



Crime Scene

Psychology Behind Bars and In Front of the Bench

The Official Organ of Criminal Justice Psychology of the Canadian Psychological Association

Section Executive:

Chair

Daryl Kroner, Ph.D.
KronerDG@csc-scc.gc.ca

Secretary/Treasurer

Karl Hanson, Ph.D.
HansonK@sgc.gc.ca

Past Chair

David Nussbaum, Ph.D.
nussbaumd@wmhc1.moh.gov.on.ca

Editor Crime Scene

Jeremy Mills, Ph.D.
MillsJF@csc-scc.gc.ca

Student Representative

Joseph Camilleri
4jac1@qmlink.queensu.ca

Directors at Large

J. Stephen Wormith, Ph.D.
wormith@duke.usask.ca

Denise Preston, Ph.D.

(Clinical Issues)
PrestonDL@csc-scc.gc.ca

Robert Hoge, Ph.D.

Robert_Hoge@carleton.ca

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The Editor's Note

Welcome to conference submissions season. The deadline for both CPA and APA will be soon upon us. Yes, it is time to start thinking about 2005. For those of you who attended CPA in St. John's the attendance was noticeably *light*. Nonetheless, those who attended had a grand time. The annual Chateau Wormith wine tasting had its usual reviews. Apparently not all wine gets better with time (or practise). We have some rather unique pictures of our Chair and others being officially "screeched in". Said pictures will be displayed at a suitable future event. Being "screeched in" allows CFAs (Come From Away) to become a honorary Newfies. To those honorary Newfies I say "long may your big jib draw".

We are encouraging our members to make one of our sections largest contributions to the CPA program next year in Montreal. You will see from the minutes of the business meeting that we are trying to broaden our sections membership (still a bargain at \$10) and make CPA a place to receive top-quality applied training. To that end, Denise Preston (see her comments in this edition) has been tasked with keeping clinical issues and training on the front burner in our section. Welcome to the executive Denise. If you have any specific areas of training that you would like to see offered during or pre-convention then please contact Denise with your ideas. Bob Hoge has also joined the executive and many of you will be familiar with his work with adolescents. Bob will be looking for ways to include more Young Offender issues and research in the coming months. If you are doing work in this area and would like to see a higher profile in this area, get in touch with Bob.

Congratulations to Karen Parhar who won the student research prize in St. John's. Karen is studying at the University of Saskatchewan with Stephen Wong, Ph.D.. I have already heard informal rumblings that Carleton University

faculty have their sights set on bringing the prize back to Carleton. Seems this may be an informal challenge to others.

Congratulations to our Student Rep Joe Camilleri who was recently married. Now your real education begins!

Don't forget to consider a contribution to January's edition of Crime Scene. Have a great fall.

JFM

View from the Top

Daryl Kroner, *President*

Peer-Reviewed Articles - A Step Above.

Another editorial on how we should read the literature (an academic input issue). On the one hand, sorry for the repetitive theme, but on the other hand, what we intellectually take in impacts heavily on how we do business (and I would argue the quality of what we do).

Compared to 20 years ago, there is currently a plethora of criminal justice information. Indeed, obvious knowledge gains have been made. Our current environment of having so much information forces us to make decisions on what we read: Thus, we ask the question, "***What should I be reading?***" Obviously, the days are all gone when we can read all that is out there. Guiding what we read, will, in part, be determined by our specific area of research or practice and key impact articles. Thus, content will be a major determining factor. But apart from content, how do we answer the question of what to read?

My answer is simple. Stay with the peer-reviewed journal articles. The procedures associated with peer-review places such information above other forms of information. The information produced is a higher quality.

For example, there are typically fewer errors in such articles. It may not seem like a big deal, but research from the medical field indicates that the number of charting errors is related to the quality of services delivered on a unit. With peer-reviewed articles, ideas, content presentation, results, and conclusions are refined in the review process. In particular, methodologies, whether of a rational/content nature or of a statistical/design nature, contribute greatly to the quality of an article. (Why the authors of the EPPP would turn their backs to this and reduce it to a wisp of wind is beyond me). These methodological procedures help to evaluate and develop content into theoretical contributions that go beyond just data reporting.

The criticisms of the peer-review process abound; time-lag, mean spirited reviews, slanted theoretical orientation, just to name a few. These issues do impact the final product, both in terms of quality and relevance. Also, this is not to say that books or internal research reports are not important. With a book, an idea can be further developed. Internal research reports can be produced in a timely fashion. Some have impacted the field. But when our professional development time -and energy- are limited, we need the most bang for our buck; that, on average, will come from a peer-reviewed article.

