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# Training in Law and Psychology: Models from the Villanova Conference

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# Training in Law and Psychology

## *Models From the Villanova Conference*

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*Although the domain of law and psychology is a burgeoning and popular field of study, there has never been a concerted effort to evaluate current training models or to develop newer, more effective ones. Forty-eight invited participants attended a national conference held at Villanova Law School to remedy this deficiency. Working groups addressed issues of education and training for the undergraduate level; for doctoral-level programs in law and social science; for forensic clinical training; for joint-degree (JD/PhD–PsyD) programs; for those in practica, internships, and postdoctoral programs; and for continuing education. This article delineates levels and models of training in each of these areas.*

**T**he scientific and professional domain of law and psychology is currently enjoying immense popularity. For the first 50 years of its existence, however, law and psychology led a dismal, dispirited life. Hugo Munsterberg's (1908) attempt to bring experimental psychology into the courtroom early in this century was a miserable failure (Wigmore, 1909). The legal-realism movement, which challenged the fiction that law was based solely on rules and precedent, led to a brief period in the 1920s of interdisciplinary cooperation between law professors and social scientists, but it finally succumbed to a lingering death (Loh, 1981; Schlegel, 1979). It took *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) 30 years later to stimulate a buoyant resurgence of vitality to the law-psychology enterprise. In that landmark decision, holding that separate but equal public schools violated the Constitutional rights of African American children, the Supreme Court cited the works of social scientists in what is perhaps the law's most famous footnote. As an eminent legal scholar and jury researcher declared at the time, "undoubtedly this is a high point in the periodic flirtation between law and social science" (Kalven, 1958, p. 94). But the works cited in *Brown v. Board of Education* were themselves severely criticized (Cahn, 1955; Tomkins &

Oursland, 1991; Van den Haag, 1960). Like most dalliances in the 1960s, the affiliation between law and psychology did not flower into a mature relationship.

Although there continues to be some disagreement about whether a successful rapprochement is possible between law and psychology (compare Hafemeister, Ogloff, & Small, 1990; Saks, 1989; see Bersoff, in press, generally), there is sound evidence that in the past 20 years, law and psychology have evoked renewed optimism that supports the conclusion that as we tread expectantly toward the millennium, there is a great deal of interest in this burgeoning amalgam of interdisciplinary science and practice.

### **Determinants of Optimism and Concern**

There are now more than 2,000 members of the American Psychology–Law Society (APLS; Division 41 of the American Psychological Association [APA]), with a strong and vital student section. There are at least four highly regarded joint programs that award law degrees and doctorates in psychology. The Law and Society Association and the American Academy and American Board of Forensic Psychology are energetic and growing organizations. *Law and Human Behavior*, *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, and *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, among

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The first author assumed overall responsibility for the article. All other authors contributed equally, and their names are arranged alphabetically merely for the sake of convention.

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other important periodicals in the field, were joined in 1995 by *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, an APA-published, law school-sponsored journal. Not to be outpaced by technology, there is now a Psych-Law Listserv on the Internet that, despite some dross, has become a rich source of opinion, resources, and comment. In the mid-1990s, of the 11 elected members of the APA Board of Directors, 2 had dual degrees in law and psychology. Five prominent members of the Federal Judicial Center, the research arm of the federal courts, also have dual degrees. A significant number of highly regarded law schools have psychologists as members of their tenured, full-time faculty or have granted them joint appointments (Melton, Monahan, & Saks, 1987). Two *Master Lecture Series* presented during APA conventions in the last 15 years have been devoted exclusively to law and psychology (Sales & VandenBos, 1994; Schierer & Hammonds, 1983). Undergraduate offerings on the topic are often the most popular courses in psychology departments, and continuing education workshops in forensic psychology are almost always oversubscribed. The field has been able to attract several well-known, thoughtful, and prolific law professors. And, law and psychology have been the subject of two major and scholarly reviews of the field's contributions to science (Monahan & Loftus, 1982; Tapp, 1976).

Despite its cyclical nature and "manic-depressive quality" (Kalven, 1958, p. 95), the connections among law, the social sciences, and mental health practice have served to stimulate not only experimentalists like Munsterberg but clinicians as noteworthy as Freud (1906/1959). The result has been the development of three somewhat orthogonal lines of scholarship and training. There are those whose interests are devoted to exploring empirically how the law works—sort of a social science of law. Correspondingly, there are those whose interests are focused on understanding and analyzing the ways in which the law defines and regulates the activities of psychologists, whether in research or clinical practice. And, there are those who seek to influence the development of social policy by bringing to bear social science data on legal issues that are essentially empirical in nature (Grisso, Sales, & Bayless, 1982).

