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**PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE AGENDA**

*Psychological Science Agenda* is published monthly by APA's Science Directorate. Dedicated to promoting and serving scientific psychology, *Psychological Science Agenda* provides news about national scientific policy developments, examines policy issues affecting and affected by the behavioral research community, and highlights the advocacy efforts of the Science Directorate on behalf of research and academic psychologists. *Psychological Science Agenda* also features news of APA's governance and program initiatives relating to scientific and academic psychology, and provides valuable, timely information about funding opportunities for research psychologists.

*Psychological Science Agenda* is distributed free to 30,000 psychologists, members of Congress and their staffs, key officials in federal agencies that fund behavioral research and use its findings, institutional libraries, and science writers in the national media.

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## The Buddy System — Forming Partnerships on Capitol Hill

by Geoffrey Mumford

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Coalitions are one of the most effective mechanisms APA Science Policy staff use to leverage a limited set of resources. Our work with other organizations is also an expression of cooperation and collegiality that enhances the role of behavioral sciences within the broader scientific community. And so we are pleased to have played a central role as several coalitions have been reinvented, emerged from the ashes, or born anew. While some coalitions are generously financed, fully-staffed, well-oiled machines, others are loose affiliations, cobbled together to solve a particular policy problem or to take advantage of a new political opportunity. Examples of the former include APA-supported Research!America and the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding, which deserve

much of the credit for the doubling of the NIH budget, and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids—which leads the charge for tobacco policy reform here in DC. Examples of the latter include the Coalition for the Advancement of Health Through Behavioral and Social Science Research (CAHT-BSSR), co-chaired by Science Policy staffer Pat Kobor, and the Coalition to Protect Research (CPR), co-chaired by Science Policy staffer Karen Studwell. These latter examples are also useful illustrations of the proactive vs. reactive position we find ourselves in with respect to advocacy. Pat's coalition was conceived as a means to enhance the profile of the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research at NIH, while Karen's coalition was constructed as a bulwark against congressional threats to peer reviewed research at that same agency.

Those of you in the substance abuse research community may have noted with despair that the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) was at the bottom rung of the funding ladder for fiscal year 2005. That last place finish, along with a growing recognition of emerging drug abuse issues, led several organizations to rally in support of NIDA. Active participation in this coalition gives APA an extra opportunity to put our mouth where psychology's money is: NIDA recently surpassed NIMH as the leading NIH funder of behavioral and social science research. Patterned after other

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## INTERESTING CAREERS

### Research and Special Projects Assistant at a Non-Profit Organization

by James B. Nolan, Ph.D., Envision Inc.

**2** My career in psychology can be summed up as a series of epiphanies, a lot of work, and a lot of good fortune. The first of these epiphanies came in the summer of 1992 while I was taking 3 weeks to recover from a bicycle racing accident that had resulted in a broken ankle and leg. Before this incident I was utilizing my bachelor's degree in business management by working as a supply manager at the local military base. This type of a position was not exactly what I had in mind—having come of age in the “Reagan 80's,” it certainly didn't match up with the outcome that Michael J. Fox exemplified in the “Secret of My Success.” However, my recovery time allowed me to step back and re-evaluate my career, and I decided it was time for a change.

I decided to return to my undergraduate institution (Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas) to finish a degree in psychology. I always had found psychology very interesting and the thought of being involved in ever changing research projects was very exciting. With the help of a few good mentors, I completed an undergraduate research project, began the process of applying to graduate programs across the country, and graduated with a degree in the spring of 1994. By the time of my graduation, I had decided to accept an offer to be part of the graduate program in Experimental Psychology at the University of Nevada, Reno. I had developed a strong interest in research, and to be more specific, in the area of cognitive neuroscience. So my wife and I loaded our car and a moving truck, and headed west.

