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Presidential Column

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I am sure you have heard it. It is a common expression, the expression "APA is the parent organization." Obviously this expression relates to the fact that there are 42 divisions within the Association which APA oversees in some way. But, what does the expression truly mean? If APA is our parent, does it parent well?

In order to consider these questions, APA's role with respect to two basic parenting functions will be considered. The basic parenting functions are: (1) to support and (2) to protect. Obviously there are many important functions involved in parenting. Given space limitations, only these two will be considered here, and the examples used to illustrate APA's role with respect to the two parenting functions will be selective rather than exhaustive. Following a consideration of these two parenting functions, an analysis of the "data" and some implications will be made.

To Support

The parenting function to support involves promoting a positive sense of self and providing encouragement and opportunities which enhance self-esteem. There have been a number of developments over the last 25 years which indicate parental support. For example, School Psychology is now considered a specialty equivalent in status to clinical, organizational, and counseling. Diplomate status for school psychologists and APA accreditation of training programs are other examples.

Our parent has many children and therefore engages in activities to promote the psychology family system. Thus, our parent is also working hard to keep the family name in good light, and has engaged in such activities as purchasing *Psychology Today*, arranging for announcements concerning psychology, and circulating a pamphlet entitled "Psychology as a Health Care Profession." In addition, APA has supported us by establishing regulations which protect both our profession and our clients. The development of test standards by the APA Committee on Joint Education Studies for Educational Psychological testing, the preparation of state of the art papers about how psychologists work, the establishment of ethical guidelines, and the participation in competency based conferences are examples.

To Protect

Parental protection involves parent utilization of resources to enable the psychological and physical safety of the child both in the outside world as well as within the family. First, has APA protected School Psychology from threats from the outside world? While threats to our field and parental response or lack of response to these threats cannot be considered here in totality, I assume my experience with APA during my term of office is illustrative of the quality and quantity of protection provided by APA to external threats. Without question, APA has been active this year on both state and national levels. Regarding a state issue for example, when concerns were raised regarding the development in South Carolina's licensing law which would have an adverse effect upon school psychology in that state, there were letters from the president of APA, Max Siegel, Executive Officer of the National Register, Al Wellner, and Chair of the Committee of Professional Standards, Board of Professional Affairs, Morris Goodman in support of the position of school psychologists. Regarding national concerns, APA has been active around the definition of "Related Services" under PL 94-142 and response to the new deregulation initiatives in Special Education by the Reagan administration. Other examples include advocacy and amicus briefs which have been provided on behalf of in-

dividuals and groups such as Forrest vs. Ambach, and the Lobbying activity of AAP and National Policy Studies to include psychology in legislation and to attain grants for psychological research.

Moving to threats existing within the family, has APA served a protector role here? Two major trends within APA provide a framework for considering this question. One trend involves the emergence of new entities within applied psychology. While there are presently only four recognized specialties, there are numerous other groups such as neuropsychology, clinical child psychology, pediatric clinical psychology, and forensic psychology which want to be recognized as specialties. As a means of dealing with the explosive differentiation within psychology and the need for regulation, a BPA subcommittee has been formed which has proposed that groups which would like to define, own, and monitor a specialty, make application. The intent is to get divisions to take responsibility for their specialty.

How does this effect us? While the new entities which are emerging have the right to develop and reflect the reality that applied psychology is changing, I am concerned about the means APA is constructing for the recognition of new specialties. The procedures are resulting in undue restrictiveness for all the specialties and threaten our generic psychology base. Over the last decade we have been moving in a generic way as indicated, for example, by the accreditation criteria for doctoral programs which are predominantly generic for the specialty; accreditation criteria for internships which specify accreditation in professional psychology rather than in a specialty; the National Register listing which identifies health service providers rather than specialty providers; generic licensure in many states; development of some programs offering degrees in generic professional psychology rather than degrees in specialty areas; and agreement by presidents of the four specialties at a recent meeting that there is significant overlap between the specialties and that a more generic approach is desirable.

My second concern with the proposed designation system is that it will be misused by states and other systems. There is more overlap than differentiation between the various specialties. Establishing boundaries has already resulted in problems, as the case in South Carolina illustrates. While South Carolina has specialty licensing already, it is attempting to adopt into state statute the specialty guidelines. This will result in limiting the activities of many school psychologists. Although the specialty guidelines were not meant to be used in this way, states are independent of APA and misuse of guidelines and other APA documents is not unusual. Further, I am concerned that the establishment of boundaries will limit opportunities for changing specialties, despite an individual developing new skills. The point I am making here is that the designation system which is being developed in order to deal with the explosive differentiation within professional psychology, the push for additional recognition within psychology, and the need for regulation may jeopardize our generic psychology base and may be misused by states and other systems in a way which will not be beneficial to the practice of School Psychology. While all school psychologists may not perceive it this way, it appears to me that our interests with regard to the proposed designation system are not being furthered.

