

# POPULATION & ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY BULLETIN

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Division 34 Silver Anniversary Year

## ISSUE THEME: UN INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF OLDER PERSONS

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### THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF OLDER PERSONS, 1999: Towards a Society for All Ages

Peter R. Walker, Ph.D.

#### Highlights from IYOP

The International Year (IYOP) was inaugurated on October 1, 1998, at UN Headquarters in New York. Its objective is an international consciousness-raising effort by United Nations member states, UN Agencies, and Non-governmental Organization affiliated with the UN. The celebration of the Year is being undertaken from the local to the international level. It highlights the aging of the world's population<sup>1</sup>, the contributions of older persons to society, and assess the needs of this growing population. During the Year, events of all kinds are encouraged. Ideas described here for celebration of IYOP have been deliberated by member states and are expressed in a number of UN documents, many of which are available on the Worldwide Web. The theme chosen for 1999, "Toward a Society for All Ages," suggests a larger focus than just older people. It provides a valuable opportunity to reflect on our interconnections and interdependence and the variety of forms these can take, as well as a chance to become aware that older persons share many of the same needs and concerns that all people feel. Another reason for taking a broader, society-wide approach is the rich interconnections that exist within and across age groups.

Through extensive negotiations, beginning with conferences held in 1982, five UN documents have emerged which help guide activities during the International Year of Older Persons and the years that are to follow: *The Principles for Older Persons* (A/46/91); the *Conceptual Framework . . . for . . . the International Year of Older Persons in 1999* (A/50/144); the *Operational Framework* (A/52/328); the *UN Menu of Ideas for Activities at the National Level*; and the *Local Agenda on Ageing<sup>2</sup> in the 1990s -- Question of Ageing*. While the "Principles" are the UN's basis for all action programs, the two "framework documents" as well as the "national" and "local" agendas for activities provide additional information and justification in support of IYOP. Each of these documents, along with supporting information, is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing.htm> or

### NEWSLETTER NEWS:

**APA President Richard Suinn, Ph.D., has invited division newsletters to feature articles on psychological topics related to race and ethnicity, or cancer. Articles might be selected for publication in book form. Division 34 is responding with themed issues in Spring 1999 and Winter 2000.**

- Spring, 1999: Ethnicity, Race, and Minorities / Convention (May 1, 1999)
- Autumn, 1999: Division 34 Silver Anniversary \*see p. 10 (October 1, 1999)
- Winter, 2000: Environment, Population, and Health (January 15, 2000)

- Submissions may be of the following types:
- commentaries on topical issues (max 1500 words)
  - "Day in the Life" columns (max 1500 words)
  - preprint abstracts (max 300 words)
  - news announcements -- e.g., Calls for Papers, Upcoming Events, etc.
  - teaching tips, laboratory assignments, etc. (max 750 words)

Send submissions to Jennifer A. Veitch, Ph.D., Editor.  
Electronic submissions are preferred, by e-mail to [jennifer.veitch@nrc.ca](mailto:jennifer.veitch@nrc.ca).

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/iyop.htm>. Issues of aging and IYOP are also covered on additional websites, including: <http://www.unescap.org/ageing/res.htm>; and <http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/international>.

### Work Leading to the International Year

There are many reasons for celebrating an International Year of Older Persons.<sup>3</sup> It is apparent that the aging of populations is now a worldwide phenomenon, more evident in developed countries but occurring more rapidly in developing countries. Although large, aging populations pose both opportunities and challenges to all societies, policy-makers in many countries have not begun to address the concerns of this group. Also, in many countries there is a significant gender imbalance in the population aged 60 and older, with women -- who usually suffer from a higher incidence of poverty and chronic ill-health -- constituting the majority of this population. The aging of populations invites fresh thinking with regard to the intrinsic value of life's many stages, from infancy through old age.

Although issues of aging had been deliberated by the General Assembly from time to time, it was not until 1982, in Vienna, that "the question of aging" was discussed in a comprehensive manner by non-governmental organizations and member states at, respectively, the "NGO Forum" and the "World Assembly on Ageing." The "Forum," held in preparation for the "Assembly," brought nine specific recommendations to the Assembly, including combating negative stereotypes of the elderly, and recommending that economists should calculate the economic input of the elderly rather than their costs alone. In the same year, the activities of the "World Assembly on Ageing" led the General Assembly to adopt the *International Plan of Action on Ageing* (A/RES/37/51). This was the first policy instrument to address aging at a global level. The "Plan of Action" discusses the multidimensional nature of aging. It draws attention to the potential for older persons to take action in ensuring a positive and developmentally oriented view of old age. The "Plan" lists 62 recommendations for action in the areas of education, employment and income security, housing, health, social welfare, and the family. These recommendations have been expressed in more operational terms in the 1992 *Global Targets on Ageing for the Year 2001* (A/47/339).