I went to UNR in order to work in the lab of the late Robert (Bob) Solso. However, shortly after my arrival, Dr. Solso began to scale back his lab effort as he was spending his primary efforts on writing books at his residence in Lake Tahoe. Instead, I decided to work in the lab of Dr. Michael Webster, who was doing research in the area of visual perception and psychophysics. This was a difficult decision for me because I was born legally blind and had spent my entire life trying to deny it, doing whatever I could to avoid and compensate for my visual condition. Though my vision is 20/200, I do things quite “normally” and even have a driver's license (a necessity living in the Midwest indeed.) But this didn't make the decision to start build-

ing my research career on something I had tried so hard to avoid any easier. Nevertheless, I soon began to really

enjoy the area of vision research and I quickly developed an appreciation for how important that area of research was to many people. Eventually, I completed my master's thesis and my dissertation in the area of color vision, with myself serving as the subject in question—as they were both case studies. My graduate training allowed me to learn as much about myself as it did the area of experimental psychology and neuroscience. For that, I am very thankful.

In the spring of 1999 I accepted a one-year visiting assistant professorship position at Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, South Dakota.

This was followed by a one-year stop

at Western Iowa Tech Community College in Sioux City, Iowa. In the spring of 2001 I finally accepted a tenure track position in the Department of Psychology at Southwestern College in my native Kansas. I remained in this position teaching classes, serving on committees, and directing a very productive research group until October 2004, when I accepted an offer to join Envision Inc. in Wichita, Kansas. Again, I was faced with a difficult decision because Envision is a full service non-profit corporation that focuses on the employment and rehabilitation of individuals who are blind or low vision. So I was faced with trying to decide if I wanted to make my everyday life surrounding the area of vision and vision related research. This decision was somewhat easier now as my consultations with vision researchers such as Dr. Gordan Legge of the University of Minnesota and Dr. Eli Peli of Harvard University, caused me to realize the kind of contributions I could make to the low vision community with both my research background and my being an individual with low vision myself. I decided to go for it!

At Envision I serve as Director of Research and Special Projects Assistant. What that means is that my duties vary tremendously, but everything I do takes advantage of my educational training in psychological science. My regular duties include analyzing corporate data, advocating for the visually impaired, and assisting with clinical based research projects that involve doctors in our on-site clinic

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

STEVEN BRECKLER, Executive Director for Science

### Psychological Science in the Public Eye

Like most scientific disciplines, psychology devotes considerable attention to its own public image. Here are just a few examples of how we do this:

- Our professional associations issue press releases when publications or research results are deemed newsworthy, and they offer summaries of the scientific literature for public consumption. Good examples include APA's Psychology Matters website ([www.psychologymatters.org](http://www.psychologymatters.org)), and APS's Psychological Science in the Public Interest.
- Publications such as the APA Monitor and the APS Observer feature articles tailored to audiences beyond our immediate scientific colleagues.
- Initiatives such as the Decade of Behavior ([www.decadeofbehavior.org](http://www.decadeofbehavior.org)) devote resources to public outreach, such as Exploring Behavior Week and the Behavior Matters booklet series.

It is worth stepping back, and asking ourselves why we do these things (what are the goals?) and whether some other vehicles might better deliver on those goals. I can think of four distinct reasons for devoting resources to the public connection with psychological science:

- As scientists, we appreciate the value of nurturing a scientifically literate society. Most of us would agree that scientific literacy is a good thing, and that it translates into a happier, healthier, and wealthier society.
- Science is often motivated by, and usually aspires to practical application. For science to achieve success in application, the public must accept the merit of our science and trust the applications that are derived from it.



- Science depends on money and public support. Most of our financial support comes from the federal agencies, which are funded by taxpayers. If taxpayers have some appreciation for the value of our science, they should be eager to support it with their tax dollars.
- The long-term health of science depends on developing future generations of scientists. This depends, in large part, on sparking the interest of children and young adults. Public outreach and cultivating a positive public image is key.

Our goals and our methods for achieving them are good ones. It is important to keep the effort up, and to continue devoting our collective attention and resources to it. Yet, I fear that we are approaching the endeavor too much as scientists, with too little attention to the more basic goal of simply cultivating a positive public image. The tradeoff between academic exposition versus Madison Avenue gloss and glitter clearly comes down in favor of the former. As a result, I suspect that we are winning the public mind but not the public heart.

I am suggesting that we devote more attention, and resources, to the public image of scientific psychology. Not an image that depends on qualifications, hedging our bets, and long-winded discourses regarding exceptions, interactions, and special conditions. We already excel at this. I am talking about a simple image. A positive image. An enduring image conveying merit, trust and respect for the science of psychology.