In U.S. courtrooms, psychology is still seen as a mysterious, inexact discipline (Berger, 1994; *Berger v. Board of Psychologist Examiners*, 1975; Goodman-Delahunty, in press), populated by hired guns who will switch sides and proffer opinions for the right fee and greatest notoriety (Bersoff, 1995a). Some of the most hotly contested issues in psychology are being fought out in the courtroom arena. New, often unvalidated "psychological" syndromes seem to proliferate every day (Freckleton, 1994; McCord, 1987; Morse, 1995). We are just beginning to understand the extent of the relationship between violence and mental illness (Monahan & Steadman, 1994), and we still have not reached agreement as to whether memories are false, uncovered, or repressed (APA Working Group, 1996; Pope & Brown, 1996). The Supreme Court, despite the best efforts of psycholegal

scholars, remains naive, if not downright hostile, to the application of social science research to empirically based constitutional questions (Bersoff & Glass, 1995; Saks & Baron, 1980; Tremper, 1987).

It is very relevant that this is also a time of ferment, turmoil, and anxiety in the education and training of future scholars, practitioners, and researchers in law and psychology, with a host of unresolved issues that are directly related to teaching and training. At the undergraduate level, there is little consensus as to the subject matter that should be taught and whether the thrust ought to be on the relationship of psychology to law or to the broad-based study of law as a social instrument. At the graduate level, proponents are faced with bearing the burden to prove to financially anxious administrators that their programs are justified from economic and scholarly perspectives. Even more problematic, it is quite possible that funding for graduate students, who are accustomed to tuition waivers and stipends, will be drastically reduced or even eliminated before this decade ends. In an era of budget tightening and politicization of science, no one can predict the fates of the National Institutes of Health or the National Science Foundation and the grants they provide. Practicum sites and institutions providing pre- and postdoctoral internships are reducing the number of slots for training.

Students who wish to pursue research must be trained in two disciplines, which raises the question of whether there is enough time in graduate school to accomplish that goal. There is little like-mindedness about what should be taught in law-oriented, social science programs, perhaps because there has been little field-wide discussion about what to teach and the field has been slow to expand beyond the borders of eyewitness identification and jury behavior (Saks, 1986).

With regard to the training of forensic practitioners, who must also learn two epistemological systems, there is little agreement about the primary focus of training. Some proponents believe that the curriculum should concentrate on educating students to be social scientists and researchers, with practical forensic training postponed until the postdoctoral years. Others assert with equal vigor that the paramount concern at the graduate level is educating applied professionals to perform clinical functions. There is greater agreement, however, that training should include predoctoral practica and internship experiences, but there is less consensus about postdoctoral internships or residencies. Even if there were agreement, there are relatively few postdoctoral facilities available. It is unclear what the impact will be of the APA's creation of identifiable specialties and proficiencies on forensic psychology and of the newly adopted movement to accredit postdoctoral programs and forensic facilities.

The lengthiest forms of graduate training are joint-degree programs that culminate in attaining the Juris Doctor (JD) in law and the doctorate in psychology. Although we are now in the third decade of such training, there is still sharp disagreement about the worth of joint programs and whether the contributions they make are

justified by their costs, both temporal and financial (Bersoff, in press; Freeman & Roesch, 1992; Melton, 1987b).

Relatively neglected in the consideration of law and psychology training is the role of continuing education. Currently, most clinicians who provide forensic services are not trained to do so in graduate school but in weekend or one-day seminars and workshops. Yet, there is little regulation of these experiences or scrutiny of the credentials of those who provide them. Most continuing education training is by psychologists for psychologists, which neglects members of the legal profession. The vast majority of lawyers are fundamentally ignorant about basic mental health principles, the vagaries of diagnosis, the limits of assessment data, and the principles of science and research design. Teaching judges and lawyers is crucial, but it has been perhaps the least successful of our efforts at continuing education.

### **Origins, Issues, and Goals of the Villanova Conference**

By the mid-1990s, it seemed time to address the several serious issues concerning the nature and direction of law and psychology as a transdisciplinary, practical, and research enterprise. Beyond reflecting on the history of law and psychology and its current status, it seemed appropriate to develop models of training from undergraduate through postdoctoral education and to create more regular and formal means to disseminate knowledge about training.

These were the purposes of the National Invitational Conference on Education and Training in Law and Psychology held from May 25–28, 1995, at Villanova Law School in suburban Philadelphia. Now more popularly known as the “Villanova Conference,” it was attended by 48 invited participants who were primarily identified with one of six major areas: (a) undergraduate education; (b) graduate social science programs; (c) graduate forensic programs; (d) practical training, including predoctoral practica, internships, and postdoctoral experiences; (e) joint-degree programs; and (f) continuing education. Students’ issues were integrated into these six.<sup>1</sup> The conference was funded by APA, APLS, the American Academy of Forensic Psychology, the Florida Mental Health Institute, and Villanova Law School. It was organized by a steering committee comprised of the authors of this article, with Donald N. Bersoff as chair.

