

# **Psychologists in Non-Traditional Academic Departments**

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## **Crossing Disciplines, Languages, and Borders**

**By Linda Polka**

Linda Polka is an associate professor in the school of communication sciences and disorders at McGill University. She is also the interim director of McGill's inter-disciplinary doctoral program in language acquisition. Polka received her PhD in experimental psychology, and completed the academic and clinical practica to become a clinical audiologist at the University of South Florida in 1989. Her research has examined how language experience shapes the development of speech perception.

As an under-graduate I was immediately attracted to psychology but I had other interests and also completed minors in natural sciences and in Japanese studies.

In my last year of undergraduate studies, I participated in a special Japanese studies program sponsored by Toyota Corporation. The program, in which each student was from a different academic discipline, involved Japanese language training, courses and intensive workshops on Japanese culture, and a study/tour in Japan.

Looking back, this experience was more than fun and, in fact, shaped my future in two ways. I became energized to learn more about the complexities of learning to speak a new language. I also learned to value cross-disciplinary interactions by working closely with individuals who shared a common interest but had different perspectives. This experience guided me to a research area that I love and led me to pursue an interdisciplinary doctoral program integrating experimental psychology and clinical audiology.

Today, I am an associate professor in the school of communication sciences and disorders at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. Our department provides clinical training in speech-language pathology at the master's level and research training at both the master's and doctoral level. I contribute to training of our students through teaching and research supervision. My major line of research examines how language experience shapes the development of speech perception. This work focuses on early development and involves comparing infants who are learning different languages in different language contexts (monolingual versus bilingual families).

Montreal is the perfect city to pursue my research, being one of the most linguistically diverse communities in North America, with two major languages (French and English), several large minority language groups, and many smaller minority groups. I also have an ideal academic environment for language research and clinical training. Within my department, I have 8 colleagues with expertise in diverse areas of language and we share the common goal of advancing knowledge in ways that can serve

the needs of the communicatively impaired. Our department and university also form the core of a broader network of expertise on language, speech, and auditory perception across Montreal. The McGill Centre for Language, Mind, and Brain ([www.crlmb.mcgill.ca](http://www.crlmb.mcgill.ca)) was recently established to recognize and support this unique and vibrant world-class language research network.

So, how did I get here? Psychology remained my home base for a long time and it is within this discipline that I initially found my research area. I entered a PhD program in experimental psychology at the University of Minnesota with a general interest in human perception and cognition. Fortunately for my advisor-to-be and me, I recognized the interests and abilities in my application to be the makings of a future speech researcher. His intuitions were right. The first week of graduate school he showed me some speech spectrograms and told me about some of the speech perception work in progress in the Minnesota Speech perception lab. I was hooked!

I started working in the speech perception lab immediately and have worked in this area ever since. It was also my good fortune to be in the Minnesota psychology department, which has a strong tradition of nurturing cross-disciplinary interactions and collaborations. I became involved with the Speech Perception Group, which included psychologists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and computer scientists and electrical engineers. These cross-disciplinary interactions were not always comfortable because individuals did not always agree or even understand each other but this tension stimulated thinking and promoted innovative collaboration. I learned a great deal participating in this group. Near the end of my first year at Minnesota my advisors, James Jenkins and Winifred Strange, announced that they were moving (and taking the lab) to the University of South Florida. Also, at South Florida they were establishing a new interdisciplinary doctoral program in experimental psychology and communication sciences and disorders. I followed my advisors and became the first graduate of this new program.

At USF I completed the academic and clinical practica required to practice as a clinical audiologist along with the experimental psychology program. Although I was interested in pursuing basic scientific research, I wanted to broaden my thinking and to think about research with respect to clinical implications or applications. This clinical training made me more knowledgeable about real problems faced by individual with hearing loss, and speech and language disorders and current solutions to these problems. I also enjoyed the challenges and rewards of clinical problem solving. After finishing my doctorate, I crossed the border to Canada to do postdoctoral work (supported by NIH) with Janet Werker in the infant speech perception lab in the psychology department at the University of British Columbia. I was hired by McGill before I started my postdoc.

At McGill, I teach courses in our clinical master's program and pursue research on speech perception development as well as some work on clinical assessment of hearing loss. I am also the interim director of the McGill University inter-disciplinary doctoral program in language acquisition ([www.psych.mcgill.ca/lap](http://www.psych.mcgill.ca/lap)). My research collaborators have included psychologists, speech scientists, linguists, audiologists, and otolaryngologists. At McGill, my connections with the psychology department include research collaborations and supervision of undergraduate research projects. I also hire psychology undergraduates in my lab.