This suggestion is tough, especially for those of us who are delivering clinical services or in administrative positions. It is easier to spend that precious little professional development time reading a book in our field of practice, leaving the searching and editorial decisions up to an author. But with the ease in searches (you can search and download all Sage articles for free - till the end of October) and the development of a modest article library, such organizational time is minimized.

We need to be delivering the highest quality research and services within the constraints of limited time and energy. Granted, peer-review vs. non peer-review can be somewhat artificial, but to argue for a "balance" between the two is

unwise. The peer-review article becomes a friend and its absence a foe.

Minutes of the Section Business Meeting

By R. Karl Hanson, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Minutes of Criminal Justice Section Annual Meeting – June 11, 2004, St. John's, NFLD

Criminal Justice Psychology continues to be a vibrant section of CPA. The membership is the highest it has ever been with 185 regular and 67 student members.

Noteworthy decisions:

- Section membership fees will increase from \$7 to \$10 for regular members. Fees for students remain unchanged at \$2.
- Student prize increased from \$100 to \$150, effective immediately.
- All award winners will receive a plaque with the new section logo.
- There will be a section banquet in Montreal in 2005.

Executive:

All standing members were re-instated by acclamation, with the exception of the Directors-at-large. Robert Hoge joined as Director-at-large, with aspirations to promote activities concerning young offenders, and Denise Preston, who will promote clinical issues and activities.

Chair: Daryl Kroner

Secretary/Treasurer: Karl Hanson

Past Chair: David Nussbaum

Editor Crime Scene: Jeremy Mills

Student Representative: Joseph Camilleri

Directors-at-large: Robert Hoge, Denise Preston, Steve Wormith

Daryl Kroner observed that correctional types are over represented among the active members, and we discussed ways of making others feel at home, such as those involved with police and civil proceedings.

Crime Scene published 3 issues last year, and Jeremy Mills deserves much credit for an excellent newsletter. Gossip and substantive submissions are welcome. Let Jeremy know if you or one of your colleagues or graduates, changes jobs, receives some notable honour or a particularly long prison term.

Crime Scene is now fully electronic (email and web versions). Paper copies are available, but last year no such requests were received. Consequently, it is important that your email is accurate. Send changes of email to Karl Hanson (Karl.Hanson@psepc-sppcc.gc.ca) and Jeremy Mills (MillsJF@scs-sec.gc.ca).

Thanks to Joe Camilleri for getting the website into shape. He also deserves recognition for organizing relevant student sessions at CPA.

Steve Wormith reported on his activities as our delegate to the National Association Active in Criminal Justice (NAACJ). As usual, there are continuing opportunities for others to become involved; contact Daryl or Steve if you want to know more.

In order to help students learn oral presentation skills, it was suggested that experienced researchers/academics organize "student" symposia for Montreal. These symposia would be an opportunity to mentor less experienced researchers through the steps of submitting, preparing, and presenting at academic conferences.

Nous encourageons les présentations en français.

Thanks to all who turned up so early.

National Associations Active in Criminal Justice (NAACJ) 2003-2004

By J. Stephen Wormith, Ph.D. *Director-at-large
& CPA representative to NAACJ*

During the 2003-2004 year, the undersigned continued to represent the Canadian Psychological Association on the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice (NAACJ), which is an 'umbrella' organization for various voluntary sector and professional organizations that are national in scope and have a particular interest in Canada's justice system. NAACJ is funded by an operating grant from federal ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and currently consists of 24 organizations. Over the past year, I attended a number of NAACJ-sponsored events. These included two sets of consultation meetings with the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and an annual policy forum with the Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and the Justice Department.

Much of the CSC consultation focused on the '*Accord between the Government of Canada and the Voluntary Sector*,' signed by the Prime Minister in December, 2001. The *Accord* sets out the values, principles and commitments that both parties want to see as a starting point for their future work together. One of the ways the *Accord* is being implemented is through the *Codes of Good Practice on Funding and on Policy Dialogue*, announced on October 8th, 2002. These codes fulfill the commitment in the *Accord* to develop good practices in the area of funding and to deepen the dialogue between the Government and the voluntary sector at various stages of the public policy process.