### **Outcomes and Emerging Models**

In his keynote address initiating the proceedings, Bersoff (1995b) asked conference participants to focus on several overarching questions. The predominant concern was whether the field can develop models of training and, concomitantly, means for evaluating what educators in law and psychology do all along the training continuum. As a subset of that fundamental issue, he set out more practical goals: (a) identify those aspects of education and training that worked well in the past or were current successes; (b) identify ongoing problems that remained

unresolved; (c) develop strategies for addressing those problems; (d) focus on and describe those strategies with the most potential for being practical, implementable, and effective; and (e) recommend possible model curricula, programs, and levels of training.

One of the criteria for selecting attendees to the Villanova Conference was an interest and involvement in one of the content areas to be discussed at the conference. There were, thus, six working groups, each identified with education and training at the undergraduate through postdoctoral and continuing education levels and committed to addressing the substantive issues delineated in the keynote address. Each of these groups made material contributions to the success of the conference. What follows is the substance of their deliberations.

#### ***Undergraduate Education<sup>2</sup>***

Undergraduate education in psychology and law is not only valuable in fleshing out the content areas of psychology, but it has a useful place in the undergraduate curriculum generally because it contributes to several goals of a liberal education. The field offers an array of topics that touch on highly significant and relevant issues that students will encounter in their lives and that are intrinsically fascinating. Furthermore, it nurtures critical thinking, acknowledges the role of personal values, develops sensitivity to ethical principles, and adds to increasing opportunities for interdisciplinary training, both didactic and practical.

There is evidence, in fact, that the number of undergraduate courses in psychology and law has been rising (Ogloff, Tomkins, & Bersoff, 1996). Many conference participants reported that the introductory psychology and law course was one of the most popular classes at their colleges and universities. One survey of the 25 highest ranking psychology departments revealed that 15 (60%) of these eminent programs offered at least one undergraduate psychology and law course and 4 of the 25 (16%) offered two or more courses (Wrightsmann et al., 1997). A survey, however, of 10 highly rated liberal arts colleges indicated that just 2 included a law and psychology course in their curriculum (Wrightsmann et al., 1997). Thus, it can be concluded that the representation of the field at the undergraduate level is uneven, that student demand for the subject matter generally exceeds availability, and that more should be done to improve undergraduate offerings in psychology and law. A central issue for this group at the conference was to consider ways of expanding relevant offerings.

Within psychology departments, the key point of entry is the introductory course, where students gain their initial exposure to psychology and to potential careers.

<sup>1</sup> Another area, the place of psychology and social science in the law school curriculum, was not fully realized and is not discussed in this article.

<sup>2</sup> The working group on undergraduate education included Solomon Fulero, Edith Greene, Valerie P. Hans, Michael Nietzel, Mark Small, and Lawrence Wrightsmann, who served as chair.

For students to seriously consider law and social science (legal psychology) or forensic psychology as an undergraduate specialization and a legitimate career option, the most effective place to begin is in their first course in psychology. A review of several dozen textbooks in introductory psychology revealed that there is some coverage of topics directly related to psychology and law, particularly with regard to memory, lie detection, and insanity (Fulero, 1996; Ogloff et al., 1996). No textbooks that were reviewed, however, included a separate chapter devoted to the field (Fulero, 1996).

Given the growth of psychology and law, it is unfortunate that its coverage is sparser than warranted. Because it merits expansion, the working group recommended that psychologists encourage textbook authors and publishers to include legal psychology in their introductory texts. To help those teaching general psychology courses, who would tend to be unfamiliar with the major issues and findings in psychology and law, it is also recommended that experts help develop multimedia materials, bibliographies, sample lectures, and other materials to be included in such a course.

The place that undergraduate students are most likely to encounter law and psychology is in an advanced survey course. But even here, the field could benefit by additional resources that would widen the range of topics that could be taught. There are a number of comprehensive textbooks in psychology and law, some with teacher's manuals. APLS's Training and Career Committee recently published the *Handbook of Teaching Materials for Undergraduate Legal Psychology Courses* (Greene, 1996), which contains an excellent compilation of demonstration materials, Internet resources, and an annotated bibliography of films and videotapes. One of the more exciting proposals emanating from the conference was the development of a series of videotapes in which well-known experts in particular law-psychology specialties would appear, present didactic material, and demonstrate fundamental techniques.

