

The Profiler

NEWSLETTER OF THE COLLEGE OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGISTS

VOLUME 8



The Australian Psychological Society Ltd.

MARCH 2010

CHAIR'S COLUMN



(The National Committee meeting in Melbourne)

Dear member,

The National Committee (Committee) had its face to face meeting on 13 and 14 February 2010 in Melbourne. This was a very productive meeting where we amongst other things prepared a "scorecard" of our activities with reference to the strategic plan that we formulated at the last meeting. We decided to provide information about this to you by listing the items on our strategic plan and reporting on what we have done in respect of each of these items.

1 **Develop the brand of forensic psychology**

This is a long term project and many of the other items in this report are related to it. We are currently also restricted in what we can do until the specialist or endorsement structure of the Psychologists Board of Australia (PBA) is clear. The good news is that if the Ministerial Council accepts the recommendation of the PBA, forensic psychology will be an area of endorsement. It is also positive that the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (AHWMC) identified forensic psychology as an area of endorsed practice. One consequence of endorsement is that those psychologists who meet the requirements for endorsement will be able to call themselves forensic psychologists and that other people will be acting unethically if they do that. Forensic psychology has, apparently, also been identified as one of the areas where there will be subsidised internships, but this has not been confirmed. The data from a survey that we did last year to identify the profile of our members are unfortunately not available yet.

2 **Developing, setting and maintaining standards**

The Committee submitted a set of course approval guidelines in December 2009 and is awaiting feedback from the Program Development and Accreditation Committee (PDAC) in this regard. The Committee has also done work on a document that identifies clusters of competencies of members of College. We decided not to do any further work on practice certificates until the APS Board had made a decision in this regard. Daiva Verbyla made a presentation to the Committee on the use of electronic methods to provide professional development and supervision to members. Unfortunately some key infrastructure decisions must still be made by APS about this, but the Committee is keen to implement some of the ideas that we have and will do so as soon as possible. The Committee is also examining inviting national and international experts in specific areas to do workshops at an intermediate and advance level and ensuring that all our members have an opportunity to attend these training sessions. We encourage members to attend the ICAP conference in July as there will be very good forensic presentations.

3 **Recognition of forensic psychology as a speciality**

As mentioned earlier, forensic psychology has been identified by the Ministerial Council as an area of practice that could be endorsed. This will improve the profile of forensic psychologists. To improve the profile of forensic psychologists amongst psychologists the Committee collaborated with the editor of *InPsych* in the writing of articles on the *Forensic College*; *Giving evidence as a psychologist*; and *Writing psychological reports for the courts*. Our aim was to emphasise that these are specialist activities that require specialist knowledge and skills. The Committee also sponsored a stall at the ANZAPPL conference to promote the use of forensic psychologists by lawyers and to recruit more members. In an attempt to improve the media profile of forensic psychologists the Committee collaborated with the National Office to identify psychologists who could provide information to the media on memory issues in law during National Psychology Week; arranged for a College member to work on behalf of the College with the APS National Office develop a submission to the Queensland government on substance abuse amongst offenders; and identified a College member to present at a conference on white collar crime. More recently the Committee collaborated with the National Office to identify psychologists who could participate on a feature on offending behaviour on Foxtel. We hope to develop information documents on specialist topics in future that we will

publish on the website where they can be accessed by members and lawyers.

4 Sustainable College

The Committee has been very successful in increasing the number of members; the challenge is now to maintain these numbers. The Committee is working on methods in which the sections in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia can "adopt" the members in the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania and Northern Territory. Attempts to do this have to date not been very successful but this is a matter that we are attending to. The Committee is also working on methods of developing future leaders for the College. In this regard the Committee encourage section committees to co-opt student members on their committees to give them an opportunity to see how these committees operate and to get involved in the activities of the committee. Given the poor attendance of Annual General Meetings when they are held at the APS conference, the Committee has decided future AGMs where the election of Committee members take place will be held at the Forensic conferences which take place biennially. To make this possible the next Committee, that is the one that will be elected later this year, will serve for one year only. To ensure continuity the Committee decided that all the current members will nominate for another year. This obviously does not prevent other people from nominating and the notice for the meeting and the nomination forms will be sent out soon. We are very keen to involve all members in the activities of the College and encourage you to volunteer to help when we look for people to assist or to join the committees of your local section.

