

Linehan Receives Grawemeyer Award for Psychology

December 02, 2016



APS James McKeen Cattell Fellow Marsha M. Linehan, whose groundbreaking research has focused on developing interventions for teens at high risk for suicide, as well as support networks for their families and friends, has won the 2017 University of Louisville Grawemeyer Award for Psychology. Linehan's award-winning Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is an evidence-based cognitive behavioral program that helps patients focus on mediating their behavior with coping skills.

Past recipients of the Grawemeyer Award for Psychology include APS Past Presidents Elizabeth F. Loftus, Walter Mischel, and James L. McGaugh; APS Past Board Member Anne M. Treisman; APS William James Fellow and James McKeen Cattell Fellow Albert Bandura; APS James McKeen Cattell Fellows Aaron T. Beck and Irving I. Gottesman; APS William James Fellows Daniel Kahneman, Mortimer Mishkin, Michael I. Posner, Amos Tversky, and Leslie G. Ungerleider; and APS Fellows Antonio Damasio, Steven E. Petersen, and Lynn Nadel.

Linehan, who directs the Behavioral Research and Therapy Clinics, Center for Behavioral Technology at the University of Washington, has worked for decades to develop rigorous clinical trials to study suicidal behaviors. In her award address at the 2015 APS Annual Convention in New York City, she noted that, as of 2013, only 83 randomized clinical trials had been conducted to measure suicidal behavior. Furthermore, 23% of those trials excluded many of the individuals who most needed treatment, such as those with depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder as well as those at high risk for suicide. Linehan, therefore, has made it her mission to increase the amount of empirical research dedicated to patients with mental disorders by using robust study methods and by training graduate students to deal with difficult cases early in their careers.

The psychological scientist has been open about how her own suicidality and depression have influenced her work. “At a young age, I vowed to get myself out of hell and then to go back and get others out,” she said in the press release announcing the award.

In addition to undertaking this daunting mission, Linehan has published seven books (including a widely employed handbook on DBT that has been translated into 10 languages).

To see Marsha Linehan’s 2015 APS Award address, [click here](#).