The single survey course represents the most frequent option that psychology departments now use to introduce students to law and psychology, but for departments serious about this popular enterprise, it is possible to develop a specialization track within a psychology major or even an independent major in law and psychology. In these specialized programs, the survey course would be complemented by an upper level seminar on more specific topics or by special sections in standard courses that highlight law and psychology. An undergraduate track would include the basic foundation courses; the survey course in law and psychology; courses in the psychology of law enforcement, criminology, and forensic psychology; and a multidisciplinary social science and justice seminar. A capstone experience, such as a practicum, supervised research project, or honors thesis, would complete the track or major. Given financial realities, it may be desirable to use distance-learning technology to bring together a consortium of universities and

colleges to offer a psychology and law major to students at several institutions.

Finally, it may be possible to increase the role of psychology and law in the numerous interdisciplinary criminal justice and legal studies programs at colleges and universities. More than 1,000 programs offer undergraduate training in criminal justice (Wallace, 1990), and increasing numbers are starting or expanding interdisciplinary legal studies programs (American Bar Association [ABA] Commission on College and University Legal Studies, 1996). Despite their growth and popularity, psychologists have played a minimal role in these programs, demonstrated by the present sociological, theoretical, and research emphases in many of them. Establishing a psychology-law specialty within criminal justice and legal studies programs would develop and enrich the field, broaden its base, and enhance the number and diversity of new entrants to law and psychology.

### **Graduate Social Science and Law Programs<sup>3</sup>**

Within the broad spectrum that encompasses law and psychology, relatively little attention has been paid to nonclinical or social science training at the graduate level (Ogloff, 1990; Ogloff et al., 1996). Because many important areas of law fall outside the traditional bounds of the clinical psychology-law interface (Ogloff, 1990; Roesch, 1990), it is important to develop programs to train legal psychologists to work more comprehensively. Yet, few such programs exist; indeed, for most departments, education is limited to one or two courses in social science and the law.

The objectives of a doctoral-level legal psychology program would be to educate future scholars to generate and apply social science and legal knowledge to legal problems. Career options for legal psychologists are diverse. Training may facilitate careers in academia, public service, and the private sector. Some of the substantive areas of application include the following: (a) policy development, analysis, and evaluation; (b) training of law enforcement personnel, lawyers, and judges; (c) assessment of court functioning and administrative processes; (d) mediation and dispute resolution; (e) case and jury consultation; (f) employment on legislative committee staffs; (g) service as an expert witness; and (h) social science research.

Conference participants did not endorse a single model of training to accomplish these objectives. Given the present state of university resources, the highly idiosyncratic interests of department faculty, and the cold fact that most departments have only one, if any, faculty member interested in social science applications to law, it would be unrealistic to agree on and implement a single model. The members of this working group attempted to address

<sup>3</sup> The working group on graduate social science education included Bette Bottoms, Brian Cutler, Ronald Dillehay, Jane Goodman-Delahunty, Jeffrey Hangaard, Trudi Kirk, Roy Malpass, Michelle McCauley, Barry Ruback, Alan Tomkins, Richard Wiener, Brian Wilcox, and James Ogloff, who served as chair.

and perhaps correct these problems. To further these goals, one of its aims was to identify the knowledge base, skills, and experience necessary to train students to become legal psychologists. The five areas detailed below may be identified as crucial for the psycholegal scholar.

**Substantive psychology.** Law and social science programs must ensure that students have a core knowledge of basic areas of psychology (e.g., developmental, cognitive, abnormal, ethical, and professional issues). Beyond these core courses, students should have an understanding of social and cultural influences and the implications of these influences for their work because of the role that these scholars will play in conducting social policy research and in developing social policy itself.

**Research design and statistics.** Because one of the assets of legal psychologists is their ability to use psychological methodology and statistical analysis to address legal questions, training programs need to ensure that students have a core knowledge of experimental and quasi-experimental methods, both in the laboratory and in the field and across methodological approaches (e.g., naturalistic observation, survey research, case studies, program evaluation). Similarly, students should become sophisticated in both basic (e.g., multivariate analysis) and innovative (e.g., meta-analysis, hierarchical linear modeling) statistical procedures.

**Legal knowledge.** Melton (1987a) urged that psychologists interested in applying their knowledge to the law "focus on 'thinking like a lawyer' and becoming a comfortable guest, if not an insider, in the legal community" (p. 293). With these attributes, psychologists are better able to design ecologically valid, legally relevant research; frame their results so that they are useful to lawyers; more easily disseminate their work to judges, legislators, and lawyers; and increase their credibility as experts.