For me, there are two major advantages of being in a communication disorders department. First, I have more colleagues closer to my own research interests than I would have in a traditional psychology

department. Second, it is generally easier to involve CSD students in my research because they have the most appropriate background, having studied acoustic phonetics, language development, and speech science.

Every choice has some drawbacks. It is more demanding and often takes more time to complete both clinical and research training programs. In recent years, CSD faculty (including ours) have worked to structure doctoral programs that facilitate combining clinical and research training, but it is still hard to do both well without extending the time to graduation. On the bright side, the current academic job market for PhDs with research skills and clinical training (in speech pathology or audiology) is excellent. However, beyond graduate school, it is also challenging to track developments in a research field and a clinical profession simultaneously, especially when both are rapidly evolving. There is no simple, one-fits-all solution to this dilemma. You have to find a strategy for balancing these demands that works for you and satisfies your career aspirations. Myself, I do not work clinically at present but teaching in a clinical department helps me keep abreast of major advances in clinical audiology. Supervising clinically-oriented student projects also helps me stay actively involved in the field.

Don't make the mistake of thinking that I am so clever that I planned or even anticipated the many steps along my career path. I believe that a graduate program designed to build scientific thinking and problem solving through research provides basic skills that can be extended in many directions. My PhD in experimental psychology did that for me. If I could go back in time, I would still invest the extra time and effort to become a clinical audiologist. Without this expertise my research and teaching would be less meaningful and I would have fewer career options. I also anticipate that I will eventually shift my attention to solving problems more directly related to hearing loss. Although crossing academic lines can be challenging, but it can also be very rewarding.

## **Interdisciplinarity is Norm at Carnegie Mellon**

**By Michael L. DeKay**

Michael DeKay is a social psychologist whose research projects involve risk perception, risk ranking, precautionary reasoning, and the distinction between unique and repeated decisions. He received his PhD in social psychology from the University of Colorado in Boulder in 1994. Since 1996, he has held joint appointments in the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management and in the Department of Engineering and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University.

Interdisciplinary research and education are alive and well at Carnegie Mellon University. For almost seven years, I have held a 50/50 appointment between the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management and the Department of Engineering and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon. Although there aren't many positions like mine at other universities, joint appointments are very common here. Almost all of the EPP faculty are jointly appointed with traditional engineering departments, the Department of Social and Decision Sciences, other departments in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, or the Graduate School of Industrial Administration (Carnegie Mellon's business school). At the Heinz School, joint appointments are less common, but that is partly due to the fact that Heinz does not divide itself into departments. There are no artificial boundaries, for example, between psychologists, economists, operations researchers, and information systems specialists, as there might be elsewhere.

This purposeful elimination of disciplinary boundaries in EPP, Heinz, and elsewhere at Carnegie Mellon has led to a remarkably vibrant community in which interdisciplinary collaboration is the norm. Carnegie Mellon's new Department of Biomedical Engineering, which is based on EPP's joint-appointment model, and burgeoning relationships with RAND's new Pittsburgh office will further enhance this collaborative environment.

An excellent example of interdisciplinary research at Carnegie Mellon is our work on developing and evaluating a deliberative method for ranking risks. This project has involved five faculty members with backgrounds in psychology, decision analysis, engineering, and the physical sciences. Although many public comparative risk projects have been conducted in recent years, the risk categories and attributes have varied widely, the materials and procedures have not been designed to facilitate comparisons among risks on their most important features, and the validity and reproducibility of the resulting rankings have generally not been assessed. With funding from the National Science Foundation and Environmental Protection Agency, we developed and assessed a method for assisting groups of laypeople in ranking risks to health, safety, and the environment, drawing upon the wealth of knowledge about risk perception and communication and on our own research into people's perceptions and evaluations of ecological risks.

Almost all of the important decisions in this project – from categorizing and describing the risks to developing multiple strategies for measuring individuals' and groups' concerns about those risks – have benefited from interactions between the psychologists and the other members of the research team. Although this risk-ranking project has an applied focus, both EPP and Heinz also encourage faculty to engage in basic research. Currently, I have two NSF-funded projects on basic judgment and decision processes: one on precautionary reasoning and one on the distinction between unique and repeated decisions.