5 Accountability

We have also started a process of meeting with stakeholders. The first was with the forensic course coordinators and we will carry on meeting with them on a regular basis in the future. We have met with Mick Symonds (senior manager of Members Services of the APS) and Don Thomson (chair of the Ethical Guidelines Committee) about the development of ethical and practice guidelines on working in courts and working in detention settings. Members of the College will assist with this process. We also arranged a symposium at the ICAP conference on psychologists working in detention settings which will be chaired by Professor Gerry Koocher, a past president of the APA. Other speakers will be Astrid Astrid Birgden (one of our members), Stephen Behnke of the APA and Graham Davidson.

6 Advocacy and marketing

One of the aims of the Committee is to work with the APS to identify pockets of money for forensic psychologists, and identifying, and addressing, areas where forensic psychologists are excluded from working in even though their qualifications may be appropriate. As a first step we have started comparing the fees paid to psychologists and psychiatrists by Legal Aid and other organisations in the various jurisdictions and if there are discrepancies we will address these. If you would like to assist with this you can contact Jack White (jackwhite@adam.com.au) or Mary-Anne Martin (maryanne.martin@optusnet.com.au). We are also looking for means to promote forensic psychology amongst lawyers and developed a flyer that we gave to lawyers at the ANZAPPL conference. We will start examining other methods of working more closely with

practicing lawyers, the Standing Committee of Attorneys General and the judiciary. Activities we are considering are offering joint professional development activities with them and inviting senior lawyers to attend College functions.

The Committee also discussed a letter the APS received from a clinical and forensic psychologist who has recently found out that she had been subjected to surveillance by the Australian Federal Police in relation to two child sexual offenders to whom she was providing treatment. She found out some months later through a lawyer representing one of the clients that her sessions with both individuals were being recorded and she was able to obtain transcripts of some of her sessions. She was, naturally, shocked at this intrusion. It appears that this may not have been an isolated incident. This raises several concerns for our members. The Committee collaborated with the APS on developing a response to this letter that will appear in the next edition of *InPsych*. Covert surveillance has become one of the tools that the police and other law enforcement agencies use to apprehend offenders and there is arguably a case to use them. It may therefore be appropriate for covert surveillance to take place if a warrant was authorised by a judge, and judges will usually only do so if this is provided for by legislation and if the police can demonstrate that it is in the public interest to override the individual rights of the suspect and other people, including psychologists who are affected by such surveillance. The Committee feels that it is important though that both the police and the judiciary are aware of the broader implications of these warrants and should be ultra cautious before they apply for, or issue, them. The Committee has therefore offered to work with the APS national office to bring the wider implications of these warrants under the attention of the police, attorneys general and the judiciary.

7 Communication with members

We have tried to report to members on a regular basis at the AGM; other opportunities where there are a concentration of members; regular reports in the Profiler; and emails in case of urgent matters. We will try to use emails very sparingly as we appreciate that you, like us, receive a large number of emails every day. Andy Day is doing a great job as editor of the Profiler, but we would like to develop it even more, especially local news from sections. Please send Andy any information that you would like to share with other members, such as photographs of activities and professional development activities (andrew.day@deakin.edu.au). We appointed Kerri Pezos as webmaster and she has expanded the website. We would like to make the website a resource that our members will find useful and to do this we need more information. Please send Mary-Anne Martin (maryanne.martin@optusnet.com.au) ideas of what you would want on the website and any contributions you want us to consider putting on it. The Committee is planning to have a joint AGM meeting with Division 10 of ICAP and will be organising a social event for members, Division 10 members and invited guests at the ICAP conference in July.

8 Outward focus

We have identified *Social justice issues* and *Prevention of crime through promotion of prevention and early intervention strategies* as two areas where we would like to work, but at the moment we do not have the capacity to do this. Please contact Alfred Allan on a.allan@ecu.edu.au if you would like to know more about these projects and get involved.

We look forward to see you at the AGM at the ICAP conference in July.

Alfred

Professor Alfred Allan, Chair CFP.

Other News: College Awards

The College awards an annual prize to the best student thesis, known as the Maconochie Prize, as well as an award for a distinguished contribution to the discipline (The Distinguished Contribution to Forensic Psychology award).

The New South Wales Section also have their own awards. These aim to reward excellence in forensic psychology in the following three categories:

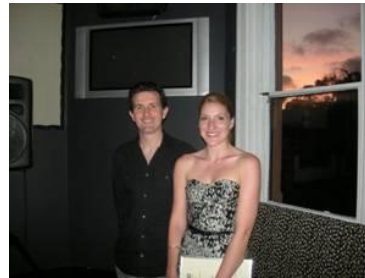
- Research and academic work
- Psychological practice and professional work
- Open category for contribution to forensic psychology, e.g., media personnel, legal professionals, and other related professionals.