Many voluntary organizations in the criminal justice field have felt that the Correctional Service of Canada has not sufficiently adhered to the principles and codes set for the in the *Accord* and have, through these consultation meetings,

requested senior officials in CSC to redress this shortcoming.

Other issues included in the consultation meetings over the last year have included the following. The use of 'ion scan' technology to screen visitors for illicit drugs has been very controversial because of the potential for false positive detections and the resistance of CSC to acknowledge such a possibility. The means by which CSC makes its research available to the academic community and public at large was reviewed. CSC does publish the results of much of its research through its own periodicals, which are freely available to the public (e.g., *Forum on Corrections Research*), but these works are not subject to the traditional academic process of blind, peer review.

This year, the theme of the Joint Policy Forum was 'Human rights of people with mental disabilities and the criminal justice system.' Deputy Prime Minister, Anne McLellan, gave the opening address, in which she committed the federal government to continued efforts to assist the plight of mentally disordered individuals who have come in contact with the law. Archie Kiaiser, Faculty of Law, Dalhousie University, presented a paper in which he reviewed Canadian law vis-a-vie the mentally disordered, while Jamie Fellner, Director of Human Rights Watch in the US, reviewed the American scene. Much of the subsequent deliberations focused on the large numbers of mentally disordered individuals who are remanded to custody and are awaiting trial, often without the benefit of a thorough assessment or adequate treatment. There was a general call for more serious efforts to divert mentally disordered individuals from the criminal justice system. The serious consequences of being found 'not criminally responsible' (i.e., long term custody) are not seen as a viable legal option for most mentally disordered accused persons because of the minor nature of their offending behaviour.

Finally, in the last year, CPA took an active role in preparing an open letter to a Member of

Parliament, Jim Pankiw (Independent), Saskatoon-Humbolt. Mr. Pankiw had made comments in the House of Commons about Canada having a 'two-tiered justice system,' in which aboriginal offenders are given preferential treatment. Mr. Pankiw's comments and the letter condemning his remarks, which was sent by NAACJ, and co-signed by CPA, set off an active flurry of media coverage in March and April, 2004.

Policy Forum on Human Rights and the Mentally Disordered

By Jean Folsom, Ph.D.

On May 3, 2004, a joint policy forum with the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice (NAACJ), Justice Canada, and Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness (PSEP) took place in Ottawa. The theme of the forum was "Human rights of people with mental disabilities and the criminal justice system". The forum was opened by the Honourable Anne McLellan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of PSEP who spoke of the impact of mental illness on inmates, families and communities and the need to address any shortcomings in the current system.

The first keynote speaker, Archie Kaiser, Professor, Faculty of Law and Dept. of Psychiatry, Dalhousie University, presented "The criminalization of people with mental health problems: Joining together to find a way forward." Mentally ill people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and that there is a dissonance between the purposes and services of the justice system and the needs of people with mental health problems. He believes, however, that mental health and social services in the community need to be improved first before making changes to the criminal justice system. He reviewed the policy statements of an American group, Criminal

Justice/Mental Health Consensus Project, many of which are applicable to Canada. He ended his presentation with 25 suggestions of his own, including establishing a joint committee on criminalization of people with mental health problems, the need to fund research in this area, support teaching in relevant mental health and justice training programs, etc. He believes that under the leadership of the federal government, real progress can be made in helping people with mental illness live better lives in the community.

The second keynote speaker was the Director of U.S. Programs for Human Rights Watch, Jamie Fellner. This organization has recently completed an in-depth review of the services for mentally ill offenders in American prisons and a copy of the report is available on line at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/usa1003>. It has been said that American prisons are the new psychiatric hospitals because more mentally ill people are estimated to be residing there than in hospital. The review found services for these offenders to be lacking. Cost-cutting at some prisons has led to a limit to the number of mental health professional being hired and a drop in the credential requirement of professionals. She recommended that facilities for mentally ill offenders be run by mental health staff with support from security staff.

A panel presentation addressed the issue of the revolving door of mentally ill people with respect to the mental health and correctional systems. Judge Richard Schnieder spoke about the mental health court in Toronto. It is the result of a partnership of the bench, legal aid, the Ontario Ministry of Health, court services, the police and Ontario correctional facilities. It operates 5 days/ week and has psychiatrists and social workers on hand with a view to prompt disposition of cases and diversion away from the criminal justice system where warranted. It typically handles minor and moderate charges and, where an appropriate treatment program can be found in the community, the charges are stayed. To date, there is no outcome data on its

effectiveness because the process has been constantly evolving. The next step to consider is diversion at the pre-arrest stage. Police officers have several options available to them when they are called to an incident and perhaps if there was a more open and available mental health system, using this option would occur more often.