### The Principles for Older Persons

The "Principles" have emerged over time from the "World Assembly on Aging" and the 1982 *International Plan of Action on Ageing* (A/RES/37/51), and now play a key role in shaping the observance of the International Year. The *Principles for Older Persons* (A/46/91) aim to ensure that priority attention will be given to the situation of older persons. The "Principles" are expressed in five clusters. The first cluster, independence, asserts that older persons need access to basic services and care, opportunities to work or earn income, the ability to influence the pace of their withdrawal from the labor force, access to education and training opportunities, safe living environments and support to reside at home for as long as possible. The second cluster, participation, addresses decision-making, dissemination of knowledge, community service and the formation of movements or associations of older persons. The care cluster focuses on issues of family and community care,

access to health, social and legal services, and matters pertaining to institutional care. The fourth cluster, self-fulfillment, calls for older persons to have opportunities for full development of their potential and access to the educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society. The dignity cluster addresses issues of exploitation and physical or mental abuse, fair treatment and being valued independently of economic contributions.

### The Secretary General's Conceptual Framework for the Year

The Secretary General's proposed *Conceptual Framework ... for ... the International Year of Older Persons in 1999* (A/50/144) suggests the theme, objective and four dimensions for the observance of the year. The four dimensions of the framework are: the situation of older persons, lifelong individual development, multigenerational relationships, and [economic] development and the aging process. It is proposed that the general objective of the Year should be the promotion of the eighteen point *United Nations Principles for Older Persons* (A/46/91) and the translation of these points into policy, as well as practical programs and actions. The "Conceptual Framework" outlines the situation of older people with regard to health and nutrition, housing, family, social welfare, income security and employment of older persons. These are highlighted in the *Global Targets on Ageing for the Year 2001* (A/47/339). The "Framework" goes on to say that, in a world where more individuals can expect to live to be 90 years, individual development is of primary importance. In a living environment which is continually changing, adaptive life skills are essential. Older persons need an environment which makes possible lifelong education, skills-upgrading, and healthy lifestyles. This dimension of the "Conceptual Framework" affords a significant opportunity for the contributions of social and behavioral scientists and practitioners. The translation of the "Principles" into reality will require both initiative by older persons and the establishment of an enabling environment by the rest of society.

### The Operational Framework

The *Operational Framework* (A/52/328) is designed to facilitate mainstreaming and encourage activities within a long-term perspective. There are four components: raising awareness, focusing on "a society for all ages;" looking ahead, beyond 1999, identifying a vision, priorities and essential processes for the long term; reaching out to non-traditional actors, including the media and young people; and networking to improve the relationship of research to policy formation across nations and economic sectors. On the point of raising awareness, among the many dimensions of the "situation of older persons," two are emerging as preeminent -- active aging and caregiving strategies. Looking ahead, two important trends will be the speed of aging in developing countries and the high proportion of older persons in developed countries. The networking component is concerned with research and information exchange. These objectives are rooted in the 1992 *Global Targets* (A/47/339).

### Suggestion for National and Local Activities

The suggestions for "National Level Activities" include: adopting and distributing the *United Nations Principles for*

*Older Persons*, and encouraging the academic community to explore of the principles and practices of an age-integrated society -- "a society for all ages." Suggestions for activities at the "Local Level" lend themselves to cooperation by the formal and informal sectors of society. Sample suggestions include: draft local plans of action on aging in cooperation with representatives of older persons; integrate the needs of older persons in urban and community planning; and support family integration and solidarity through dialogue in schools, community forums and local media. These items and, indeed, many suggested action items proposed by the UN for IYOP, support the view that aging is not only a subject of special concern but a process affecting daily life, which requires responses by the individual, family, organizations, and governments.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For example see UNFPA (1998). *The State of World Population: The New Generation* (pp. 8-14), or visit <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/agewpop.htm> for a copy of "Ageing of the World's Population."

<sup>2</sup> The United Nations adopts the convention of spelling aging with an "e".

