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CRIME SCENE

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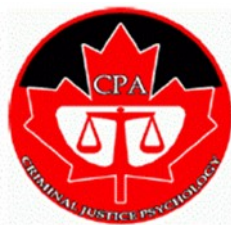
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Message from the Chair

Jim Cheston, Ph.D. C.Psych

This is the last 'Word from the Chair' from this Chair. At our Annual General Meeting in Halifax on June 1, our Vice-Chair Dr. Sandy Jung will become the Chair of this Section, and I will assume the position of Past Chair. This will represent part of an ongoing shift in the composition of the CJPS Executive. As I noted in the last edition of this article, some long-standing members of the Executive have recently stepped down, creating the opportunity for others to step up.

In addition to the Vice-Chair position becoming vacant when Sandy becomes Chair, there are a few other positions on the CJP Section Executive which need to be filled. Most sadly, one of those positions is Director-At-Large NAACJ, which was left vacant by the passing of Dr. Stephen Wormith at the end of March. His representation of our Section and of CPA to the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice was one small part of all the contributions he made to CJPS over the years. As I highlighted his legacy in an email to the Section shortly after his passing, Steve was an exceptional human being who will be missed by so many in so many ways.

The two following positions are also available: another Director-At-Large, as well as the *Crime Scene* Review Editor. Please consider applying for any of these three positions to be part of effecting influence and change in our Section.

Our Section continues to collaborate with CPA to advocate for psychologists to be designated to perform assessments to determine Fitness to Stand Trial, as well as assessments pertaining to a Section 16 defence of the *Criminal Code*: Not Criminally Responsible on Account of Mental Disorder. An unexpected barrier to this advocacy has recently occurred with the controversy associated with the role of Attorney General at the federal level. Nevertheless, the CPA has persevered in their advocacy and sent letters to each of the provincial and territorial Attorney Generals to request their consideration. There have been some

encouraging responses, though most have communicated that the issue will be further explored before a definite answer is provided. I am very appreciative of the members of our Section who worked to develop the initial position paper and to the executive of CPA for having used that position paper to advocate this issue at the national level. Tremendous progress has been made despite the many challenges of accomplishing legislative change at the national level of government.

At the last Executive teleconference meeting, earlier this month, it was decided to create a graduate student research grant with a \$1,000 award to commemorate the research legacy of Dr. Steve Wormith. Details of the grant will be provided at our AGM at N4. This follows the grants which were awarded to support three forensic psychology seminars in 2017 and continues the efforts of your Executive to support graduate students in the Correctional/Forensic field.

The end of my tenure as Chair of the CJPS could not have been better timed than to be coinciding with N4 in Halifax. I am eagerly anticipating the exciting experience of connecting with friends and colleagues to share, discuss, and explore current developments in this field in a charming Maritime atmosphere. Hoping to see you in Halifax!

I will conclude this last Word from this Chair by expressing immense gratitude and appreciation to the other members of the Executive: both those who have stepped down and those who have more recently been elected. You have all been a tremendous help in the development and guidance of the Section. I am sure this positive trajectory will continue under the direction of Dr. Jung.



In Memory of our Friend and Mentor, Steve Wormith

Michael Sheppard, Ph.D.

My academic supervisor, Steve Wormith, died on March 28 this year; a surprise to most who knew him. Those of us in academia know Steve as a scholar. He earned his Ph. D. in Psychology from the University of Ottawa in 1978 and made full professor at the University of Saskatchewan. He was also an athlete (Brown University's running back of the decade for the 1960s¹ - moniker earned: Workhorse Wormith), a Montreal Alouette in 1970 (they won the Grey Cup that year; he had a Grey Cup ring). Steve continued to play hockey into his senior years. He could hold his own with much younger athletes. Steve was also interested in the arts (especially the Group of Seven). In sum, Steve Wormith was a true renaissance man. He was a gentleman; kind, knowledgeable, and generous with his knowledge.

Career-wise, Steve worked at the Regional Psychiatric Centre in Saskatoon as chief psychologist from 1978 to 1982. He moved to Ontario to work in provincial and federal corrections there and returned to Saskatoon in 1999 as a chair in forensic psychology at the University of Saskatchewan. This latter position eventually became Professor and Director of Forensic Behavioral Science and Justice Studies. Steve was a significant contributor to the culture and content of correctional psychology in Canada for decades; some of his research was far enough ahead of its time that PsychInfo searches can miss it (e.g., publishing about the validity of the Nuffield system rather than SIRS scale with aboriginal offenders). Part of the reason for this as well is his love of "old-school" language. I was never able to convince him that if he wanted to be old school, he should go with the oldest school in psychology: Psychodynamic. However, he was willing to supervise my psychodynamic dissertation. Steve was made a Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association in 2003.

He supervised an impressive number of students with a staggering variety of thesis topics (e.g., ranging from evolutionary psychology [cuckoldry risk hypothesis regarding male sexual coercion] to psychodynamic psychology [defense mechanisms in male federal offenders] and, occasionally, the psychology of criminal conduct or validity of risk measures with different populations). He was cross-appointed by program, having students in applied social psychology and clinical psychology. At lab meetings, Steve would tell us how important it is to have knowledge beyond psychology and would give us knowledge-breadth questions at the start of the year (he stopped doing it after we figured out the

answer was always either "Group of Seven" or related to the Group of Seven). He was awarded an APA Division 18 Leadership in Education Award in 2015.

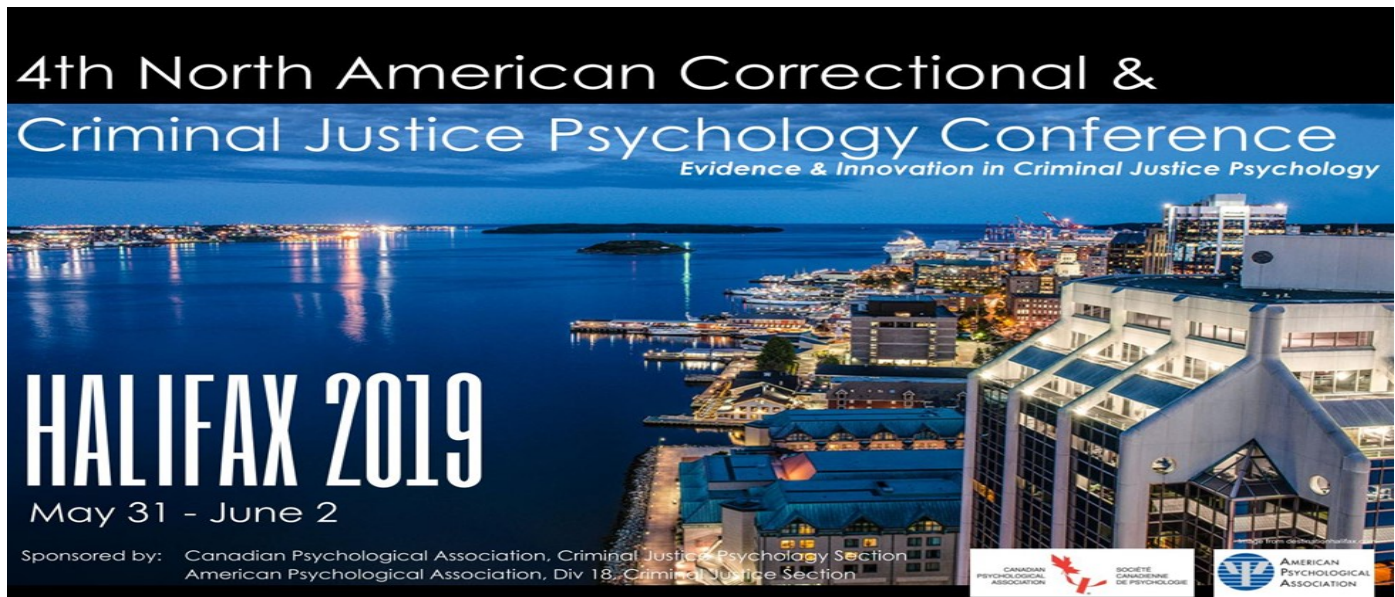
Steve was a reliable fixture at CPA and N1-N3. Normally quite reserved, he was most animated when presenting to his peers and colleagues (and students). He didn't usually have questions or comments for other speakers, so when he did have something to say people listened. Some years ago, he told me he had attended 23 consecutive CPA conferences (it was probably over 30 before this year). Although he had a quiet and humble interpersonal style, he was famous -possibly infamous- for his conference hotel room parties where seasoned forensic psychology professors and budding students alike could meet, socialize, and have a good time in the too-small space of his room. As host, Steve dutifully and reliably pilfered fruits, cheeses, and crackers from other functions for his guests. He didn't sing or play an instrument, but he encouraged others to do so, and Rob Roy's, Mark Olver's, and David Simourd's guitar-playing and sing-alongs were fantastic community-builders. Steve was most proud when the parties resulted in noise complaints from the hotel (the tradition of conference hotel room parties will be continued; I'm doing it at N4 and hope others will). In addition to being an athlete, scholar, mentor, and social fixture in correctional psychology, Steve provided training internationally, promoting RNR and the LSI family of risk assessment measures. His work ethic in this regard was astonishing; he once presented even though he had to hold his top front teeth in by hand while talking (he'd had a hockey injury).

Steve was also available by phone after I'd graduated. We kept in touch about once or twice a year, mostly to catch up and also because he wanted me to work on a manuscript I kept ignoring. He always had time to listen and share his thoughts.