I recognize that many scientists would be troubled by this approach – that it is driven too much by consumer and media concerns, and not enough by scientific concerns. But we need to be realistic and pragmatic. If we can agree on our goals, then we need to explore the most effective means to achieve those goals. I believe that the proper branding of scientific psychology offers huge potential in helping to achieve our goals.

Major corporations understand this. Private foundations get it. Even government agencies do it. They all cultivate a simple, positive, memorable public image to convey the essence of what they are about:

- We don't make your products, we make them better (BASF)
- Dedicated to helping groups and individuals foster lasting improvement in the human condition (John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation)
- Where discoveries begin (NSF)
- Talk to someone who can help (APA Public Education Campaign)

I believe that scientific psychology will better achieve its goals for public education and fostering a positive public image by considering a similar approach. ■

**...Cover Story,****continued from page 1**

Institute-specific coalitions (e.g., the Friends of NICHHD), the Friends of NIDA was formed last summer with generous support from the College on Problems of Drug Dependence (CPDD), Reckitt Benckiser (the company that worked closely with NIDA in the development of buprenorphine for the treatment of opiate dependence) and various individual donors.

4 Since then, under the capable leadership of CPDD Board Member Dr. Bill Dewey and Charles O’Keeffe, Friends of NIDA has assembled an impressive Board of Advisors including former NIDA Directors, ONDCP Drug Czars, and Congressmen. An Executive Committee (<http://www.apa.org/ppo/issues/fonemembers.html>), Chaired by Dr. Dewey, has met monthly here at APA headquarters since December and the coalition continues to gain momentum. Seeking to gain name recognition while advancing worthy NIDA-oriented action on Capitol Hill, the Friends of NIDA have drafted several letters that have been sent to every Member of the House urging broader participation in Congressional Caucuses devoted to substance abuse issues including treatment research (<http://www.apa.org/ppo/issues/fonidacaucusltr105.pdf>), methamphetamine (<http://www.apa.org/ppo/issues/fonmethltrsmpl.pdf>), and tobacco (<http://www.apa.org/ppo/issues/fonidatobaccoltr.pdf>). Other letters (<http://www.apa.org/ppo/issues/fonidaappropsltr.pdf>) have advocated for a 6% increase in NIDA’s FY 06 appropriation. We have drafted

written testimony (<http://www.apa.org/ppo/issues/fonsenatetestimonyfy06.pdf>) for inclusion in the Congressional Record for both the House and the Senate. Additionally, the Friends are following up on written funding requests with group visits to key appropriations staff to help them understand the importance of NIDA’s research portfolio.

Other educational efforts continue. Charles O’Keeffe has organized a website ([www.thefriendsofnida.org](http://www.thefriendsofnida.org)) with content contributions from several members of the executive committee. A briefing series that began with a standing room only breakfast event in July 2004 (<http://www.apa.org/ppo/issues/nidabrief704.html>), was followed last month by a second briefing entitled, “Effectively Breaking the Cycle of Drugs and Crime: Research and Treatment Provide the Answers,” which has served to raise awareness of NIDA’s Criminal Justice Drug Addiction Treatment Services (CJDATS) research portfolio. The speakers included NIDA Director Nora Volkow, MD, who provided an overview of the NIDA criminal justice treatment research portfolio. Former NFL football player Dexter Manley, Director of Community Outreach, Second Genesis, Inc., shared his journey through addiction, prison, treatment, and recovery. APA Fellow Dwayne Simpson, PhD, Director of the Institute of Behavioral Research, Texas Christian University, detailed treatment research results involving partnerships between scientists, offenders, and the criminal justice

system. The briefing drew more than 120 guests, including personal and committee staff from 50 House and Senate offices.

We were especially pleased that Congressman Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), Co-Chair of the Addiction, Treatment, and Recovery Caucus with Congressman Jim Ramstad (R-MN), took time out of his busy schedule to provide concluding remarks on the importance of substance abuse research, research funding, and parity. Rep. Kennedy alluded to a comprehensive parity bill he will be introducing with Congressman Ramstad. Although that bill is still in the discussion phase, readers may be interested in Rep. Ramstad’s bill H.R. 1258, the “Time for Recovery and Equal Access to Treatment in America (TREAT America) Act,” introduced March 14.