A second trend within APA involves the proliferation of professional psychology in relation to scientific psychology and the increasing dissatisfaction experienced by the latter group. APA has responded by restructuring the association into two forums, forum 1 (scientific) and forum A (professional), on a trial basis, in an attempt to better meet the needs of all psychologists. Clearly there is a need to better respond to the concerns of the more scientifically oriented. However, I am concerned that the establishment of two forums serves to divide the allegiance of school psychologists who are both researchers and practitioners. The point I am making here is that the trial plan to deal with the greater voice of professional psychology within the APA structure and the lesser voice of scientific psychology results in a divided allegiance.

Analysis

From a reading of the above, it appears that our parent organization supports both the division and larger family to which we belong and whose reputation we share. In addition, from the reading it appears that our parent organization actively protects us against outside forces. However, our

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Issues and Answers in School Psychology

Masters vs. Doctors: The Real Issues

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Bardon (1982) has expressed his perception of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)/Division 16—American Psychological Association (APA) disagreement over independent practice/entry level for school psychologists. The controversy, however, is between practitioner versus nonpractitioner viewpoints. Iscoe (Note 1) focused on the riff in general when he stated that the real estate and investments are the glue that holds APA together. In Iscoe's opinion, a major factor in circumventing a split among the clinicians, researchers, and academics who currently compose the APA is the legal implications and complications a separation would necessitate regarding disposal of real estate holdings in Washington, D.C.

Bardon (1982) is correct when he says that school psychology has primarily established itself as an independent profession, the entry level of which is nondoctoral. Those of us with doctorates who actually practice psychology in the schools are few in number. Most doctorally trained school psychologists are primarily functioning as college and university professors, administrative supervisors of school psychological services, or engaged in practice of some related psychological specialty. It was reported by French and McCloskey (1979) that only 10% of school psychology graduates receive a doctorate. Their findings further support the notion that many doctoral recipients go into positions other than service delivery.

These findings also support my belief that doctoral school psychologists seldom intend to make a career of direct service to schools. There are 1,599 fellows and members of Division 16 listed in the *Directory of the American Psychological Association* (1981). Since it would take a long time to look up the current employment status of each individual listed, I elected to explore the background of each individual listed at the top of each column of names included in the Division roster. Out of 24 individuals, only 1 was currently employed as a rank and file doctoral school psychologist. The remaining individuals typically were supervisors of school psychological services, college and university faculty members, therapists in private practice or community mental health centers, or retired. This ad hoc examination suggests that possibly only 4% of the doctorally trained school psychologists are providing direct services to school clientele.

Currently there are only 2 doctoral psychologists employed full-time to provide direct services to students in the district employing me which has approximately 60,000 students. That amounts to a doctoral school psychologist:student ratio of 1:30,000. During previous employment in 1976, I once calculated by studying a *Texas Almanac* (1975) that I was the only doctoral level school psychologist serving the children included in a population of 483,600 people living in 11,024 square miles of Central Texas.

Those of us who have earned doctorates in school psychology and are actually practicing in public schools are really what Phillips (1982) has referred to as an embarrassment to the professions of psychology and education. Most of us would probably admit we would like to join the faculty of a university or assume a more responsible position of leadership within the public schools. We desperately need and usually are members of both the NASP and the APA. The APA identification is needed as we strive to maintain contact with avenues to pursue future career goals. The NASP meets our professional needs as school psychologists.

Competition for prestigious academic and supervisory school psychology positions is likely to be keen and yet there are probably enough positions nationally for doctoral school psychologists who are not especially particular. Rand and Ellsworth (1979) reported it not to be uncommon for an employer of educational psychologists to have as many as 100 - 200 applicants for a single position. If academic school psychology training programs have similar desirability as those in clinical psychology, then it is conceivable there may be at least from 46 to 111 applicants for announced opening (Klesges, Sanchez, and Stantion, 1982; Tarlow, Note 2). On the optimistic side, Brown and Lindstrom (1978) estimated there to be 203 school psychology training programs in the United States. If each program had an average of 5 faculty members, assuming some programs may have only 1 or 2 and other programs as many as 15 or more, then 1,015 possible members of Division 16 may have the opportunity to be employed as trainers of school psychologists.