<sup>3</sup> The United Nations, in its General Assembly (GA) and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) documents, defines those over the age of 60 years as older persons, and those over 80 years as the oldest old.

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### United Nations Principles for Older Persons

The United Nations Principles of Older Persons was adopted by the UN General Assembly (resolution 46/91) on 16 December 1991. Governments were encouraged to incorporate them into their national programmes whenever possible. Some highlights of the Principles are:

#### Independence

Older persons should:

- have access to adequate food, water, shelter, clothing and health care through the provision of income, family and community support and self-help;
- have the opportunity to work or to have access to other income-generating opportunities;
- be able to participate in determining when and at what pace withdrawal from the labour force takes place; have access to appropriate educational and training programmes;

- be able to live in environments that are safe and adaptable to personal preferences and changing capacities;
- be able to reside at home for as long as possible.

#### Participation

Older persons should:

- remain integrated in society, participate actively in the formulation and implementation of policies that directly affect their well-being, and share their knowledge and skills with younger generations;
- be able to seek and develop opportunities for service to the community and to serve as volunteers in positions appropriate to their -interests and capabilities;
- be able to form movements or associations of older persons.

#### Care

Older persons should:

- benefit from daily and community care and protection in accordance with each society's system of cultural values;
- have access to health care to help them to maintain or regain the optimum level of physical, mental and emotional well-being and to prevent or delay the onset of illness;
- have access to social and legal services to enhance their autonomy, protection and care;
- be able to utilize appropriate levels of institutional care providing protection, rehabilitation and social and mental stimulation in a humane and secure environment;
- be able to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms when residing in any shelter, care or treatment facility, including full respect for their dignity, beliefs, needs and privacy and for the right to make decisions about their health care and the quality of their lives.

#### Self-fulfilment

Older persons should:

- be able to pursue opportunities for the full development of their potential;
- have access to the educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society.

#### Dignity

Older persons should:

- be able to live in dignity and security and be free of exploitation and physical or mental abuse;
- be treated fairly regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, disability or other status, and be valued independently of their economic contribution.

### The Self-Propelled Older Person of the Twenty-First Century

M. P. Lawton, Ph.D.  
Polisher Research Institute  
Philadelphia Geriatric Center

The twenty-first century will be characterized by a search for the social resources that may be contributed by older people.

The numbers of frail, impaired, and service-needy elders have increased and will continue to increase. Their acute needs have forced us to design new services and new residential facilities for this group. It is important to keep in mind the size of this group, however: With about 5% of elders in institutions and 14% of the community-resident elders requiring some assistance in tasks of daily living, our country counts more than 80% capable of living relatively independent lives. Up to this point, our zeal to serve the 20% has preempted, to some extent, the use of society's energy to support the continued contributions of the great majority of elders to their own growth and the growth of our society as a whole. It is clearly time to right that balance.

How can such resources become better utilized? We get some hints from the vanguard of older people who have begun to explore new directions in personal resource cultivation. Although life-care communities (or continuing-care retirement communities, CCRCs) have served the socioeconomically elite, their example demonstrates, first, that personal enrichment in the form of new learning, discussion groups, arts activity, and so on may be fostered by older people themselves. It is significant that a critical mass of older people with shared backgrounds living in a single location, as in the CCRC, has been necessary for the development of such activity.

Although there will be continuing need for such residential environments (including "assisted living" for the marginally independent), it is clear that the great majority of older people will wish to continue to live in their own homes. As of now, the senior center is the main community focal point for organized enriching activities of older people. The new century should see the tie between creative activities and such aspects of the formal service system as the senior center loosened considerably. Such independence would benefit both the older person and society as a whole because the link to social services conveys somewhat of a message of dependency. By contrast, a proactive role provides greater motivation to the elder and helps erode the social stereotype of uselessness too frequently connoted by old age. At this point, proactivity in politics, social action, the arts, and other sectors of life is achieved mainly by individual effort and example.

I see several channels through which proactive contributory effort of elders may be fostered. A first one will be through the application of technologies and their acceptance by the older population. Recent research has indicated that older people can and do become skilled computer users. Nonetheless, as a group they lag behind. Planned housing and senior centers may well constitute natural starting points for the diffusion of such technology. Barriers of both geographic distance and often personal health limitations may be overcome by this mode of communication.