The Friends of NIDA plan to sponsor four educational briefings a year and future briefings may focus on the Clinical Trials Network, NIDA’s developmental research portfolio, or advances in the prevention and treatment of nicotine dependence.

Some of the organizations participating in the Friends of NIDA do so mostly by lending their names while others, like those represented on the Executive Committee, lend active volunteer staff support. Regardless of how organizations lend their support, we can never have too many “friends.” So if you know of a group that doesn’t currently identify with our coalition, please urge them to consider becoming part of this dynamic team. ■

**...Interesting Careers,****continued from page 4**

(this includes everything from fund generating to project design, data collection, statistical results analysis, project write up, conference presentation, and publication). I also am responsible for whatever projects our company president decides need acting on—both in the short term and the long term. So my day is fast-paced and very exciting; plus I feel like I am contributing a direct benefit to the population my company serves—a group I can relate to very easily indeed.

The current clinical vision research projects that I am working on include topics that relate to low vision, treatments, driving, retinal and cortical imagery, and even survey research addressing treatment effectiveness and utilization of services. Some of the other projects I am involved with include helping to establish our rehabilitation clinic as a testing center for visual aid devices, contributing to a forthcoming professional medical newsletter, overseeing a college student intern program, contributing to a parents

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## SCIENCE BRIEF

## Rumor and Gossip Research

by Ralph L. Rosnow and Eric K. Foster



Ralph L. Rosnow is Thaddeus Bolton Professor Emeritus at Temple University, where he served as a faculty member in the Psychology Department from 1967-2001. He has also taught at Boston University and Harvard University. He is the author or coauthor of more than two dozen books and many journal articles and chapters. His most recent books are (with Robert Rosenthal) *People Studying People* (W. H. Freeman, 1997); *Beginning Behavioral Research* (Prentice Hall, 5th edition, 2005); (with Rosenthal and Donald B. Rubin) *Contrasts and Effect Sizes in Behavioral Research* (Cambridge University Press, 2000); and (with Mimi Rosnow) *Writing Papers in Psychology* (Thomson Wadsworth, 7th edition).

Eric K. Foster received his PhD in social psychology from Temple University. His dissertation focused on gossip at a systems level using social network analysis. He is a Study Director at Temple's Institute for Survey Research, which conducts social, educational, and epidemiological studies. He is also an adjunct assistant professor of marketing at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.



5

Popular and media interest in rumor and gossip never seems to wane, but psychological research on rumor has been cyclical and that on gossip has, until recently, been dormant (Foster, 2004). World War II saw a burst of interest in the psychology of rumor and rumor control. Seminal work was done by Gordon W. Allport and Leo Postman (1947), the impetus for which was their concern about the damage to morale and national safety caused by menacing rumors spreading needless alarm and raising extravagant hopes (p. vii). There was some formative research in the following decade (e.g., Back, Festinger, Kelley, Schachter, & Thibaut, 1950; Schachter & Burdick, 1955) and then a period of quiescence. Another cycle of interest is evident in the late-1960s and 1970s, starting with the publication of sociologist Tamotsu Shibutani's (1966) book, the Kerner et al. (1968) report on civil disorders, and Milgram and Toch's (1969) essay on collective behavior, followed by other books written from a sociological or psychological perspective (Morin, 1971; Knopf, 1975; Rosnow & Fine, 1976). More recently, there has been another spate of books on rumor and gossip (Fine & Turner, 2001; Goodman & Ben-Ze'ev, 1994; Kapferer, 1990; Kimmel, 2004; Koenig,

1985; Levin & Arluke, 1987; Spitzberg & Cupach, 1998; Turner, 1993). There has also been a flurry of research and conferences focused on these and related forms (e.g., Fine, Heath, & Campion-Vincent, in press), though there continues to be more theory and speculation than empirical research. Nonetheless, there have been empirically grounded insights.

