

The Profiler

NEWSLETTER OF THE COLLEGE OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGISTS

VOLUME 1



The Australian Psychological Society Ltd.

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Welcome

This is the first edition of a new newsletter on behalf of the APS College of Forensic Psychologists. Our hope is that this newsletter will offer a way of communicating information about what is happening in the College, and hopefully a forum for discussions in relation to the area in which we work.

As most members will remember there have been a number of previous attempts to develop a newsletter, none of which have proven to be sustainable over time. The success of any newsletter depends upon its ability to attract material that will be relevant to the readership. As such we hope to include regular updates from members on the following aspects of college business:

- Membership and Governance of the College
- Reports from the States and Territories
- Professional Development Activities
- Training and Accreditation
- Australian Research in Forensic Psychology

Our hope is that we will have sufficient material to produce the newsletter three times a year. We would welcome contributions from members. Please send these by email to: Andrew.day@unisa.edu.au

Andrew Day
SA Section

President's Column

It is my pleasure to write the inaugural president's column for the College of Psychologists Newsletter. We are indebted to Andrew Day and the South Australian Branch for allowing us to build on the South Australian Newsletter to become national. We hope that the Newsletter will become the primary vehicle for communication and dissemination of information to members.

As I write, a flood of thoughts regarding the activities and work over the past four years have come rushing forward. Sifting through them, the message I would like to give is that the work of the College of Forensic Psychologists is incredibly important. When I speak to colleagues, there is a tendency to

say things like "the College should do..." or "why isn't the College doing..." Simply stated YOU are the College. All of the officers at the state and national level are volunteers who give freely, and, most often, generously of their time. We are constantly seeking members to assist with the many activities required to maintain the College. I'd encourage you to contact your local committee, or we in the national committee, with your suggestions and willingness to help implement those suggestions.

With the shifting sands in the psychology terrain, it has become ever more difficult for forensic psychologists to maintain a foothold. This is unfortunate indeed since we are at a point in our professional knowledge development that is stronger than it has ever been. However, we do face a number of challenges which will need to be addressed in the short term. I briefly mention two of the challenges below.

First, the lure of Medicare funding has placed stress on specialty area. This is evidenced in many places in increased difficulty recruiting postgraduate students into our masters and doctoral course. As a result, a few of our accredited postgraduate courses have ceased taking students and at least one has recently folded.

Second, we continually struggle with our professional identity. Many psychologists who do forensic work are not members of the College. Also, increased numbers of non-psychologists are now engaging in work that was once the province of our members of our field. There are ongoing struggles with psychiatrists and medical practitioners generally over practice areas. For example, most states now have post-sentence detention legislation for sexual offender and they almost uniformly require assessment by two psychiatrists. This is most unusual given that very few forensic psychiatrists maintain expertise in the area of sexual offending.

On a positive note, the work that many of our members are doing, both on the practice and research fronts is impressive. Our knowledge base and expertise is growing. Our College continues to grow, although we believe that we need to increase membership to ensure the long-term strength of the college – and forensic psychology in Australia.

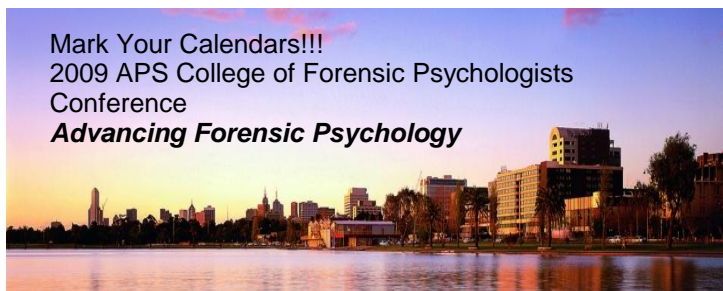
The College of Forensic Psychologists has been particularly busy with a range of activities. In addition to the ongoing work of the National Committee, we have been working on other activities. These include working with APS and the other colleges to articulate expected competencies for members of our College. We have been involved with the APS in the organisation of the Congress of the International Association of Applied Psychologists that will be held in Melbourne in 2010. This is the

largest international conference held annually. We have also updated the information package for prospective members and each of the state branches has been hosting a range of events for members. Most recently, we are working a revision of the APS brochure on forensic psychology.

Elsewhere in this newsletter we provide initial information about the forthcoming national forensic psychology conference which will be held in Melbourne in February 2009. This is particularly exciting since it will have been eight long years since the last conference was held in Sydney in early 2001.