Somehow, in his full rich life, he also had time for his family. He leaves behind his wife Amalita, sons Donnie and Ace, and daughter Joy.

Steve will be sadly missed.

¹<http://www.cstv.com/sports/m-footbl/stories/081703aad.html> described him as fullback.



With N4 just around the corner (May 31-June 2, Halifax NS), I hope to give you a glimpse of what to expect. The “N” conference has established itself as an important gathering in our field because it showcases prominent scholars and practitioners and gives attendees opportunities to network, discuss, and learn about current best-practices. To continue in this spirit, we used our conference tag-line, Evidence and Innovation in Criminal Justice Psychology, to drive our choice in keynote speakers: Dr. Karin Beijersbergen, Dr. David Farrington, Dr. Richard Schneider, Dr. Lynn Stewart, and Dr. Gregory Walton. Their notable work spans our vast field, including procedural justice, psychologists in the courts, criminal risk and protective factors, and applied correctional research. To inspire new ideas, we will also learn about theory and research on wise interventions. There is also incredible breadth from our presenters, ranging from risk assessments and psychopathy, to policing and eyewitness accuracy.

This year’s conference continues a trend of attracting international speakers and attendees, many of whom are traveling quite a distance - at least 7 countries, 13 US states, and 9 Canadian provinces are represented.

We will also have a Celebration of Excellence Banquet, where we will announce winners of the Don Andrews Career Contribution Award, the Significant Contribution Award, and student poster prize winners. It will also be a great opportunity to network and enjoy some food and live music (from our very own Natalie Jones!).

Hope to see you in Halifax!

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Camilleri, Ph.D.

Chair, NACCJPC 4

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the latest updates! The preliminary schedule is available [here](#).

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RESEARCH BRIEFS



ODARA 101: Look What's New!

Elke Ham, P.G. Dip., N. Zoe Hilton, Ph.D., Crystal J. Giesbrecht, M.S.W., and

Sheila Macdonald, M.N.

ODARA 101 is the online training for the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA), recently re-launched in a new learning environment with automated features and controls divested to organization administrators. This article looks at why ODARA 101 is needed and its new, improved features.

Background

Nearly 200,000 Canadians are assaulted by their domestic partner every year, and four in ten assaulted women are physically injured (Statistics Canada, 2016). The ODARA is one of the few well-validated risk assessment tools for identifying cases at greatest risk of domestic violence recidivism (see review in Hilton & Eke, 2017). Since it was first constructed and tested (Hilton et al., 2004), the ODARA has been validated in a variety of populations and performed well in meta-analyses (e.g., Hanson, Helmus, & Bourgon, 2007; Messing & Thaller, 2013).

The ODARA is the most commonly used tool for assessing intimate partner violence (IPV) risk in the Canadian corrections system (Bourgon, Mugford, Hanson, & Coligado, 2018). Research using the ODARA victim interview format revealed that women who seek out victim services usually do so in preference to calling police (Hilton, Harris, & Holder, 2008). Shared use of the ODARA by the criminal justice system and community partners promotes effective communication and offender risk management, and empowers women's decision making and safety planning.

Training for accessible cross-sector risk assessment training is critical.

ODARA 101 is an online, restricted-access training program that assessors can use anytime, anywhere, and at no charge. It supplements the full ODARA scoring manual (currently under revision; Hilton, Harris, & Rice, 2010). Content is portrayed through learning modules using animated slides and videos with professional voice-over, quizzes, and scoring practice cases. Training takes about 4 to 6 hours and requires learners to score ten test cases to an acceptable level of reliability ($ICC \geq .75$). Our earlier evaluation showed that ODARA 101 is as successful as face-to-face training (Hilton & Ham, 2015).

Demand increased from 500 learners in 2012 to over 1,300 in 2017, requiring extensive staff time to manage numerous tasks, including handling email test submissions and creating and distributing certificates. Training videos dated from 2004 and did not reflect our users' current and diverse experiences. The outdated software platform was causing technical barriers.

Method and Results

The project was reviewed and approved by the research ethics board at Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care. We overhauled the program's outdated technology, revised content to enhance cultural and language accessibility, and evaluated training success and learner satisfaction in the new, improved program.



New Linguistic and Cultural Accessibility

We created new scenarios designed to respectfully reflect women's current experience of abuse in urban, rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. We gathered 20 true stories through collaborations with domestic violence shelter and counselling agency staff across the 21-member agencies of the Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan (PATHS). We turned these into simulated victim interview transcripts, then edited them to ensure anonymity as well as a range of ODARA scores. We created versions set in hospital-based Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres (SADVTCs) in Ontario, shelters and victim crisis services, and police investigations. Thirteen scenarios were video-recorded. Training content was translated from English into French, including the professional voice-over.

In sum, ODARA 101's new features include:

- updated scenarios based on women's experiences of abuse
- choice of taking the test in three versions: interview, police records, or a mix
- video-based test on a limited, experimental basis
- choice of training, practice scoring, and testing in English or French

Improved Technical Accessibility

We converted the program from Flash to HTML and gave it a more intuitive web design. Learners are issued a license to access ODARA 101 and sent an automated password reset email. Learners complete the test entirely online with instant pass/fail results and downloadable certificates. Test cases are randomly assigned from a pool of 80 documents, creating a more secure and individualized test.

Agencies can now identify Organizational Administrators to oversee their staff's progress in the program. Org Admin privileges include:

- register their organization (using our 3-step guide to organization set-up)
- request licenses for all their staff
- assign licenses to individual learners
- see learner's training activity and test completion date
- transfer Org Admin privileges to another staff

Program Evaluation

Elke Ham and Zoe Hilton independently scored the ODARA for the 20 new case transcripts. The 2-way mixed, absolute agreement ICC on ODARA total scores was .82 single measures and .90 average measures. Final edits were made using consensus scoring.

We then evaluated ODARA 101 using a method similar to our previous evaluations of ODARA classroom and DVD training (Hilton & Ham, 2015; Hilton, Harris, Rice, Eke, & Lowe-Wetmore, 2007). Our sample comprised 223 self-selected participants attempting the test. They included Ontario's SADVTC clinic nurses, Saskatchewan's PATHS-member domestic violence shelter and counselling agency workers, and high-frequency ODARA 101 users from policing and probation services in Canada and the United States. We eliminated 13 previous participants due to an error in the program's calculation of test scores.

Most participants (78%) passed the test first time. The average ICC on first attempt was .82. This coefficient is not significantly lower than we found for the original ODARA 101 program, in which 45 assessors completed the training during a pilot phase with an average ICC of .88 (Hilton &

Table 1

Mean responses and percentage of positive responses to ODARA 101 evaluation survey.

Survey Item	Mean	(Standard Deviation)	Percent Positive
Ease of use	4.4	(.59)	85
User-friendliness	4.4	(.72)	86
Quality	4.4	(.69)	85
Utility	4.3	(.76)	83
Comparison to old program	4.7	(.52)	95
Org Admin controls	4.8	(.52)	95

Note: Response options range from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive). Percent positive includes responses of 4 or 5.

Ham, 2015), $Z = 1.30$, $p = .194$. However, all pilot phase participants passed on their first attempt, a significantly higher success rate, $Z = 3.48$, $p < .001$. The difference could be attributable to learners' adjustment to the online testing environment and inability to change scores after submitting each case score. Learners chose tests using: interview transcripts ($n = 55$, $ICC = .84$), police records ($n = 45$, $ICC = .83$), mixed documents ($n = 138$, $ICC = .82$), and video ($n = 24$, $ICC = .78$). No learners chose the French language test.

An evaluation survey was completed by 56 self-selected participants who made at least one attempt at the test and by 12 who only reviewed the program. Participants rated questions about ODARA 101's ease of use, user-friendliness, quality, utility ($n = 68$), comparison to old program ($n = 17$), and Org Admin controls ($n = 15$) on a scale from 1 (very false) to 5 (very true). Most responses were positive or very positive (Table 1) as illustrated in participant comments:

"The new version is much more accessible...Being able to pick up where you left off also makes it much easier for staff who are busy to complete the training easily."

"The new program is much more user friendly. It looks more professional, is easy to navigate, and seems easy to troubleshoot if needed."

Conclusion

ODARA 101 has been offered at no cost to Ontario's police services and Canada's shelters since its beginning, and to all approved organizations since 2014. Grants made it possible to keep the program running so far, and the new upgrades will see it through the next few years. We are currently reviewing avenues for long-term sustainability.

Author Note

This project was made possible by Justice Canada grant #9181400. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily represent the Government of Canada. Contact: eham@waypointcentre.ca. ODARA 101 site: <http://odara.waypointcentre.ca/>

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Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Justice-Involved Youth

Hailey Kolpin, M.A., Joyce Radford, Ph.D., Dan Ashbourne Ph.D., and Alan Leschied, Ph.D.

Nature of the Study

Preamble. Increasing interest has been shown in recognition of the high rate of youth who are involved in the child welfare system [CWS] and who, while in care, incur charges and then become involved in the youth justice system [YJS] (Bala, et.al 2015; Corrado, Freedman, Blaiter, 2011). The current study is one of a series through the London Family Court Clinic that has addressed these 'cross over youth', that is, youth who are involved in both youth justice and child welfare and the unique challenges they pose to service providers.