To accomplish these goals, the working group recommended that students learn the basic tools of law (e.g., legal processes, evidence), sources of law (e.g., common law, statutory law, constitutional law, administrative law), and the core substance of law itself (e.g., civil, criminal). This knowledge can be obtained in a number of ways. It can be gathered initially at the undergraduate level (see above); in interdisciplinary, law-related courses at the graduate level; and in law schools that offer a yearlong Master of Legal Studies to those who have already established themselves in another profession.

**Substantive legal psychology.** In addition to basic education in law and psychology, it is recommended that students complete integrative foundation courses in law and psychology. These courses should expose students to contemporary original research in legal psychology, original legal materials like statutes and cases, and a historical and contemporary appreciation of how social science evidence is used in law. The list of topics in such courses would vary but would likely include information on eyewitness testimony, jury decision making, procedural justice, expert testimony, the standards for admitting scientific evidence, competency and responsibility in criminal law, civil commitment, unlawful discrimination,

mental health and educational services, criminal justice, domestic violence and abuse, law enforcement, and professional regulation and ethics.

**Scholarship and training.** Finally, students should participate in developing and conducting original research and scholarship, which culminates in a doctoral dissertation that is relevant to law and psychology. To ensure that students gain experience and expertise in disseminating knowledge, they should present at professional meetings such as the biennial meeting of APLS, teach undergraduates, conduct workshops, and publish their research. It would be especially helpful if in addition to didactic work, opportunities were provided for students to gain appropriate real-life experience in legislative, administrative, and judicial settings.

There is an abundance of untapped and underexamined areas of research open to psycholegal scholars interested in social science applications to the law. However, there are not enough well-trained researchers to tread these exciting paths.

### **Graduate Forensic Psychology Programs<sup>4</sup>**

Until recently, course work in forensic psychology was not a component of most graduate clinical psychology programs. This may be changing, perhaps in response to the recognition that a growing number of clinicians are engaged in forensic practice and research. Nevertheless, any model of forensic training must take into account that students in professional training programs already have a heavy course load and that the majority of clinical programs lack the critical mass of faculty and finances to offer forensic courses on a regular basis, much less a specialty track. As a result, and because approaches for providing forensic training can take many forms (Melton, 1987b; Roesch, Grisso, & Poythress, 1986), this working group, like its social science counterpart, rejected the idea of developing absolute standards of training and focused instead on developing basic options that graduate departments could offer to those interested in careers in forensic practice. These options fit neatly within a three-level hierarchy of skills, knowledges, and abilities that are applicable to forensic psychology.

#### **Entry level—the legally informed clinician.**

Beyond general clinical training, all professional psychologists would receive basic education in law as it applies to professional practice, including information about confidentiality and privileged communications, and appropriate procedures for responding to subpoenas for clinical records and personal notes. Some of this forensic content can be introduced in many, if not all, required clinical courses, especially those on assessment, intervention, and ethics. Ethics courses would include discussion not only of the APA's ethical code of conduct (APA, 1992) and other policy documents but of the Specialty Guidelines

<sup>4</sup> The working group on forensic training included Diane Follingstad, Phyllis Hofnung, Richard Rogers, and Ronald Roesch, who served as chair.

for Forensic Psychologists (Committee on Ethical Guidelines for Forensic Psychologists, 1991) as well.

Dissemination of other important didactic content would require the periodic offering of an overview course in mental health law. Such a course would provide a basic understanding of the theoretical and practical differences between law and psychology, fundamental knowledge of how the civil and criminal justice systems operate, a primer on how to find and read the law, and advanced consideration of ethical issues that are unique to forensic practice. This minimal level of law-related training is essential because

it would be a mistake . . . to believe that only those psychologists who identify themselves as *forensic mental health professionals* will find themselves involved with the law. Every psychologist is a potential expert witness, and each must be prepared to interact with the legal system. (Bersoff, 1995a, p. 416)

**Proficiency level.** Psychologists attaining this mid-level expertise may be trained through general professional programs, with an emphasis on forensics; training programs offering a "concentration" in forensic psychology; or, for already trained clinicians, through extensive continuing education or postdoctoral programs. The modal model would probably be the concentration.

Although not a formal track, a concentration is envisioned as an opportunity for a graduate program to offer course work, practica, and research experiences within forensic psychology. Beyond course work that would focus on didactics, students concentrating on forensics would receive practical training in court clinics, forensic hospitals, juvenile facilities, public defenders' offices, or workers' compensation clinics. There would be greater exposure, compared with entry-level students, to legal concepts and to training in testifying as an expert witness, consulting with legal counsel, and performing forensic evaluations related to their clinical specialties (e.g., family therapists might learn to do child custody evaluations). Students in this concentration would most likely do their dissertation research on forensic topics.