We should distinguish between rumor and gossip, as each appears to function differently in its pure state. Rumors have been described as public communications that are infused with private hypotheses about how the world works (Rosnow, 1991), or more specifically, ways of making sense to help us cope with our anxieties and uncertainties (Rosnow, 1988, 2001). On the other hand, as Wert and Salovey (2004b) noted, "almost as many functions of gossip have been argued as writers to write about gossip" (p. 77). More than rumor, gossip tends to have an "inner-circleness" about it, in that it is customarily passed between people who have a common history or shared interests. Popular usage defines gossip as "small talk" or "idle talk," but gossip is hardly inconsequential or without purpose (e.g., Gluckman, 1963; Goodman & Ben-Ze'ev, 1994; Rosnow & Georgoudi, 1985; Sabini & Silver, 1982; Spitzberg & Cupach,

1998). For example, it has been theorized that gossip played a fundamental role in the evolution of human intelligence and social life (Dunbar, 2004; Davis & McLeod, 2003) and that it continues to play an active role in cultural learning (Baumeister, Zhang, & Vohs, 2004) and as a source of social comparison information (Suls, 1977; Wert & Salovey, 2004a). To be sure, it is often noted that rumor and gossip can also be undeniably aversive and problematic--currently illustrated, for example, in the way that rumor and gossip have generated resistance to medical efforts to deal with HIV and AIDS (e.g., Smith, Lucas, & Latkin, 1999; Stadler, 2003).

Allport and Postman called their most far-reaching assertion "the basic law of rumor." It declared that rumor strength ( $R$ ) will vary with the importance of the subject to the individual concerned ( $i$ ) times the ambiguity of the evidence pertaining to the topic at hand ( $a$ ), or  $R \approx i \times a$ . The basic law of rumor was not empirically grounded in any rumor research, but was adapted from the earlier work of Douglas McGregor (1938) on factors influencing predictive judgments (Rosnow, 1980). One difficulty with the basic law of rumor was that the factor of "importance" was elusive

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**...Science Brief,****continued from page 5**

and not easy for researchers to operationalize. Also of concern was that the basic law of rumor ignored the emotional context of rumor. Based on subsequent research findings, Rosnow (1991, 2001) proposed a modified theory in which rumormongering is viewed as an attempt to deal with anxieties and uncertainties by generating and passing stories and suppositions that can explain things, address anxieties, and provide a rationale for behavior. At a molar level, we can usually distinguish between two types of rumors (Rosnow, Yost, & Esposito, 1986), those invoking hoped-for consequences (wish rumors) and those invoking feared or disappointing consequences (dread rumors), but finer distinctions within each category have been described as well (e.g., DiFonzo & Bordia, 2000). Another addendum is that people have a tendency to spread rumors that they perceive as credible (even the most ridiculous stories), although when anxieties are intense, rumormongers are less likely to monitor the logic or plausibility of what they pass on to others (Rosnow, 2001).

These modifications of the classical view of rumor have implications for how potentially damaging rumors may be effectively combatted (DiFonzo, Bordia, & Rosnow, 1994; Fine & Turner, 2001; Kimmel, 2004) and have recently served as a stepping stone for other researchers' innovative work. For example, Chip Heath, Chris Bell, and Emily Sternberg (2001) have been exploring how rumors and urban legends thrive similarly on information and emotion selection. They have developed the thesis that rumors and urban legends are subsets of what biologist Richard Dawkins (1976) called memes, reasoning that there is a cultural analogy between ideas that compete for survival and biological genes.

As another recent illustration, Air Force Captain Stephanie R. Kelley (2004), for her Master's thesis at the Naval Postgraduate School, did a content analysis of 966 rumors col-

lected in Iraq from a weekly feature in the Baghdad Mosquito. Proceeding from the idea that rumors serve as a window into people's uncertainties and anxieties, she identified fears inhibiting cooperation with U.S. counterinsurgency efforts and formulated ideas for improving Coalition information campaigns. That rumors might be projections of societal attitudes and motivations goes back to the classic work of Robert H. Knapp (1944), who sorted through a large collection of World War II rumors printed in the Boston *Herald's* "Rumor Clinic" column and collected through the auspices of two mass circulation magazines, *The American Mercury* and *Reader's Digest*. Knapp settled on three categories of rumors: pipe-dream rumors, bogies or fear rumors, and wedge-driving rumors.

