Psychology and APS Summit Showcased In ’91 Federal Research Funding Bill

Arguably, this has been the most dramatic and volatile beginning to a fiscal year in our nation’s history. Just as unprecedented, the scientific discipline of psychology has emerged from the fray in no uncertain terms a winner.

As the direct result of APS’s efforts with Congress and federal agencies, psychological research is prominently mentioned in congressional reports and legislation on funding of the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), the Departments of Education and Labor (DOE, DOL), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

This year’s budgets for federal research agencies were forged against a backdrop of pre-election partisan politics, economic uncertainty, and waning public confidence in government, all of which conspired to create a budget impasse of enormous proportions. But there was no impasse regarding behavioral and social science research.

Psychology Emerges From the Smoke
“As the smoke clears” from the budget battles, “we are seeing that we have achieved a new level of support in Congress,” said Alan Kraut, APS Executive Director. “This is particularly significant for the founders of APS who wanted a greater presence for scientific psychology in Washington.”

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said such an outcome “will be even more significant if the entire NIH budget is mandated to stay.”

NIMH Prevention Research
It is understood that more support for research in prevention is necessary, particularly in primary prevention and promotion from a social and behavioral perspective. Although significant progress will be made increasing funding in this area before next year’s appropriations hearings.

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What Congress Is Saying About:

The APS National Behavioral Science Research Summit
Joges the research funding agencies of NIH, NIMH, NSF, and the Department of Education and Labor to Evaluate the APS Summit Meeting to Increase Federal Research Funding 5/91

Behavioral Science at NIMH
Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and the Senate Appropriations Committee have proposed an increase in the NIH budget for behavioral science research.

See inside for the ’91 Convention
CALL FOR PROPOSALS

American Psychological Society, 1511 K St., NW, Suite 345, Washington, DC 20005-1401, Tel.: 202-783-2077
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THE REAL APS AGENDA

James L. McGaugh
President, APS

In the past months, I have often been asked, "What is APS all about — what is its 'real' agenda?" In view of the turmoil that led to the creation of the American Psychological Society, I suppose that questions of this kind are to be expected. But the record of the past two years has given a clear answer. The agenda is a simple one: The aim of APS is to advance psychological science. Although the agenda is simple, the implementation is not.

The articles in this issue of the Observer provide a sample of current initiatives and concerns of APS that are related to our overall aim. As you will note, APS is highly active in efforts to influence government actions affecting the funding and conduct of psychological research. These efforts include ongoing interactions with congressional and agency offices as well as the work of the Summit to encourage the development of a funding and conduct agenda for psychological science. The 1991 convention program committee is busy creating a program that will highlight recent research accomplishments of psychological scientists. Nearly every issue of the Observer now has a "Spotlight on Research" featuring a recent research achievement. The William James Fellow awards were established as a means of honoring our most distinguished psychological scientists. It is time to submit nominations for those you believe have significantly advanced psychological science.

These are some of the activities initiated by the actions of the APS Board and the APS Washington, DC, office. All are based on a dedication to serving the interests of APS members. Your continued support is essential (note: this is a not-so-subtle hint that it is time to pay your 1991 membership dues). With your support, APS will continue to work vigorously on the "real" agenda: Advancing psychological science.
“Human Capital Initiative” Is Coming to Life

National Priorities Fuel Psychology’s Research Agenda

Psychology’s “National Research Agenda” is on track and on time. The consensus of the multi-society summit in Tucson, AZ, (in January, 1990) is winding its way to incorporation into a visible product, a white paper by the summit’s steering committee. The draft of what is now called the “Human Capital Initiative” will be the main topic of discussion at the next APS summit scheduled for January 25-27, in Houston, TX.

APS President James McGaugh has invited the original 65 summit-participant psychological societies, along with a number of newly participating societies, to take the next major step in developing a national agenda for psychological research.

Janet Spence, who chairs the steering committee that drafted the Human Capital Initiative report, said, “We’ve been trying to craft a document that really centers around national needs, that points to the problems current society faces, and that tells where psychology can contribute and what kind of research has to be done.”

The steering committee — which includes Donald Foss, Co-chair, David Berliner, James Blascovich, Milton Hakel, Bruce Overmier, Sandra Scarr, and Larry Squires — produced an all-but-completed draft document in October at its third meeting.

“We propose a Human Capital Initiative . . . to support psychological research relevant to a set of crucial national priorities.”

So far, Washington policy makers have responded positively to the APS summit outcomes and initial steps toward drafting a national research agenda. Both the summit and the agenda have been cited by the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. Congressman George Brown (D-CA) specifically noted the outcome of the 1990 science summit as a reason for his pursuing legislation to create a separate directorate for behavioral and social science at the National Science Foundation. And, the Senate asked federal agencies to examine the summit document and to be prepared to discuss it during next year’s appropriations hearings.

Spence expects the Human Capital Initiative draft to serve as the main focus of the second summit in January. But the draft is intended as just one of the two major parts of psychology’s response to the funding agencies’ challenge. Part two of the response involves each of the constituent societies in developing its own specific set of research priorities and initiatives that fit within the broad guidelines of the Human Capital Initiative, or — where interests overlap — working in small groups to develop joint research priorities and strategies.

“We conceive of the Human Capital Initiative as speaking to policymakers in Congress and the Administration,” Spence said. “Once it is agreed upon, there needs to be a series of more specific initiatives that can help program staff in the research agencies to develop RFAs and RFPs. And, these initiatives should reflect the

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tions Committee, has been instrumental in ensuring much of the support for psychology’s research issues. He represents a diverse district and is particularly interested in rural mental health issues.

The leadership of Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-HI), a long-time ally of psychological science, also is evident in promoting health and behavior at NIH and NIMH.

“Follow the APS Summit”

One example comes from the Senate Appropriations Committee, which sets overall funding levels and provides the agencies with some directions on how to spend their money. This year, the Senate budget report specifically addressed the summit meeting convened by APS earlier in 1990, noting that “general psychology research themes” are being developed as a result of the summit, and that these “fit the agenda of many of the research agencies under the auspices of this Committee.”

Accordingly, “The Committee urges the research funding agencies of NIH, ADAMHA, NSF, and the Departments of Education and Labor to examine the summit meeting documents with an eye toward behavioral science funding initiatives in 1991. The Committee would like to hear the results of this examination in next year’s appropriations hearings.”

NSF: Psychology Alone

And in Science Education

The Senate Appropriations Committee, in unusually strong terms, told the National Science Foundation to respond to issues of increased funding and establishing a separate directorate for behavioral and social sciences.

“The Committee directs NSF to examine the National Academy of Sciences report and recommendations that NSF create a separate directorate and increase funding for psychology, behavioral science, and social science. The NSF shall report to the Committee by January 31, 1991, on its response.” (See related story on page 7 on NSF.)

In the same report, the Committee also gives a boost to psychology’s role in science education, noting that “the behavioral sciences can provide important information that will help educators improve the way in which we teach and learn about science and technology. The Committee believes these disciplines have much to offer in terms of applying new ways to stimulate and motivate students, particularly those in Kindergarten through grade 12 level, in the study of science and technology.”

NIMH: Behavioral Science, Young Psychologists, Behavioral Science Centers, Prevention

Perhaps it is at NIMH where the most congressional attention on psychology was focused. For some time, APS and others have expressed frustration about the agency’s neglect of behavioral and social science research. While Congress has mentioned this issue in previous reports, this year there is a new, more foreboding tone: “The Committee remains deeply concerned that the broad legislative mandate of NIMH is being narrowed from within the Institute to deal mainly with biomedical research on mental illness.”

Specifically, the Senate Committee indicates that both basic research and research into social and behavioral aspects of numerous conditions have suffered from “an administrative narrowing [that] is inappropriate at best, and at worst, profoundly neglectful of the public NIMH is mandated to serve.”