Abstract

The current study examined the development of a posttraumatic stress response following childhood maltreatment in a sample of justice involved youth who entered care through the CWS. Symptoms consistent with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder [PTSD], the nature of their maltreatment, mental health problems, and substance use were explored in the context of the lives of these youth who become involved in the YJS. Four main findings emerged. First, gender is related to a posttraumatic stress response [PSR] for crossover youth. Second, characteristics related to the nature of the experienced maltreatment are relevant in the development of a PSR. Third, sexual abuse, whether in combination with other forms of abuse or occurring in isolation, was significantly related to symptoms consistent with PTSD. Fourth, crossover youth who experience a PSR endured multiple forms of maltreatment compared to crossover youth without a PSR, with the total number of maltreatment types contributing significantly to the prediction of a PSR.

Data for this study of justice-involved youth was based on a youth sample drawn from an urban-based court clinic who had been referred for psychological assessment by a youth court judge under Section 34 of the Youth Criminal Justice Act [YCJA]. Section 34 assessments are completed by a psychologist/clinician to address a variety of issues related to the committal of an offense that enables the court to make decisions related to sentence. File data were gathered on 299 youth who were predominantly male [80.8%, $n = 242$] and 15 years of age at the time of referral. More than 8 out of 10 of these youth [84.3%; $n = 252$] had current or past CWS involvement and hence rendered them the designation of crossover youth. A Data Retrieval Instrument (DRI) was created to guide the extraction of information from the extensive files that were created on these youth as part of their assessment through the clinic.

Summary of Major Findings

The following section highlights some of the major findings based on the data summaries that were generated that relate to gender, the nature of maltreatment, and the nature and quality of the traumatic stress response.

Gender

Gender is related to a PSR and is in line with previous research, as females have a heightened risk for the development of PTSD symptomatology (Breslau, 2009). The current study extended this finding by evaluating the specific subset of trauma victims that included those who experienced childhood maltreatment, became involved with the CWS, and their pathway into the justice system.

Nature of Maltreatment

Characteristics of maltreatment, particularly the presence of sexual abuse along with multiple forms of maltreatment are associated with PTSD in both short- and long-term youth outcomes (Hetzel & McCanna, 2005; Schneider et al., 2007; Wilson & Scarpa, 2014). In the short term, crossover youth who have experienced either sexual abuse and / or multiple forms of abuse were found more likely to experience symptoms consistent with a posttraumatic stress response. These findings highlight the nature and intensity of the impact of their maltreatment. This translates into

their experience of symptoms that are highly consistent with a later diagnosis of PTSD² that includes flashbacks, re-experiencing, avoidance, and negative thoughts and feelings, but in addition, leads to behaviours that influence their entrance into the YJS.

Traumatic Stress Response

Numerous factors are related to a traumatic stress response [PSR] that include gender, the nature of previous abuse, mental health problems, and substance use. These factors were included in the present study in examining the predictive accuracy of a PSR stress response following maltreatment for crossover youth. The results reflected that all of the above cited factors as a set aided in the prediction of a posttraumatic stress response, although the variable that contributed most significantly was the number of maltreatment types experienced, which is consistent with previous literature (Schneider et al., 2007).

Contrary to the hypotheses, a PSR was not associated with comorbid depression, anxiety, or substance abuse. Although all of these factors are subsumed within a PTS, there also exists high rates of these mental health issues in the broader crossover youth population who do not experience a PSR. For example, 61% of crossover youth who were on probation, in an out-of-home placement, or in custody had mental health issues, while 80% misused substances (Halemba, Siegel, Lord, & Zawacki, 2004). Similarly, 83% of crossover youth adjudicated in the youth justice system were found to have co-occurring substance abuse and mental health problems (Herz & Ryan, 2008). These youth had either completed or were proceeding through the court process and had lives characterized by trauma, chaos, and instability. The subsequent development of mental health issues and the use of substances to cope or self-medicate are just a few of the negative outcomes resulting from what is referred to as an Aversive Life Event [ALE] that encompasses prior maltreatment.

Implications

Findings from the current study underscore the impact of the nature of maltreatment and the importance of a gender informed response to trauma within a group of cross over youth. The current study highlighted that females have a differential response to trauma compared to males and thus services and programs need to be specifically designed for females, as their unique needs are often overlooked in standard programs and services. This is reflected in addiction treatment, where gender informed services with female offenders who have experienced a mental health /

PSR disorder achieve better outcomes when compared to those who were involved in traditional programs (Grella, 1999; Nelson-Zlupko, Dore, Kauffman & Kalterbach, 1996).

Similar to previous research, it was found that features of the ALE were related to the subsequent outcome. Some of the aspects found to be most detrimental included the trauma being interpersonal in nature and occurring more frequently and over a longer period of time. (Wamser-Nanney & Vandenberg, 2013). This is represented by the term complex trauma, a construct developed to depict the symptom presentation arising from repeated and extensive trauma (Herman, 1992). Complex trauma can result in profound and extensive outcomes beyond what is reflected in a PTSD diagnosis. This includes for example emotion regulation deficits, impaired self-regulation, and difficulties with impulsiveness (Cook et al., 2003). Behaviour problems have also been found to be more common for young persons who were exposed to complex trauma in comparison to other types of trauma (e.g., acute non-interpersonal, traumatic event, acute interpersonal; Wamser-Nanney & Vandenberg, 2013). Findings from the current study, consistent with previous research, suggests that young persons exposed to complex trauma have different symptomatology than those exposed to noncomplex trauma, and these symptoms may have a lasting impact. Some crossover youths' experience of complex trauma and the resulting behaviour problems are likely a main contributor to their entrance into the justice system.

Many youth who come into contact with the YJS have experienced an ALE such as maltreatment and come into contact with the CWS. Given the high rate of youth with an ALE, there is a need for a heightened sensitivity and awareness to the importance of PSR and the relevance of acknowledging a youth's trauma history.

A trauma informed systemic approach is reflected in an understanding, recognition, and response to the effects of trauma (Child Welfare Committee, 2013). Currently, there are certain practices in youth detention and other residential settings (e.g., group homes) that are potentially re-traumatizing for many children and youth (Child Welfare Committee, 2013). For example, the use of seclusion and restraints could be traumatizing, especially if the youth had previously experienced neglect or had a history of physical / sexual abuse. As part of the youth rehabilitation system, services should be designed at the least to do no further harm and move towards assisting these youth in their recovery from trauma. It is recommended that with the high prevalence of trauma found in this study's sample of

²Current DSM -5 does not include a specific PTSD diagnostic category for youth despite attempts to have it appear. For a further discussion of this issue see: Van der Kolk, B. (2005). Developmental trauma disorder: Towards a rational diagnosis for children with complex trauma histories. *Psychiatric Annals*, 35, 401-408. http://www.traumacenter.org/products/pdf_files/preprint_dev_trauma_disorder.pdf

justice-involved youth, which is consistent with other research (e.g., Abram, Teplin, Charles, Longworth, McClelland, & Dulcan, 2004), that a trauma informed care [TIC] approach be adopted with the guidance of existing literature and its application to youth justice systems (Oudshoorn, 2015; Branson, Baetz, Horwitz, & Hoagwood, 2017).). Fundamental to TIC is that it recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role trauma plays in all aspects of an individual's life. This will include their psychological, biological, neurological, social and behavioural systems that influence an individual's sense of themselves, their sense of others and their beliefs about the world (The BlueKnot Foundation, 2012).

One fundamental systemic change that is being tested in the youth justice system to better address cross over youth and their needs is reflected in the use of "two-hatter" judges. These courts draw on judges who have a wealth of knowledge of both the CWS and YJS and sit in both courts (Scully & Finlay, 2015). Knowing both systems allows the same judge to identify unique needs and provide solutions across systems. Without the knowledge of a youth's child welfare history and ALEs, opportunities are often missed to connect youth with resources that have the potential to divert a court-related matter or highlight to service providers the aspect of trauma that needs to be addressed as part of the YJS (Scully & Finlay, 2015).

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Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha: Comments - Part I¹

Daryl G. Kroner, Ph.D. and Matthew J. Riordan, B.A.

Marvin K. Mooney, Will You Please Go Now!
- Dr. Seuss²

a.k.a.

Cronbach Coefficient Alpha, Will You Please Go Now!
- Psychometric Community

The usage of psychologically-based constructs places a high premium in knowing the confidence level of what is being represented by the data. Compared to measurement in the physical sciences (e.g., thermometers, electrocardiogram), psychologically-based constructs have less of a direct link between the data and data interpretation. Many approaches have been proposed to address this link, which include operationalization, verifiability, falsifiability, testability, repeatability, quantifiability, to name a few. Regardless of which approach is used to link data with an interpretation, the confidence of this link is foremost in using psychologically-based constructs. This confidence is addressed via reliability. Hence, the importance of reliability, which has primarily been assessed with Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha.

In this brief overview, we will address necessary assumptions for α , consequences of assumption violations, two inappropriate applications of α , alternatives for measuring internal structure reliability, and some cautions in assessing internal structure reliability.

Why most applications of Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha are inappropriate.

Four assumptions necessary to calculate Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha are violated ... almost always.