Nominations for all awards are now due. All details, and information on how to nominate, are available on the APS website. For further information please visit: <http://www.psychology.org.au/about/awards/> and **NOMINATE NOW! The closing date is 1st June 2010.**

THE WORLD'S MOST INFLUENTIAL FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST?

The Maconochie Prize was named after Alexander Maconochie, a retired Naval captain who in 1840 at his own request, became superintendent of 2000 twice convicted prisoners on Norfolk Island. In four years, Maconochie transformed what was one of the most brutal convict settlements in history into a controlled, stable and productive environment that upon release his prisoners came to be called Maconochie's gentlemen!

The College is interested in organising speaking tours for people who we regard as the most influential forensic psychologists currently practising. If you would like to nominate someone, please email andrew.day@deakin.edu.au.



Pictured above is Kristy Martire from NSW receiving the 209 Maconochie prize from the NSW Section Chair, David Bright. Kristy's paper, *The impact of eyewitness expert evidence and judicial instruction on juror ability to evaluate eyewitness testimony*, was published in *Law and Human Behavior*.

MEMBER PROFILE: DR JACK WHITE



Forensic psychology: never a dull moment

My pathway to forensic psychology was never structured or planned but rather a product of chance. Studying in the 1970s was fun, not serious, and decision-making was often 'ad hoc'. My original decision to study Mathematical Sciences at Adelaide University was more a consequence of my older sister having done it years previous, and I thought I'd reduce my workload by borrowing her old lecture notes and textbooks. University was free, and the Whitlam era was a time of optimism and revolution.

In first year, I recall selecting "Psychology I" because the study of human behaviour appealed to me, and each year during the undergraduate program it became more fascinating. During Honours, I had decided that "mathematical psychology" was the way of the future, and my love for "computer simulation" fitted neatly into this area of psychological investigation. A PhD thesis entitled "Coding and Processing Numerical Information" provided a blissful period of experimental memory research, exposing a young researcher to feelings of excitement when the results made sense, and periods of deep depression, when they did not. Eventually when it was all over and the thesis was submitted, one examiner remarked— "It demonstrates he can comply with the classical academic standards. One can only hope that he will also later be able to transcend them." I never really understood what that remark meant, and assumed my days in academia were numbered. After a couple more years of teaching and research, an opportunity arose to move into the field of "clinical psychology", with a position at a psychiatric hospital in Adelaide. Hillcrest Hospital boasted a Psychology Department of 20 or so psychologists, with particular expertise in areas of Emergency Psychiatry, Neuropsychology, Mental Health Rehabilitation ("Living Skills"), Geriatric Psychology, Alcohol Dependency, Schizophrenia, Adolescent Behaviour, Affective Disorders and Forensic Psychiatry. The hospital

provided an idyllic learning environment for a young psychologist to be mentored by some of the State's most skilled and experienced psychologists. In those days, the pay rate for public sector psychologists was excellent, and few psychologists saw the private sector as a viable career option.

In 1990 an opportunity arose for an "overseas exchange", and I travelled to the Calgary General Hospital, where much to my surprise, I was about to become a "forensic psychologist". In fact it was a little bit more serious than that, as the person with whom I was exchanging, was the "Head" of the Forensic Psychology Department, and I was expected to take over his role. After adjusting to temperatures of -40°C and "black ice" on the freeways, I decided that "forensic psychology" couldn't be that hard.

I was also very grateful to be mentored by Dr Tom Dalby, a Canadian Forensic psychologist, whose passion and energy in the criminal field was inspirational. Suddenly psychological work seemed more important than it had been in the past. The psychological report was the instrument through which the psychologist communicated with the court, a privileged and important function. Canadians took their work very seriously, and their investment in psychology resources was remarkable. I recall that most of the clinical psychology staff had their own secretaries and one or two psychology assistants to help in the preparation of assessments and reports.

When I returned to Australia in 1991 I was saddened to learn that my old hospital had closed. I continued to work in the forensic psychology field, initially at James Nash House and later within the South Australian Health Commission's Sex-offender Unit. Eventually by 1997 I decided it was time to move into the private sector, and I joined a slick forensic psychology practice that provided an excellent grounding in how to run a business.

In 1999 I started my own practice, 'White and Associates Psychologists', which predominantly focused on Criminal Court work, especially involving the writing of reports for court. Also in 1999 I became actively involved in teaching within the Forensic Psychology Masters Program at the University of South Australia. Disappointingly that program ended in 2009, despite it having produced a rich supply of exceptional graduates and had proved a great benefit to Forensic Mental Health in South Australia.