Having allowed NIMH leeway in previous years to determine how to improve this situation, this time the Committee prescribed specific steps for the agency to take regarding:

Basic research

The Committee is aware of the reorganization of NIMH’s Basic Science Division into the Division of Basic, Brain, and Behavioral Sciences (DB3). This is an important first step in making behavioral science more visible, but must not be the final step. The Committee would like to learn what the Institute is doing about including behavioral scientists in the leadership and planning for the new division. In addition, there should be equitable distribution of funding across branches of the new division. The Committee understands, for example, that certain behavioral branches supported grants down to only the 5th to 6th percentile in funding cycles, whereas biomedical branches supported grants to the 11th to 14th percentile. The discrepancy is even more striking given the greater expense of biomedical research. Such a discrepancy simply is not acceptable.

Prevention

The Committee was disappointed by the March 1990 ADAMHA report on prevention, which makes little or no distinction between NIMH prevention initiatives and the existing NIMH agenda in neuroscience research, schizophrenia, et cetera. Specifically in response to the Committee interest in preventing suicide, NIMH proffers discussion of biological and genetic links to suicide. This, however, overlooks compelling evidence linking suicide to farm foreclosures, stress in adolescence, admission to a nursing home, unemployment, and other environmental factors.

Therefore, the Committee requests that NIMH report on its plans for developing an expanded research agenda in preventing mental disorders and in promoting mental health. Specifically, the Committee is interested in knowing plans for increasing the quantity of prevention research, particularly in primary prevention and promotion from a social and behavioral perspective. The Committee expects that significant progress will be made increasing funding in this area before next year’s appropriations hearings.

Behavioral research centers

The Committee was pleased to learn of the NIMH Director’s interest in behavioral science research centers, and would like to see how this interest is being pursued. We would be interested in seeing a timetable for a behavioral centers program, including schedules for distributing an announcement, for review, and for funding.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Government Science Policy Notes

Testing

Civil Rights Legislation and Employment Selection. On October 22nd, President George Bush vetoed civil rights legislation that sought to restore certain rights to victims of discrimination but also could have jeopardized the use of standardized employment selection procedures. H.R. 4000, the "Civil Rights Act of 1990," proposed to alter or reverse six recent Supreme Court decisions regarding job discrimination protections. The Act also widens the scope of EEO damages to entitle victims of all types of discrimination, not just racial discrimination, to seek punitive damages.

The provision most troublesome to industrial/organizational psychologists also was one of the most controversial aspects of the legislation and was a basis for President Bush's veto. At issue was the definition of "business necessity" as it applied to hiring or promotion practices. Under the legislation, employment practices proven to be biased would be unlawful unless they were required by "business necessity." An early version of the legislation defined business necessity simply as meaning "essential to job performance." Another defined it as "significantly related to successful job performance." Many objected to these definitions, saying that the difficulty in meeting such standards would result in the establishment of quotas.

In contrast, supporters of H.R. 4000 said the Supreme Court's actions in 1989 (Wards Cove Packing Co. v. Antonio) could have jeopardized the use of standardized employment selection procedures. The provision most troublesome to industrial/organizational psychologists also was one of the most controversial aspects of the legislation and was a basis for President Bush's veto. At issue was the definition of "business necessity" as it applied to hiring or promotion practices.

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Young researchers

The Committee, therefore, directs NIMH to set aside sufficient funds in 1991 for mechanisms such as FIRST Awards, Small Grants, and other appropriate methods, to significantly reverse this [decline in young NIMH investigators] in the behavioral sciences. The Committee requests to see documentation of this reverse prior to next year's appropriations hearings.

Departmental oversight

NIMH is part of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA). The status of behavioral and social science research throughout ADAMHA also has been a concern to the Committee. Under the broad rubric of public health management, the Committee for the first time is expressly holding Department-level officials at Health and Human Services (HHS) responsible for ADAMHA's lackluster support for behavioral and social science research. For the past several years, this Committee has stressed the importance of strengthening the psychological, behavioral, and social science research, training, and service programs of PHS [U.S. Public Health Service] agencies. To date, the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration has been extremely resistant to fulfilling its legislative mandate in this regard... The Committee must, therefore, now call upon the Assistant Secretary [of Health] to more closely monitor ADAMHA's portfolio and ensure that the agency maintains a balanced agenda that sustains a variety of approaches to questions of mental health and substance abuse.

NIH: Health and Behavior

The topic of health and behavior is addressed for nearly all of the fourteen National Institutes of Health. APS's efforts focused on the National Institute on Aging (NIA), the National Institute on Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI), and in conjunction with the Society for Research on Child Development (SRCD), the National Institute on Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). The result was that in each case, the Committee report highlighted areas of interest and encouraged the particular Institute to support activities in those areas.

National Institute on Child Health and Human Development

The Committee encourages support for behavioral and social science research in several areas, including: links between developmental factors and preventable injuries; early detection of learning disabilities; developmental psychobiology; the interaction between learning and biology; behavioral approaches to SIDS; drug addicted babies; and normative research on ethnic minority children. many of which involve standardized testing and assessment.

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National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute

Emphasis is on expanding research into the effectiveness of behavioral changes in addressing coronary, and lung and blood diseases. In addition, NHLBI is encouraged to look at health and behavior in the workplace, and the evaluation of service programs.

National Institute on Aging

The Committee calls for increased behavioral and social science research in a long list of areas including studying aging among special populations, fostering independence in the aged, and preventing disabling conditions through psychosocial interventions. Particular emphasis is placed on the use of behavioral interventions to modify lifestyles and thus extend vigorous health and effective functioning. In addition, the development of behavioral and social interventions are encouraged in efforts to "lighten the burden of caregivers of Alzheimer's patients."

National Institute on Neurological Disorders and Stroke

Basic research on the neurology of learning and memory, cognition, and behavioral neuroscience is seen as especially important in understanding learning disabilities, Alzheimer's disease, and stroke. Increased understanding of normal brain functioning is seen as important in understanding various conditions, and the importance of a "two-way path" between applied and basic research is emphasized and encouraged.

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collective wisdom of the groups attending the summit."

Useful Theme for Policymakers and Psychologists

Speaking about the "human capital" theme, Co-chair, Don Foss said, "I believe that the Committee’s product will both excite and inspire the public and that it will permit researchers across the wide spectrum of psychology to 'find a home' for their efforts within its framework."

Sandra Scarr, a member of the steering committee that drafted the paper, said, "It’s very important for psychologists to band together to point out to policymakers how crucial our research is to the nation’s well-being and to the further economic and social development of the United States. That’s why I think the theme we’ve chosen — the Human Capital Initiative — is particularly suitable to address the concerns of psychologists about human development and human behavior and to meet the concerns of policy makers about how human capital has enormous impact on everyone’s well-being."

"At last January’s summit we decided that something like this human capital initiative would encompass our concerns within the field and also encompass the national concerns of the policymakers. It seems the best meeting point between psychologists and policymakers because it includes mental health, physical health and behavior, it encompasses human development and education, work, worker productivity, and all of the issues that have to do with how we as a society are functioning in our economic roles and in our human social roles," Scarr said.

"Human capital is investment in people, in human development and human behavior. That includes the most obvious things about worker training and children’s education, but it also includes mental health and physical health issues; it includes social organizational issues, the background issues of understanding learning and motivation and brain/behavior relationships, because all of these have an impact on how effective our population functions for the greater social good."

Spence noted that the draft “points to areas where research needs a lot more work” and “it’s work that is capable of being done. It’s not as if we are saying that a cure for some dread disease must be found. The draft doesn’t do anything as vague as that. We are pointing to things for which we know the tools are there and know there is a good background on which to build.

“We are trying to show that basic research is needed, that it does feed into action-oriented research, the kind of work that really does address and find solutions to very practical problems. But we are not trying to make any artificial distinctions between basic and applied, and our focus is that psychology has a good deal to contribute to the solution of pressing problems that affect us all — and those solutions come from the very basic level to the obviously applied.”

Asked whether the national research agenda would not only alert policymakers but also tend to focus psychologists into areas where American society needs solutions to problems, Spence said, "I don’t believe anyone had that in mind. But I can be perfectly frank: research needs money to survive, and access to funds is bound to attract people. So that federal policy does distort the research that is done by the kind of research the agencies support. So I think it’s wise for us as psychologists to say we would like to join in setting these priorities. Then when the agencies do affect the field they will do so in a way that we think is useful.”