Another environmental focus is the dwelling unit. Many older people's residences have experienced deferred maintenance or simply aged in place to the point of shabbiness. Research tells us that older people benefit from novelty and stimulation, if introduced within limits and especially if self-initiated. I think there is the possibility for a network of elders who can develop a sense of excitement about inexpensive ways of adorning or functionally upgrading their own residences and sharing their experiences with others. Translating such self-help

into the practices of traditional social-service and housing agencies would represent a perfect combination of benefit to both self and society.

Other possibilities exist for those in less robust health. A new look in nursing home care is the value being placed on autonomy, self-determination, personal preference, and consumer input into care practices. Quality of life as judged by the resident requires renewed research attention. Many current facility-planned efforts include both individual and focus-group discussions with elders regarding desirable and undesirable design features.

We can also assume the continuation of traditional resource uses, such as older people as volunteers in human services, foster grandparenting, retired executive consultants, and so on. But the principle that should drive forthcoming effort in both environmental and nonenvironmental domains is the idea that incremental stimulation and challenge are good for both the person and his or her social context, and that their effectiveness is greater when self-initiated.

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**Eldercare: A Personal Narrative**

Robert Sommer, Ph.D.

University of California, Davis

When her mother died, my wife's father, John, came to live with us. This move to an extended family seemed natural to me as my maternal grandmother lived most of her life in my parent's home, before coming to California at age 90 to live with me.

John's arrival required us to make our house accessible to an 84 year-old who treasured his independence. The design of facilities for older people had been a long-standing professional interest. We raised the wattage of light bulbs, removed tripping hazards, rearranged bathroom racks, and introduced familiar objects from his previous home to ease the transition to his new home. We identified tasks around the house that he could do, as we wanted him to feel that he was a contributing member of the household. He was good at repairing things and when he could no longer perform the work himself, he could give advice.

We also wanted to integrate John into the larger community so that he would have peer relationships. We checked out activities at the Davis Senior Center and opportunities for him to do volunteer work. Although the Davis Senior Center, with its abundance of retired professionals, was a bit too upscale, John enjoyed the program at the nearby Woodland senior center which had a working class clientele. He started repairing books at the high school and county libraries. He worked alone at the high school repairing hundreds of books that were falling apart but could not be replaced due to budget constraints. At the county library, John was part of Bookmenders, an informal group of seniors which provided meaningful peer relationships.

Initially John walked the six blocks to the libraries and also to his medical appointments. He was a bionic man with artificial

hip, hearing aid, glasses, pacemaker, etc. His vision deteriorated to the point where he could no longer read, watch TV, or play cards. We experimented with large-type books and large-face playing cards without success. When John felt his poor eyesight was delaying the bridge game at the senior center, he stopped attending which further reduced his peer contacts. The two libraries so valued his services that they accommodated to his vision problems by arranging damaged books in the proper page order so that he could do his repairs by pattern recognition and touch. When the high school closed for the summer, we set up a book repair shop at home. He worked so efficiently that he repaired the hundreds of damaged textbooks we had brought home by late July leaving him unemployed in August. We decided against loosening the spines of the repaired books to keep him occupied. John derived a great deal of pleasure from taped books provided to the blind at no cost. He was continually supplied with tapes suited to his interests, which had been identified by a questionnaire and his initial selections. Cut off from reading and watching TV, the enjoyment he received from audio books was incalculable.

His locomotion problems became more pronounced. He went from independent walking to a cane, a walker, and eventually a wheelchair. There were occasional falls and our household became a familiar stop on the 911 pickup route. We hired a succession of daycare workers to help out and learned how difficult it is to find people willing to do this type of work. Eventually he needed 24-hour care which could not be provided in an ordinary house without major modifications. We went through the typical progression of institutional arrangements, from independent living in his own room with a communal dining facility to a convalescent hospital, with numerous side trips to the emergency room where John appreciated the extra attention. The physical and finally mental deterioration seemed interminable as it occurred but only an eyeblink in retrospect.

As an environmental psychologist, I was given a first-hand opportunity to create a prosthetic environment that could enhance John's declining sensory abilities. This was successful up to the point when 24-hour nursing care was required and a private home no longer suitable. While the end was stressful, it was very enriching for us to have him live with us. It kept Barbara and I from acknowledging our own declines since we had someone in the household who was "really old." This role relationship is becoming more common, in which younger and healthy seniors become caregivers for those older and more frail. John's down-to-earth attitudes provided an antidote to the stuffiness of academe and made possible family gatherings in the household with four generations present. We expect this to occur again but with a different cast of characters.