Another option within the proficiency level is the forensic minor. This would be a formal program in which courses are offered on a regular basis and students completing all requirements would receive a certificate or some other formal recognition of their accomplishment. The training itself would at least be as comprehensive as in the concentration option. At least two, if not three, faculty members would be required so that enough courses could be offered and the requirements completed in a reasonable period of time.

**Specialty level.** Those professional psychologists wishing to attain the highest level of training would almost assuredly be educated in programs dedicated to producing forensic psychologists. These programs would have an integrated, carefully developed sequence of training with an identifiable, experienced forensic faculty with recognized credentials. Beyond intensive and in-depth understanding of case law and extensive training in forensic skills, the forensic specialist would work with a vari-

ety of populations (e.g., children, victims of sex offenders, sex offenders and other criminal defendants, elderly adults, and those for whom civil commitment is sought).

These options coincide serendipitously with correlative events within APA. In February 1995, APA created a Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP), whose role is to recommend approval or disapproval of petitions from organizations requesting APA to recognize a professional specialty or proficiency. CRSPPP defines a *proficiency* as "a circumscribed activity in the general practice of professional psychology" (Joint Interim Committee for the Identification and Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies, 1995a, p. 1). A *specialty* is "a defined area of psychological practice which requires advanced knowledge and skills required through an organized sequence of education and training . . . subsequent to the acquisition of core scientific and professional foundations of psychology" (Joint Interim Committee for the Identification and Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies, 1995b, p. 2). Clearly, forensic psychology is eligible for denomination as a proficiency and a specialty.

Although "in forensic psychology, there is yet no generally accepted and well-codified training model" (Freeman & Roesch, 1992, p. 568), there is a growing consensus that the vitality and future growth of forensic psychology rests on its ability to apply the scientist-practitioner model to psycholegal questions (Heilbrun, 1990; Roesch, 1990). In any event, forensic psychology should fare well in an increasingly competitive and skeptical marketplace. More and more of its instruments and procedures have withstood empirical scrutiny (e.g., Grisso, 1986; Monahan & Steadman, 1994; Roesch, Ogloff, & Golding, 1993; Rogers, 1995), and it is not beholden to the vagaries of managed mental health care.

### **Practical Training<sup>5</sup>**

As we have described, each of the career paths for forensic clinicians would begin with formal preparation in graduate courses that provide the conceptual bases for forensic practice and an appreciation for how the law affects clinical practice. This class work should be augmented by, at least for those at the proficiency and specialty levels, supervised, real-world experience that may include practica, predoctoral internships, and postdoctoral forensic fellowships or residencies. One of the most important goals of the practical-training working group was to discover the extent of the development of these training facilities.

**Predocutorial forensic practica.** The working group sent a mail survey to 151 APA-accredited graduate training programs in clinical psychology, of which 71 responded (47%). Of those 71, 61 (86%) reported at least one practicum placement at which students receive supervised clinical forensic experience, usually in assess-

<sup>5</sup> The working group on practical training included Allen Brown, Kirk Heilbrun, Steven Norton, Norman G. Poythress, Jr., Gail Vant Zelfde, and J. Thomas Grisso, who served as chair.



ment. These 61 programs identified over 200 settings in which students could obtain some supervised clinical forensic training. These settings include state civil or forensic hospitals, special units of county or community hospitals, county jails and juvenile detention facilities, state or federal prisons, state juvenile justice agencies, local private practice groups, community mental health centers (CMHCs), and intradepartmental or university clinics. The sites most commonly identified by the survey respondents were CMHCs (74%), state civil hospitals (56%), state forensic hospitals (44%), and private practice groups (43%).

The precise nature of the training opportunities depend on the site in which the function is performed. Practicum students at forensic units, for example, perform assessments of competence to stand trial, insanity, and risk for violence. At state hospitals, they are more likely to perform assessments for civil commitment, guardianship, and capacity to consent to treatment. For those at CMHCs, students are more likely to be involved with child abuse and neglect, child custody, and civil commitment.

**Predoxal internships.** The working group sent a mail survey to the 259 programs identified by the *APPIC Directory: Internship and Postdoctoral Programs in Professional Psychology* (Association of Psychology and Postdoctoral Internship Centers [APPIC], 1995) as offering major (i.e., students spend about 50% of their time) or minor (i.e., students spend about 25% of their time) forensic rotations, of which 79 responded (31%). Of those 79, 9 reported they no longer provide any significant forensic training. Of the remaining 70 sites, 38 (54%) offer major forensic rotations, and 15 of these offer both major and minor rotations.