D. Kent

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substantially diluted the standard of "business necessity" set forth in the 1971 Griggs v. Duke Power Co. decision, and shifted the burden of proof to the employee, who would have to prove that the practices being questioned were discriminatory and not a business necessity.

APS, working with members of its affiliate Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP) and the American Psychological Association (APA), supported the goals of H.R. 4000 and urged Congress to define business necessity in a way that reflects established scientific employee selection methods, as presented in the “Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures.” A letter from SIOP to Congress was cited on the floor of the Senate by Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-KS) in support of the position that the Act could result in the establishment of quotas.

In the bill sent to President Bush, the definition of business necessity has been greatly expanded in order to clarify the intention of the Act. Selection practices that measure job performance “must bear a significant relationship to successful performance of the job.” Others “must bear a significant relationship to a manifest business objective of the employer.”

The definition goes on: determining business necessity requires demonstrable evidence, including among other things, validation studies, expert testimony, and “testimony of individuals with knowledge of the practice or decision involved.”

The Senate failed by a single vote to override the veto. However, sponsors of the legislation have said that they will introduce an even stronger civil rights measure early in the next session of Congress.

Labor Discontinues GATB. The Department of Labor (DOL) has proposed discontinuing the use of the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) for the purposes of job referrals in state employment programs. This decision was made despite a generally favorable report on GATB from the National Academy of Sciences, and it will remain in effect until further research is conducted on the battery. APS recommended that DOL continue the use of the GATB while such research is being conducted. and that their

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NSF Task Force: New Opportunity
Old Approach

WASHINGTON — It was “deja vu all over again,” as that sage of the baseball diamond, Yogi Berra, would say. Others might not be so kind in characterizing the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) most recent actions regarding a separate directorate for behavioral and social science research.

For years, psychologists have said the current structure that serves the behavioral and social sciences within the NSF presents an obstacle to funding. The problem is a lack of representation at the higher levels of the Foundation, where critical resource allocations are decided.

What initially appeared to be a good faith effort by the NSF to address this issue now has taken on the appearance of yet another not-so-subtle effort to maintain the status quo regarding the behavioral and social sciences.

NSF Responsibility

For the uninitiated, the status quo is a status low: NSF’s behavioral and social science research programs are funded on a permanently lower plateau than other areas of science within the same directorate as well as across the NSF as a whole. Although the directorate’s leaders have tried to implicate Congress as responsible for this situation, those familiar with the congressional funding process understand that the relevant funding decisions rest squarely with the agency.

As we have reported earlier, there has been increased pressure from Congress and even from one of NSF’s own advisory panels to establish a separate directorate for the behavioral and social sciences and to increase funding for research in these disciplines. Forced to do something, the NSF convened a task force in September ostensibly to address these issues further. But once again, it is a group dominated by individuals not familiar with behavioral or social science research, who will be determining the status of that research at NSF.

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evaluation look at the ways in which GATB is used. To date, DOL has not responded.

Animals in Research

Proposed Animal Welfare Standards.

Many of you are aware that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) issues regulations for the care of laboratory animals, as required by the 1985 Animal Welfare Act. Regulations proposed earlier have undergone substantial revision and APHIS recently published the revised version for further comments. APHIS has heard from more than 10,000 individuals (this includes a petition with 5,000 signatures) on these regulations, including 2,000 from the research community (this includes a petition with 500 signatures submitted by an animal dealer).

From the point of view of researchers, the current version of the animal welfare standards are a great improvement from earlier versions, and APHIS has been responsive to many of the concerns of science, although some specific concerns remain. In general, the comments from researchers reflect these points. In contrast, the animal rights people are waging a strongly negative campaign against APHIS for not going far enough in the regulations.

APS made the following general recommendations to APHIS: (1) include consultation with a behavioral scientist as a requirement for determining “psychological well-being”; and (2) modify the regulations to allow maximum flexibility in addressing the social and psychological needs of animals.

Innovation Lacking

“It was the exact scenario we have been trying to change,” said APS Executive Director Alan Kraut, commenting on the composition of the task force. “The lack of sensitivity is discouraging, to put it mildly.”

“This is not a conflict between scientific disciplines,” he added. “This is not the psychologists against the biologists.” Rather, he said it is a matter of a federal agency resisting congressional authority, an age-old but nevertheless serious problem.

“NSF’s policies are especially difficult to understand,” said Kraut, since “APS and other behavioral science organizations have always advocated for a strong NSF budget on Capitol Hill. But NSF remains to ignore Congress on behavioral and social science research funding.”

APS Board Member Nancy Cantor was chosen to serve on the 20-member task force. She is the only psychologist, and one of seven non-biologists on the panel, which was hand-picked by NSF directorate staff. The Task Force is being chaired by Paul Magee, Dean of the College of Biological Science at the University of Minnesota.

The good news is that rather than concurring in the obvious attempt by some at NSF to sidestep the issue, the task force acted independently to ensure that a separate directorate and other issues pertaining to behavioral and social science research would have a prominent place on their agenda. However, this probably will not be as easy as it sounds.

Mission Imponderable

The actual mission of the task force remains elusive, certainly to the casual observer, and apparently even to some task force members. When task force members agreed to serve, they thought they were taking part in the “Task Force to Review the Structure of the BBS Directorate.” But shortly before the first meeting in September, the NSF had changed the name to the “BBS Task Force Looking to the 21st Century.” This change was one of several clear indications that the NSF was distancing itself from a meaningful consideration of structural issues.

As the new name suggests, the charge

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The purpose of the task force in their opening remarks was to address issues pertaining to behavioral and social sciences. Under most circumstances such a task force would have difficulty accomplishing anything meaningful within their short deadline. Data collection alone should take years. But there is no danger of information overload, since more often than not, requests for information were met with resistance, and members were told that various kinds of data did not exist or would be too difficult to obtain.

Adding to the confusion, NSF officials gave conflicting statements about the purpose of the task force in their opening remarks. Newly-named Acting NSF Director Frederick Bernthal indicated that the group was to address the organizational structure of the directorate, while Mary Clutter, head of the directorate, told the group its purpose was to look to the future, and the task force chair, Paul Magee, emphasized a need to generate support from the scientific community.

There was, however, great clarity on one issue: the structure of BBS is of far less importance to NSF than the question of how to compete with the National Institute of Health (NIH). Euphemistically called "living in the shadow of NIH," this inter-agency turf squabble quickly emerged as a less-than-hidden agenda item.

Congressional Pressure

NSF's attempts to sidestep the issues are occurring despite mounting congressional pressure to specifically address the concept of a separate directorate for behavioral and social sciences, and related issues. Most recently, this was expressed by Representative Doug Walgren (D-PA) and Representative George Brown (D-CA) in a 1989 letter to Bernthal.

"We would like to take this opportunity," said Walgren and Brown in a joint letter, "to express our concern that the charge to the task force seems broad and duplicative of past reports and specifically does not include consideration of a separate directorate for the behavioral and social sciences."

"This is particularly important since the BBS most likely would not be the subject of inquiry were it not for the concerns raised in Congress and elsewhere about funding for these sciences."

Walgren and Brown are the original cosponsors of a bill to establish a separate directorate for behavioral and social science at NSF, and have long been strong supporters of psychology.

(Parenthetically, it should be noted that task force was made aware of the Walgren-Brown letter by one of its own members when it appeared that NSF staff was not planning to distribute it.)

This issue also was addressed by the Senate Appropriations Committee which recently approved the following language directing NSF to respond to recommendations concerning increased funding and a separate directorate for behavioral and social science.

The Committee directs NSF to examine the National Academy of Sciences report and recommendations that NSF create a separate directorate and increase funding for psychology, behavioral science and social science. The NSF shall report to the Committee by January 31, 1991, on its response. [Senate Report 101-474, p. 154]

The significance of this language is discussed further in a related story on federal FY 1991 appropriations on page 1 of the Observer.

