



The Profiler

NEWSLETTER OF THE COLLEGE OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGISTS

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Annual Report 2008-2009 tabled by Professor Alfred Allan, Chair CFP, at the AGM held in Darwin on 2 October 2009.

It is a privilege to report to you regarding the activities of the APS College of Forensic Psychologists for the past year. I wish to start by thanking the members of the National Committee for the excellent work they have done during the past year. The members during this year were:

Name	Portfolio
Alfred Allan	Chair
James Ogloff	Past Chair and Chair of the Victoria Section
Jack White	Treasurer
Leonie Coxon	Secretary
Ronnie Zeussman	Chairperson of the Continuing Professional Development Committee
Mary-Anne Martin	Membership Secretary and since 1 October 2009 Deputy Chair
Greg Dear	Chairperson of the Course Approval Committee and Chair of the Western Australian Section
Andrew Day	Newsletter editor and Chair of the South Australian Section
Francesca Bell	Student representative
David Bright	Chair of the New South Wales (NSW) Section since June 2009 after David Mutton stepped down
Gavan Palk	Chair of the Queensland Section and since 1 October 2009 Membership secretary

The changes in the portfolios of some members became necessary after my appointment as a member of the inaugural Psychologist Board of Australia. The workload associated with this position is substantial and I thank Mary-Anne Martin who has taken over the day to day management of the College and Gavan Palk who has taken on the role of membership secretary. Both of them are well equipped for these tasks.

I also want to foreshadow that the work load of the Psychologist Board of Australia may be such that I will have to step down before the end of the term because it may not be able for me to do justice to the demands of the College which also has a substantial workload. The Committee met on the following occasions:

Date	Type of activity
26/02/09	Face to face meeting
27/02/09	Meeting with Prof Lyn Littlefield
27/02/09	General Meeting
4/05/09	Telephone meeting
15-16/08/09	Face to face meeting
21/09/09	Telephone meeting

The major activity of the College during this year was the 2nd Forensic Psychology Conference that was held in Melbourne from 25 to 28 February 2009. This event, entitled, *Advancing Forensic Psychology*, was attended by about 450 college members, other APS members, and non-APS members including psychiatrists and lawyers. The key note speakers were Justice Glazebrook from the New Zealand Court of Appeal, and Professors Maryanne Garry from Victoria University in New Zealand and Randy Otto from the University of South Florida. This very successful conference was organized by members of the Victoria Section under the leadership of Professor Jim Ogloff. The conference provided members with a large range of professional development opportunities and was also a valuable recruitment opportunity for the College.

The Committee decided that there will be a forensic psychology conference every second year and the next conference will be held in Queensland during 2011. Members of the College are, however, actively involved in the planning of a forensic stream at the 27th International Congress of Applied Psychology that will be held in Melbourne in July 2010. I encourage you to make a note of this conference in your diaries.

While I am referring to Professor Ogloff it is my pleasure to announce that the APS Board has, on the recommendation of the Committee, awarded him the Forensic College's Award of Distinction in recognition for his outstanding services to the College. We plan to present the award to Jim at the ANZAPPL conference in Fremantle.

It is also a pleasure to congratulate Dr Kristy Martire from the University of NSW who was the winner of the Machonochie Prize for 2009 for her paper entitled *The impact of eyewitness expert evidence and judicial instructions on juror ability to evaluate eyewitness testimony* that was published in *Law and Human Behavior*. Her research project was supervised by Dr Richard Kemp. Dr David Bright, the chair of the NSW section, will present her award to her at an appropriate occasion later this year.

I thank the Committees of the various Sections for the activities they organised during the year.

The Psychologist Board of Australia met for the first time on 20 September 2009 and, contrary to what was generally assumed it is not yet certain that there will be specialist titles under the new registration and accreditation scheme. The Board did, however, approve a process to consult on proposed qualifications and other specific requirements required for psychologists to have recognition on a specialist register. A discussion paper in this regard will be published towards the end of October for consultation. Whatever happens in the future it is clear that the College will face great challenges during the next five years and the Committee has therefore developed a strategic plan for the period 2009-2014. My own interpretation of this strategic plan is as follows.

