A., Ph.D. Candidate

Sexual violence is experienced at least once in the lifetime of 24.8% to 54.3% individuals. Most of these assaults are not reported to the police and those that are reported to the police often do not result in guilty verdicts. This presentation describes a quantitative research study aimed to fill this gap by examining how (a) unacknowledged sexual victimization, (b) rape myth acceptance, and (c) ambivalent sexism affect juror decision making in a mock rape trial. Approximately 500 jury eligible individuals served as mock jurors. Results found that rape myth acceptance impacted all juror decision making outcomes, while other predictor variables, including gender, sexual assault acknowledgement and hostile sexism, predicted some but not all outcomes.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Explain the influence of rape myth acceptance, ambivalent sexism, and traditional gender role beliefs on acknowledgement of sexual assault experiences.
2. Describe the influence of rape myth acceptance, ambivalent sexism, traditional gender role beliefs, and acknowledgement of sexual assault experiences on jury decision making in a rape trial.
3. Discuss the influence of gender on rape myth acceptance, ambivalent sexism, traditional gender role beliefs, acknowledgement of sexual assault experiences, and jury decision making.

Kasey Connors-Beron is a Ph.D. candidate in clinical psychology at Fielding Graduate University. Kasey conducts research on jurors' judgments in rape trials.

9:00-10:00 AM (1 CE)

Found in Translation: Effective Communication of Statistics to Attorneys

Beverly Griffor, Ph.D., J.D., and Sarah Vasquez, Ph.D., M.P.H.

In this presentation, forensic psychologists will learn effective strategies for communicating complex statistical concepts to attorneys in a clear and accessible manner. Emphasizing the importance of translating technical data into practical insights, the presentation will highlight techniques for simplifying statistical terminology without compromising the integrity of the analysis. Key strategies include using analogies and visual aids, focusing on the relevance of statistical findings to case outcomes, and addressing potential misconceptions or biases that attorneys may have regarding statistical evidence. By fostering collaborative dialogue and tailoring explanations to the attorney's level of understanding, forensic psychologists can ensure that their statistical insights are both meaningful and impactful in the legal context.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Explain how to simplify complex statistical concepts and terminology for legal professionals without compromising accuracy.
2. Describe the use of visual aids and analogies to enhance attorneys' understanding of statistical data in forensic contexts.
3. Develop strategies for addressing common misconceptions and biases that attorneys may have regarding statistical evidence.

Beverly Griffor, JD, PhD, is a Licensed Psychologist with a focus on forensic psychology. As a part of her practice, Beverly completes forensic assessments in family, probate, and criminal matters on behalf of clients, the courts, and attorneys. In her therapeutic practice, she integrates scientific research with legal insights and utilizes elements of geek culture to engage underserved and high-risk populations. Additionally, Beverly teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses in psychology, criminal justice, and family life education. Her scholarly contributions include academic articles and book chapters, and she has served as a mental health trainer for the State of Michigan.

Sarah Vasquez, PhD, MPH, is a Licensed Psychologist with a focus on forensic psychology. She is a Readjustment Counselor with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Assessment Director at Arbor Mountain Therapy & Assessment. Her research focuses on human sexual behavior, sex offenses, anger/violence, personality disorders, PTSD, and veteran assessments. With an interest in veteran populations, she works to improve assessment and treatment of individuals with military-related trauma. Dr. Vasquez's expertise in both forensic psychology and neuropsychology allows her to integrate complex psychological evaluations in clinical, legal, and research settings.

10:00-10:15 AM **Coffee Break**

10:15-11:15 AM (1 CE)

Neuropsychological Consequences of Cannabis Use

Kristine M. Jacquin, Ph.D.

Cannabis is one of the most widely used substances in the U.S., with approximately 43.6 million current users in the U.S. Forensic implications of cannabis use are especially timely given the growing decriminalization of cannabis and increased use of the drug. Cannabis use is associated

with a variety of negative outcomes, including legal problems. The growing use of cannabis and its potential negative outcomes highlight the need for forensic psychologists to understand the psychopharmacology of cannabis and the neuropsychological consequences of cannabis use. This seminar provides an overview of relevant research on cannabis to help forensic psychologists who assess current or former cannabis users. Specifically, this seminar describes the prevalence of cannabis use in the U.S., including in various age and ethnoracial groups. Then, the psychological and legal outcomes associated with cannabis use are examined, followed by an overview of the psychopharmacology of cannabis. Finally, we examine the neuropsychological consequences of acute and ongoing cannabis use.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Describe the prevalence of cannabis use in various groups in the U.S.
2. List three psychological or legal consequences associated with cannabis use.
3. Explain three neuropsychological consequences of cannabis use.

Kristine M. Jacquin, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist with a forensic neuropsychology practice. She is also a Professor of Psychology and Dean at Fielding Graduate University. In addition to assessing the effects of cannabis use in several forensic cases, Dr. Jacquin conducts research on the neuropsychological consequences of cannabis use.

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM (1 CE)

Programs Don't Work

William K. Marek, Ph.D., and Yahziq Ohmn-Drayden, M.A.

This presentation will discuss the scale of how society, government and psychology programs fail, and fail bad. For example, recidivism rates show that two-thirds of inmates will either commit a violation of parole or be returned to prison. This is an excellent example of how the program of punishment disappoints everyone. The last half of this paper will focus on Yochelson & Samenow's magnum opus, *The Criminal Personality*, which criminal personality elements put inmates at risk for recidivism, and why punishment does not work.

The first half of the seminar will focus on why society's obsession with throwing money at changing nurture is doomed to failure. We will also discuss reasons why we think we've got it right, but don't. We will review scientism, confirmation bias, self-fulfilling prophecy, faulty reasoning, hubris, a desire to promote a political/social philosophy, and psychological activism.

At the end of this seminar, the learner will be able to:

1. Explain why current social programs will generally fail.
2. Discuss which criminal personality elements contribute to the program of punishment to not work.
3. Discuss why scientism may lead psychologists to an uncritical trust in science and scientists.

William K. Marek, Ph.D., is retired from the Federal Bureau of Prisons, is in private practice, and teaches at CSU-East Bay and Napa Valley College.

Yahziq Ohmn-Drayden, M.A., is a doctoral student at Fielding Graduate University.

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM (Professional Development for CA psychologists, no CE)
Consultation Group – Normandy (for psychologists who signed up in advance)

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