Report Expected

The Task Force will meet at the end of November, at which time public hearings will be conducted to receive testimony from organizations representing the various disciplines within the BBS. An interim report is expected by January 31, and a final report in June.

Note: Nancy Cantor is inviting comments concerning NSF funding of behavioral and social science research. You may contact her at the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-1248. BITNET: USERSSCE@UMICHUM.
Research psychologist Alan Leshner assumed the position of Acting Director of the National Institute of Mental Health last month and provided the following exclusive interview with APS Observer reporter Don Kent.

Leshner received his PhD in physiological psychology from Rutgers University in 1969. While professor of psychology at Bucknell University he held visiting appointments at the Post-graduate Medical School in Budapest, the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, and the Wisconsin Regional Primate Research Center of the University of Wisconsin.

He joined the staff of the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 1979 as Program Associate in the Psychobiology Program and later became Executive Officer of the Division of Behavioral and Neural Science. Leshner held a number of other positions there before becoming Director of the NSF-wide Office of Science and Technology Centers program. From there he joined the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) as Deputy Director two and a half years ago. His research interests include the biological bases of behavior, and he is the author of a book and numerous papers on behavioral endocrinology, and on science and technology policy and education.

Plans

Q. First of all, congratulations. You've been Acting Director of NIMH since . . . ?
A. . . . October 15.

Q. And Lewis Judd is going . . .
A. Back to San Diego, where he is chair of the psychiatry department at UCSD.

Q. Are you the first psychologist to be Acting Director?
A. No. psychologist Frank Sullivan was acting director between Shervert Frazier and Lewis Judd.

Q. Well, how do you feel about heading the largest scientific institute in the world with a primary focus on mental disorders, as NIMH is billed?
A. It's a great opportunity to continue the task of defining the scientific institute and to keep moving it forward. This is the best time in NIMH history. The institute is on a good course, moving forward in good directions.

Q. What are your plans?
A. I've been part of all that has been going on here for two and a half years . . .

Q. As Deputy Director?
A. Yes, and so for the near term I'm planning to continue on the course we charted. I also plan to spend some time continuing to make clear what that course is. At times there is some misunderstanding about NIMH's activities and emphases.

Balancing Act:
NIMH Research Portfolio

Q. Misunderstanding inside or outside NIMH?
A. Both. I plan to put some time in on that issue.

Q. The course you've charted, tell us about that.

Q. What other plans of your own do you have?

A. NIMH is in the process of developing a fully balanced portfolio running the gamut from the molecule through studies of the behavior of individuals, through clinical issues, through services research issues, to services, research demonstrations and then to knowledge dissemination. We have developed a range of activities like that, and I am hoping that will continue afoot.

We are also balancing our portfolio of approaches between behavioral approaches, biological approaches and combined approaches, where we view these as levels of analysis, not competing approaches or competing points of view.

We are not in a reductionistic or non-reductionistic mode. The issue is that we believe all types of analyses are necessary in order to understand mental illness and how to treat mental illness, and that's our mission, of course.

Therefore, we need a fully balanced portfolio of biological, behavioral and combined approaches.

Q. Balanced, is that new?
A. NIMH has always had wide-ranging research activities. But what is new is that we are trying to be sure that we have the full gamut of them, and that they are the highest quality and most focused research in each of those categories. There's always the danger of being totally reactive. We're trying to be as proactive as we can — that is, going out and seeking the best investigators in all fields, trying to get the best science.

Q. What other plans of your own do you have?
LESHNER FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

bring to NIMH at this time?
A. I’m of course interested in basic science. I am a basic scientist. I’ve always been interested in psychology, and I am a psychologist. I was a professor of psychology for 10 years. So I have a particular interest in basic science and I also am particularly interested in services and research issues. I think a major clinical-applied set of issues facing NIMH in the years ahead will be how to improve services provided to the severely mentally ill. That will be one of NIMH’s evolving and continuing interests.

Q. For how long ahead?
A. I only control the next six to nine months.

Q. But the issue will still be there.
A. Yes, it will still be there, and I think it will be a major issue for NIMH.

Staff Recruitment

Q. What is the status of DB-3 (NIMH’s new Division of Basic Brain and Behavioral Sciences)?
A. The organization of that division is in place. We are still in a staffing process, and that’s going “medium.” We’ve hired some very good people. We’ve had some extremely good people turn us down. And we are continuing to search for superb individuals who would be willing to come to government service, either for the long or short term.

Q. If any superb people want to present themselves to you, can they? Or do they have to wait for you to find them?
A. Oh no, we want people to call us. They can either contact Dr. Stephen Koslow, the director of DB-3, or they can write to me. I would be happy to hear from them.

Behavioral Research: Priorities and Guideposts

Q. What else about behavioral research?
A. NIMH has been trying very hard to expand and improve our behavioral science portfolio. That’s why we have been supporting the annual [research priorities] summits organized by APS. One of the things we want to do is make clear to everyone our commitment to these areas, and to improve the contact we have with the field and thereby improve both the quality and the number of research proposals we receive.

Q. You say you support the effort to identify research priorities for psychology?
A. We think it will be very useful, and hopefully useful to us at NIMH particularly, to our interest group. We’re nice and gracious about wanting behavioral science generally to develop a highly useful research agenda, but we also are particularly interested of course in how behavioral science and NIMH issues relate.

We will act on the recommendations that come out of the APS summit.

Q. As of now, what are NIMH’s main efforts in behavioral areas?
A. NIMH has spelled out the four major national plans that guide our general activities. There is the national plan for schizophrenia research. Then there’s the Decade of the Brain plan, which we believe includes psychological research, because I am unable to make dichotomies between the mind and the body, and therefore we believe psychology is a major part of the decade of the brain. Thirdly, there’s the just-released National Plan for Child and Adolescent Mental Disorders. And now we are developing another called the National Strategy to Improve Care for the Severely Mentally Ill.

NIMH Budget for 1991

Q. Is there anything you can tell us about your 1991 budget?
A. Well, the Senate has just finished marking it up, and it looks terrific.

Q. How terrific?
A. It’s about to go into conference, so by the time it comes down I think any figures I gave you now wouldn’t mean much.

Q. What about your involvement with APS?
A. I’m an APS Charter Fellow, and I support APS’s goals. I like to think I’m one of the stimuli for the [psychology] National Research Agenda exercise. [See related story on page 3.]

Q. The agenda...
A. Yes, I’ve been pushing that. I also have been dealing with APS scientists for many years, both at NSF and here. And I go to all the APS meetings. I’ve spoken at some.

Q. The summits, the conventions?
A. I’ve gone to all of them. And I also have worked very closely with APS Executive Director Alan Kraut. He is one of the most organized and effective advocates for science in this country, let alone in psychology. And he is formidable, and therefore we work with him a whole lot and view him as one of our good friends — somebody we would fear if he were not a friend! ♦
Spotlight on Research

Good Science Is Good Business

Predicting the future has been a tricky business ever since the Sumerians, around 23 B.C., first attempted to use information about the sun and stars to forecast eclipses and floods. Today, two College Park, Maryland, psychologists combine psychological science and computer software technology in ways they believe will enable businesses to forecast powerful business information.

Dr. Kenneth Stephens and Dr. William Hutchison founded their company, BehavHeuristics, in 1986. There they work on the cutting edge of artificial intelligence (AI) by developing software tools they term “adaptive (neural) network systems.” As Stephens, Chairman and CEO, explains it, their software, BANKET (BehavHeuristics Adaptive Network Knowledge Engineering Tool), “learns and uses feedback to adapt itself.” Businesses can use the knowledge generated through BANKET to estimate how to efficiently allocate resources.

“Hard” resources include cash, plant and equipment, and offices, while “soft” resources are people and technology, and intelligent resource allocation can mean the difference between companies that compete effectively and those that perish. Careful calculations in a rapidly changing environment can translate into significant economic savings.

Foundation in Behavior Science

In designing the software, the two psychologists capitalize on their understanding of behavior analysis. Both Stephens and Hutchison have doctorates in behavioral psychology. Stephens received his PhD from Western Michigan University where he focused on using computers to control laboratory experiments. Hutchison, President and Chief Scientist at BehavHeuristics, received his PhD from the State University of New York-Stonybrook where he researched creative processes and turned laboratory lessons into software that “behaves and learns.”