The interdisciplinary nature of EPP and Heinz extends to education as well as research. In particular, undergraduate and master's students are required to take two semesters of project courses, and EPP Ph.D. students are required to manage one such course. The project courses I have taught have involved two or more faculty; students from EPP, Heinz, and SDS; review panels composed of experts from outside the university; and usually clients from local or national government agencies. Topics have included brownfield redevelopment, organ transplantation, human tissue engineering, and the transition to a hydrogen-based energy system. Such courses provide students from different academic backgrounds the opportunity to work together on important and challenging problems.

In my experience, being an academic psychologist outside of a traditional psychology department requires a genuine interest in other relevant domains. Indeed, my background in the physical sciences helped me land this position in the college of engineering. (I had degrees in chemistry from Caltech and Cornell before heading back to graduate school to study social psychology at the University of Colorado.) Although my appointment is very unusual for a psychologist, an appreciation of other scientific perspectives seems essential for anyone working at the boundaries of the discipline.

Of course, being jointly appointed outside the psychology department has its drawbacks as well. On the research side, it is somewhat difficult to attract psychologically-minded graduate students to either program, and I have to be careful not to lose track of my own research agenda among the numerous opportunities for collaboration. On the teaching side, courses in my specialty area (judgment and

decision making) are covered elsewhere at Carnegie Mellon. As a result, I have developed or adapted four different methodology courses and two courses on more focused topics (environmental and medical decision making). Finally, I do miss having closer connections to colleagues in psychology. Despite my access to an excellent psychology department at Carnegie Mellon (note that Sheldon Cohen will give one of the distinguished lectures at this year's APS convention), my activities in Heinz and EPP have made it difficult to pursue additional interests.

In summary, my current position challenges me in ways that a typical social or cognitive position in a traditional psychology department would not, but the intellectual rewards of working in such a stimulating environment more than compensate for the additional effort that is required. Carnegie Mellon is one of the very best places in the country to research judgment and decision making, and Heinz and EPP both provide excellent avenues for applying this research to important policy matters. With lower barriers to interdisciplinary research at Carnegie Mellon than at any other top-tier university in the nation, it is hard to imagine being anywhere else.

## **Promoting Academic Excellence**

**By Todd Zakrajsek**

Todd Zakrajsek is the first director of academic excellence at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. Zakrajsek was previously director of the Center for Teaching and Learning at Southern Oregon University, where he also taught in the psychology department. Zakrajsek received his PhD in industrial/organizational psychology from Ohio University and currently teaches learning and memory, statistics, and a graduate teaching seminar.

I have one of the best jobs in academe: directing a faculty development center at Central Michigan University. Faculty development directors support faculty and the mission of the university with respect to quality instruction in a number of ways, including personal consultations, providing resources, delivering teaching/learning workshops, and serving as a consultant on matters of student learning.

My training in industrial/organizational psychology provided a phenomenal foundation for this job. The major aspects of faculty development involve issues very similar to core issues in I/O psychology:

- organizational change (dealing with increased class size)
- motivation (developing systems to help faculty to encourage students to do course work)
- job satisfaction (coaching "burned out" faculty)
- performance evaluation (consulting on evaluation of teaching effectiveness)
- assessment/program evaluation (designing classroom assessment techniques)
- interpersonal communication (methods to maintain civility in the classroom)
- research methods (helping faculty to conduct research on pedagogical issues).

Although faculty development directors come from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, I find my training as a psychological scientist especially well suited.

I received my PhD in I/O psychology from Ohio University in 1992. Aside from outstanding

disciplinary training, I gained extensive experience teaching while in graduate school. After graduate school I taught as an adjunct for 2 years: at a prestigious private college, a small public college, and a medium-sized university. This variety helped me get my first tenure-track job, and also served as a solid foundation from which I drew on my experience to help faculty with their teaching.

My road to faculty development started shortly after securing tenure in the psychology department at Southern Oregon University. I had a close colleague in the psychology department with whom I frequently discussed teaching philosophies. Soon, I was facilitating brown-bag lunch conversations with faculty from across campus. The provost, a huge supporter of faculty and faculty issues, gave me a small allocation of money to “see what would develop.” Within a few years I had a faculty development center with release time and a small budget. Recently, I accepted a full-time job as the inaugural director of the faculty center for academic excellence at Central Michigan University.