Dr. François Bouchard, Director General, Health Services, Correctional Services Canada (CSC), spoke about the situation for offenders with mental health problems within the federal prison system. The prevalence of mental illness is 2-3 times higher in offender populations than for men in the community. Recent trends suggest that the number of mentally ill people entering the system is increasing. Currently CSC is reviewing its capacity to meet the needs of mentally ill offenders in a manner that provides a continuum of care from admission to sentence expiry. The issue of the need for partnerships to be forged among health care, justice, and corrections both federally and provincially in conjunction with community partners and agencies was emphasized.

Throughout the day, there was an emphasis on the need for improved staff training, the need to strengthen the mental health system and the need to work in partnerships as crucial components for improving the lives of mentally disordered offenders. This forum offered the first step in bringing together a diverse group of people working with such offenders for a day to begin this process.

In The Trenches: the practical experience of forensic and correctional psychology.

By Dorothy Cotton, Ph.D.

One of my best friends likes to make jokes about having a parking lot named after her when she dies. It is her belief that this is not a great honour. I have to wonder if it more of less of an honour to have a disease or disorder named after you. I sometimes have the impression that you

only get a disease named after you if you have an odd name. I am not aware of diseases or disorder's called Smith's Disease, or the Mitchell Syndrome. You have to be names something like...Asperger. Now to give Dr. Asperger credit, he did not name that disorder after himself. He called it "autistic psychopathy." Those of us working in the forensic fields may not have seen a whole lot of this disorder--but that may well be because until recently we haven't actually known about it or thought about it as a specific disorder. But if you go back to that original title and note the use of the term "psychopathy," then it shouldn't be a big surprise that we do see the occasional individual with Asperger's in our midst.

The core clinical symptoms of Asperger's have been described as:

- Minimal empathy
- Naive and inappropriate social interactions and limited capacity to form friendships
- Pedantic and repetitious speech
- Poor nonverbal communication
- Intense preoccupation with certain limited topics
- Poor physical coordination and clumsiness

Asperger's used to be considered just a variation on the theme of autism, but there are some key differences. People with Asperger's are rarely mentally retarded, and unlike people with autism, they are quite interested in other people--just not very good at being involved with other people. Individuals with Asperger's often live quite productive lives. I think many become math professors at elite schools.

But there are a few who end up in correctional facilities. It's hard to say whether people with Asperger's have a higher rate of violence or aggressive behaviour than do other groups. The measurement issues here are much the same as they are in looking at base rates of violence for any "mentally disordered" group. What might be

a little idiosyncratic among this group is not the rate of aggressive behaviour but rather the nature and cause. As noted, the individual with Asperger's has trouble with empathy. Thus, it may be that the problem lies not in having any particular intention to hurt others, but rather the may "accidentally" hurt others in their single minded pursuit of something they are interested in, or during a state of panic, or because of a lack of appreciation of social codes of behaviour.

The good news for those of in the trenches however is that it does not really matter much to us whether or not the rate is higher or lower for these folks. If you have a person with Asperger's sitting across the table from you, and you are going to provide an intervention, the important thing is to take into account is that things like deficient empathy, interpersonal naivete, sexual frustration, and idiosyncratic preoccupations are going to have a whole lot to do with their criminal behaviour. While none of these are unique characteristics in a forensic population, the difference may well be that in contrast to many of the people we see, the person with Asperger's has not learned these behaviours or developed them from experience. They are hard-wired in.

If you your interested in a little more reading on this subject, there's a quick overview and a few case reports in the Spring, 2002 issue of the International Journal of Forensic Mental Health Services. If you can't locate it, give me a shout.

Clinical Rounds

By Denise L. Preston, Ph.D.