The two psychologists met through the Association for Behavior Analysis (ABA) and soon decided to work together on a mutual area of interest, artificial intelligence, to develop a commercially useful product based on behavioral principles.

Getting Results

After agreeing to come work for Stephens, Hutchison set to work to examine discriminant analysis and other statistical techniques needed to develop such a product. He soon uncovered a combination of new statistical techniques that reduced forecasting errors by roughly 15 to 20 percent, a critical achievement in the project. Stephens said, “At that point, we were ready to begin soliciting financial backing to develop our product idea.” Having encountered rejection of their requests for financial support in various places, however, the two decided to strike out on their own.

The psychologists are members of the ABA, a growing group of several thousand active professionals whose “thinking dominates many areas of basic and applied human research,” says Stephens. Behavior analysts contribute to the artificial intelligence domain, says Stephens, by “modifying outdated and erroneous statements about behaviorism with new alternatives.”

Initially, mainstream artificial intelligence relied predominantly on cognitive psychology, which is based on logical reasoning and thinking. That led to the development of logic-based systems. But “the brain’s learning and performance as a total system is understood only well enough to suggest general directions for designing artificial systems,” says Stephens. Earlier generations of AI software, known as “expert systems,” contain no way of modifying themselves.

Fuzzy Logic

To rectify this deficiency, Stephens and Hutchison apply their psychology background and training to the continuing problem of teaching the computer software to modify itself, or to “understand” the continuum between formal rules and experimental knowledge. “That continuum can’t be reduced into rules because there can be an interaction between several factors, which have a fuzzy logic,” explains Stephens. Exploiting their knowledge of the relationship between formal rules and experimental knowledge (otherwise known as “contingency-shaped behavior”), the two psychologists formulate the notions of behavior they want to program into the “distributed neural networks.” Neural networks represent a...
Insurance Rates Rising?

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BOTTOM LINE
FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

step forward in AI by incorporating "less discrete behavioral relationships to capture subtle relationships," says Stephens.

"If programmed to integrate rules with little or no modification, neural networks could not respond adaptively to even small, subtle changes," maintains Stephens. With their behavioral knowledge and information about stimulus control, the psychologists say they have "produced software that predicts outcomes by paying attention to variables, and simulates rules."

Currently, Stephens says that Nationalair Canada uses the "Airline Marketing Assistant," a product designed by BehavHeuristics. Airline staff enter both predictive and historical factors such as departure dates, season, climate, and the nature of two connecting cities (e.g., whether the cities serve business or leisure markets). The software then forecasts demand and suggests how to optimize sales of tickets.

In addition to their slower speed, traditional prediction methods are at greater risk of generating forecasting errors due to the fact that they can accommodate many fewer relevant variables. Consequently, traditional methods also result in potentially greater financial losses due to misallocation of resources.

Stephens asserts that BehavHeuristics software adapts itself based on feedback. "Our system pays attention to a whole array of input data, the relationship between the pattern of input data and output responses, and the associations and connections between the inputs and outputs." The connections adapt because the system contains a source of feedback about error, and it uses that feedback to change the connections, flexibly correlating inputs and outputs. Flexibility becomes more important during changing times such as economic downturns or special events such as the Super Bowl.

Stephens and Hutchison reach for more new connections between technology and behavior analysis, basing their theory on direct studies of human and infra-human systems that "exhibit behaviors like those we try to engineer." Recently, an Irish company, with hundreds of millions of dollars in annual revenue, consulted BehavHeuristics for assistance in developing resource allocation solutions. "If they can measure even small improvements," says Stephens, "that information is worth millions to them." As they work on a structure for this company, Stephens and Hutchison also see "exciting" long-term implications.

One such promise would be software that enables computer users to operate within "inexact virtual fields," in other words, to have the ability to ask questions phrased in fuzzy language. With the questions, and information already entered, the computer would allow adaptive networks to uncover hidden relationships. Such competence would mean more powerful information systems would be possible.

Such a relationship between psychological science and technology clearly promises significantly positive possibilities for business.

APS OBSERVER

Changing Your Address?

Be sure to notify the Membership Office at APS Headquarters:

APS
1511 K Street, NW
Suite 345
Washington, DC 20005-1401

Include a copy of your mailing label to speed processing.
Since APS instituted a professional liability program last January we have received many calls from members and non-members asking questions about the program. As we approach the one-year mark, we thought it might benefit our members to have our account representative Tony Spohn, from the Chicago-based Maginnis and Associates, respond to those questions most commonly asked.

Q. Who is eligible?
Spohn: Any APS members working in an educational, clinical, research, or industrial setting, or student members. The categories are clearly defined on each of the applications.

Q. What kind of professional liability insurance does APS offer its members?
Spohn: Essentially there are two kinds of coverage offered. One is for psychologists engaged in teaching and/or research. Its protection goes as high as $1,000,000 per claim and includes court costs and lawyer’s fees in addition to the policy limits. The second kind of coverage is designed for APS members who do various types of industrial consulting (full or part time) or who have a part-time clinical or counseling practice (10 hours per week or less).

Q. Why do psychologists who are faculty and researchers need professional liability insurance?
Spohn: Well, there are really three areas of liability protection to think about:

Professional Liability - Increasingly, psychologists and researchers are seeking professional liability coverage to protect themselves against a lawsuit.

Educators Liability - Psychologists working in a university environment could unexpectedly find themselves named in a lawsuit by students, research participants, or other faculty.

Student Liability - Student teaching, counseling, and clinical services provided under an internship put students at risk of having a lawsuit brought against them.

Q. What activities are covered by the APS professional liability plan for academics and researchers?
Spohn: The coverage wording is quite broad actually. It doesn’t look to define each activity that is covered. That, in and of itself, would be restrictive. The field of psychology is constantly changing and incorporating new practices while dropping other functions. For this reason the policy looks to cover a liability exposure based on the training, education and experience of the covered psychologist as long as he or she is working within the scope of his or her employment as a psychologist or performing a function that would reasonably be considered to be that of psychologist.

Some of the activities that are covered include, but are not limited to, clinical supervision of students, animal research, and research that involves human subjects. It also provides protection for libel, slander or defamation of character, and failure to educate; publishers liability (specifically for the publication of research papers or similar literature, but only when no compensation is received for that publication); and tenure disputes. In addition, the individual covered will be reimbursed up to $250 per day and $5,000 per trial for loss of earnings due to attending the trial of any lawsuit.

Q. What are the major benefits of the APS professional liability insurance plan?
Spohn: The first benefit that comes to mind is financial security. Secondly, you know that your reputation will be well defended should an incident occur. Lastly, it’s nice to know that any lost wages or court fees will not come out of your pocket if a groundless lawsuit is brought against you.

Q. Why would APS members who are I/O psychologists especially want to purchase this insurance?
Spohn: I/O psychologists are especially vulnerable to a lawsuit due to the fact that they have contact with industry as far as consultations and advice given. Sometimes this advice can spawn a lawsuit, sometimes years after it is given! Bear in mind that the I/O plan covers all industrial practice, full or part-time, including a person who also performs academic/research activities. No other program is specifically aimed to serve the I/O psychologist as in the APS liability plan.

Q. Why would students want to purchase insurance?
Spohn: Students are involved in a number of activities which put them at risk. Some examples include student teaching, publication of research papers or similar literature for which no compensation is received, and counseling or clinical services provided under an internship, each of which could elicit claims. Although their exposure is minimal compared to the full-time faculty member, it is a safety precaution. Also, the price is right at $30 for $1,000,000 worth of coverage.

If after reading this you have other questions about the professional liability policies that APS offers to its members, please feel free to call Tony at 1-800-621-3008, Ext. 29. You can address any correspondence to: Tony Spohn, Account Executive, Maginnis and Associates, 332 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60604. I look forward to hearing from you.

Applications are available from both Tony’s office and the APS Central Office.