I quickly realized this new job would be very different from the traditional academic jobs I had held. First, there were few people on campus with whom I could consult on issues related to faculty development; after spending years in departments surrounded by colleagues, I am now in a position with little peer support. Second, faculty with whom I work come from literally all over the university. I thought there were vast differences between clinical and experimental psychologists, but now find those differences minor compared to back-to-back conversations with a brand new faculty member in physics followed by a full professor in art.

The lack of inherent peer support and the variety of issues involved in this job necessitates the continual formation of collaborations. I quickly established contact with a variety of faculty, staff, and administrators from across campus. I find collaborating with a variety of individuals to be particularly rewarding. I now have a much better appreciation for multiple “ways of knowing.” Although it is obvious faculty from different disciplines have different perspectives, I never really understood the depths of the differences until I began to work closely with faculty from dozens of different departments.

I am lucky to have a solid relationship with a great psychology department. I teach one course each semester and find it comforting to remain in contact with my “home” department. A friend from another university recently asked if I felt that I had “given up anything to work in an interdisciplinary teaching/learning center.” My first response was an emphatic “no.”

From the beginning, I have enjoyed the eclectic nature of a job that really opened my eyes to all the positive aspects of the diversity within academe and am reminded daily of the importance of embracing diversity. Now I realize that it does come at a cost. There are times when I miss daily interactions with colleagues in psychology, but that said, I am extremely lucky to have this opportunity. Every day, I get to help a variety of faculty who are good teachers and who want to be even better. After more than a decade working in higher education, I still run up the last few stairs some mornings, anxious to get to my office and begin the day.

## **Hospitality is Part of My Job**

**By Michael Lynn**

Michael Lynn is a social psychologist at Cornell University's school of hotel administration. His research interests have focused on tipping behaviors and customs. Lynn received his PhD in social psychology from Ohio State University in 1987. Before joining Cornell University's school of hotel administration, he held appointments as professor of marketing in the business schools at the University of Missouri-Columbia and the University of Houston.

I am a social psy-chologist at Cornell University's School of hotel administration. The Cornell hotel school is essentially a boutique business school with a focus on the hospitality industry. In this article, I will identify some of the ways that my job differs from the typical academic position in psychology, describe my research, and explain how I came to work in a hotel school.

## MY JOB

Like most academics, my job involves teaching, research and service. However, the job differs in important ways from those in psychology departments. Among the distinctive features of the job are the following.

- I teach marketing rather than psychology courses. My courses on consumer behavior and marketing research involve a substantial overlap with material I learned as a social psychologist. However, even these courses required me to learn a lot of new material.
- As a group, my students are more extroverted, more career-focused, less intellectually curious, and less analytical than the typical psychology student. In order to reach these students, I have to emphasize established principles and their application rather than alternative theoretical perspectives and research testing those theories.
- Work dress norms require a coat and tie on teaching days and business casual on other days. Unfortunately, these norms do not include jeans!
- My research is expected to contribute to hospitality management. Thus, I do not have the same degree of freedom in choosing research topics that most psychologists do. However, my own preference for applied, phenomena driven research is more appreciated than it would have been in most psychology programs.
- I have no behavioral labs or established subject pools. On the other hand, I have better access to the hospitality industry's field settings and data sets than do most psychologists.
- I am expected to provide service to a constituency that most psychologists do not have – i.e., the hospitality industry. I serve this constituency through consulting, writing for practitioner journals, and presenting at industry conferences.
- I work with people from a wider variety of disciplines than is found in psychology departments – i.e., from accounting, communications, finance, human resources, information technology, law, management, marketing, operations management, and strategy. This makes faculty committees, lunches and parties more interesting and educational.
- My income is substantially larger than it would have been had I remained in psychology.

## DETERMINANTS OF TIPPNG BEHAVIOR

The Cornell Hotel School requires faculty to publish in the journals of a basic discipline (such as economics, marketing, or psychology) as well as in hospitality management journals. Many faculty do this by pursuing two different programs of research – one for discipline journals and another for hospitality journals. Fortunately, my interests have allowed me to publish in both types of journals from a single research program. For the past twenty years, I have studied the determinants of tipping behavior

and customs. Tips are voluntary payments of money given to service workers after services have been rendered. Tipping interests psychologists, because they use it as a naturalistic dependent variable in research on diffusion of responsibility, equity, reciprocity, and other psychological processes. Tipping also interests economists, because they see it as an irrational economic behavior. Finally, tipping interests hospitality managers and employees, because it is a major source of employee compensation in the industry. Thus, I have been able to publish my research on this topic in applied psychology, behavioral economics, and hospitality management journals. Interested readers can find pre-prints of some of my articles on my Web site at [www.people.cornell.edu/pages/wml3](http://www.people.cornell.edu/pages/wml3).