First Assumption. α has an assumption that all items are measuring the same underlying construct (i.e., equal factor loadings of items or each item has the same contribution to the scale score) (Green & Yang, 2009; Peters, 2014). The constant assumption is defined by the *tau-equivalent* model. This model assumes constant item variances for

true scores, but allows for true score means and the error variances of the items to vary. The requirement of equal item variance (i.e., constant) of the *tau-equivalent* model is quite restrictive and rarely met. Only one item in the scale violating the *tau-equivalent* assumption impacts the use of α as a measure of reliability (drop from .94 to .65; Raykov, 1997).

Second Assumption. From Classical Test Theory, items have item true and item error scores. When an item has a 0/1 (or even a 1 to 5) response, categorizing the "true score" and the "error score" components becomes difficult (Yang & Green, 2011).

Third Assumption. With α , there is the assumption of uncorrelated errors. This assumption is near impossible to meet. Even Cronbach and Shavelson (2004) have stated, "One can rarely assert, then, that violations of independence are absent, and it is burdensome (if not impossible) to assess the degree and effect of nonindependence" (p. 402). Test re-test, reading comprehension, ordering of items, and similarly worded items can contribute to correlated errors. In addition, instruments with positively and negatively worded items separate but still retain a covariate relationship (Viladrich, Angulo-Brunet, & Doval, 2017). Yang and Green (2011) conclude that errors tend to be positively correlated, thus inflating α (See the Inappropriate Applications section below).

Fourth Assumption. There is a requirement of multivariate normality. The multivariate normality assumes that the residuals are normally distributed and that each variable (including variable subsets or linear combinations) has a normal distribution (symmetrical). Without this assumption, the point estimate will be incorrect and the calculations of confidence intervals will be less correct. Using simulation models, Trizano-Hermosilla and Alvarado (2016) found α to be strongly sensitive to asymmetrical items. This assumption is often not met, as ~66% of ability measures and ~75% of psychometric measures have some degree of asymmetry (Micceri, 1989).

¹ This brief article benefited from conversations about alpha with Steve Wormith (Saskatoon, May, 2018). This is a but small reflection of the encouragement and generosity that Steve brought to criminal justice psychology and the Criminal Justice section.

Thank you to Kelly Babchishin for her helpful comments.

² This Dr. Seuss book was a regular read with our three children (DGK). There was an emphasis on "Now!"

Consequences of Assumption Violations.

Sometimes the violation of assumptions can be ignored, especially if the statistical procedure is robust, but this is not so for α .

1. *Inability to indicate unidimensionality.* Problems with this assumption can be visually demonstrated with four types of data structure (from Revelle, 2019). All four datasets have equal average correlations of .3. For dataset A, the matrix indicates measurement of a single factor. For dataset B, the matrix indicates a strong general factor but present are small group factors. For dataset C, the matrix indicates a smaller general factor, but large group factors. For dataset D, the matrix indicates no general factor, but two distinct groups.

Intuitively, these four data structures are different. Yet all four matrixes have a α of .72. This same α across the four different data structures demonstrates two points. First, if the assumption of the *tau-equivalent* model is not met, α does not have the capabilities to reflect unidimensionality. This has also been demonstrated by Sijtsma (2009), who

concluded that higher α 's do not indicate higher dimensionality.

2. **α can be biased.** Not only can it be biased, the type of bias is often unknown. Yang and Green (2011) have stated, "Coefficient alpha may be (a) negatively biased, (b) relatively unbiased, (c) positively biased, or (d) all of the above. The answer is 'all of the above'" (p. 380). As suggested by the $\alpha = .73$ for dataset D, α can overestimate the degree of unidimensionality. In a simulation study, Gu et al. (2013) showed that α can overestimate the population reliability by as high as .38. For a similar dataset of C (small general factor, large group factors), Green and Yong (2009) have shown a 6-item scale to underestimate α by as high as 19%. Positive kurtosis distributions produce an underestimation of α with larger standard errors (Sheng & Sheng, 2012).

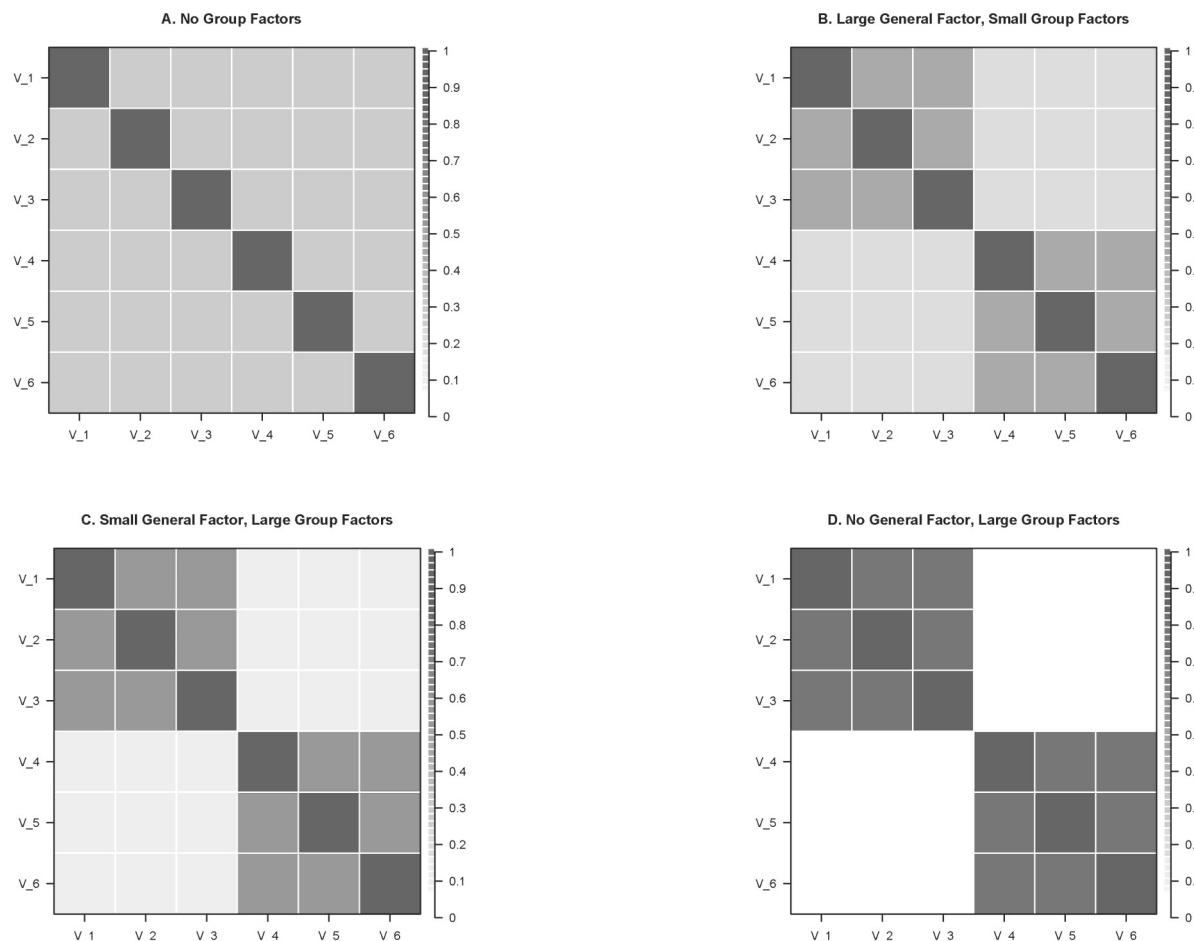


Figure 1. Correlation matrix for four datasets. Strength of correlation indicated by shade-level index.

Two Common, but Inappropriate Applications

1. When ordinal item responses are used (i.e., agree/disagree; 1-5 Likert), the polychoric correlation matrix provides a more accurate estimate of reliability than the Pearson correlation matrix, which is typically used for α (Gadernann, Guhn, & Zumbo, 2012). Almost all commercial package (e.g., SPSS) calculations of α use a Pearson correlation matrix. The problem with the Pearson correlation matrix is that it assumes continuity of the items. When violated, the Pearson correlation matrix becomes distorted. The polychoric correlation matrix estimates the linear relationship for two unobserved continuous variables given only observed ordinal data. Thus, the nature of the data is taken into account (Zumbo, Gadernann, & Zeisser, 2007).

2. A common procedure in test development and refinement has been to use the “Alpha if deleted” function. The removal of one item with an increase in α can be sample specific and not generalize to other samples. Also, given the bias characteristics of α , the removal of an item can increase the α , whereas the level of the true score will remain the same (or vice versa). Hence, the appearance of gain or generalizability may not occur.

Alternatives

Multiple alternatives are suggested. Each assesses a specific aspect of reliability. Also, as only an *estimate* of the population, multiple measures of reliability are encouraged.

1. *Omega Total* (ω_t ; McDonald, 2011). The omega coefficients are based on a factor analytic model. Thus, Omegas are similar to α in that reliability is assessed by a ratio of the items variability explained by the total variance of all the items. ω_t is based on the sum of squared loadings on all factors. It estimates the total reliable variance in a scale (McNeish, 2018; Revelle, 2019). Referring back to the four datasets, ω_t for A = .72 and for D = .90. For D, 90% of the correlation matrix is explained by the entire scale, concluding that the two independent factors represented a strong reliable variance in the scale.

2. *Omega Hierarchical* (ω_h ; McDonald, 2011). ω_h is based on the saturation (sum of the squared loadings) of the general factor. ω_h is the percentage of the correlation matrix that is associated with a general factor. Referring back to the four datasets, ω_h for A = .72, B = .48, C = .25, and D = .00. Thus, for dataset B, 48% of the correlation matrix is explained by a general factor, indicating the importance of the pattern of the general factor loadings (Revelle & Condon, 2018).