1. **We need to develop forensic psychology as a brand.** It appears to me that we do not currently have a clear definition of forensic psychology in Australia and this hampers our ability to market forensic psychology to other psychologists, the public and consumers of our services. Reaching consensus may require a robust and long debate, but this should not prevent us from addressing this issue.

2. **We must develop, set and maintain clear standards for accreditation and membership.** Ideally we would like to have clarity about the definition of forensic psychology before we do this, but we do not have time to wait that long as we must finalise new course approval guidelines. The Committee has therefore decided to identify clusters of capabilities required by psychologists when they work in three areas: namely forensic evaluations; forensic interventions; and psycho-legal research. Once these capabilities have been identified the Committee will develop course guidelines that will allow students to develop these capabilities. The next step is to develop a strategy to facilitate the creation of supervision and professional development opportunities for members which will assist them to develop, where necessary, and maintain the relevant competencies. The Committee is acutely aware of the difficulties some members have in obtaining supervision and attending professional development opportunities, and is exploring methods of assisting in this regard. One avenue is to make use of online facilities, another is for State Sections to *adopt* the members in States and Territories where there are not currently Sections. For instance, members in Tasmania will be supported by Victoria, those in the ACT by NSW, those in the Northern Territory by South Australia. Both these strategies will be discussed at the next face to face meeting of the Committee in February.

3 **The College must promote the recognition of forensic psychology as a speciality in psychology.** Methods of improving the profile of forensic psychologists amongst psychologists can take the form of contributions in *InPsych* about the College and its activities. The College can also do more to create a media profile for forensic psychology. Professor Bob Montgomery suggested that the College could improve its public profile by developing a theme during National Psychology Week and Mary-Anne Martin is working on this. We should also become more involved in making submissions to government. The South Australia section has done good work in this regard by developing a submission on the Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for the state registration board. There are, however, op-

portunities for members who have knowledge to make contributions. John Nolan is, for example, assisting the National Office of the APS with the development of a submission on violence and alcohol on behalf of the College.

4 **To ensure the sustainability of the College it is important that we grow the membership.** I am therefore delighted to report that our membership has grown by 12% since the beginning of the year. We also need people to take on leadership positions in the College and I encourage those of you who aspire to be future leaders to start developing the necessary skills by becoming involved in the Committees of your local sections.

5 As I have mentioned earlier in the year **the College should be more active in marketing forensic psychology** by, for instance, identifying pockets of money that may be available to pay for serviced by forensic psychologists; identify areas where forensic psychologists are excluded from; and by marketing forensic psychology to stakeholders. In line with this strategic objective, the Western Australian Section, for instance, arranged a lunch meeting with members of the judiciary and other key stakeholders. The outcome of this meeting was an agreement that the College would actively collaborate with stakeholders to improve the quality of psychological testimony in the courts. The NSW Section is similarly investigating the possibility of training and accrediting psychologists who act as court experts to counter the sometimes poor quality of reports tendered to courts. The NSW Section has also been involved in negotiations with the NSW Victims' Services regarding the exclusion of forensic psychologists from acting as Authorised Report Writers for the Victims Compensation Scheme. This matter has not been satisfactorily resolved and will be further pursued at national level by the College working in collaboration with the National Office. An opportunity that the College should consider for the future is the current emphasis the Federal government is putting on prevention and early intervention strategies. If one conceptualises crime, particularly juvenile offending, as a public health issue there is clearly scope for forensic psychologists to make a contribution in this area.

6. It is important that **College members are accountable for their behaviour** and in this regard the College will work with the appropriate APS committees to develop two sets of ethical and practice guidelines. The one will be aimed at psychologists who do investigations, write court reports, and give evidence; and the other at psychologists who work with people in detention. It is very likely that there will be a symposium on the latter at the IPAC conference in Melbourne in 2010.