#### HOW I CAME TO THE CORNELL HOTEL SCHOOL

In 1987, I graduated from Ohio State University's social psychology program with seven first authored publications. My original goal was a tenure track job in a psychology department. However, my research was not focused – my articles dealt with alcohol effects, group processes, person perception, romantic relationships, and social dilemmas – and I had difficulty finding a tenure track job. Therefore, I took a visiting position in psychology at the University of Missouri-Columbia. It was there that I first thought about employment outside of psychology.

While at UMC, I was offered a two-year visiting position in the business school due largely to the strong ties between the psychology and marketing departments that Richard Petty had forged there. With an undergraduate dual-major in psychology and economics, a master's thesis on tipping, and a dissertation on consumer response to product scarcity, I had always been interested in economic behavior. Therefore, I decided to accept the visiting marketing position and to reposition myself as a consumer psychologist seeking employment in a business school.

In 1990, I obtained a tenure track position in marketing at the University of Houston. In my fifth year there, I came across an ad for a consumer psychology position at Cornell's Hotel School. I applied for, and eventually accepted, this position for many reasons. First, I wanted to be in a more academically challenging university. Second, I had fallen in love with the hospitality industry while paying my way through school working as a banquet server, bartender and waiter. Third, I liked the Cornell Hotel School's applied orientation, which was even stronger than that at most business schools. Finally, I knew that my research on tipping would be more appreciated at the Cornell Hotel School and would have more visibility and impact coming from there than elsewhere.

I have now been at Cornell's Hotel School for seven years. Although it was not where I had originally planned to work, I have found it to be a very hospitable environment for an applied consumer/social psychologist like myself.

## **Life in a Multidisciplinary Environment**

**By Kimihiko Yamagishi**

Kimihiko Yamagishi earned his doctorate at the department of psychology, University of Washington, in 1995. Since 2000, he is an associate professor at graduate school of decision science and technology, Tokyo Institute of Technology. His Web site is at [www.ky.hum.titech.ac.jp/kimihiko-e.html](http://www.ky.hum.titech.ac.jp/kimihiko-e.html)



As a cognitive psycholo-gist by training, my specialty is in judgment and decision-making. Being a decision-making specialist puts me in a funny position for a psychologist, and in effect, I have never been affiliated at a department of psychology since earning my doctorate.

The first professional position I held was in the school of business and environment at Shukutoku University. Now I am at the graduate school of decision science and technology at Tokyo Institute of Technology. The reason I have held jobs at decision science programs may be due to the multidisciplinary nature of decision-making research. When I was finishing my graduate education and was on the job market, I planned to find a position in my home country, Japan. At that time, job openings in Japan for decision-making researchers were more abundant at multidisciplinary programs than at conventional psychology departments. This still holds true today and my colleagues' backgrounds include animal behavior, business studies, economics, linguistics, marketing, mathematics, operational research, sociology, and so on.

Therefore it may be said that I have always been in multidisciplinary environment: Interacting with colleagues from various disciplines adds more fun to being an academic psychology researcher. A drawback of not being in a psychology department – my university does not have a psychology department – is that it is sometimes time-consuming and cumbersome to persuade my colleagues that psychologists have special needs.

My colleagues, for example, do necessarily understand that human participants are crucially important for psychological research on decision-making. Sometimes I am forced to make special arrangements and even a bit of political maneuvering to run experiments with human participants. Yet, I enjoy interacting with people from various disciplines who share common interests in the process of decision-making. This multidisciplinary nature is probably the biggest difference from being affiliated at a psychology program.

## **Holding onto Psychology in Leisure Studies**

**By Douglas Kleiber**

Douglas A. Kleiber is professor and director of the school of health and human performance at the University of Georgia. He received a PhD in educational psychology from the University of Texas at Austin in 1972 and an AB in Psychology from Cornell University in 1969. He has taught previously in the department of leisure studies at the University of Illinois and in the psychology departments at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota and University of Georgia.

I have worked in leisure studies, a field that is at least as likely to be called “recreation and leisure studies,” for 24 years (12 at the University of Illinois and 12 here at the University of Georgia) before assuming my present duties. At the moment, serving as a full time director of a School of Health and Human Performance, I have precious little time for research of any kind. But after a year and a half in the role I have learned a great deal more than I knew before about exercise science, physical education, and health promotion than I did before. These are the other three departments in our four department structure, the fourth being the one from which I came, recreation and leisure studies.