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## **A DAY-IN-THE-LIFE... of a Population Psychologist**

**A Day in Moscow, September 1998**

Henry P. David, Ph.D.

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It is not so easy to respond to the editor's invitation to write about A Day in the Life of a Population Psychologist. While I have been a population psychologist for more than 30 years, my activities have been primarily outside the United States, working with colleagues from diverse disciplines conducting research in reproductive behavior and women's rights.

A day in Moscow during September 1998, while Russia was experiencing a severe economic, social, and political crisis, may reflect my experience. I flew there from Prague where I had been consulting with my Czech colleagues about the significantly greater incidence of mental health problems around age 35 among the subjects in our longitudinal study of persons born in 1961-63 to women twice denied abortion for the same pregnancy as compared to their controls and siblings.

On arrival in Moscow, I found the generally crowded Sheremetyova Airport much less hectic than usual. Customs was a breeze. There were no forms to complete.

The late afternoon weather was cold and wet. The lobby of the Radisson Hotel was gloomy and nearly empty. At the Reception Desk a sign stated the dollar/ruble exchange rate for hotel guests, a figure far more favorable than what was offered by the bank across the lobby. When asked, the clerk confirmed that the hotel was only half occupied, that supplies were disappearing (no hotel stationary), and that ruble prices were increasing daily while ruble salaries were not being adjusted accordingly.

The purpose of my trip was to participate in a Technical Advisory Board meeting of the Moscow Center for Gender Studies (MCGS) the next morning. MCGS was founded in 1990 as a unit of the Institute of Socio-Economic Population Problems, Russian Academy of Sciences. Most of the meeting was devoted to reviewing survey and interview findings from Rybinsk, an average size town not far from Moscow. It was noted that most couples want more than two children but cannot afford them. Although the contraceptive supply situation is improving and contraceptives constitute 30 percent of a pharmacy's income, many women cannot afford to buy them or remain fearful of side effects. Abortions continue to be readily available in state and commercial facilities. An increasing proportion of women prefer to have children without marrying, afraid that husbands may soon become economically dependent on them.

With the support of the church, pro life organizations have stymied sexuality education in the schools despite parental wishes for such classes. Meanwhile, the incidence of venereal disease is rising. Pregnancies in girls under age 18 are increasing as is prostitution among older students whose educational stipends are insufficient to meet basic needs.

Amidst growing economic crises the struggle for women's rights, especially reproductive rights, has taken a back seat to

assuring daily survival. Salaries are in arrears, pensions are delayed, access to bank accounts is difficult, all giving rise to renewed cynicism. Since people do not believe that laws work, they feel free to violate them. This makes even more difficult MCGS efforts to strengthen the concept of women's rights as human rights in their work with local and regional policy makers, educators, and the media..

In the late afternoon I met with colleagues at the Center for Demography and Human Ecology of the Russian Academy of Sciences to review public health and abortion data. Reported abortions are declining but that may be in part the result of commercial clinics failing to report. At dinner that evening it was impossible to pay by credit card. The restaurant needed cash to replenish funds for the next morning's market.

Despite the prevailing pessimism, I left Moscow with a sense of optimism about the younger generation. Most are becoming effective contraceptors and believe they will have greater opportunities in the future. They seem more willing to stand up for their rights, opposing neofascism, antiabortion movements, and abstinence crusades. There is growing recognition that reproductive rights are a barometer of human rights and that sex education is an indicator of reproductive rights. An itinerant international population psychologist must be optimistic.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Robert Gifford, Ph.D.  
University of Victoria

Where are we? That's the question I asked myself. Your newsletter editor had asked, in her most diplomatic manner, for my column, and everyone is asking this question as the millennium looms. More specifically, whither environmental psychology at 30 (or so)?

Maybe P.J. O'Rourke, the Canadian writer, has it right: "Everybody wants to save the Earth, no one wants to help mom with the dishes." But then, maybe he hasn't got it quite right.

What's on the scorecard? Here's the view from Way Up Here (in Canada). In traditional architecture-oriented environmental psychology, there's war on between budget-cutting governments and architects who have Heard the Message. An architect I know included a pond in the front of the new secondary (high) school he designed. It was devised as a "spontaneous outdoor ecology lesson," the architect said, "that helps to preserve the site's ecosystem." The finance ministry denounced the pond as a frill.