Tony Spohn has been an Account Executive at Maginnis and Associates for three-and-a-half years. He is the representative for the APS liability program currently available for psychologists.

APS OBSERVER
November 1990
An Ethical Question for APS Members

Ethics are necessary, there is no question. But does APS need an ethical code crafted to the special concerns of scientific psychology? That’s a question for APS members to decide for themselves, starting now, with the help of an ethics committee composed of Martin Kurke, Chair, Robert Boldt, and Donald Bersoff.

Kurke, Boldt and Bersoff are asking APS members to speak out on what direction APS should take — whether to have a code, and, if so, what form it should take — by writing to the ethics committee or checking off their preference in the box on this page and mailing it to APS.

“We have to take a look at research from the most basic to the most applied, and see whether it is necessary to have a separate code that will meet the spectrum of research concerns of APS members,” said Kurke, a human factors research psychologist with the federal Drug Enforcement Administration who is also an attorney. He has been on ethics committees of several behavioral science and law associations and has helped develop methods of adjudication of ethics charges against their members.

“The question is up in the air right now,” Bersoff said. “One of the first things we’re doing is trying to find out if APS needs a separate code of ethics, and, if so, what kind.” Bersoff, a founding member of APS who was attorney for the American Psychological Association during most of the 1980’s, is now professor of psychology and law at Villanova Law School and Hahnemann Graduate School.

Code’s Breadth of Influence

An APS ethics code could reach beyond APS members and help shape the regulations and decisions that other institutions in government and the private sector make about the conduct of research, Boldt points out. A senior research scientist at Educational Testing Service, Boldt said that “the major concern of an APS code of ethics might be that of facilitating the development of scientific knowledge, balanced by the need to protect the comfort, dignity and safety of human and animal participants. To a substantial extent these activities are regulated from outside the profession,” Boldt said. “We need to take the lead in providing guidance to government and legislative deliberations as well as those of institutional review boards.”

Existing Codes Are Insufficient

Kurke believes that "many APS members need a code of ethics that goes beyond any existing codes. Those codes can be restrictive to scientifically oriented psychology, for example by requiring that research results be available to everybody who asks for them. This may be quite reasonable for some psychologists, except that a good portion of APS members don’t work in the mental health system and their research may be either classified or proprietary because they work for government or industrial firms.

Options

Kurke has outlined four directions APS can take regarding an ethical code: (1) use the present APA code and future changes to it, (2) develop an APS code focusing on APS member needs but endorsing portions of the APA code, (3) develop a distinct APS code focusing on APS members’ needs, and (4) adopt no code of ethics at all.

Some pros and cons of the options are examined in an ethics committee paper that can be obtained by calling or writing APS (see the box at left for details). Kurke urges members to let APS know their preference, and he also solicits input on the types of concerns and problem areas any APS ethical code should tackle. "If APS does decide to develop its own code, then we need inputs from membership on how APS should look at issues not covered in the existing codes or covered inadequately for any particular part of the APS spectrum of members,” Kurke said. "That would back up an argument to go ahead, also," he said.

Boldt surveyed some areas an APS code might focus on: Ethical aspects of research such as evidence, conduct, documentation, claims and reporting.

CIRCLE THE NUMBER OF YOUR CHOICE:

| APS should: | 1) Adopt the American Psychological Association (APA) ethical code | 2) Develop an APS code using portions of APA’s | 3) Develop a distinct APS code | 4) Have no code at all |

Sign below and send to: APS Ethics Committee, 1511 K Street, NW, Suite 345, Washington, DC 20005-1401

☐ Check here to receive copy of the APS Ethics Committee Plan outlining the pros and cons of the options. (To speed processing, enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.)

Name

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APS OBSERVER

November 1990
There might even be some qualification of what constitutes scientific misconduct, and this could be very important.

"This is needed as soon as possible, because organizational structures and procedures are being put in place around the country to handle matters of scientific misconduct. Those involved need the input of those who do psychological research. APS should provide leadership in this field," Boldt said.

"The appropriate application of scientific findings and the related issues of applied research also need our work," Boldt said. "For example, the prospects for immediate implementation of research results would almost certainly affect our view of what research steps are acceptable.

"Also, what are the proper concerns of consent and degrees of procedural rigor needed for research in prisons, in court, in occupational settings, and in the military, perhaps during an anticipated police action or war?" Boldt asked. He said that formulation of ethical principles that best span such situations could be a proper part of the APS code.

Boldt said he sees the "spread of risk principle in research — which declares that research risks should be spread out among different subjects without going back again and again to the same populations — is an example of the special ethical problems some APS members face."

Bersoff, who is midpoint in writing a text on psychology and ethics, said, "There is some question, at least in my mind, whether codes of ethics are necessary. A lot of respected writers consider that codes of ethics are too vague to really guide behavior or be enforceable and that an ethics code is simply a false hallmark of a profession.

"On the other hand, this may present APS with a unique opportunity to develop a genuinely useful set of ethical principles that focus on the particular work of its members."

Bersoff said he thinks APA "has done a reasonably good job in trying to deal with the research aspects" in its ethics code, now under revision. But a lot of the APA code applies to practitioners and therefore the APS code, if one is developed, may not have to focus on private practice issues such as advertising of health services.

"I hear a common criticism of the APA code that it doesn't deal as much as it should with institutional conflicts — what happens when an institutional policy conflicts with your own values, and a conflict develops between what you think is correct and what the institution wants," Bersoff said. "Since a lot of APS members are based in institutions like government agencies and universities, maybe a code, if developed, could pay more attention to these kinds of conflicts. The other thing is that generally there could be more attention and thought given to the psychologist as teacher and trainer and educator. Again, there are things in the APA ethical code that deal with that... but it may be that more thought could be given to issues of teaching and training where I imagine many APS members are housed.

**New Opportunity:**

**To-the-Letter or Aspirational Code**

"And finally, it may be possible to rethink the entire form of an ethics code. Rather than laying down particular enforceable prohibitions — for example, you can't have sex with your client — we may be able to think of the code as transmitting agreed upon ethical values or ethical principles with a small 'e'."

"An example would be a code that says something like 'You have responsibility for transmitting the promotion of independence and autonomy with people you deal with, whether students, clients, research subjects or whomever.' You would be using the code to transmit ethical core values rather than black-letter law and specific prohibitions. Maybe we don't need 10 ethical principles — maybe we need four or five ethical precepts written as aspirational goals and also written in some cases as enforceable rules. It's an opportunity to rethink this issue," Bersoff said.

Kurke noted, "I think the need for an ethical code tailored to the needs of science-oriented psychologists is almost as great as the need for APS itself."

**D. Kent**
Optimists and Pessimists, Both Have Their Place

by Don Kent

Optimists are predictable winners in politics. And, optimistic or pessimistic explanatory styles can be highly predictive of a person's physical health, achievement, and susceptibility to depression, says research psychologist Martin Seligman. Learning to say “yes” rather than “no” can do wonders in fighting depression, for example.

But it turns out that optimists have benign distortions. Data seems to show that pessimistic, depressed individuals are more accurate in their perceptions of the world around them. “Would you want a pilot with benign optimistic distortions to take your plane through Los Angeles fog, or keep your corporate accounts, or serve as your safety engineer?” asks Seligman rhetorically.

With these reflections, Seligman believes “there is indeed a place for both pessimists and optimists.” Within a corporation, for example, the job of the CEO “can be looked at as trying to balance the counsels of doom of the pessimists and the counsels of ‘charge ahead’ of the optimists,” Seligman said.

In personal lives, each individual may act as that CEO balancing the varying up and down moods of the basic rest/activity cycle (BRAT), he said. Seligman presented this summary of research at the second annual APS convention.

Non-Helplessness

Looking back across two decades, Seligman said that in his work with learned helplessness he increasingly noticed that about one third of all people and animals resisted any and all attempts to make them helpless. In addition, about 10 percent of people and animals were “helpless to begin with ... without any intervention by us.”

About 14 years ago he began to ask seriously why some people don’t become helpless, and why others become helpless so readily. This led to development of a test to measure personal explanatory styles and to predict achievement, health, and depression.