7. It is very important that the Committee has an **effective strategy for communicating with members.** The Committee see the Profiler as an important vehicle for this and I want to thank Andrew Day who is editing it. I would also like to encourage you to send contributions to Andrew. As a past editor of a newsletter I know very well what a battle it is to collect material. You may also have noted that we have used the odd email to communicate with you regarding urgent matters, but we are mindful of the fact that all of us are inundated by emails and will use this form of communication only when required. Ideally we would like the website to be fully func-

tional, but to date we have not been able to fill the position of webmaster. We do, however, hope to fill this position soon. We are also considering regular meetings at non-College events where there may be members, such as the ANZAPPL conference.

8. It is important that the **College should have an outwards focus and become involved in social justice issues**. One such area that we hope to develop in future is the needs of people with mental health problems who interact with the justice system. The Committee is, for instance, concerned with the youth justice facilities for juveniles in South Australia and for adults in, for instance, the Northern Territories. This is something we would particularly like the different Sections to take up with the assistance of David Stokes at the National Office.

As you can see the National Committee has very ambitious plans for the future. This is only a blue print and the Committee needs your assistance to implement them and we therefore want to encourage you to become involved in the activities of your Section. We realise that some of these plans will take time to implement, but we hope to make a start this coming year.

MEMBER PROFILE: DR RONNIE ZUESSMAN

A Look See

One of the areas forensic psychologists tend to pay attention to is impression management. So, when asked to provide this 'About Members' brief for the *Profiler*, I began to reflect upon the ways in which I manage impressions. While appreciating the importance of transparency, I am aware that information may be drawn into surprising jurisdictions by advocates. So here, in print, I tell you this part of a tale, which might be more colourful if conveyed personally at one of our collegial meetings.

More than 30 years ago I found myself providing counselling to troubled adolescents at a store-front agency in a rough area of town. Thus, my deep-end introduction to a professional world dealing with drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, shattered families, homelessness, sexual abuse, criminal offending and serious psychopathology. Surprised by the nitty gritty of those street urchins, I have learned a lot from people in all walks of life.

After a four year degree in psychology and education, and significantly influenced by existential and humanistic psychology, I pursued learning about personality and psychotherapy, and proceeded through a masters degree and professional diploma in counselling before completing a doctorate

in psychology. I have continued my professional education ever since, with deep thanks to my many teachers.

Experience took me through schools, universities, acute psychiatry, psychiatric rehabilitation, community mental health, disability, employee assistance, community corrections, prisons and private practice. I wanted to know what went on behind the walls of those institutions, clinics and offices. The complexities of society and the boundaries between its institutions fascinated me. So I tried to learn as much as I could and dealt with anxiety by enquiring and conceptualizing. Perhaps another way was by teaching and supervising others in the process.

Some of my activities included: member of advisory board on domestic violence; consultant to residential facilities for adolescents; member of child protection teams; assessments for child and family services; psychological evaluations for tribunals and courts; consultation to police; integration of actuarial and professional judgement in risk assessments of serious criminal offenders; supervision of service delivery to psychiatrically and intellectually disabled maximum security inmates; member of a victim assistance team; consultation to a residential violence prevention program; development of substance abuse intervention programs; direction of sexual offender treatment programs. I have come to develop expertise in clinical and forensic psychology. I practice. I test. I testify. I counsel. I teach. I supervise. I promote policy.

I have come to value a balance of actuarial prediction and phenomenology, nomothetic diagnosis as well as an idiographic perspective. I have come to value forensic as well as personality assessment; psychological formulation and ethical practice; group intervention targeting criminogenic needs as well as individual psychotherapy and family therapy. I have come to value the lives of clients and a sense of service to others. I have come to value my colleagues.

I am a member of the College of Forensic Psychologists.

Ronnie Zuessman, PhD

Registration: Dr Belinda Guadagno (via e-mail: belinda.guadagno@deakin.edu.au)

AGM & ANNUAL COLLEGE DINNER

Wednesday 9th December 2009

Venue: Graduate House, 224 Leicester Street, Carlton

Cost: Forensic College Members: \$40.00
| Students: \$35.00 | Others: \$50.00

Time: 6:00pm AGM; 7:00pm pre-dinner drinks followed by a 3-course dinner

Registration: Dr Belinda Guadagno (via e-mail: belinda.guadagno@deakin.edu.au)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



**College of Forensic Psychologists
Victorian Section**

ANNUAL RESEARCH DAY

Thursday 15th October 2009 from 3.00pm

The Research Day will feature a diverse range of presentations from students and practitioners of forensic psychology. It is an opportunity for forensic psychology students to get to know colleagues outside of their own institution and to learn of the research activities of other universities and services.