Another local architect sneaked a waterfall into his design for the foyer of another new school. An education ministry official publicly wondered how many additional classrooms or computers could be added if money hadn't been spent on ponds and waterfalls. A third new school here in Victoria is an amazing composition of unusual angles and shadows, was

criticized as "weird" by some letter-writers, yet has won numerous international awards and is, arguably, Canada's most internationally acclaimed project ever. Supposedly, the design did not cost more than any standard school.

Still, the government wants standard, cookie-cutter designs. So, the most recent event on the school-design front was the howl of protest from parents who saw the design for a new school near here. Some compliant architect had brought forth a totally box-like school (it looked a lot like a shoe box). This plan elicited moans and lamentations worthy of the Old Testament from parents because their children were not getting the beautiful designs that the other children were getting. A Vancouver architect, who obviously has Heard the Message, opined that "If you build 'em mean, they'll get treated mean."

So--score one for environmental psychology. Its 30-year old message has largely infiltrated the architecture community, and when parents see one, they naturally want one, too. Only the government, more blind than cash-strapped (not that ours isn't cash-strapped, but the quality designs look expensive, and that doesn't look good to many letter-writers), has not got the message.

What about environmental psychology's natural front? The people of the northwest are into recycling in an even bigger way than ever. An Oregon man is having a de-commissioned Boeing 727 converted into a house on his 10-acre property. How many tin cans' worth of recycling is that worth? An artist in Ontario has created 30-foot high sculptures alongside a major freeway in Toronto that look like giant molars stuck part way into the ground. The molars are stuffed with shredded plastic fluff from recycled cars, and plants grow out the top cavity in the molar. Are the big chompers merely '90s art? No way. Polluted water from the nearby river runs through them, drawn up by solar panels. The plants munch on the toxins, the water drains through the fluff, and clean water runs out the bottom, back into the river. A sculpture that cleans rivers? Sounds implausible? The Ontario Science Center, which is next door to the six pollution-eaters, says the whole thing works, and adds that the plastic fluff does not add any toxins to the water.

Score a couple more for environmental psychology, with an assist to kinetic art.

Another story from my town. A young woman has recycled a 1940s bus into a home and workplace. Next to it is the city's first straw bale building. She says straw bales are an annually renewable resource, compared to the 30 to 100 years needed to grow trees for building, not to mention the ugliness of the clear-cuts that result, as compared to the neatness of a mown hay field. The thick walls, covered with an adobe-like substance, mean energy efficiency: keeps heat in during the winter and out during the summer. Oh yes, the new house's purpose? It is a compost education center.

Add a free throw for environmental psychology to the score card.

How about the design and nature themes of the field combined? In the center of Toronto, in a small park built recently, there are 700 tonnes of granite, plus a waterfall, a pine forest, and metal posts that pump the air full of fog as regularly as Old Faithful. This is, according to the Globe and Mail, "one of the more bizarre works of civic architecture in Canada." Each

of several sections of the urban park represents a different region of Canada, from marshes to plains to mountains. It contains many of the elements William Whyte prescribed for successful plazas over 20 years ago, from waterfalls to performers to sittable space, but goes far wilder than Manhattan's pocket parks. Though it is in a busy part of town, the roar of the "rain fountain" and the seclusion provided by the huge mound of primeval granite drowns out the noise of traffic.

Then there's the renaissance of wind power, around the world. Seven percent of Denmark's total power output is from wind. California's current output (sorry) is enough to run San Francisco. Way Up Here, a poll found that 79 percent think that more wind power should be a major or moderate priority of the utility companies. This fall, Alberta residents became able, for \$7.50 a month, to direct their utility company to purchase wind power, and calls began to pour in even before the program's official launch.

Some governments and many who fund academic positions may not have Heard the Message, but others--architects, artists, and just regular folks--have.

*Robert Gifford's e-mail address is: rgifford@uvic.ca.*

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## LETTERS

*To Robert Gifford, Ph.D.*

*Re: Your column in the Autumn, 1998 issue of PEPB*

It is useful to raise, as you did in your column, the question of how environmental psychology and ecopsychology are, or should be, related. However, discussion of this issue is poorly served by your dichotomy between ecopsychology, which you describe as interested in "big, green" issues but doing no research that meets normal scientific standards, and environmental psychology, which you characterize as doing standard research but rarely on big, green issues. In fact, over the last 30 years there have been quite a lot of research studies of acceptable quality on "big, green" issues (I call them "environmental problems.") Gerald Gardner and I have summarized much of the literature (but cited only a small part of it) in our textbook, *Environmental Problems and Human Behavior* (Allyn and Bacon, 1996). There are more detailed literature reviews available of various parts of this literature. Although you are right that this research topic is not the major one in North American environmental psychology, it is far from insignificant, and it is an obvious link between ecopsychology and the environmental psychology you have in mind. I should add that scientific research on the green issues is a much more lively activity in Europe these days than it is in the United States.