Looking back on the profession of Forensic Psychology in Australia, I think the past 20 years have provided a period of growth and evolution. The profession is much richer by the development of psychometric tools that facilitate clinical assessment (especially Les Morey's PAI) and Forensic instruments for measuring risk and legal issues (unfitness / mental incompetency). The standards of Report writing generally appear to be improving and acceptance in the court of psychological evidence is no longer contentious. As the Courts become increasingly aware of the greater relevance of Mental Health expertise, so the future should bring with it more recognition of psychologists in the administration of justice.

I am aware that around Australia a trend has started with the appointment of psychologists to preside in Magistrate Courts. In 20 years time we may see a psychologist appointed to the High Court who knows?

Jack White PhD, FAPS

Obituary: Peter Prisgrove



It is with great sadness that the APS Forensic College and APS Perth Section announce the death of Peter Prisgrove who died after a long illness at home with family on 16th January 2010.

Peter came to Australia by ship as an unaccompanied child migrant under the Fairbridge scheme when he was 11 years of age. He did well at Pinjarra school, and won the only Fairbridge scholarship that enabled him to study year 11 and 12 at Bunbury high school. He then entered university to study psychology on a Commonwealth Scholarship. Peter met his wife Davina in February 1964 at UWA when he was 18. They had a happy and enduring marriage and enjoyed raising their two children Nic and Victoria. Their children allowed Peter in more recent years to be a proud and loving grandfather to his grandchildren.

Peter's creative spirit meant that he was always trying something new: he taught himself many musical instruments that he acquired over the years; taught himself music theory, which led to an interest in arranging music for a number of choirs and groups; did sketching, wood-carving, sculpture, soapstone-carving, stained glass, and rustic furniture-making. Despite all these varied interests and achievements Peter always had time for his family, friends and colleagues.

Peter worked primarily in the corrections system. He worked for, what was then, the Department of Community Welfare from the 1970s with juvenile offenders, and later the Department of Corrective Services with adult offenders. Peter chose to work in the difficult areas of violent behaviour and sex offence and was instrumental in the development of programs and standards for psychologists and social workers who worked with these offender groups. When Peter was involved you could guarantee the program had been well researched and developed in a practical manner to meet the needs of the population it was designed for. Peter also taught for a period in the psychology course at Edith Cowan University and was involved in the placements of postgraduate students for the clinical and forensic specialties.

He supervised and mentored many WA psychologists in clinical and forensic psychology and was a long time member of the Australian Psychological Society and inaugural member of the APS Forensic College in WA. Peter was known for his calm and sensible influence; non-judgmental, supportive and constructive approach; warm generous spirit; thoughtfulness; sense of humour; relaxed manner; enthusiasm; spontaneity; open mindedness; and dedication to helping people better their lives. He was a calming influence on others. Colleagues frequently sought him out for sensible and ethical advice and direction.

Peter loved singing with his choir and was known for his songs at staff social events. Peter was an extremely talented person and truly a self-made man. A man better able to balance his deep love for his family and friends, his leisure interests, and his active engagement with his work, would be hard to find.

ICAP 2010

The International Congress of applied Psychology, being held in Melbourne from 11-16 July looks set to be of great interest to forensic psychologists. The scientific committee for the congress has received over 3,500 abstracts from more than 60 countries. This is the largest congress on applied psychology in the world and more than 4,000 delegates are expected to attend. Professor Paul Slovik, one of the world's leading scholars on genocide and risk is the key note speaker. Professor James Ogloff and Professor Kevin Douglas are all presenting keynote addresses and various symposium featuring leading forensic psychologists from within Australia will also feature. This year's AGM will be held at the congress so we will look forward to seeing you there.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



**College of Forensic Psychologists
Victorian Section**

The Victorian section hosted a wide variety of activities in 2009. In an effort to address the diverse needs of our members, we offered a range of brief seminars, workshops and panel discussions. Our 2009 professional development program included:

A 1 hour seminar given by Professor Mairead Dolan (Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science Monash University) entitled "The Neurobiology Of Antisocial Behaviour: Developmental Perspectives" a 4 hour workshop entitled "Supervision In Forensic Settings" Presenters: Ms Kaye Frankcom (PRBV President) Dr Fiona Barson (PRBV Professional Standards and Performance Manager) Dr Annie Thomas (Corrections Victoria) Dr Michael Daffern (Forensicare) Dr Belinda Guadagno (Centre for Offender Reintegration, Deakin University) Dr Michael Daffern (Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science Monash University and Forensicare) Mr Michael Crewdson (Private practice) Mr David Curnow (Loddon Prison)

A 3 hour panel discussion entitled "Report Writing for Parole Boards, Courts and other Decision Making Tribunals"

A 2 hour workshop entitled "Working with offenders with personality disorder" Presenters: Dr Jim Vess (Centre for Offender Reintegration, Deakin University), Janina Tomasoni (Spectrum), Dr Michael Daffern (Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science Monash University and Forensicare)

A jointly sponsored presentation with ANZAPPL given by Professor Gary Melton on "The Need For Reform In Child Protection". Professor Melton's presentation was followed by a panel discussion.