It all started with a question. Earlier this spring my colleague and Crime Scene editor Dr. Jeremy Mills asked me if I was planning on attending the CPA convention in St. John's. I said no, explaining that I haven't attended the conference for many years because I have found it to be too research oriented and not sufficiently forensic. Don't get me wrong: as a scientist-practitioner, I

fully understand and whole-heartedly support the importance of research. I sit on a research committee that reviews proposals to conduct research with federal offenders or in federal penitentiaries, I regularly facilitate the implementation of research projects in my work site, and I am involved in conducting research projects from time to time. I make on-going efforts to remain abreast of relevant new research findings and to ensure that my clinical practise, and that of those I supervise, is grounded in the most recent empirical evidence. However, I often find that translating data, beautifully depicted in tables and figures, into clinical practise is a bit like trying to thread a needle in the dark. Add to this the fact that much of the research has been conducted with university students under fairly well controlled conditions, and it becomes apparent that I am blindly trying to thread my very tiny sewing needle with a very large piece of rope.

Over the years I have come to prefer applied workshops in which I learn a few specific ideas or strategies that can easily be incorporated into practise. Even this is not always helpful, though, when the workshop has not been designed for a forensic population or setting. A case in point: Several years ago when I was running an intensive treatment program for violent offenders I attended a one-day workshop on dealing with difficult clients. The brochure listed as examples clients who are resistant, defensive, or have anger management problems. It sounded perfect. I was pumped and ready to learn, desperate to learn in fact, anything to help me reach my clients more effectively and to survive the daily onslaught of their behaviour as intact as possible. Unfortunately, the case studies the presenters used to illustrate their techniques, their so-called "worst cases", were like socialites at a Swiss finishing school in comparison to my population. Needless to say, I learned very little in that particular workshop, an experience that has been repeated several times since. I long for greater availability of empirically based clinical/forensic workshops and conferences.

Enter Dr. Mills and his seemingly innocent question. He understood my reluctance to attend the conference and indicated that he knows of others who feel the same way. He then spoke about how the Criminal Justice Section, and a new executive position of Director-At-Large for Clinical Issues, could address these and other issues. He asked me if I would be interested in such a position, I said yes, and was duly elected in absentia at the conference.

A bit about myself: I earned my doctorate in the Clinical program at Queen's University in 1995. I was fortunate to have been able to go through their forensic program, which is no longer in existence I understand. This is a great loss to the field, to aspiring graduate students, and to the numerous forensic and correctional settings in close proximity to Queen's, many of whom have been experiencing chronic recruitment and retention problems. I wonder if this loss is an example of exactly what the Criminal Justice section and this executive position can try to mitigate against. I have been employed as a psychologist for the Correctional Service of Canada for over 14 years now. I spent many years in direct service delivery running groups for sex offenders, violent offenders, and lifers, providing mental health services, completing risk assessments, and offering Critical Incident Stress Management and Employee Assistance services to staff. I spent 5 years working for CSC's research branch, and have done tons of staff training on a variety of issues. Currently, I am the Senior Psychologist at Millhaven Institution in Ontario. Millhaven is a maximum-security facility that serves as the largest reception centre in the country, admitting between 1000 and 1200 federal offenders each year. It also has a static maximum security population, and a large segregation unit. Needless to say, it is a dynamic, challenging environment in which to work and I am blessed to work in a department with very dedicated, competent, motivated professionals.

Regarding this position, my first order of business will be to establish a mandate. While I

have some ideas, I envision this as an evolving process and as a collaborative one in which I would welcome any input from section members. I see the primary mandate of the position as raising the profile of forensic clinical issues within the section, CPA, and the discipline. This can be accomplished in a number of ways at a variety of levels. At a micro level, this position can promote a forum or mechanism for information sharing, discussion, debate, and support regarding clinical forensic issues. No matter how experienced, we all struggle with contentious, complex cases and issues from time to time. At a macro level, this position can establish links with graduate schools

and the various regulatory bodies to promote forensic specializations, to educate them about clinical forensic issues, and to serve as an advisor or consultant on relevant issues, such as the development of forensic curricula or competencies. Even more broadly, I envision an eventual National Forensic College to integrate all of these functions, to ensure greater consistency in training and regulation, and to promote our chosen area of practise within the discipline. I look forward to the year ahead, and to hearing from section members. I can be reached at PRESTONDL@CSC-SCC.GC.CA.