We welcome attendance from people who are not currently enrolled in formal study and those who are not presenting, particularly APS and Forensic College members, researchers and forensic practitioners who are interested in contemporary local research.

Come and celebrate the innovative work being undertaken in the forensic field and enjoy the wine and refreshments provided! We are looking forward to a day of interactive discussion.

Venue: Thomas Embling Hospital Conference Rooms, Yarra Bend Road, Fairfield

Cost: APS Forensic College members & students: FREE | Others: \$20.00

Enquiries: Dr Michael Daffern (via e-mail: Michael.Daffern@med.monash.edu.au)

+ Please note there is no need to register your attendance ahead of time

NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL SCREENING WORKSHOP: RECOGNISING COGNITIVE DEFICITS

Wednesday 11th November 2009 4:00pm – 8:00pm

Venue: Thomas Embling Hospital Conference Rooms, Yarra Bend Road, Fairfield

Cost: APS members & students: \$50.00
| Others: \$65.00



**College of Forensic Psychologists
Queensland Section**

Throughout 2008 and 2009 seminars have been held at Griffith and Bond Universities. The number of participants has varied from between 15 and 40+. Topics that are relevant and interesting with a good speaker attract the most participants. The seminar topics for the 2008-2009 year have included:

- Current professional issues in the practice of psychology by Prof Bob Montgomery;
- Psychopathology: a psychologist's pass to world travel by Prof Stephen Woods;
- Forensic Psychologists perspectives on the utility of clinical vs. actuarial assessments in predicting recidivism among sex offenders By Dr Gavan Palk;
- Assessing risk and post prison release eligibility for sex offenders; what can be done with individuals who claim they are innocent by Dr James Freeman;
- Preventive Detention for Dangerous offenders by Prof Patrick Keyzer;
- The ecological validity of common risk assessment measures for offenders with a learning disability by Assoc Prof Dr Doug Boer; and
- Separating respectfully: a family therapy approach to dispute resolution.

A survey of members' professional and development needs was conducted to ascertain the seminar and workshop topics they would be interested in for the 2009-2010 year. These are listed below.

Proposed 2009-2010 seminar and workshop activities

Date	Topic	Presenter	Format	Location
Sept 2009	Assessing malingering	Jacqui Yoxall	2 hour	Griffith University (Mt Gravatt)
Dec 2009	Victims of Crime (includes end of year function)	Victims of Crime Support service (Qld Health)	2 hour	Griffith University (Mt Gravatt)
Dec 2009	Treating internet sex offenders	Prof David Middleton (visiting from the UK)	1 day	Bond University
Feb 2010	Assessment and treatment of substance abuse	TBA	2 hour	Bond University
Apr 2010	sexual offenders - assessment and risk management	Prof Stephen Smallbone	1 day	Griffith University (Mt Gravatt)
Jun 2010	Psycholegal interface	Steven Morgan	2 hour	Ipswich
Aug 2010	Forensic report writing and giving evidence	Ian Freckleton	1 day	Wacol
Oct 2010	Psychological autopsies	Ros Robertson	2 hour	Griffith University (Mt Gravatt)
Dec 2010	Genocide (includes end of year function)	Prof Paul Wilson	2 hour	Griffith University (Mt Gravatt)

NOTICE

Bob Walkley from Townsville is seeking to buy a copy of the WAIS III – contact Bob [bobbyw@mpx.com.au]

Please send contributions to the Profiler to Andrew Day. Email: andrew.day@deakin.edu.au



College of Forensic Psychologists SA Section

The next SA seminar on interviewing vulnerable witnesses by Professor Martine Powell has been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

The College AGM is scheduled for Wednesday 2nd December at 5.00 3/459 Morphett Street.