An annual Research Day where students involved in forensically-relevant scholarly work as part of a Doctoral, Masters, or Honours Degree presented papers based on their research. A number of local college members, researchers and practitioners attended to learn about the innovative research being undertaken. Prizes were awarded for the best presentations.

Finally, our AGM and Annual Dinner where Professor James Ogloff was celebrated as the recipient of the 2009 APS College of Forensic Psychologists Award of Distinction. Professor Ogloff presented on "The Future Of Forensic Psychology In Uncertain Times".

2010 ACTIVITIES

The Victorian branch held its first professional development activity for 2010 on 10 February. A lecture was given by Dr Troy McKewan (Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Forensicare) on 'Recognising and Understanding Stalking'.

A ½ day workshop will be presented by Professor Simon Crowe on 14 April. The workshop will focus on *Neuropsychological Screening in Forensic Contexts*.

We are investigating several other options for 2010 for professional development activities (on the following possible topics):

- Post-sentence dispositions for sexual offenders
- Domestic violence
- Eyewitness testimony
- Victim issues
- Drug and alcohol use and violence
- Prison culture
- Historical crimes



**College of Forensic Psychologists
New South Wales**

The following events were held in 2009.

18 August 2009 (with ANZAPPL NSW): Terrorism, interrogation and torture: International, legal and policy implications (evening seminar)

5 December 2009: NSW Section Xmas Party- a social event attended by approx 50 people.

In 2009, we also conducted an on-line survey of NSW college members and non-members regarding professional development needs (e.g., content areas, preferred location). We have used the results of the survey to plan PD events for 2010.

NSW Conference: "Forensic Psychology on the Frontline: Core Competencies for the Practice of Forensic Psychologists".

When and where: March 19-20 2010 at the Moss Vale Golf Club. Topic areas include risk assessment, assessment and interventions with personality disordered offenders, expert evidence, and mental illness and the law.

For more information:

<http://admin.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/CFP%20brochure%202010final.pdf>

To register:

<http://www.psychology.org.au/Events/EventView.aspx?EventID=5705>

The NSW section is planning three other PD events for 2010 on the following topics: risk assessment of sexual offenders, violent offenders, and court work. Further details including dates will be forthcoming.



College of Forensic Psychologists SA Section

The South Australian section hosted a seminar series in 2009 as follows:

A/Prof Devon Polaschek	Treating high risk violent offenders: Lessons learned—sometimes painfully—from research and practice
Helen Cox, A/ Prof Paul DelFabbro and Pam Simmons	The Care and Protection of Children: Legal, Empirical and Practice Issues
Dr Jim Vess and Dr Sharon Casey	Risk Assessment, Treatment Readiness and Risk Management

In 2010 we have the following events scheduled:

Dr Astrid Birgden: Offender rehabilitation and human rights: Balancing offender rights and community rights (within a compulsory drug rehabilitation program)

When: Friday 5th March, 2.45-5.30pm.

Where: Parkview Room, Fullarton Centre, 411 Fullarton Road, Adelaide.

Cost: \$10-\$60 depending on level of APS membership (APS non-members very welcome). Please register through the APS website under the events calendar:

<http://www.psychology.org.au/Events/EventView.aspx?ID=5707>

Dr Michael Daffern: Introduction to using in-custody Offence Paralleling Behaviour (OPB) to inform risk assessment and intervention

When: Friday 3rd September 2010, 2.45-5.15pm.

Where: Parkview Room, Fullarton Centre, 411 Fullarton Road, Adelaide.

Cost: \$10-\$60 depending on level of APS membership (APS non-members very welcome). Please register through the APS website under the events calendar:

<http://www.psychology.org.au/Events/EventView.aspx?ID=5766>



College of Forensic Psychologists Queensland Section

REMEMBER THE COLLEGE CONFERENCE IS COMING TO QUEENSLAND IN 2011 – DETAILS TO FOLLOW ON WHEN AND WHERE AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED.....

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)



College of Forensic Psychologists Western Australia Section

PD events to be advertised in the next Profiler.

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