Student Research Award

“Seeing the Light”: Positive Self Change Theory of Desistance from Crime

Karen Parhar, M.A., University of Saskatchewan
Stephen C. P. Wong, Ph.D., Regional Psychiatric Centre, Correctional Service Canada

Studies of desistance, or cessation, from crime are gaining attention. However, little is known about the desistance of high risk offenders as few studies have been able to study desistance with this population. There is a lack of unified, empirically based research specific to the development and the testing of theories specific to the desistance from crime. We proposed a Positive Self Change (PSC) theory to explain the process of crime desistance and we intend to test the validity of the theory. The PSC theory proposes that offenders desist from criminal activities when there is an increased motivation to change, a reduction of criminogenic factors, and an increase in protective strategies. As a first step to test the PSC theory, a semi-structured interview was conducted with 61 parolees and with 34 parole officers across western Canada to assess their views on what they considered as key in crime desistance. Results strongly supported the PSC theory. Overall parole officers and parolees are generally in agreement that all three components of PSC theory (motivation, protective strategies and criminogenic risks) are important in crime desistance and PSC theory was the most frequently supported theory among other theories of crime desistance. Results are consistent with past findings indicating that criminogenic risks and protective strategies are related to reductions in crime (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Andrews & Robinson, 1984). Although motivation was the most frequently reported cause of crime desistance in the current study, it has received relatively little attention in the crime desistance literature. Further research of the PSC theory is currently underway to develop more sensitive measures to assess the PSC theory, specifically, changes in offender motivation not to re-offend.

For more information please contact Karen Parhar by email at kkp542@mail.usask.ca

Recent Publications

Mills, J. F., Kroner, D. G., & Hemmati, T. (in press). Validity in violence risk estimates: An issue of item performance. *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*

Typically, research conducted on the cross-validation or generalization of risk assessment schemes focuses on the aggregate score accuracy of the schemes within the new sample or population. Often overlooked when the schemes are examined in their aggregate form is the performance of the individual items. The current study looks at the association between the items of the HCR-20 and the Violence Risk Appraisal Guide and violent recidivism in a sample of predominantly violent offenders. The results show that a number of the items from each scale do not distinguish between violent recidivists and non-recidivists and the presence of these items potentially reduces the predictive accuracy of the instruments. In addition, the inclusion of items that do not discriminate between recidivists and non-recidivists potentially undermines the validity of the risk assessment process. Discussion centers on the application of prediction schemes and their individual risk factors in forensic practice.

Members on the Move

Along with his recent nuptials, Joe Camilleri has moved to Kingston to study at Queen's University. Joe's new contact information is below.

Department of Psychology
Queen's University
62 Arch St.
Kingston, ON
K7L 3N6
Phone: (613) 533-6552
e-mail: 4jac1@qlink.queensu.ca

Nominations for Section Awards

Nominations for Section Awards are being received until December 1, 2003. Below are the criteria for each of the two section awards.

If you choose to nominate someone for the award, please forward a covering letter explaining your support of the individual along with a copy of the nominee's Curriculum Vitae. Please note that only one Career Contribution Award will be made in any year.

Submission should be made electronically or by regular mail to...

Jeremy Mills, Ph.D., C.Psych.
Psychology Department
Bath Institution
P.O. Box 1500
Bath, Ontario
K0H 1G0
Ph: (613) 351-8399
Fax: (613) 351-8347
E-mail: Millsjf@csc-scc.gc.ca

The Significant Contribution Award

The Significant Contribution Award recognizes a specific work that has been recently completed (within the last year or two) that makes a significant contribution to the application of psychology to criminal behaviour, criminal justice, and/or law. The work could be theoretical, empirical or applied. For the theoretical and empirical works, the award would typically be based on a paper published during the previous year in an academic or professional journal. The applied contributions would address the creation and implementation of psychological services to offenders or to the courts. The effective promotion and administration of psychologists and

psychological services would also qualify as a significant contribution (e.g., setting up a treatment center, hiring 10 new psychologists). If a member of the section makes exceptional contributions on different years, then it is possible for the same individual to receive this award more than once.

The Career Contribution Award

This award recognizes a corpus of work accrued over a period of at least 10 years that makes a significant contribution to the application of psychology to criminal behaviour, criminal justice, and/or law. The work could be theoretical, empirical or applied. For the theoretical and empirical works, the award would typically concern a series of published works that have had an important influence on the field. Signs of this influence could include changes in practices (widespread use of treatment or assessment methods; changes in the law) as well as recognition by the academic community (e.g., citations). The applied

contributions would recognize leaders in the criminal justice field who have demonstrated excellence in one of the following areas: the creation and implementation of psychological services to offenders or to the courts, the teaching and mentoring of new psychologists, and management and administration.

CPA Convention Submission Deadline

October 14, 2004

You can make a submission online by following the links at www.cpc.ca