
Introduction

Festschrift in Honor of Michel Hersen, PhD, ABPP

Behavior Modification

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It is with great pleasure that we coedit this Festschrift in honor of Michel Hersen, PhD, ABPP. In 2011, Dr. Hersen retired from his position of dean of the School of Professional Psychology at Pacific University, completing a stellar career in which he made significant contributions to the behavioral sciences and to graduate education and training in clinical psychology. In the 45 years from receipt of his doctorate to his retirement, Dr. Hersen had an enormous impact on his colleagues, students, and the disciplines that were advanced through his pioneering research. The articles that comprise this Festschrift are a testament to the admiration and respect of his colleagues and former students, and we are honored to have compiled them and to publish them in a journal cofounded by Dr. Hersen—*Behavior Modification*.

Michel received his BA, majoring in psychology, at Queens College in 1961. He earned an MA in psychology at Hofstra University, going on to receive his PhD in psychology at the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1966. At Buffalo, Michel's senior professor was B. Richard Bugelski, a prominent scholar in learning theory. His dissertation, titled "Conditioning Acceptance or Rejection of Information: The Experimental Induction of Positive and Negative Response Biases," presaged his interest in learning theory, which he would go on to apply to many clinical conditions in research throughout his career. Following a fellowship at the VA Hospital in West Haven, Connecticut, Michel entered private practice, and after a brief sojourn, he secured his first academic position at the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. While in Mississippi, much of his work was focused at the Jackson VA Medical Center. From 1970 to 1974, he rose to the rank of professor, and two themes that characterized his career emerged. *First*, Michel was a highly productive and groundbreaking scholar. With his colleagues, Michel published numerous papers on the emerging field of behavior therapy, demonstrating its applicability to a broad range of clinical conditions and establishing its scientific

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foundation. *Second*, Michel helped establish strong training and clinical service programs. As associate director of the Psychology Internship Program at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, he cofounded a program that set the standard for excellence in the training of behavior therapy, which continues to be a highly respected internship.

In 1974, Michel joined the faculty at the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. At that time, the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC) was embarking on a revolution in academic psychiatry, establishing leading-edge institution that would soon lead the field in research, training, and clinical care. As an early testament to his broad ranging skills, Michel came to WPIC to direct an inpatient unit, something unheard of for a psychologist then or now. During his 17 years at WPIC, Michel helped establish highly innovative and productive clinical and research programs in the behavioral treatment of schizophrenia, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and developmental disabilities, among others. Extending work begun in Mississippi, two major foci of his work in Pittsburgh were in social skills training and in the use of single-case designs to test novel treatments, two areas with which he was strongly identified and widely respected. He built strong collaborative relationships with colleagues, and was widely sought out as a mentor by graduate students and early career faculty in psychology and psychiatry. He was greatly admired both for his research acumen and his commitment to excellence in clinical practice, values that he passed on to new generations of clinicians and scholars.

Michel joined the Center for Psychological Studies at Nova Southeastern University in 1992. Founding and directing the Nova Community Clinic for Older Adults, he established strong clinical and research efforts in geropsychology. While serving as interim dean at the Center for Psychological Studies, Michel decided to open a new stage of his career and to pursue academic administration. He became dean of the School of Professional Psychology at Pacific University in 1997, a position he held until his retirement in 2011. During his tenure at Pacific University, he oversaw the growth and transformation of the program that has emerged as a leader in education and training of psychologists. Michel brought the same values and passions to his role as dean that have defined his career—a strong integration of clinical practice and rigorous research, a commitment to evidence-based practice, and the growth and support of graduate trainees and colleagues to reach their full potentials as clinicians and scientists.