After a couple of years, it became apparent that many people whose achievement, health, and depression are deserving of study simply don’t avail themselves of such questionnaires — sports heroes, the Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, the President of the United States.

One Causal Statement Per Minute

The predictive validity of the tests developed to measure explanatory style was psychometrically reasonable, asserted Seligman. “But, we wondered whether there was a way of determining the explanatory styles of these [elusive] subjects? “Chris Peterson reasoned, and it turned out to be correct, that you could successfully reconstruct their beliefs by merely analyzing causal statements in natural speech. You can code causal statements as if they were items on our questionnaire . . . . In fact, people emit causal statements in natural speech at the rate of about one per minute . . . .”

Predicting Electability

“A graduate student of mine, Harold Zallow, was curious about the political arena: What do Americans think about optimists and pessimists in an electoral situation?” Zallow reasoned from the . . . literature on anti-intellectualism in American life that Americans like to vote for optimists. They want a president who espouses good news and doesn’t ruminate about bad news.

“We decided to test this retrospectively and see if we could ‘postdict’ presidential elections. We examined 22 elections taking place between 1900 to 1984 looking at the nomination acceptance speeches of the two candidates. We rated each ‘because’ statement for optimism and pessimism. In addition, we scored every sentence in the speech 1 or 0 for the presence of a rumination, that is, talking about a bad event. We formed Z scores, joined these two together, and there emerged these facts:

The more optimistic candidate won in 18 of the 22 elections. The only exceptions were the three FDR re-elections and the Humphrey/Nixon election. “The second thing we found was an interesting correlation between how much more optimistic you are than you opponent and the margin you win by. The correlation was .89 . . . .”

In January, 1988, Seligman and Zallow decided to try to predict a major historic event — something that, to their knowledge, had not been done before in the social sciences.

“In January, 1988, you recall, there were 13 people running for President — seven Democrats and six Republicans.

The New York Times had published their stump speeches, so we analyzed them as I described previously, and sent our predictions in a sealed envelope to the New York Times. Here’s what we found: . . . Gary Hart looked like a depressed patient and there was one clear standout, Dukakis . . . .

“Among the Republicans, it was neck-and-neck between Dole and Bush. But we found Dole looked quite pessimistic and Bush was the standout . . . .
Democratic and Republican Campaigns Asked for More

"In May, the New York Times published this study on the front page and we [subsequently received] two interesting letters, one from each of the national campaign committees, asking of what 'optimism' consisted.

"So we waited for the nomination speeches . . . Dukakis delivered that stirring speech. We ran the numbers on it, and found Dukakis had delivered the single most optimistic nomination speech in modern history . . . But Zallow's analysis of every other speech that Dukakis had ever given had not looked like that. I want to remind you they exhummed Ted Sorensen to write that speech."

"But during the debates, Dukakis dropped down to where he usually was (on our scale) and Bush was staying solidly optimistic. By the second debate, it looked as if Dukakis had in fact given up, while Bush held steady in the home stretch . . ."

At the nomination speeches Seligman and Zallow predicted Dukakis would win by 3 percent and predicted that Bush would win by 9 percent. Bush actually won by 9.2 percent.

Optimism Is Not the Solution

"I have argued that having a pessimistic explanatory style produces more depression, lower achievement, and maybe even worse physical health. [I have also said] the techniques of cognitive therapy with depressed people change explanatory style from pessimistic to optimistic. This suggests [and is corroborated by tentative data] that if we give normal people these techniques, their performance at work, their immune system variables, athletic performance, and even risk of second heart attack might be modifiable."

Seligman does not advocate optimism, however. For, while he believes "optimism is a good thing if you are interested in fighting depression, doing better in the workplace, and improving your physical health, he emphasizes that there are other values in life. There is the issue of getting along with people. There's the question of truth and the question of wisdom."

Pessimism's Role

Over the last decade, said Seligman, a lot of research points to optimistic people as maintaining benign distortions and to pessimistic, depressed people as being accurate in their perceptions. Optimistic people think they have more skill than they actually do. In experimental tasks they judge they have more control than they actually have; their memory is rosier than things actually were.

"This brings me to the question of what pessimism might be about. Consider for a moment the well-run corporation. For some of its jobs it needs optimists — its salesmen, its marketers. But for some other jobs — financial vice presidents, CPAs, safety engineers — you don't really want the someone who has benign distortions. You don't want the airline pilot to have benign distortions about fog in Los Angeles.

"So indeed the job of CEO can be looked at as trying to balance the counsels of doom of pessimists against the counsels of 'charge ahead' of the optimists.

Your Own CEO

"Consider your own life. You experience pessimistic and optimistic moments. And if you think about BRAT, your basic rest/activity cycle, . . . indeed there are some reasons to think that when you wake up at four in the morning and can't get back to sleep your thoughts (may be) much more pessimistic than they are at 12 in the afternoon or 10 in the evening.

"Now what I suggest is that what BRAT might do for us is to give us, as in a well-run corporation, both the dreams and visions that are necessary for high achievement and then the counsels of doom that are necessary to balance that footless optimism. And just as the corporation needs an executive to compare these two and make a decision, perhaps that is what a life needs as well. Perhaps that executive is what we call in some circles 'ego' and in other circles 'wisdom.'"
Guest Editorial by Mark R. Rosenzweig

What's Going on in International Psychology?

Mark R. Rosenzweig
President
International Union of Psychological Science

What's going on in international psychology? Here are a few answers:

- The next International Congress of Psychology is well along in its planning by the Belgian host committees, with input from psychologists of many other countries.
- The main international organization of psychological science is trying to ensure the participation of behavioral and social science in the major international scientific program of the 1990s.
- Psychological science is playing active roles in the International Council of Scientific Unions, the International Social Science Council, and UNESCO.

Now let's fill out these points.

Planning for the XXV International Congress of Psychology, Brussels, July 19-24, 1992. The week-long Congress program will include Keynote Addresses, State-of-the-Art Lectures (brush up on major areas with international experts), symposia, and individual presentations at thematic sessions (papers) and interactive sessions (posters). The second Congress circular, with invitations to submit papers, will be available by the end of 1990. Copies of the first Congress circular were distributed to participants at the two APS Conventions. Copies of the second will be sent to everyone who has requested one, and they will be available from the APS Washington, DC, office.

Attendance at the Congress gains added interest because 1992 is the year of integration of Europe, and Brussels is a main international capital of Europe, as well as a fascinating city. Those who submit abstracts for individual presentations by the first deadline of June 1991 will learn in November 1991 whether their presentation has been accepted; those who submit abstracts by the final deadline of November 1991 will receive the decision in February 1992.

As with every International Congress of Psychology since 1976, there will be a special chapter on the host country in the 1992 Annual Review of Psychology. This will provide information about Belgian universities and research centers, psychologists, and trends in Belgian psychology. (Members of APS can purchase the Annual Review of Psychology and other Annual Review volumes at a reduced price through the APS office.

The International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS) assures the succession of International Congresses of Psychology and carries out many other activities. The Union is the main international voice for psychological science. Founded in 1951, it now groups scientific organizations of 48 countries. The U.S. member is the National Academy of Sciences (NAS); the membership of NAS in IUPsyS is effectuated by the U.S. National Committee for IUPsyS (USNC/IUPsyS). IUPsyS represents psychological science in various international bodies. It is a member of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) and of the International Social Science Council (ISSC). It has consultative status with UNESCO and receives some subventions and research grants from UNESCO.

At present, the Union is one of the groups trying to ensure participation of the behavioral and social sciences in the International Geosphere-Biosphere Program: A Study of Global Change (IGBP); this is the major international research initiative of the 1990s. As constituted so far, IGBP includes physical, chemical, and biological studies of global environmental changes. Although human activities are driving many of these

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Letters to the Editor

Research Consortia for Second-tier Organizations

Dear Editor:

APS should adopt the role of broker in the formation of research consortia by APS members. The purpose of this proposal is to: (a) enhance the research opportunities of researchers at second-tier universities, colleges, and isolated non-academic settings, and (b) attract and sustain new APS members not located at large research institutions.