The Public's Perception

Whenever a new acquaintance inquires as to what my occupation is, their reaction is directly related to the wording of my response. If I reply, "I am a school psychologist," the reaction is, "Are you kind of like a guidance counselor?" or, "So you do testing for the schools?" People tend to assume that I have no more than a master's degree, if even that. Recently an ARD meeting (admission, review, dismissal from special education) was held at a

junior high school during which a student's father informed the committee that he had minored in psychology in college, had worked as a psychiatric aid in the armed forces and consequently had a good understanding of his son's psychological problems. Since I had introduced myself as the school psychologist, he turned to me and inquired, "How many hours of field work are required to be a degree in psychology?" I replied, "Do you mean to get a bachelor's degree?" "Yes," he answered. "At most colleges and universities, there is probably no field requirement for a bachelor's degree with a major in psychology" I noted. He then profoundly and proudly said, "See. I probably know as much about psychology as you do."

It is not only the public that considers school psychologists to be non-doctoral but college trainers of school psychologists as well. The supervisor of psychological services for the school district that employs me was invited to participate on a panel discussion at a major university. Since she was unable to attend, she recommended to the professor in charge that one of her staff members attend in her place and my name was mentioned. The college faculty member sent me cordial letters prior to and after the panel discussion and addressed me in the letters as "Mister" rather than "Doctor" and referred to me as a psychological associate rather than a psychologist. It was obviously assumed that as a rank and file school psychological services staff member, I had not earned a doctoral degree.

I have resolved to identifying myself to the world, not as a "school psychologist" but rather a "psychologist for the public schools." People seem to respond to this title by assuming that I am indeed a doctor rather than a nondoctor and give me the cherished feelings of honor and worth professionals with earned doctorates like to get. As Mandell (1977) embarrassingly pointed out, "educationalists everywhere need 'Doctor' and glow appreciatively when they hear it." Those of us who need the prestige of being recognized as doctors can refer to ourselves as a "psychologist for the public schools" until we reach that career change we so actively meditate and pursue.

The Real Issues

The real issue being debated is the fact that public schools do not need doctoral level school psychologists as much as psychologists need the public schools. Schools employ large numbers of nurses not physicians, speech therapists not otolaryngologists, and teachers not professors. How many elementary teachers feel the necessity to get a doctoral degree? If one should attain such an achievement and continue to be a rank and file teacher, would this not be a professional embarrassment?

The debate regarding the independent practice of school psychology by individuals who have not earned a doctoral degree is primarily a confrontation between private practitioners, often clinical psychologists, and nondoctoral school psychologists. There are licensed doctoral school psychologists who have already attempted private practice and have decided to remain employed by the public schools as a career choice or to remain employed until a related career opportunity is realized. Roose (1982) outlined the frustrations full-time private practice presents and the reasons he returned to practice psychology in the public schools. Grangaard (Note 3) outlined a rationale for maintaining a private practice on a part-time basis but warned that independent practice may not be as appealing as it appears to the individuals not currently eligible to pursue private enterprise.

Licensed psychologists engaged in private practice heavily depend on referrals from the public schools. Without school psychologists making referrals or, worse yet, with schools making referrals to licensed nondoctoral practitioners, psychology is threatened with a subservient status compared to psychiatry and concomitant loss of business that could result in financial ruin as well as eradication of professional pride.

Concluding Remarks

Any psychologist who has earned a doctoral degree and attained the necessary credentials to engage in independent practice, supervise and administer school psychological services, or serve as a faculty member for a school psychology training program, should be justifiably concerned with the points of disagreement between the NASP and the APA. Changing the title to psychologists for the schools and the establishment of a new psychological specialty as Bardon (1982) has recommended ignores the real issues concerning the current and future status of desired employment by school psychologists who have earned a doctorate. It would appear that doctoral school psychologists with no sincere interest in private practice should not be concerned with licensing nondoctoral school psychologists for independent practice. It should concern them, however, because if non-doctoral school psychologists may practice independently, then there is no reason to employ doctoral school psychologists to serve as supervisors and administrators of school psychological services. It is also conceivable that nondoctoral school psychologists will attain the necessary status to train themselves. School psychologists trained at the doctoral level may have additional difficulty achieving their personal professional goals if the added competition of experienced nondoctoral school psychologists becomes a reality.

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Ethics Column

Submitted by: Roy P. Martin, Chairperson
Division 16 Ethics Committee

Our review of the revised APA ethics code has come to Principle 8, that principle specifically addressing assessment techniques.