James R. P. Ogloff, Chair
APS College of Forensic Psychologists

National Conference



The APS College of Forensic Psychologists Conference will be held from 25 – 28th February 2009. The theme of the conference will be “Advancing Forensic Psychology,” encouraging a broad range of submissions.

Many members will remember the fantastic Forensic Psychology Conference held in Sydney in early 2001. The conference was very well attended and provided a vibrant forum for learning and engaging with colleagues.

The College will hold the 2009 Conference at the Sebel Albert Park Melbourne. The hotel is located opposite picturesque Albert Park Lake and minutes from Melbourne’s CBD, St. Kilda Road, and Shopping.

The conference will begin with a series of workshops on topics including correctional psychology, memory in the forensic context, and malingering and deception. There will be four keynote speakers. Dr. James Bonta, one of the founders of the Risk-Need- Responsivity model, will join us from Canada. The second keynote speaker will be Dr. Randy Otto, who has served as President of the American Academy of Forensic Psychology, the American Psychology-Law Society, and the American Board of Forensic Psychology, will provide information in the forensic assessment and practice field. Bringing a perspective from experimental psychology and law, Dr. Maryanne Garry will share her expertise on real-life memory distortions, especially as they apply to legal settings, with participants. We are particularly pleased to have been able to secure the Honourable Justice Susan Glazebrook from the New Zealand Court of Appeal as a keynote speaker. Justice Glazebrook will share her experiences and thoughts about expert psychological evidence in difficult fields such as the assessment of sexual offenders for post-sentence supervision.

In addition to the conference proceedings, there will be social events including the conference dinner. Participants will have the option of attending the conference dinner which will be

held at the Old Melbourne Gaol. This will be particularly special.

A call for papers is being prepared and will be posted to members, and available to others, at the end of July 2008. We would welcome submissions for the presentation of symposia, papers, and posters. Details will be provided in the call.

James R. P. Ogloff,

Conference Chair

Membership

As of April 2008, the college had a total of 292 members, of which 206 were full members. When broken down by state, the largest group comes from NSW (111 members), followed by Victoria with 77 and Queensland with 50. The other states and territories have small memberships (SA-24; WA-12; ACT-8; Tas -5; NT - 2; overseas -3).

A suggestion made at a recent SA branch meeting was to invite closer collaboration with members from adjoining areas (in SA’s case , the NT). This might be one way of trying to ensure that members have access to college activities. Any comments or suggestions on this would be welcome?

Update from the States (and Territories).

Western Australia

The W.A Branch of the APS Forensic College has been busy organising a number of events for 2008. In April, an interactive workshop on the new APS Ethics Code was run by Professor Alfred Allan. This workshop proved popular with approximately 80 attending. In June, a dinner and presentation at the Royal Perth Yacht Club with Emeritus Professor Bill Marshall from Canada was held. Professor Marshall is an international expert in the area of sex offending and spoke on fantasy management in the treatment of sex offenders to. His presentation was extremely entertaining and informative and was enjoyed by 120 guests. Further events for 2008 are currently in discussion.

South Australia

The South Australian section is small by college standards with 24 full members. Our energy last year was devoted to promoting the 3rd International Congress of Psychology and Law in conjunction with the 27th Annual Congress of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Psychiatry, Psychology and Law, which was held in Adelaide.

In 2008 our focus has been on developing a professional development seminar series for members. We hold these monthly with the latest seminar on Experiential Therapeu-

tic Modalities in Working with Offenders, presented by Linda Davey.

What is happening in your state? Please let other college members know...

Why Join the Forensic College?

The APS College of Forensic Psychologists is a specialist college of the Australian Psychological Society (APS). Membership of the College acknowledges your specialist status and expertise in the area of Forensic Psychology.

Among its functions, the College oversees pathways towards qualifying as a forensic psychologist, assesses applications for membership, and provides college-approved professional development activities. The College comments on issues pertinent to the area of forensic psychology, promotes specialist practice in forensic psychology, maintains practice standards and quality assurance, and encourages and supports the education and professional development of specialist forensic practitioners.

There are a number of advantages to membership of the APS College of Forensic Psychologists.

- Recognition as a specialist Forensic Psychologist
- Membership of a professional body with the potential to influence broader political and legislative policy
- Professional support in the workplace/during studies
- Shared skills and resources (including links between research and practice)
- Professional development forums, conferences, and workshops
- Receipt of the College newsletter *Forensic Forum* and the SA Branch newsletter *The Profiler*
- Opportunities to be involved in policy development of the College and the APS.