The dominant model of psychological research as single-site, individual, grant-supported work concentrated at research universities - which culminates in publications in journals of national stature - is ill-suited to the needs of capable researchers at smaller universities and non-campus agencies whose priorities, resources, and reward structure do not support such a model. Given the current federal budget crisis, grant funds from federal agencies will become progressively restricted, and defining research questions on the basis of what Congress currently wants to buy, as the recent APS summit appeared to do, is bad science. An alternative mechanism for research support is needed.

The APS Research Consortia would benefit individual APS members by providing a mechanism for sharing resources, a platform for soliciting private foundation funding, and an avenue for developing collegial professional relationships. Restrictions of the number of available subjects, time to conduct research, facilities and equipment, computer support, and library facilities are in varying degrees severe obstacles to researchers at smaller schools and applied psychology environments. Research may require diversity of specializations not locally available. A multi-site collaborative effort of sufficient size and having an APS identification may facilitate the solicitation of funding from several private foundations. Finally, the satisfaction of collaboration with others of similar interests will be available to researchers who find themselves isolated. Historically, collaborative work has evolved on the basis of coincidental acquaintances, and the APS consortia would merely formalize that process.

The benefit to APS would be the attraction of new members and enhancement of its publication and convention programs. Half of the posters presented at the 1990 APS Convention appeared to have originated at second-tier universities and service agencies. Students at second-tier schools would also find participation in a consortium attractive. Since the proposed consortium structure presumes a preplanned symposium or paper, presentation of the work at the APS convention or in Psychological Science would be a natural outcome.

One possible way to initiate a consortium would be to have researchers submit a proposal abstract to the APS Observer, which could allocate a section for such proposals. The abstract could identify the research question, a tentative method, the duration of the study, necessary resources, and the proposer's address. Interested participants could then write to the proposer to identify themselves and obtain a detailed proposal. Subsequently, the proposer would be responsible for serving as initial consortium coordinator, arranging convention meeting space for the participants, organizing the multi-site execution of the study, and planning the presentation of the completed work at an APS convention or in Psychological Science.

To support this process, APS should allocate space in the newsletter for proposal abstracts, allow consortia to use APS poster sessions as a meeting place and a way of inviting new participants. Time in the convention program for the presentation of completed work should be provided. APS may also be able to provide assistance in identifying funding sources.

I suggest that members endorsing this plan, or having improvements to suggest, should send them to the Observer or to the APS Board of Directors.

Mark R. Rosenzweig is Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychology at the University of California in Berkeley.

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changes and are responding to them, little has been done so far to include the study of human dimensions of global environmental changes into IGBP.

IUPsyS is also taking part in planning behavioral and social science research programs in parallel to IGBP. This is one of the main topics in which representatives of the Union participated at the General Assembly of ICSU at Sofia in October and in which they will participate at a special meeting of ISSC in December. Brochures about IUPsyS are available from the APS office.

The U.S. National Committee for the International Union of Psychological Science (USNC/IUPsyS) provides U.S. input to the planning of the International Congresses and carries out many other functions to represent the U.S. community of psychological scientists. The USNC is a committee of the National Research Council-National Academy of Sciences. Most of the members of the USNC are nominated by the main organizations devoted to psychological science in the United States, and the members are appointed by the President of the NAS. The current Chair of USNC is James L. McGaugh (1988-90).

The IUPsyS journal, the International Journal of Psychology (IJP), will appear through a new publisher, Lawrence Erlbaum U.K., beginning with Volume 26, in January 1991. IJP publishes research reports in all areas of psychological science; the International Platform section provides news about the Union and about psychology in many countries. Each issue has an extensive listing of meetings in psychology and related fields. The new publisher is offering the journal at favorable subscription rates, and the Union hopes that it will reach more readers than before. A certain number of copies will be available for subscription in non-convertible currencies, which should favor its distribution in eastern Europe and developing countries. For information about IJP, write to the Editor, Professor Michel Sabourin, Department of Psychology, University of Montreal, C. P. 6128 Succ. A, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 3J7.

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Bridges Over the Atlantic
by Josef Brozek

Facilitating Development of Psychology In Free Czechoslovakia

If totalled up, the costs of the “Cold War” between the United States and the Soviet bloc nations would turn out to be astronomical. Can America afford pennies, relatively speaking, to promote “Warm Peace”? I hope so. A temporary increase in funding for the U.S. federal agencies and other organizations responsible for international exchange — of investigators, teachers, and students — would be ideal. But, I will address here two concrete things that can immediately facilitate the task of helping Czech and Slovak psychology recover from over forty years of severe repression: (1) Donations of temporary introductory psychology; and (2) Participation by American psychologists in one-week, American-Czechoslovakian seminars on psychology.

Textbooks for Introductory Psychology Courses

The introductory course provides the foundations and sets the tone for the student’s approach to and understanding of psychology. American teachers and students of psychology have a unique opportunity to help their Czech and Slovak counterparts by making available used copies of textbooks. My colleagues and I, at Charles University, have reviewed at length the merits and disadvantages of three strategies to achieve the same result:

(1) Write a new textbook, in Czech or Slovak, free from Communist ideology and terminology and up-to-date in content.
(2) Translate the most appropriate American textbook.
(3) Attempt to acquire a sufficient number (perhaps 100 copies) of the selected textbook, to be made available on loan to students signing up for the course.

Following serious consideration of the three alternatives, we rejected options (1) and (2) as not meeting the present, urgent needs. Alternative (3) appeared optimal. We examined several contemporary textbooks and decided that Henry Gleitman’s Psychology (NY: W.W. Norton & Co. 2nd ed., 1986) was most appropriate to our needs.

We felt it would best meet a two-fold requirement: It would provide students with a readable, dependable, well-illustrated, and well-balanced, historically oriented source of information about contemporary psychology, and, second — a very important point — it would introduce students to the English language, the world-wide language of psychology.

The most hopeful approach to obtaining the required number of copies of the textbook seems to be a direct appeal to the American teachers and students. Used copies may be transmitted directly to the Library of the Department of Psychology, Charles University (Hradchany Square 5, 118 42 Prague I, Attn: Dr. J. Hoskovec). Or, they can be addressed to me (265 E. Market St., Bethlehem, PA 18018). Alternatively, larger shipments may be mailed from Washington, DC, to Prague on behalf of an American department of psychology or a university library by the Smithsonian International Exchange Service (Smithsonian Institution Libraries, 1111 North Capitol Street, NE, Attn: T. J. Matthews, Washington, DC 20560). Such shipments require preliminary approval by the Smithsonian.

I will gladly personally transfer sample copies of other introductory textbooks to the psychology departments of universities in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia that wish to experiment with this approach to teaching introductory psychology.

American-Czechoslovakian Seminars in Psychology

One-week seminars would be held in Czechoslovakia, perhaps through the Commission of Cooperation with Czechoslovakia, Czech-Slovak Society of Arts and Sciences. The aim of the seminars is to facilitate the two-fold: Assist the Czech and Slovak professional personnel to meet the challenges of the anti-communist “Velvet Revolution” and to strengthen scientific and cultural relations.

With regard to the seminars, I am seeking comments from American psychologists. The task at hand is to match the needs and interests of the Czech and Slovak psychologists with the professional competencies of their American colleagues who are willing to participate.

There are seven categories of topics of particular relevance and interest: General Psychology (Conceptual issues and terminology; Computers; The realm of values in behavior); Basic Psychology (Neuropsychophysiology, Animal behavior); Developmental Psychology (Lifespan; moral development; Art and personality growth); Clinical Psychology (Assessment, New treatments; Family psychology); Psychology and Health (Health promotion; prevention of toxicomanias; Psychology in somatic medicine); Social Psychology (Social processes in a free society; Crisis intervention; Aggressiveness vs. pro-social behavior; Social-psychological training; minority issues); Educational Psychology (Achievement motivation; Autonomy and conformity).

Please contact me directly, if you are interested in helping me develop the seminar idea further or are interested in participating:
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