Sites offering major forensic rotations report an average of 4.64 intern positions but with 3.45 actually available and filled. These sites primarily offer inpatient experiences with adult criminal forensic populations. Fewer (although almost half) offer either a corrections-prison experience or outpatient experience. Fewer than 15% offer training in a court clinic or a juvenile residential setting.

Sites offering minor rotations are more likely to offer outpatient placements, experience with child and family forensic issues, forensic neuropsychology, and juvenile court experience, with less emphasis on working with adult criminal clients. Both major and minor rotation settings commonly offer forensic seminars and other pedagogical training.

**Postdoctoral fellowships-residencies.** In contrast to predoctoral training experiences, the number of postdoctoral forensic psychology training programs is small. There appear to be 10 such programs in the United States (an additional 1 is to begin in 1997), with most of them evolving in the 1990s (see the Appendix). These programs have developed in relative isolation from each other and are highly selective. A mail and telephone survey to all of these programs indicated that each admits only one or two fellows annually. The programs are located in diverse sites, including forensic hospitals, medical schools, and correctional facilities. They all provide

clinical forensic experience supervised by clinicians who specialize in forensic psychology. The focus is on assessment more than treatment and with criminal populations more than civil and family cases. Stipends range from \$22,000–30,000 for a full year.

Given the small number of programs and the competition for limited slots, the purpose of postdoctoral forensic psychology training programs is to produce the future leaders in forensic psychology. They should be prepared to model the most advanced skills and ethical integrity, to teach and train others, and to produce new concepts, knowledge, and technology.

The working group strongly recommended that postdoctoral training programs in forensic psychology form a network within which information could be disseminated. It would be helpful to collect didactic course descriptions, syllabi, and other curricular information. This information would be particularly useful as APA begins to accredit postdoctoral programs in psychology.

### **Joint-Degree Programs<sup>6</sup>**

One of the first tasks of this working group was to define the nature and aims of joint-degree programs. Joint programs are those that meet the following criteria (see also Bersoff, in press): (a) Students are enrolled simultaneously in a JD program at an accredited law school and a doctoral program (PhD–PsyD) in psychology, (b) the program is led by an individual designated as its administrative head, and (c) the program contains an identifiable and integrative law and psychology curriculum in addition to ensuring that students complete all formal requirements toward both degrees. As defined, these programs are differentiated from dual-degree programs in which students are allowed to enroll for both degrees but the universities that offer them take a predominantly laissez-faire attitude toward integration. In such dual-degree programs, students are primarily, if not solely, responsible for arranging the curriculum and integrating what they have learned.

There are only four programs in North America currently meeting the definition of a joint program (although each site may have its distinct nomenclature). There is the real possibility that two more such programs may emerge in the near future.<sup>7</sup> The current programs are at the University of Nebraska, the University of Arizona, Allegheny University of the Health Sciences–Villanova Law School, and Widener University.

The four programs vary in the kinds of lawyer-psychologists they produce. Some prepare researchers who concentrate primarily in social, developmental, or experimental psychology; some prepare students primarily for health and mental health policy positions; some

<sup>6</sup> The working group on joint-degree programs included Donald N. Bersoff, James Cassidy, Amiram Elwork, Stephen Penrod, and Bruce D. Sales, who served as chair.

<sup>7</sup> As this article went to press, the Pacific Graduate School of Psychology and Golden Gate University Law School announced they had accepted students in a fifth joint program, directed by Bruce Bongar.

are devoted to practitioners who concentrate their efforts in clinical psychology; and some have several purposes.

Although the specific training goals of the programs vary, they share the common goal of training scholars and practitioners interested in research and policy careers who will produce theoretically and methodologically sophisticated research integrating the psychology, law, and policy interface. (Ogloff et al., 1996, p. 217)

“They intend to produce lawyer–psychologists who can bring the information base, research methods, and concerns of psychology to bear upon questions of law and policy” (Roesch et al., 1986, p. 89).

Despite their lofty aims, competitiveness, and prestige, joint programs remain controversial. The uniqueness of their training permits graduates of these programs to pursue careers that singly trained graduates would find difficult to enter. But the program requires a great deal of time and effort as well as the payment of tuition to two schools. Some of the law school requirements, such as courses in tax and trusts and estates, may be seen as wasteful. For students whose goals for forensic practice are clear, it may be more efficient to enroll in doctoral programs in which the aims and curricula are designed to produce forensic clinicians, as we have described above.

It was clear to the working group on joint programs that attention should be paid to two issues. First, there is no coordination of the efforts of the directors of these programs or a means of regular communication. To that end, the four directors formed the Council of Graduate Programs in Psychology and Law, to which other directors of graduate social science programs in law and psychology are invited. The group plans to meet at least annually and to eventually develop a model curriculum in psycholegal studies.