The College offers varying grades of membership depending on your qualifications. In general, if you are interested in joining or planning to follow a particular pathway towards membership, you can access a membership resource package which provides an outline of the relevant guidelines for membership and core competencies of the field from (<http://www.groups.psychology.org.au/cfp/join/>) . You are also encouraged to contact the College to discuss possibilities.

Linda Davey

Forensic Ethics

The APS Ethical Guidelines committee plans to develop a set of guidelines for people doing forensic work towards the end of the year. College members who are inter-

ested in assisting with this, please contact: Professor Alfred Allan: a.allan@ecu.edu.au

Research News

It is often difficult for practitioners to keep up to date with recent research. In this section we hope to describe some recent research conducted by students of forensic psychology. In this edition, two theses from Deakin University are described, courtesy of Belinda Guadagno. Please send other contributions to Andrew.day@unisa.edu.au

Research Title: An examination of the consistency of investigative interviewers' performance.

Researcher: Cristina Cavezza

When investigative interviewers of children participate in training or research programs, they are often required to engage in one or more types of mock (simulated practice) interviews. Ultimately, for a mock interview task to provide a reliable and valid 'test' of interviewer ability, it must produce samples of individual behaviour that are replicable and that are generalisable to the *field* context. This work provided the first ever examination of the degree of consistency (both group and individual stability) in investigative-interviewer performance across two or more interview tasks.

The overall picture that emerged from this thesis is that the performance of investigative interviewers is relatively stable across independent administrations of interviews. However, the degree of consistency in performance depends on many factors including the nature of the event and interview paradigm, the type of questions being examined, the precision of the assessment measure, and whether individual or group stability is being measured.

Research Title: Internet Child Pornography: An Investigation of Attachment Style and Intimacy Deficits in Offenders.

Researcher: Janelle Armstrong

Limited empirical data exists on the characteristics and motivating factors of individuals who access child pornography on the Internet. This population must be investigated, not only to ensure that these offenders receive the most appropriate and effective treatment but also to allow an assessment of risk i.e., progression to interpersonal sexual offending. Considering researchers argue that, the propensity to sexually offend arises primarily from poor attachment bonds (Marshall, 1989, 1993; McCormack, Hudson & Ward, 2002), which are believed to provide a foundation for emotional loneliness, poor self-esteem, and problems with intimacy in adult relationships. It is important to consider these as etiological fac-

tors in this subset of sexual offenders. This study will compare attachment style and intimacy in three groups; a control group (of community members), a sex offender group (excluding Internet Child Pornography related offences) and a Internet Child Pornography offenders group.

Training and Accreditation

The following on-line course is currently offered by Deakin University. We are happy to include details of any other professionally relevant courses and programs.

Advanced Practice in Forensic Interviewing of Children (PDP 011)

Advanced Practice in Forensic Interviewing of Children (PDP 011) is a distance-education unit for forensic interviewers of children, prepared by Professor Martine Powell (School of Psychology, Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing and Behavioural Sciences).

About the unit

A forensic interview is defined as any interview where the purpose is to elicit accurate and detailed information from an interviewee about an event or situation. This unit is designed for any professional who conducts or supervises forensic (investigative) interviews with child witnesses. Such professionals include:

- Police officers
- Social-workers and psychologists who work in the human services sector
- Teachers and Investigating Officers within the Education Departments
- Psychologists or psychiatrists who conduct assessments for the court

Forensic interviewing of children is a highly complex task and research shows that 'best-practice' interview guidelines are typically under-utilised by professionals in the

field. This unit was created in response to the widely recognised need for more intensive, high quality and cost-effective training for professional forensic interviewers.

The unit is conducted **on-line** (i.e., it offers distance education through interactive computer exercises). Specifically, the unit enables professionals to conduct high quality forensic interviews (or evaluations of interviews) through:

- developing a greater appreciation and knowledge of effective questioning procedures
- taking an active role in monitoring/evaluating individuals' interviewing performance
- studying in a flexible, private learning environment.

While the focus is on interviewing children aged 4 to 12 years, the skills learned are effective when interviewing any witness group. Further, while the focus is on investigative interviewing about child abuse, the skills can be applied to all interviews conducted within the forensic setting.

For More Information & Expressions of Interest

Professor Martine Powell (Unit coordinator) Email: martine.powell@deakin.edu.au; Dr. Belinda Guadagno (Assistant coordinator) Email: belinda.guadagno@deakin.edu.au Phone: +61 3 9251 7231

Notices

This is the first time that an ISJR conference is being held in the Southern hemisphere. This presents a great opportunity for Australian justice researchers - and in particular for those in Adelaide. (For further information see <http://www.isjr.org/2008>.)