Social psychologists Nicholas DiFonzo, at Rochester Institute of Technology, and Prashant Bordia, at the University of Queensland in Australia, have collaborated in another significant program of research on rumor and rumor control (and are putting the finishing touches on a book to be published by the APA). Their work has largely focused on the sensemaking aspect of rumors at the individual level, exemplified by a series of studies exploring how rumors are embedded with stable cause attributions that affect perceptions and predictions in systematic ways (DiFonzo & Bordia, 1997, 2002). Whereas traditionally the dynamic of rumor was studied employing a one-way communication paradigm resembling the telephone game, these researchers have studied it in rumor discussion groups (Bordia, 1996; Bordia & DiFonzo, 2004; Bordia, DiFonzo, & Chang, 1999; Bordia & Rosnow, 1995), for example, a chat group discussion of a rumor in cyberspace over a 6 have uncovered systematic patterns in both the content and level of individual participation, consistent with the theoretical idea of rumormongering as a collective, problem-solving interaction that is sustained by a combination of anxiety, uncertainty, and credulity (Bordia & Rosnow, 1995).

Empirical gossip research has not coalesced into a mainstream approach. Most researchers are in accord that the term can apply to both positive and negative aspects of personal affairs and that, depending on the point of view, it can have positive or negative social effects. An early factionalism was reflected by the opposing views of Gluckman (1963), who maintained that gossip served the interests of the group, and Paine (1967), who countered that gossip was a tool wielded by individuals for personal advantage. Wilson, Wilczynski, Wells, and Weiser (2000), using evaluations of gossipy vignettes, showed that gossip that upheld group norms tended to reflect better on the gossipers (and more harshly on the targets) than self-serving gossip did. Studies have also focused on individual differences in gossip use, perception, and vulnerability (e.g., Davis & Rulon, 1935; Jaeger, Skleder, & Rosnow, 1998; Litman & Pezzo, 2005; Nevo, Nevo, & Derech Zehavi, 1993; Radlow & Berger, 1959).

In a forthcoming chapter (Foster & Rosnow, in press), we use social network analysis (SNA) to explore how the structure of the network--the links among all the members--can affect the potency of gossiping behavior. The SNA approach simultaneously takes into account the density of the network and the positions of individuals within it to predict how gossip will affect influence and group coherence. We found that denser networks are less vulnerable to social fragmentation from gossip. However, this effect is moderated by "gatekeepers" who tend to position themselves along unique social bridges between other network members. Disintermediating, that is, increasing the density of social connections around gatekeepers, is expected to decrease negative effects of gossiping and to assist in improving norm coherence. Thus, the structure of the gossip network, as much as the content, can contribute to collegiality and understanding as well as to inequality and conflict.

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## April 2005 Announcements

### Call for Nominations: *Decade of Behavior Awards*

The Decade of Behavior (2000-2010), now at its halfway point, continues to develop an impressive collection of programs and activities that work to highlight the importance of behavioral and social science research to policymakers, scientists and the public. Activities include a public education program that pairs graduate students and academic faculty with secondary school teachers to inform students about exciting research, and briefings on Capitol Hill that involve Congressional staff and distinguished scientists from a variety of disciplines. Likewise, a complete collection of *Behavior Matters* booklets are being produced to show the public the many ways in which behavioral and social science research has been used to improve our lives. The booklets showcase research related to the Decade themes of safety, health, education, prosperity and democracy. Two *Behavior Matters* booklets, specific to the fields of psychology and communications, are available and widely distributed.



In addition to the numerous programs and activities currently underway, the Decade of Behavior has also developed several annual awards that recognize the contributions of scientists, journalists and political figures. We are currently accepting nominations for three of the Decade's prestigious awards.

**The Decade of Behavior Distinguished Lecture Program** – support for showcased talks at society annual meeting to facilitate cross disciplinary interaction. Nominate a scientist from outside your discipline to speak at your society's convention; nominate a scientist in your field with something to say to other disciplines. Deadline August 15, 2005. See <http://www.decadeofbehavior.org/dls/index.cfm>.

**The Decade of Behavior Research Award** – recognizes high caliber research that has impacted policy or society, has impacted policy decisions, or has enhanced public understanding. Up to 5 awards annually. This year's theme is Safety. Nominate a scientist who's work has gone beyond the lab. Deadline August 15, 2005. See <http://www.decadeofbehavior.org/award/index.cfm>.