Second, although one can denominate the benefits and costs of joint-degree training, its worth is still unproven. It has been 25 years since the first joint program was developed, and our profession still has “no empirical evidence that full training in any two disciplines produces more insightful contributions to society” (Roesch et al., 1986, p. 100) than single-degree training. The working group agreed that we need to evaluate these programs.

Nevertheless, students and graduates of these program concur, at least as measured by the only survey of these populations, that although they are “time-consuming, expensive, and sometimes lacking precise definition, . . . joint degree . . . law/psychology programs provide unique insights, skills, and opportunities for its [sic] participants” (Hafemeister et al., 1990). They remain the most “direct route to achieving law/psychology integration” (Tomkins & Ogloff, 1990, p. 208).

### ***Continuing and Cooperative Education***<sup>8</sup>

Although continuing education in law and psychology has an ongoing impact on the training of a large number of psychologists, it has not enjoyed a prominent position within this specialty. Nevertheless, it fills a unique place in training forensic psychologists. Continuing education

courses address topics in greater depth than there is time for in the undergraduate and graduate curricula and may, at times, address issues that are not included in these curricula. It usually attracts those who are already licensed professionals and, as a result, can apply their experience to forensic issues. Finally, advanced levels of training may be focused on the most sophisticated and theoretical issues that forensic psychologists will face.

The working group delineated five goals of continuing education: (a) improve standards of forensic practice and ethical decision making, (b) improve and update knowledge in specific content areas, (c) provide paths for the improvement of forensic skills, (d) provide opportunities for interdisciplinary interchange, and (e) stimulate research and the dissemination of new knowledge.

Current continuing education efforts, however, are not entirely and uniformly successful. Often those who provide workshops do not inform participants about the level of sophistication of their offerings. Their quality is uneven, and there is a dearth of measures for evaluating the success of workshops and seminars. Some fail to bridge the gap between research and practice. Many are not adequately accessible in terms of cost, location, and time.

In that light, the working group offered several recommendations for improving continuing education. First, it would be helpful to delineate three levels of training (basic, specialty, and advanced), develop their respective definitions, and apply them to course offerings. Second, the field should consider a credentialing process for providers of forensic continuing education. Third, course leaders should address ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and gender differences in forensic practice, and the leaders themselves should represent more diverse and underrepresented groups. Fourth, alternative forms of offerings should be considered, particularly summer institutes that would include real practical experience and case supervision.

A final recommendation, perhaps the most noteworthy of all, is to make continuing education more multidisciplinary and interactive. In fact, one of the outgrowths of the Villanova Conference was the development and implementation of a conference offering continuing education credits for psychologists and lawyers jointly sponsored by the APA and the ABA’s Section on Family Law. The conference was held in April 1997 in Los Angeles. Its focus was on children and divorce, with several crucial topics presented and discussed by lawyers, psychologists, and those with combined training in both. A similar conference is planned with the ABA’s Section on Criminal Law.

The concept of collaborative interdisciplinary meetings such as these should be reinforced. Psychologists and lawyers alike talk primarily to their own colleagues. Both professions tend to be ignorant about the serious issues that confront each of them. Joint meetings can become a model for chipping away at the formidable barriers that imprison each profession in its own stereo-

<sup>8</sup> The working group on continuing education included William Foote, Bruce Frumkin, Patricia Griffin, Gary Hawk, Ira Packer, and Gregory Van Rybroek, who served as chair.

types. Perhaps not only can both professions educate themselves and each other, but we can learn to alter our respective perceptions that all lawyers are “sharks” and all psychologists “hired guns.”

## Conclusion

Our personal vision for the Villanova Conference was the history-making Boulder Conference (Raimy, 1950), at which was developed the scientist–practitioner model of professional education in clinical psychology, a model that continues to have a major impact on that field. We have hopes that the Villanova Conference will have a similar influence on education and training in law and psychology for the first half of the 21st century. It took four years to obtain the imprimatur of the APA to cosponsor the conference, to raise the money to fund it, to select and invite participants to it, and to structure it so that it would have the greatest possibility for success. The conference was perhaps the only time in the next several decades that the field will be able to gather together, formulate ideas, and translate those ideas into implementable plans. We would like those who follow us to read the record of the conference proceedings in 2050 and say that its participants provided definitive models for education and training in law and psychology that survived for five decades. We hope that readers will be stimulated to contribute to this goal by developing and disseminating creative models of education and training.

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## APPENDIX

### Postdoctoral Training Programs in Forensic Psychology: 1996

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