Principle 8 Assessment Techniques

In the development, publication, and utilization of psychological assessment techniques, psychologists make every effort to promote the welfare and best interests of the client. They guard against the misuse of assessment results. They respect the client's right to know the results, the interpretations made and the bases for their conclusions and recommendations. Psychologists make every effort to maintain the security of tests and other assessment techniques within limits of legal mandates. They strive to assure the appropriate use of assessment techniques by others.

a. In using assessment techniques, psychologists respect the right of clients to have a full explanation of the nature and purpose of the techniques in language that the client can understand, unless an explicit exception to this right has been agreed upon in advance. When the explanations are to be provided by others, the psychologist establishes procedures for insuring the adequacy of these explanations.

b. Psychologists responsible for the development and standardization of psychological tests and other assessment techniques utilize established scientific procedures and observe the relevant APA standards.

c. In reporting assessment results, psychologists indicate any reservations that exist regarding validity or reliability because of the circumstances of the assessment or the inappropriateness of the norms for the person tested. Psychologists strive to insure that the results of assessments and their interpretations are not misused by others.

d. Psychologists recognize that assessment results may become obsolete. They make every effort to avoid and prevent the misuse of obsolete measures.

e. Psychologists offering scoring and interpretation services are able to produce appropriate evidence for the validity of the program and procedures used in arriving at interpretations. The public offering of an automated interpretation service is considered as a professional-to-professional consultation. The psychologist makes every effort to avoid misuse of assessment reports.

f. Psychologists do not encourage or promote the use of psychological assessment techniques by inappropriately trained or otherwise unqualified persons through teaching, sponsorship, or supervision.

The ethics column has reviewed each of the previous seven principles of the code and several times principles effecting the assessment process have been mentioned (see discussion of competence and confidentiality). The present comments will not touch on these important issues.

School psychologists criticize themselves frequently on many grounds including sensitivity to ethical principles. However, on the general subject covered in section "a" of Principle 8—explaining the purpose and nature of the assessment process—it is my belief that we excel. There is a strong tradition in school psychology toward fully informing parents and to a lesser extent children as to the purpose, nature, and outcome of the assessment process. I'm sure there are isolated cases of abuse, particularly with regard to the right to know on the part of children, but on average our record has been strong in this area. Psychologists working in industrial/organizational roles find this principle very difficult particularly if they are involved in personnel selection. Clinical psychologists may also have difficulties in cases in which the competence of the adult client to provide sanctions for the assessment is in question.

Unfortunately, section "c" of Principle 8 touches on an area in which most school psychologists and most other applied psychologists fall short. We simply do not make explicit enough the inadequacies of our assessment devices. This can be done in many ways, but one of the most precise ways is through a thorough explanation of the meaning of the standard error of the measure and the standard error of estimate, translated, of course, to the level of sophistication of the audience. Judging from my work with school psychologists in several states, the great majority do not know in a precise way how these statistical indices are computed or how they can be used in practical situations. This represents a major failure in training and certification standards.

There has been some improvement in recent years in the appropriate use of the standard error of the measure in IQ interpretation. This has been brought about, I think, by the availability of high quality texts on the interpretation of scholastic aptitude measures (e.g., Kaufman & Sattler texts). However, even psychologists who seem to understand the concepts as they apply to this domain, fail to utilize them in interpretation of achievement test data, perceptual-motor data, and personality test data. How often does one see "bands of error" listed for data other than IQ's?

errors of the measure and the standard errors of the estimate are not readily attainable (e.g., interview and projective procedures). This does not absolve the user from communicating the limit of the reliability and validity of such data. In fact, it makes the case more compelling.

Feeling an obligation to communicate clearly about the shortcoming of the devices we use might have a further positive effect. It should help eliminate the use of devices that are embarrassing when their shortcomings are discussed. For example, if an achievement test is used in which a 68% confidence band is two grade levels, and the parent understands that his/her child may get a score outside of this band one out of every three times the test is administered to their child, then the psychologist might not want to use this test and face the difficult questions posed by parents.

While I am a strong proponent of computerized assessment aids in administration, scoring, and interpretation, section "e" of Principle 8 points up the real ethical dangers of the use of the computer, particularly in interpretation. Several interpretative packages are now on the market and the future will undoubtedly bring many more. Most of these packages provide very poor documentation for the statements being made. For example, if a certain package is programmed to state that a large verbal-performance difference on the WISC-R "may be indicative of delinquent or pre-delinquent behavior", the user needs to know some of the following: (a) What size discrepancy triggers this statement in the program, (b) on what research was this statement based (more than references are needed here, a reasonably thorough review of the literature is mandatory), (c) what probabilities are implied by the statement "may exhibit delinquent behavior" and how was this probability figure arrived at. If this kind of documentation cannot be produced, the program writer is in an ethically questionable position as are all those psychologists who utilize the program in their assessments.

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