I share some of your uneasiness about the nonscientific aspects of ecopsychology, and perhaps feel it all the more keenly because I know it is possible to do rigorous research on the green issues--including treating the views of ecopsychology practitioners as testable hypotheses about human-environment relations.

*Paul Stern, Ph.D.*

*National Research Council*

*Washington, D.C.*

*Response to Paul Stern:*

You certainly make a good point. I have a copy of your excellent book and I am aware of the environmental problems research within the empirical mainstream of environmental psychology, as my 1987 and 1997 textbooks show. Still, I am sorry the column created a different image for you; I should have been clearer.

When I wrote the column, I was reflecting on my encounters with several ecopsychologists at the 1998 convention in San Francisco. Thinking about the issue again, I see two issues that may have contributed to the misunderstanding. One is that ecopsychologists take, as I understand them, what might be more accurately described as a clinical approach to environmental problems. Second, I believe there are environmental problems, and there are environmental problems. Certainly, mainstream environmental psychology has investigated energy conservation, recycling, litter, resource management, and pollution for 30 years. However, we have not done very much with global warming, biodiversity, habitat destruction, El Nino, or the ozone layer...and these are the very problems that the ecopsychologists focus on. These are the "big, green" kind of environmental problems I was referring to in the column.

By saying that, however, I don't mean to say that the aforementioned problems are not important (I do some of that research myself), and of course the two kinds of environmental problems are inextricably linked. One set of problems (the former) seems more amenable to standard social science research methods, and the other (the latter) does not; perhaps it is a matter of scale.

Anyway, the ecopsychologists approach these questions from a case study methodology, whereas you and I and other environmental psychologists use approaches more familiar to social psychologists, with larger samples, independent and dependent variables, random assignment to conditions (where that is possible), etc.

The ecopsychology approach seems not constrained by these concerns--and possibly even sees rigor as a barrier to understanding and action. Thus ecopsychologists seem to find it easier to speculate on large-scale problems and solutions after employing their methods. This tendency makes some Division 34 members nervous, because traditional environmental psychologists justifiably worry about conclusions drawn from very small samples without the customary scientific rigor.

Nevertheless, the ecopsychologists are an active and organized group, and should be recognized as a group that is trying to solve environmental problems. For that reason, I would like to introduce the two groups more formally, in order to begin a dialog. Hence, I am trying to organize a debate/discussion/roundtable between key figures in environmental psychology and ecopsychology for the Boston convention, in August 1999.

So, Paul, if my misleading column hasn't put you off too much, I would like to ask you to be on this panel. Interested?

With my apology for my column's lack of clarity and my best regards,  
 Robert Gifford  
 President, APA Division 34

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Action Research

A review of: Greenwood, D. J. & Levin, M. (1998). Introduction to action research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN 0-7619-1676-X (paperback-\$34.95).

Reviewed by Robert Sommer, Ph.D., University of California, Davis.

When Nevitt Sanford (1970) asked "Whatever happened to action research?," he was trying to understand why action research (AR) was neglected in academic social psychology while at the same time gaining influence in applied fields such as education, business, and international development. This book, the result of an 11 year collaboration between a sociologist and an anthropologist, answers Sanford's question based on an analysis of power relations in the larger society and in academe. They view AR as fundamentally subversive to the societal power structure which is not likely to support its use.

The authors' conception of AR as the conjunction of research, action, and practice is traced to Lewin's interest in solving real-world problems. They quote with approbation Lewin's statement that the best way to understand something is to try to change it. Earlier roots of AR are seen in Dewey's pragmatism with its commitment to democracy and its refusal to separate thought from action. The authors believe that AR can and should be scientific and quantitative, although it can include qualitative elements to encompass process. The book contains excellent sections on training practitioners in the hopes of developing a science of practice. The authors maintain that practitioners require group facilitation skills, must be able to write strong narratives (we would call this case study writing), and must possess the ability to move seamlessly between thought and action. These recommendations will appeal to many environment-behavior researchers (EBR). Similar to AR, our field differs from academic psychology by its more frequent use of field rather than laboratory methods, its attempts to address real-world problems, and in its insistence on the importance of context and local knowledge, multi-method designs, and emphasis on user involvement.