**The Decade of Behavior Media Award** – recognizes people newspaper and broadcast journalism who consistently incorporate behavioral and social science research in their non-partisan reporting, with preference to those who report on the Decade themes - safety, education, health, prosperity, democracy. Up to 5 awards annually. Nominate your favorite reporter who tells the world about behavior! Deadline May 13, 2005. See [http://www.decadeofbehavior.org/media\\_award.cfm](http://www.decadeofbehavior.org/media_award.cfm).

You can visit [www.decadeofbehavior.org](http://www.decadeofbehavior.org) for a complete listing of all of our activities and programs and to download nomination forms for the awards listed above. If you have ideas for future programming or are interested in being involved in current Decade of Behavior activities, please send an email to [dob@apa.org](mailto:dob@apa.org).

## April 2005 Announcements (cont.)

### Grants Available for Scientific Conferences

#### Proposals Invited

The Science Directorate is currently seeking proposals for research conferences in psychology. The purpose of this program is to promote the exchange of important new contributions and approaches in scientific psychology. The next deadline for applications is June 1, 2005.

Grant money ranging from \$500 to \$20,000 is available for the scientific conference. Proposals will be considered using such formats as "add-a-day" conferences (\$500-\$3,000 available), "stand alone" conferences (\$5,000-\$20,000 available), and festschrifts (\$5,000-\$20,000 available). APA is also open to innovative ways of holding conferences. The conference must be additionally supported by the host institution with direct funds, in-kind support, or a combination of the two. Please note that a detailed budget including institutional support is required for application.

Conference proposals must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- One of the primary organizers must be a member of APA.
- Only academic institutions accredited by a regional body may apply. Independent research institutions must provide evidence of affiliation with an accredited institution. Joint proposals from cooperating institutions are encouraged.
- Conferences may be held only in the United States, its possessions, or Canada.
- APA governance groups, APA Divisions and other related entities are not eligible for funding under this program.

Conference manuscripts shall be submitted to APA after the conference is held for publication in PsycEXTRA, a companion database to the scholarly PsycINFO. PsycEXTRA is designed to link researchers, academics, clinicians, librarians, consumers, and policy-makers to a variety of information sources covering psychology, behavioral science, and health; PsycEXTRA provides the readership with original documents.

Seventy-five percent of funds will be distributed to grantees prior to the conferences, and the remaining twenty-five percent will be released following the conference and after the submission of a final financial report detailing conference expenditures equal to or exceeding Grantee's proposed total budget.

Conference review committee members are: Anita Davis, PhD; Michael Domjan, PhD; Irene Frieze, PhD; Kathleen McDermott, PhD; Kevin Murphy, PhD; and James W. Pennebaker, PhD.

For more information on review criteria, proposal contents, and budget guidelines, please refer to the APA website at <http://www.apa.org/science/confer2.html> or contact Deborah McCall, Science Program Manager, at (202) 218-3590 or [dmccall@apa.org](mailto:dmccall@apa.org).

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support group for low vision and blind children and adolescents, volunteering at "Heather's Camp" (a summer camp for low vision and blind children), and serving as educational coordinator for a planned annual multi-disciplinary vision conference that will begin in 2006.

I have not disappeared from academics. I am still working in a research capacity with several students and I adjunct a night class in both cognitive and biopsychology. My educational and academic training in psychology has been invaluable. I address issues regarding research methodology, statistical analysis, and general science concepts daily. However, the most important contribution my training has made to me is my understanding of advanced concepts, my ability to make presentations, my ability to continue learning (even if I don't understand something that is presented to me at first) and, most importantly, my ability to deal with people and have an understanding of them and their communication patterns.

There is absolutely no way that I would be where I am without the good luck of having worked with so many influential people who have had a direct impact on my life. Those include my mentors Dr. Mike Webster, Dr. Mike Crognale, Dr. Robert Solso, Dr. Allen Gardner and Dr. Beatrice Gardner. Most importantly the efforts of my best friend and wife, Dana, have allowed me to realize all of my endeavors.

So I guess you could say my journey in the field of psychology has provided me with an understanding of science, behavior, communication, and an understanding of myself. I am glad that by studying psychology I can make a contribution to many others lives and, I hope, my educational and personal experiences will continue to allow that to happen. ■

## ...Science Brief,

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