In sum, the family of Omega reliability coefficients are based upon confirmatory factor analysis parameter estimates. The deriving of Omega coefficients have relaxed the assumptions of uncorrelated errors, normality, and unidimensionality. Consequently, they better reflect real world data (Viladrich et al., 2017).

3. *Greatest Lower Bound* (glb). Based on Classical Test Theory, glb has two components; the sum of the inter-item covariance matrix for true scores (true scores = observed scores) and the sum of the inter-item covariance matrix for the error term (Ten Berge & Socan, 2004). The inter-item covariance matrix for the error term has the largest trace that is consistent with the data (McNeish, 2018; Trizano-Hermosilla & Alvarado, 2016). This calculation uses the maximal values for the error component of the observed scores that is consistent with the data. As a result, using maximum errors will give the lowest possible value for reliability. A similar interpretation given to α is made for glb (Thus, as a start, glb could be the first alternative to be used). glb reflects the strength of the inter relatedness of all the scale items (which is different than unidimensionality).

Some Cautions

With the understanding of the limitations of α , there is enthusiasm for replacing Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha with alternative methods. Even though these are “more correct,” there are three cautions. Even with the advantages of Omega, its calculations will have a tendency to slightly overestimate reliability levels (Revell, 2019, p. 223), but some authors suggest that this level of overestimation is negligible (Gu et al., 2013). Second, regardless of the method used to assess reliability, it bears repeating that reliability is not a characteristic of the instrument, but a value for an instrument in a specific data set (Thompson, 1994). Third, reliability coefficients are an *estimate* of a population parameter. Thus, the use of good estimates is better but points to the importance of using multiple indices of internal structure reliability.

Conclusion

In most applications within correctional and forensic applications, the use of Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha is an inappropriate measure of reliability. A question becomes, is the level of inappropriateness sufficient to warrant a change? Yes. Hopefully some reasons for a change and potential alternatives were addressed in this brief comment. In Part II, “how to” calculate alternatives and their interpretations will be covered.

Further Readings

Below is a list of readable articles describing problems with Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha and practical guidelines for alternatives (* Open Access).

Least Technical: Dunn, Baguley, and Brunsten (2014); * Peter (2014); Gadermann et al, 2012.

Somewhat Technical: * Trizano-Hermosilla and Alvarado (2016); *Viladrich, Angulo-Brunet, & Doval Diéguez (2017)

Most Comprehensive: McNeish (2018); Revelle & Condon (2018)

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PUBLICATIONS



Recent Publications

Hogan, N. R. & Olver, M. E. (in press). Static and dynamic assessment of violence risk among discharged forensic patients. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*. doi:10.1177/0093854819846526

This study evaluated the predictive validity of structured instruments for violent recidivism among a sample of 82 patients discharged from a maximum security forensic psychiatric hospital. The incremental predictive validity of dynamic pre-post change scores was also assessed. Each of the Historical-Clinical-Risk Management-20 Version 3 (HCR-20V3), Psychopathy Checklist-Revised, Short-Term Assessment of Risk and Treatability, Violence Risk Scale (VRS), and Violence Risk Appraisal Guide-Revised was rated based on institutional files. The study instruments significantly predicted community-based violent recidivism (area under the curve [AUC] = 0.68-0.85), even after controlling for time at risk using Cox regression survival analyses. Dynamic change scores computed from the HCR-20V3 Relevance ratings and from the VRS also demonstrated incremental predictive validity, controlling for baseline scores. The findings provided support for the use of the study instruments to assess violence risk and for the consideration of dynamic changes in risk—provided that valid means of assessment are employed.

Jung, S. & Stewart, J. (2019). Exploratory comparison between fatal and non-fatal cases of intimate partner violence. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, advance online publication. doi:10.1108/JACPR-11-2018-0394

Purpose – Much has been written about intimate partner homicide (IPH), but empirical examinations have been less rigorous and mostly descriptive in nature. The purpose of this paper is to provide an exploration of the characteristics of fatal intimate partner violence (IPV) cases. **Design/methodology/approach** – A direct comparison of fatal IPHs with both a matched sample of non-fatal IPV cases and a random selection of non-fatal IPV cases is made on a number of offence, offender, victim characteristics and risk-relevant variables. **Findings** – Despite assertions that domestic homicide is different than domestic violence, in general, few notable differences emerged among the groups. Prior domestic incidents differed between the matched fatal and non-fatal cases, where a greater proportion of the homicide perpetrators had a prior domestic incident. Other differences that were found revealed that more non-fatal perpetrators had substance abuse problems, younger victims and been unemployed at the time of the offence. However, differences were minimal when fatal and non-fatal IPV perpetrators were matched on demographic features and criminal history. **Originality/value** – This study highlights that there may be few features that distinguish IPH and non-fatal violence. Rather than be distracted with searching for risk factors predictive of fatality, we should evaluate IPV risk using broad-based approaches to determine risk for reoffending and overall severity of reoffending.



Jung, S. & Wielinga, F. (2019). Simplifying the estimation of violence risk by police among individuals charged for sexual assault. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 6(1), 38-50. doi:10.1037/tam0000116

The six items from the Static-2002R that form the Brief Assessment of Recidivism Risk-2002R (BARR-2002R) have demonstrated very good predictive accuracy for violent recidivism with postadjudicated individuals who have sexually offended. In light of the constrained resources in law enforcement, the BARR-2002R may be a valuable tool to evaluate risk for identifiable perpetrators of sexual assault. The present study investigates the utility of the BARR-2002R to predict future violence propensities of 293 individuals who have been charged for sexual assault. The BARR-2002R showed a large effect in its ability to predict future general and violent offending and was associated with increased frequency of reoffending, including violent reoffending. The BARR-2002R was associated with the imminence of any recidivism but not violent recidivism. The severity of future violent offending was not associated with BARR-2002R scores. Findings suggest that the BARR-2002R may have a place in policing to evaluate violence risk among individuals charged with sexual assault. Implications of risk evaluation in law enforcement are further discussed.

Lee, S. C., Hanson, R. K., Calkins, C., & Jeglic, E. (2019). Paraphilia and antisociality: Motivations for sexual offending may differ for American Whites and Blacks. *Sexual Abuse*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1177/1079063219828779

There has been little research on the sexual offending behavior of different racial groups. This study compares the characteristics and risk factors for American, non-Hispanic Whites ($n = 797$) and Blacks ($n = 788$) who had been convicted of a sexual crime in New Jersey. The results indicated that Whites appeared more paraphilic whereas Blacks displayed higher antisociality. Despite the differences, however, the Static-99R, sexual recidivism risk tool, predicted equally well for both racial groups: Whites (area under the curve [AUC] = .76) and Blacks (AUC = .78). The findings suggest that there may be opportunities to improve treatment for the individuals at risk for sexual offending by tailoring interventions to the distinctive risk-relevant characteristics of Whites and Blacks.

Tedeschini, J. & Jung, S. (2018). Motivational interviewing in the context of police investigative interviews with suspects. *Investigative Interviewing: Research and Practice*, 9(1), 01-13.

The field of police investigations has been gradually progressing from accusatorial approaches to inquisitorial approaches in the context of interviewing suspects. This article explores the utility of motivational interviewing, which was taken from the field of counseling and provides a structured approach to engaging individuals in moving from ambivalence to motivation to change, in the context of police investigative interviews with suspects. Motivational interviewing offers an ethically driven approach to rapport building and can be effective in many situations. This article highlights the contexts where motivational interviewing may be applied and where it is contraindicated. Implications for training of police investigators and for research will also be discussed.

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Recently Defended Dissertation

Sarah H. Coupland, Ph.D.
Simon Fraser University

Stalking is a form of targeted violence which most often results in psychological harm, but can also include acts of physical harm, and is associated with victims experiencing a wide range of psychological difficulties. This study examined the psychometric properties of the Guidelines for Stalking Assessment and Management (SAM; Kropp, Hart, & Lyon, 2008), including the interrater reliability, predictive validity, and concurrent validity with the Screening Version of the Hare Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL:SV; Hart, Cox, & Hare, 1995), and the Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG; Quinsey, Rice, Harris, & Cormier, 1998). Another objective of this study was to examine reoffending rates and patterns in time-to-reoffending among a sample of offenders originally convicted of stalking-related offences. The sample consisted of 106 offenders referred to a Canadian forensic psychiatric clinic or hospital for pre trial or post-sentence assessment or treatment. Recidivism was coded over the follow-up period of approximately 10 years, and was categorized into four types of recidivism (i.e., any new stalking with physical harm, any new stalking, any new violence, & any new recidivism). Overall, the SAM performed well in terms of interrater reliability. The interrater reliability of numerical SAM total and domain scores was good to excellent (ICC2

range = .73 to .75) while Summary Risk rating agreement was fair (ICC2 range = .50 to .57). When examining the concurrent validity of the SAM, the Nature of Stalking, Perpetrator Risk Factor, and SAM Total numerical scores displayed good concurrent validity with the with the PCL:SV and VRAG, as did the Case Prioritization and Risk of Physical Harm ratings, correlations all significant $p < .05$. The Risk of Continued Stalking rating was significantly correlated with the PCL:SV, $p < .05$, but not the VRAG. As would be expected, Victim Vulnerability Factors and Reasonableness of Fear Summary Risk rating were not significantly correlated with either the PCL:SV or VRAG. In terms of predictive validity, none of the measures (SAM numerical total scores, VRAG scores, PCL:SV scores) were associated with stalking recidivism. The SAM Summary Risk rating, Risk for Continued Stalking, significantly predicted violent recidivism within the first year.

