Moving Psychology Forward
In An Aging Society:
Progress & Possibility

Michael A. Smyer
Bucknell University
• CONA’s Founding & Mission
• Examples of CONA’s efforts
• A Look Ahead
Would you have invested?

Microsoft Corporation, 1978
Success Has Many Parents
CONA Mission Statement:
There shall be a Committee on Aging that shall concern itself with furthering the major purpose of APA to advance psychology as a science and as a means of promoting health and human welfare by ensuring that older adults, especially the growing numbers of older women and minorities, receive the attention of the Association.
Provide strong and visible advocacy for a scientific agenda on aging to policymakers and private and public funding agencies.
Responding to the Challenges of Aging: Lessons from Medicine, Psychology, & Law

- Determining the legal capacities of elders: Myths & realities  Charles P. Sabatino
- Genetic risk assessment for Alzheimer’s disease: The REVEAL study. Robert C. Green, M.D.
- Psychology’s role in an aging society. Sara H. Qualls, Ph.D.
- Rosemary Blieszner & Mick Smyer
Practice

- Promote the practice of psychology by advocating policies that enhance the availability and reimbursement of health and mental health services to older adults and their families.
• “Older Boulder I” – Boulder, CO, 1981
• “Older Boulder 2” – Washington, DC, 1992
• Growth of gero internship/postdoc programs
• Geropsychology recognized as proficiency by CRSPPP – 1998, 2005
• Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Older Adults (APA, 2004)
• Geropsychology: growing area of practice and training

source: Michele Karel
Monitor on Psychology
Volume 37, No. 8 September 2006

• “The Pikes Peak Model will provide guidelines for training in professional geropsychology that should be useful to both programs and individuals.”

  Bob Knight
National Conference on Training in Professional Geropsychology
Contribute to the formulation and support of public policies and associated regulations that promote optimal development of older adults, facilitate psychological practice with older persons, and expand scientific understanding of adult development and aging.
Bracing for the Baby Boom

The White House Conference on Aging listed a mental health resolution as a key priority that will be included in the conference’s final report.

By Zak Stambor
Monitor Staff

In December, 929 of the 1,200 national delegates at the White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA) voted to improve “recognition, assessment and treatment of mental illness and depression among older Americans,” making the resolution one of the conference's top 10 priorities in dealing with America's aging population.

Moreover, mental health was included in numerous other resolutions' “implementation strategies.” For example, a resolution seeking to "strengthen and improve the Medicare program for seniors” included a call for mental health parity that will be included in the conference’s final report. Throughout the past 15 months, both APA's Office on Aging and Committee on Aging have advocated for mental health’s inclusion into the conference’s agenda.
CONA Capitol Hill Day
September 2006
Promote inclusion of knowledge about adult development and aging in all levels of education, including continuing education, training programs, and professional development of psychologists
Toward an Inclusive Psychology:
Infusing the Introductory Psychology
Textbook With Diversity Content

American Psychological Association
Commission on Ethnic Minority
Development, Recruitment, and Training
Textbook Initiative Work Group
Aging and Human Sexuality Resource Guide

Introduction

We don’t discuss sexuality enough when considering the lives of older adults. It’s easy to assume that aging brings dramatic changes and that sexuality is not a topic that concerns older adults to any great degree. Sometimes, however, events bring about a dramatic shift in awareness and understanding. The highly-publicized events following the release of the medication Viagra (sildenafil) provided a vivid example of such an event. Suddenly the country was swept with evidence that older adults are vitally concerned with sexuality.
Public Interest

Promote the application of psychological knowledge to the well-being of older people, with special attention to the influence of gender, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation and family in science, practice and policy relating to older adults.
Instilling skills for treating minority elders

It takes practice to gain cultural astuteness in clinical work, said a convention speaker.

BY BRIDGET MURRAY LAW
Monitor Staff
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Yeshiva University geropsychology training director Richard A. Zweig, PhD, finds that his psychology supervisees often lack the cultural-competence skills necessary for their geropsychology doctoral practica.

"Our university's multicultural training consists of one required course in multicultural issues, and occasional infusion of multicultural issues into other coursework," said Zweig, of Yeshiva's Ferkauf Graduate School and Albert Einstein College of Medicine, at APA's 2005 Annual Convention. "We're at best at a level of
Develop and disseminate information concerning scientific findings and practice issues about older adults to psychologists, other professionals, policymakers, and the public.

Recipients of the CONA Award for the Advancement of Psychology & Aging

Norman Abeles    George Niederehe
Margaret Gatz    Antonette Zeiss
Martha Storandt  Gregory Hinrichsen
Serve as a visible focus for the coordination of information among groups within APA that address aging issues and offer consultation to relevant APA boards, committees, divisions, state associations, and directorates; also ensure that older members of APA receive the appropriate attention of the association.
Fighting ageism

Geropsychologists are striving to stop negative age stereotypes and meet the growing mental health needs of older adults.

BY MELISSA DITTMANN
Monitor staff
Print version: page 50

The number of Americans 60 and older is growing, but society still isn't embracing the aging population, geropsychologists say. Whether battling "old geezer" stereotypes or trying to obtain equal standing in the workplace, those who are 60 or older may all too often find themselves the victims of ageism.

In fact, in a survey of 84 people ages 60 and older, nearly 80 percent of respondents reported experiencing ageism--such as other people assuming they had memory or physical impairments due to
A Look Ahead

• Continuity: Mission & Goal Areas
  – Internal & External Focus
  – Integrate with APA structures
  – Leverage outside collaborations

• Change
  – Substantive & Procedural Challenges
  – State-level initiatives
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2006 APA Committees on Aging (CONA)

CONA welcomes its two new members: Darlene Gallagher Thompson, PhD, ASP, and Cheryl McMenamin, PhD, who began three-year terms in January. They join Peter A. Lipton, PhD, ASP,专班 Manager, Maria Araceli, MD, PhD (Chair-Elect), Victor Minuchin, PhD, ASP, and Michael Shay, PhD on CONA. A kind farewell and thank you to Rosemary Brennan, PhD, and Florence Davidson, PhD for all of the efforts as members of CONA over the past three years.

2006 APA Committees on Aging (CONA)

CONA and the Office on Aging 10th Anniversary Celebration at the APA Convention

2006 marks the 10th Anniversary of the year that CONA held its first meeting and the Office on Aging was established. It was during the APA Presidency of Norman Abelson, PhD (1997) that the Council of Representatives established a continuing Committee on Aging. The Proposal for the Committee on Aging, drafted that year envisioned that “what is currently a fragmented effort will become a powerful voice promoting psychological research and practice that enhances the quality of life for older people... We have come a long way in the past 10 years in this regard due to the efforts of the 20 current and past members of CONA and its predecessor, the Ad Hoc Committee on Issues of the Older Adult.”
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