After receiving an AB in Psychology from Cornell University I did doctoral work in educational psychology at the University of Texas, taking the opportunity to work a little with psychology department faculty Arnold Buss and Eliot Aronson while working with ed psych faculty. The most influential of those, Guy Manaster and Jere Brophy, did their doctoral work in developmental psychology at The University of Chicago. My intellectual roots were even more firmly established with the Chicago School through what has been a continuous working correspondence with Mihaly Csikszentmihaly, who has contributed so steadily to the emerging “positive psychology” initiative championed by Martin Seligman among others. All of these associations were instrumental in my academic development, but I risked detaching from them and psychology in general when I jumped to leisure studies in 1977. However, there were both conceptual and practical reasons for doing so.

As an undergraduate psychology major at Cornell in the late sixties I played football, and my advisor, Jim Maas, encouraged me to acquaint myself with the emerging area of sport psychology. My status as captain of the team gave me only enough leverage with my teammates to get them to complete a personality inventory, the results of which I analyzed for differences between offense and defense and lineman and backs (Surprisingly, in retrospect, some of predicted differences were borne out!). This experience predisposed me to use my graduate program to examine the developmental significance of play and the impact of leisure activity on self-actualization, subjects that continue to interest me.

In the mid 70s, the leisure studies department at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign was collecting social scientists for an interdisciplinary leisure research program, and an article I did on play and learning while in the psychology department at St. Cloud State University caught the attention of the search committee, after which they welcomed my application for a “psychology of leisure” position. The practical value of making the change was that I went from a very heavy teaching load (three courses per quarter at SCSU) to not teaching at all in my first year at UIUC, and thus I was able to do more research on the psychology of play and leisure in that one year than I would ever have been able to do in many years in my previous position.

Eventually, I learned enough about the academic field of parks, recreation and leisure services to be able to contribute to the instructional program in ways other than in my specialty area. And having tried to understand intrinsic motivation and development in the context of public school classrooms for the previous five years, the focus on the context of leisure was a welcome change. Indeed, I was fortified by the conviction that play and self-expression had important developmental benefits. The fact that many of my new colleagues were public-spirited individuals who took as their mission the provision of opportunities to enhance such activity also contributed to what struck me as an agreeable working environment.

Demands for accountability in all public sector areas in the early 80s and the influx of social scientists in recreation and leisure studies raised the profile for research and evaluation in that field. Managers of leisure services were compelled to demonstrate the social, psychological and economic “benefits” of their planning and programming, to both communities and to individuals, particularly those with disabilities or disadvantages.

The move to leisure studies led me to do forego a membership in the American Educational Research Association for one in the National Recreation and Park Association, but I maintained my membership in psychology organizations for awhile, ultimately becoming a founding member of APS, and

established working relationships with faculty at UIUC who had an interest in achievement motivation. I collaborated with Martin Maehr on the subject of intrinsic motivation, achievement motivation, and aging, including editing and contributing chapters in the *Advances in Motivation and Achievement* series (JAI Press).

I found that my interest in motivation, expressive behavior, and developmental transitions was compatible with concerns of people in special education and recreation therapy who were working on the problem of school-to-work transitions for individuals with developmental disabilities. A federal grant in that area supported the beginnings of what has become a 20-year program of research on self-expression in relation to developmental transitions. Colleagues and I have given particular attention to the significance of leisure experience in adjusting to spinal cord injury. Some of this work has led me to an association with faculty in the psychology department here at UGA. Partly as a result, I was recently offered adjunct status with that department, thus bringing me full circle in one respect.

Working outside of mainstream academic psychology, I have found not only the opportunity to do psychological research and stay connected with the field, I have also found that there are a good number of scholars with training in academic psychology who are using it to address a wide variety of problems. In addition to leisure studies, which has had its share of those with training and advanced degrees in psychology, health promotion and behavior, sport psychology and exercise science. Exercise psychology, in particular, is a prominent program in Exercise Science with laboratory research on exercise adherence and the impact of exercise on emotion and cognition. While administrative responsibilities have taken me away from some of my own research interests, I have come to an even greater appreciation of the extent to which psychology is a preoccupying discipline for many in programs outside of traditional psychology departments and for the collaboration opportunities that are created as a result.