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BOOK OVERVIEW



Treating Impulsive, Addictive, and Self-Destructive Behaviors: Mindfulness and Modification Therapy

Peggilee Wupperman, Ph.D.

Clients with impulsive/addictive behaviors often have great difficulty in therapy. They often feel as though their impulsive/addictive (dysregulated) behaviors are impossible to resist, even when they are aware of the negative consequences. As a result, they tend to display fluctuating motivation, difficulty with treatment engagement, and problems with attendance and homework completion. These issues are exacerbated for clients in correctional and forensic settings.

“conventional treatments for dysregulated behavior can often be stymied because these behaviours rarely occur alone.”

As a further challenge, conventional treatments for dysregulated behavior can often be stymied because these behaviors rarely occur alone. For example, someone who misuses alcohol or drugs has an increased likelihood of aggressive behavior—and vice versa.

Treating Impulsive, Addictive, and Self-Destructive Behaviors describes a psychotherapy developed to address the above issues. Mindfulness and Modification Therapy (MMT) integrates key elements from six psychotherapies with evidence for treating dysregulated behavior. These

psychotherapies include: Motivational Interviewing, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention, and Mentalization-Based Psychotherapy. As a result of this integration, MMT is a three-fold intervention with evidence-based methods for addressing (1) multiple dysregulated behaviors, (2) constructs that underlie these behaviors, and (3) related issues of fluctuating motivation, problems with engagement, and ambivalence (or even resentment) about attending treatment.

The overall goal of MMT is to help clients free themselves from dysregulated behaviors and move toward lives that feel more fulfilling. Dysregulated behaviors are conceptualized as problematic only in that they impede the client from living the kind of life that he/she wants to live. As a (very simplified) example: A client mandated to treatment for aggression and substance abuse may adamantly argue that he only uses aggression when justified, he has no problem with substances, and he does not need treatment. In MMT, the clinician would validate the client's frustration at being mandated to treatment, while also helping the client identify the life he wants (which may consist simply of avoiding incarceration or completing probation, at least at the beginning of treatment). The clinician would help the client understand that continued acts of aggression or substance use would decrease the chance of attaining the life he wants (freedom from the criminal justice system), regardless of whether or not the client “has a problem”



with either behavior. MMT would then be described as a way to help the client refrain from any behavior that could impede his eventual freedom from the criminal justice system.

“every chapter includes methods for implementing the treatment with forensically involved clients.”

MMT is a selectively manualized therapy. Consistently, this book provides general session templates, along with practical guidelines on how to customize and implement the treatment to fit each client’s needs, behaviors, and values. Readers will also find guidelines for customizing MMT to fit forensic settings. Although the book was written for a broad array of clients and behaviors, every chapter includes methods for implementing the treatment with forensically involved clients.

The book is divided into 13 Chapters. Chapters 1-2 (Part I) present an overview of the rationale and research behind MMT, as well as guidelines for nonjudgmentally conceptualizing clients in a way that facilitates treatment effectiveness. Attention is also placed on helping clinicians address their own potential frustrations, which although understandable, can contribute to burnout and impede treatment success. Chapters 3-5 (Part II) describe the five basic MMT strategies for improving motivation, engagement, and treatment outcome. Strategies include (1) focus on the therapeutic relationship; (2) focus on client values (and how dysregulated behavior interferes with those values); (3) focus on helping the client understand self, behavior, and treatment; (4) assign and review home practice effectively (practice includes guided mindfulness audios); and (5) work with the client to actively shape behavior. Finally, Chapters 6-13 (Part III) contains guidelines for conducting each MMT session, along with handouts for each session topic. Part III also includes instructions for conducting MMT in individual or group sessions.

To facilitate practical implementation of the treatment, each chapter provides hypothetical case examples and vignettes, as well as examples of dialogues from therapy sessions that cover common experiences (e.g., what to say if a client skips sessions or doesn’t complete home practice). Readers also get access to a companion website, where they can download audio recordings of the guided mindfulness practices, as well as all of the customizable handouts.

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A Word from the Student Representative

Alisha Salerno, M.A.

Conference season is upon us! A few short months ago, I had the pleasure of attending and presenting at the annual American Psychology-Law Society (AP-LS) conference, held from March 14th to 16th in beautiful Portland, Oregon. It was certainly a busy three days packed with new and exciting research and, of course, exploring all of the beauty (and donuts) that Portland has to offer. This year, AP-LS celebrated its 50th anniversary, kicking off the conference with a presidential address from Dr. Kevin Douglass reflecting on the accomplishments of AP-LS and the current challenges facing the field. Prosecutorial decision-making and misconduct emerged as a “hot topic” for future research, which was further reflected in the plenary sessions.

For myself, like many others, the highlight of AP-LS is often the fantastic plenaries, and this year was no exception. Friday’s plenary session featured Jabbar Collins, who spent 16 years in prison after he was wrongly convicted of second-degree murder. Also featured in Friday’s plenary were Rebecca Brown, from the Innocence Project, and Marvin Schechter, who discussed how prosecutorial misconduct contributed to Jabbar’s wrongful conviction. Jabbar devoted his time in prison to determining why the two key witnesses provided false testimony, eventually exposing questionable policies and misconduct on behalf of the former prosecutor. They concluded the session with a call to research on prosecutorial decision-making, as well as a plea for greater accountability and oversight in the system.

Saturday’s plenary session was equally as exciting, featuring Richard Phillips, the man who holds the record for the longest prison sentence served as an innocent man. Phillips was convicted of the 1971 murder of Gregory

Harris in Detroit but always maintained his innocence. Phillips told his heroic story to a silent audience, many with tears in their eyes as he recounted telling his wife and small children to move on without him after he was arrested. He said he didn’t want his wife or children subjected to pat-downs and strip searches in order to visit him.

After serving 45 years and 2 months in prison, Phillips was exonerated in 2018, when his alleged co-defendant, Richard Palombo, admitted that Phillips had nothing to do with the crime. In fact, it was Palombo and another man (ironically the prosecution’s star witness) who murdered Harris and then conspired to frame Phillips for the murder. Phillips happy, smiling demeanor was both inspiring and baffling. I imagine most people would hold some level of resentment after spending the better part of their life wrongly incarcerated. Under Michigan law, Phillips is entitled to more than 2 million dollars in compensation for his wrongful incarceration, but he was told that there was no money in the fund. He resorted to selling his art, which he created while incarcerated, to get by. His final message was a powerful one: “don’t think you can’t go to jail.” His story is a jarring reminder of why research on wrongful convictions is so incredibly important. It also prompts us to consider the complex needs of exonerees following release.

I left Portland inspired and with a renewed sense of purpose. AP-LS always proves to be a great opportunity to learn, network, and showcase research to an engaged, interdisciplinary audience. I look forward to seeing what next year’s conference has to offer in New Orleans! If you are intrigued, check out <http://ap-ls.wildapricot.org/APLS2020> or feel free to contact me for more information.

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CORRECTIONAL AND FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE ANYWAY?

Andreea Tamaian, M.A. and Nina Fusco, Ph.D.

You work in in a jail??? Are you in a room alone with your clients? Are they handcuffed? How do you make sure you're safe? You must be so brave. These are some of the comments that those of us working in correctional or forensic settings hear from others – even from other psychologists. Some have no idea what we do, while others cannot understand why we would choose a line of work that seems so dangerous or risky. While there are some similarities between forensic and correctional settings, psychologists have different roles and encounter different challenges depending on the setting in which they work.

“Mental illness within the Canadian correctional system has been referred to as being in “crisis” in the media”

Psychologists in both corrections and forensics see a wide range of clients who may be accused of committing various types of crimes (from minor convictions to more serious crimes), although the type of facility in the corrections world has some bearing on this. Pretrial or detention centres will house people accused of any crimes committed within that jurisdiction (as one of the authors learned on her first day on the job!), whereas prisons receive those who have been sentenced to longer sentences often for more serious crimes than jails. While psychologists in correctional roles may generally work with individuals with less serious mental illness than those in forensic institutions, they may still work with clients who have a wide range of mental health needs in a system that has fewer supports for those needs. Mental illness within the Canadian correctional system has been referred to as being in “crisis” in the media (e.g., Solomon, 2017), which highlights a critical need for psychological services. Canadian research shows a high prevalence of mental health and social determinants of poor health among incarcerated individuals (e.g., history of childhood trauma), as well as two to three times the suicide rate compared to the general population (Kouyoumdjian, Schuler, Matheson, Hwang, 2016).