Michel's contributions to the field are reflected by multiple achievements and recognitions. In 1978, he was named a fellow in Division 12 (clinical

psychology) of the American Psychological Association, and he later served as president of the Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy. He wrote and edited multiple books in clinical psychology and related topics, several of which have become classics in the field and helped establish the empirical foundation of behavior therapy. Among the most prominent are the multivolume series *Progress in Behavior Modification* (with Richard M. Eisler and Peter M. Miller), *Single-Case Experimental Designs* (with David H. Barlow, 1984), and *Behavior Therapy in the Psychiatric Setting* (with Alan S. Bellack, 1978). He cofounded a number of journals that have provided important outlets for the dissemination of new research in the field, including *Clinical Psychology Review*, currently the clinical psychology journal with the highest impact factor. His research was funded by many sources, including the National Institute of Mental Health and National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (U.S. Department of Education), among others. He has served on multiple editorial boards and grant review panels.

Any reference to Michel's skills would be remiss if it did not mention his artistic bent. Prior to venturing into psychology and science, Michel was an extremely talented musician, who might well have gone onto a successful career as a violinist. While becoming a world class clinical scientist, Michel also pursued an avocation as an art collector. He gradually assembled a museum quality collection of Hudson River School landscape paintings, and had he selected a more lucrative profession to underwrite his acquisitions, he would undoubtedly have one of the foremost collections in the world. In the short time since his retirement, Michel has built on his eye for natural beauty to become a published landscape photographer whose works have earned him prestigious awards, as well as accolades. It may seem a bit trite to call him a *renaissance man*, but Michel is truly multit talented and has had the discipline to be successful in any endeavor he pursues.

The breadth of Michel's interests and achievements is a notable feature of his career. As a result, it is not surprising that the articles in this issue—written by some of his colleagues and former students—reflect diverse client populations and varied treatment approaches. All, however, share common elements of a commitment to clinical relevance and empirical rigor. The Festschrift begins with three tributes by authors who worked closely with Michel at important stages of career. Agras (2012, p. 436) describes Michel's early work at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, a time in which behavior therapy came into its own and emerged as a major theoretical and treatment modality. Miller (2012, p. 444) follows with a discussion of Michel's seminal contributions to social skills training and its significant

impact on the field. Finally, Miller and Thomas (2012, p. 454) recount Michel's time as dean at the School of Professional Psychology at Pacific University. His vision for a rigorous academic training program and the integration of psychology into other health disciplines created a unique and fruitful setting for training and practice.

The *Festschrift* continues with eight articles addressing a variety of clinical issues. A number of different conditions and populations are represented—maternal depression, bipolar disorder, animal phobias, selective mutism, high-risk families, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and geriatric anxiety. Moreover, the themes that defined Michel's scholarly efforts are evident in these contributions. Ammerman, Peugh, Putnam, and Van Ginkel (2012, p. 462) describes predictors of outcomes in an innovative cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) treatment for depressed mothers participating in a child abuse prevention program. Ellard, Deckersbach, Sylvia, Nierenberg, and Barlow (2012, p. 482) present a series of case studies demonstrating the application of an integrated and theoretically focused treatment approach (Unified Protocol for Transdiagnostic Treatment of Emotional Disorders) that is applied with adults with bipolar disorder and anxiety. Ollendick, Lewis, Cowart, and Davis (2012, p. 509) describe a study of the role of parental anxiety in performance on a behavioral avoidance test in children with animal phobias. Young, Bunnell, and Beidel (2012, p. 525) report on a study of children with selective mutism or social phobia, examining differential psychological and physiological presentations to identify potential contributors to clinical presentation. Thase (2012, p. 545) examines and updates the literature on social skills training for depression. Urgelles, Donohue, Wilks, Van Hasselt, and Azrin (2012, p. 558) present findings from a study of a novel approach to helping high-risk families manage emergencies in their lives. Gros et al. (2012, p. 580) describe a new approach for comorbid PTSD and depression that combines behavioral activation and exposure. Finally, Gerolimatos, Gould, and Edelstein (2012, p. 600) examine the psychometrics of a measure of anxiety in older adults. Taken together, we believe that these contributions are a fitting testament to Michel's noteworthy career and valued contributions to the field.

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