Resource allocation varies significantly between the two systems, thereby affecting the roles of psychologists. Limited clinical resources are a major challenge to how psychologists perform their duties in corrections. Whereas forensic services are often provided in a healthcare setting, the emphasis of the correctional system on security as well as the paramilitary culture significantly affects the work environment. Moreover, collaborating with a broader interdisciplinary team (including correctional officers and managers) and often a more limited clinical team impacts the work of psychologists in many ways. For one, there are practical barriers to accessing clients. One of the authors had the experience of remaining between two closed doors as the correctional officers were dealing with a security crisis, for example. Healthcare professionals also depend on correctional staff for access to clients in order to provide psychological services (e.g., escorting clients to interview spaces or observing interactions with higher risk clients). Given the two sometimes competing overarching goals of correctional staff compared to clinical staff (i.e., security versus mental health treatment), it can be challenging to effectively work in such a team. Issues of confidentiality also arise when the broad interdisciplinary team need to make decisions regarding the security of the institution as well as the well-being of clients. Balancing the needs of individual clients with those of the institution can be very difficult to navigate; psychologists are asked to provide information about clients' mental states to correctional staff in order to aid with decision-making regarding housing of incarcerated clients and behaviour management.

Ethical considerations are common and at times difficult to navigate in both forensic and correctional settings. As psychologists, we are found balancing our ethics code with the law, which often requires us to be particularly mindful of the therapeutic alliance and how to balance the needs of the client in front of us with the needs of our other “client” (e.g., the courts, the public). Assessments conducted by forensic psychologists are often either directly or indirectly for Court purposes, thus limiting the confidentiality of the information collected. As such, forensic psychologists must carefully explain the limits and consider the voluntariness of their clients' participation. In contrast, a number of additional limits



of confidentiality apply in a correctional environment (e.g., breaking rules of the institution, planning an escape). Clients may often be reluctant to speak to a psychologist but be asked to do so in order to address their needs for suicide precautions, for instance. Nevertheless, incarcerated clients are often surprisingly willing and eager to access psychological services. That the needs are so high can mean that every little bit counts, which is one aspect of working in correctional settings that can be extremely rewarding. Due to the shortage of resources and diverse needs of this clientele, it can often feel that correctional psychologists become the “jack of all trades,” which can be exciting, gratifying, but sometimes overwhelming. Examples of duties that the authors have performed in their roles in corrections include informing clients of the death of a loved one, attempting to de-escalate someone who is actively self-harming, and helping individuals cope with incarceration and/or facing serious criminal charges – none of which formal education were quite able to help us face. One of the authors even recalls being called to assist with a Russian-speaking individual despite not understanding a single word of the language.

Correctional psychologists are involved in various kinds of assessments (e.g., brief assessments for mental health needs, suicide risk assessment and prevention), crisis intervention, treatment planning, and consultation with the rest of the clinical team and with correctional staff. The fast-paced and ‘high stakes’ nature of the work is rewarding and challenging all at once and forces you to flexibly attend to each client interaction in order to best suit the immediate needs of the individual with whom you are working. Decisions must be made based on limited information, often within short amounts of time. In contrast, psychologists in forensic settings typically conduct more comprehensive assessments (e.g., risk, malingering, psychodiagnostic clarification) and longer-term treatment. As with many other areas in life, the same aspects that are the advantages of working in these settings can also be disadvantages. In the authors’ experience, there are very few ‘dull days’ working in either setting but especially in corrections (except perhaps when there are institutional lockdowns...). This is part of what makes the work incredibly fulfilling, exhausting and daunting.

One aspect of forensic work that is different from other legal settings is assisting clients with the emotional and psychological challenges associated with being found not criminally responsible for their crimes. It is not unusual for clients who are in recovery to struggle with a crime they committed when they were ill. Aside from the legal repercussions, they are now left to manage feelings of guilt and shame, interpersonal difficulties, and confusion and

hopelessness linked to how their future will look now that they are in the forensic system. For some, the hope to return to their previous life may not be a possibility, and as such, they may need support adjusting to a new reality. Additionally, the forensic system often gets criticized and has to manage societal biases and pressures. Some may think individuals “get off easy” by entering the forensic system instead of the correctional system, as they are viewed to be treated differently than other “criminals”. However, some individuals would prefer to serve their time in a correctional facility where the length of their sentence is prescribed and they may have more perceived freedom than have to report to a board and have someone else make decisions about their wellbeing, their health, and where they can live.

Unfortunately, the work we do in both forensic and correctional psychology has been inaccurately portrayed in the media and pop culture, and as a result, is often misunderstood even by our peers. Hollywood movies have frequently portrayed individuals struggling with mental health concerns to be the “violent villain” who lurks in the shadows and have sensationalized aspects that are often untrue of this population. These misconceptions have lost the essential humanity that we see everyday and often fail to address the reality of recovery – some of the main reasons that make working in these areas worthwhile. Working with this clientele can be difficult but extremely rewarding. Small gains go a long way in these populations, and as psychologists, we witness and celebrate every sliver of hope for recovery and a fuller life. Each day, we are fortunate to have the opportunity to see our clients as people: people with strengths, challenges, fears, and dreams – people who are much more than just the crime they committed. It is exactly for these reasons that we have chosen to pursue careers at the intersection of the law and mental health.

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WORKSHOPS, EVENTS, AND CONFERENCES



13th Annual Risk and Recovery Conference

Mini Mamak, Ed.D., C. Psych and Josephine Cosco

The Forensic Psychiatry Program at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, in conjunction with McMaster University, celebrated their 13th Annual Risk and Recovery Forensic Conference in April this year. Over 200 professionals attended the three-day conference and like previous years, it was a great success. The conference provides an opportunity for those working with forensic populations to not only hear from the internationally known keynote speakers but to network and build relationships with colleagues from around Ontario and beyond.

Each year, keynote speakers highlight the importance of keeping abreast of evidence-based practice and the importance of learning from our international colleagues. This year, we had the privilege of hearing from Professor Harry Kennedy from Ireland about the Dundrum Tool Kit, a novel approach to the assessment of risk, recovery, and treatment assignment. In addition, Dr. Sean Kaliski, provided meaningful insights into risk management practices in South Africa.

We also heard from Dr. Flavio Kapczinski from McMaster University, about the potential use of Big Data analytics in Psychiatry to improve treatment outcomes, and possibly risk assessment practices. Lawyer, Ms. Anita Szigeti, provided legal updates as she highlighted the findings of recent inquests and court decisions. And, Mr. Brian Rose, Peer Support Specialist at Ontario Shores, shared his personal and inspiring story of lived experience and recovery. Each of these speakers

provided their unique professional and personal perspectives and insights into forensic practice.

In addition to the formal conference agenda, attendees had the opportunity to attend evening networking events. Attendees enjoyed dinner and networking at a trendy Hamilton restaurant (Nique) one evening and on another, had the opportunity to share in a Dinner Theatre Mock Trial, written, directed, and acted out by our own Forensic Psychiatry Staff: The Murder of Sweet Fanny Adams. The dinner theatre event provides a historical perspective of key cases that shaped our current laws and forensic practices.

The Risk and Recovery Conference has become one of the key forensic conferences held in Ontario and each year, we strive to provide an agenda that not only builds capacity and learning, but an opportunity to hear the stories from service users, families, and victims. It is also an opportunity to build relationships, form collaborations, and have opportunities for self-care and fun.

More information can be found at riskandrecoveryconference.ca. Also tune into our podcast episodes: Hitting the Hammer on Podbeam.



FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY DAY @ X

Claire Keenan and Jennifer Aftanas

Forensic Psychology students at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia hosted the 11th annual *Forensic Psychology Day @ X* on Friday, March 8. The day consisted of a series of talks and presentations by forensic researchers and practitioners, including "Friends of Forensic Psychology" - StFX alumni, community members, and others (including correctional staff) who contribute to the success of the Forensic Psychology program at StFX.

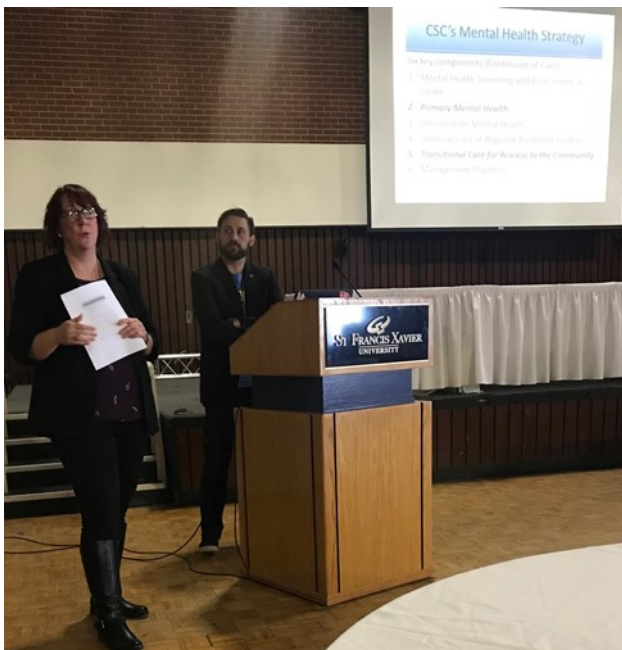
The day began with introductions from Dr. Peter McCormick, Chair of the StFX Psychology Department, and the masters of ceremony, graduating students Marshall Whitall and Jennifer Aftanas. The first talk of the day was by Nicole Rovers, a Legal Aid lawyer in Antigonish, who spoke about her experience working within the legal system and the mental health tolls that come with the job. Rovers was followed by Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) Psychologists Paul Murphy and Lesa Douglas, both StFX alumni, who discussed mental health in CSC as a whole and the unique complexities of working as



Dr. Meg Ternes

psychologists within the correctional system in their talk entitled "Mental Health Continuum of Care".

This talk was followed by a Graduate Student Symposium introduced by VP Research Dr. Richard Isnor, consisting of Chris Lively (Memorial University) Catherine Gallagher (University of New Brunswick), Kathleen Hyland (St. Mary's University), and Brianna Boyle (University of New Brunswick) – all StFX alumni. Lively's presentation focused on his research interests: alibi assessment, jury decision-making processes, the comprehension of legal rights, and the information gathering practices of criminal justice members. Hyland, an MSc student at Saint Mary's University and StFX alumna, spoke of her research into alternative questions within police interviews. She has analysed the Reid model for its guilt-presumptive approach and the confirmation bias



Lesa Douglas and Paul Murphy.

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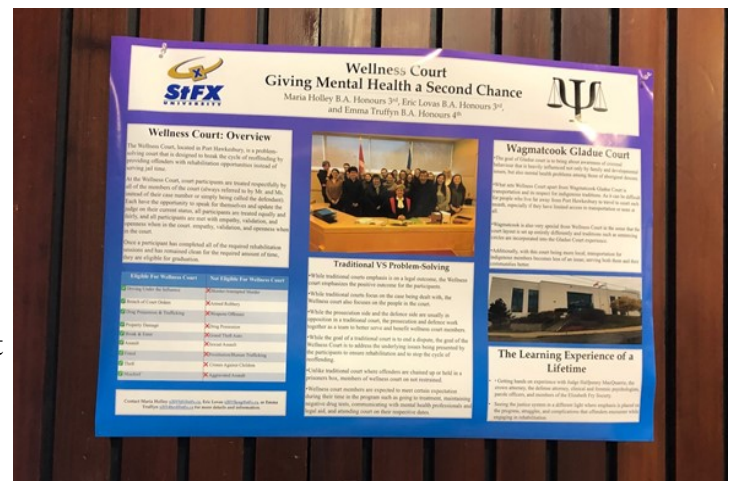
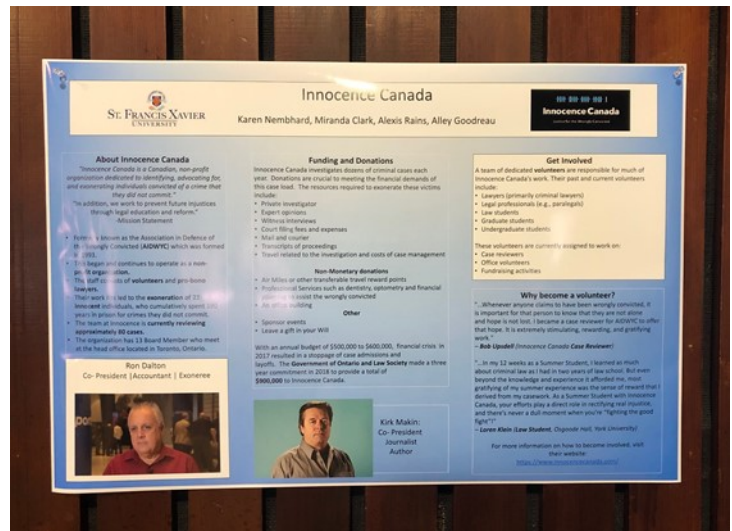
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that comes from it in her talk entitled, “Were you being coercive or providing an opportunity to come clean? An Investigation on Alternative Questions”. Gallagher’s presentation covered the research she is collecting for her doctoral dissertation, which will examine how emotional processes, including emotional tolerance and emotion regulation, may explain the high rates of complex trauma and substance misuse among women offenders. The final speaker in the Graduate Student Symposium was Brianna Boyle, who conducted her talk entitled, “Exploring the Mechanisms of Change in Offenders: The Professional Relationship.”

The day continued with two talks from faculty members from the new MSc in Forensic Psychology at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, NS. StFX alumna, Dr. Meg Ternes, gave a talk on “Searching for Deception Detection Wizards”. Wizards are supposedly those who are better than average at detecting when others are lying. However, Dr. Ternes’ research indicated that there were not, in fact, those who were better at detection than others. Dr. Veronica Stinson followed with her talk, “Psychological science on juries in Canadian courts: Lessons & research implications from the Dennis Oland trials”. Dr. Stinson discussed researching what people in New Brunswick knew about the Dennis Oland case, how that could influence the jury, and the difficulties that come with presenting scientific research in court.

The lunch break allowed students, faculty, and guests to circle the room and admire the many posters prepared by practicum students. These posters displayed and described the type of work that students do in their practicum placements. These placements include working with community-based organizations, government agencies, provincial correctional centres, and federal prisons. Students reported on their work with the Elizabeth Fry society in Cape Breton, parole officers at Nova Institution, a federal women's prison in Truro, NS, and at Springhill Institution for men, and cases from Innocence Canada.



A few of the posters prepared by practicum students.

One of the highlights of the afternoon was the keynote speaker, Dr. MaryAnn Campbell, a Psychology professor at the University of New Brunswick and Director of the Centre for Criminal Justice Studies introduced by StFX Dean of Arts, Dr. Karen Brebner. Dr. Campbell gave a talk entitled, "Understanding the Nature of Mental Health Resilience and Support Needs of Law Enforcement Employees" and discussed unhealthy coping mechanisms that many use and how to counter them and integrate good alternatives and support systems.



Dr. Mary Ann Campbell.

The final highlight of the Day was the Alumni Panel who came to share how they got from X (StFX) to where they are today. The panel included people from the Correctional system (e.g., psychologist, Paul Murphy), graduate students, professors (Dr. Meg Ternes) as well as clinicians, even IBM (Stewart Barclay), and an actor (Briony Merritt). The 15 panellists shared the highlights and challenges of their respective jobs and encouraged student audience members to pursue their goals with enthusiasm and not be dismayed if their journey takes unexpected twists and turns. For current students who are trying to figure out their place in the world, the panel allowed a real-life image of what it is like in the "real" world and how to move toward some of these jobs.

In short, Forensic Psychology Day @ X was filled with opportunities for students and professionals and community members alike. Students were able to get a better understanding of different career paths, demonstrate their current research/placements, and celebrate their placement supervisors. Professionals were able to network. Community members got an inside look at the broad scope of topics at the interface of psychology and law.



Alumni panel. Pictured (left to right) Chris Lively, Catherine Gallagher, Brianna Boyle, Katherine Hyland, Taylor MacNeill, Kelsey Greenidge, Kaleigh Smith, Emily Fleet, Paul Murphy, Dr. Meg Ternes, Nicole McGillivray, Lesa Douglas, Stewart Barclay, Briony Merritt, and Brandon Burgess.

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Other Upcoming Conferences

[Contemporary Issues in Forensic Psychology,
American Academy of Forensic Psychology](#)

Various dates and locations

[CPA's 80th Annual National Convention](#)

May 31-June 2, 2019, Halifax, Nova Scotia

[19th International Association of Forensic Mental
Health Service](#)

June 25-27, 2019, Montreal, Quebec

[American Psychological Association Annual
Convention](#)

August 8-11, 2019, Chicago Illinois

[Society for Police and Criminal Psychology
Conference](#)

September 22-25, 2019, Scottsdale, Arizona

[PRATO 2019: Working with Violence in Adults and
Youth](#)

September 30-October 2, 2019, Prato, Italy

[9th Annual Sexual Behaviours Clinic Education
Event at Centre for Addiction and Mental Health](#)

October 3-4, 2019, Toronto, Ontario

Contact [CAMH](#) for further details or to be added to the distribution list

CAREERS



Have You Checked Out the Job Openings on the CPA Website Lately?

If not, here are some positions that may interest you:

- ◇ Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services is looking for a Chief Psychologist, based out of Ottawa, Ontario
- ◇ The Department of Health and Social Services in Whitehorse, Yukon is looking for a clinical counsellor for their Forensic Complex Care Unit
- ◇ Saskatchewan Health Authority (North Battleford, SK) is looking for two Psychologists (Forensic and Non-Forensic)

For a complete listing of career opportunities, see <https://www.cpa.ca/careers/>



STAY INVOLVED!

We are looking to fill several vacant positions on our Executive:

- ◇ Vice Chair
- ◇ Director-at-Large
- ◇ Director-at-Large, NAACJ: Liaise with NAACJ and maximize the Section's representation at funded meetings. Prepare a report for circulation prior to the AGM on the year's accomplishments.
- ◇ *Crime Scene* Review Editor: Review articles submitted for inclusion in the upcoming issue of *Crime Scene*. Solicit and interview a psychologist for the featured psychologist section. Assist the Managing Editor as needed.

Individuals interested in these positions are encouraged to submit a statement of interest to our Membership Coordinator, Dr. Natalie Jones (nataliejenniferjones@gmail.com). The election will take place at the Annual General Meeting at N4 in Halifax.

Contribute to *Crime Scene*:

We are always looking for the latest news, events, research, or commentaries that may be of interest to our members! We accept a wide range of submissions and encourage both professionals and students to consider contributing in English and/or French.

Students, this is a great opportunity to boost your CV!

If you have ideas for submission or questions, please contact the Managing Editor, Kyrsten Grimes (kyrsten.grimes@mail.utoronto.ca).

Do you have ideas, comments, or suggestions?

Feel free to contact any member of our Executive team—we want to hear from you!

Don't forget to check out our Website: <https://www.cpa.ca/aboutcpa/cpasections/criminaljusticepsychology/>

Thank you for supporting the Criminal Justice Psychology Section!

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