Greenwood and Levin do not accept Lewin's approach uncritically. They reject his experiments aimed at producing short-term changes in attitude and behavior, what they call "drive-by one shot interventions." In this respect their epistemologies differ radically from mainstream environmental psychology. Having defined AR as research with a social change agenda, the authors argue that the pace and direction of change should be set by the stakeholders, particularly the disempowered and oppressed. Translating this to into our jargon the authors would insist that environment-behavior researchers who undertake a needs analysis or post-occupancy evaluation should have a transformative vision for the democratization of power, in that "AR explicitly seeks to disrupt existing power

relationships for the purpose of democratizing society" (p. 88). This goal immediately comes up against the interests of those with power, and in EBR this means clients such as building owners, managers, government agencies, architects, planners, and developers. In a housing project, the authors would have us work with tenants with the avowed goal of increasing their power vis-à-vis management.

Those in EBR who share this view are likely to keep it to themselves, at least on grant applications and discussions with potential clients. The emphasis on a superordinate goal of empowerment raises the question of whether one can practice the authors' variety of AR (and they acknowledge it is not in the mainstream even of AR practice) without carrying the ideological baggage. Can one leave this suitcase at the station in going out on a job? The authors reject this possibility and criticize those who employ participatory methods on single projects without striving to change larger power relations. They do not believe that social research can be transformative without an explicitly ideological agenda. This view is not likely to gain many followers among environmental psychologists, which is regrettable as there are many valuable sections in the book that apply directly to EBR.

Ideology is not a commonly discussed issue at our meetings. I have a transformative vision in that I came into this field to make a better world. Sadly, if I state this to colleagues, it provokes embarrassment, silence, and appears to raise questions about my objectivity. As a consequence, I keep my ideology to myself, as do my colleagues. How would it appear on a grant application or discussion with a potential client if I stated that I wanted to change power relations in their organization or in the larger society? This is not a major concern to the book's authors who are tenured professors and wrote the book, as they state with apparent pride in the Acknowledgment, without financial support from any granting agency.

Environmental psychologists most often cite proximate objectives, e.g. to improve the fit between occupants and the built environment, identify sources of stress in the city, or document the positive effects of contact with nature. Greenwood and Levin criticize this approach as short-sighted and ineffective, and save some of their harshest words for the type of evaluation that predominates in EBR, which they consider to be authoritarian and oppressive. In its place they would substitute participatory evaluation in which users set the criteria and gather the information needed. The book ends without a conclusion since the authors believe this will take place in the real world.

### Reference

Sanford, N. (1970). Whatever happened to action research?  
*Journal of Social Issues*, 26, 3-23.

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### Whither Social Psychology?

A Review of: Craig McGarty and S. Alexander Halsam (Eds.), *The Message of Social Psychology*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell. ISBN: 0631197818 (paperback, £15.99) ISBN: 0631197796 (hardcover, £50.00).

Reviewed by Barbara A. Bremer, Ph.D., Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg

Following years of trying to explain the nature of social psychology and its lessons to undergraduate students, Craig McGarty and Alexander Halsam posed the question to a large number of social psychologists "What are the principal lessons to be learned from social psychology?" Twenty-five psychologists responded and the book is a collection of 22 essays describing the lessons from the perspective of the contributing authors. As expected, the answers are as numerous as there are chapters. The editors chose to present the essays in alphabetical order rather than try to impose their own organization on the responses. They describe the collection as a *Festschrift* for the discipline of social psychology, though expressing the hope that social psychology is not nearing the end of its career.

The intended audience is undergraduate students, but the diversity of answers as well as the lack of an organizing structure and a commentary at the end to help pull it all together would make the book quite difficult for beginning undergraduate students. The volume would be more appreciated by advanced undergraduate students, and even more so by graduate students and social psychologists who have the background to understand all the nuances associated with the concepts as well as the experience in extracting themes and imposing structure. With that said, I will review some of the highlights from the book. Unfortunately within the limitations of the review it is impossible to do justice to the responses presented, or even attempt to share them all. This is book worth reading to get a feel for how social psychologists understand the contributions of their discipline.

It is quite fitting that the book begins with Elliott Aronson's perspective. He chose to focus on cognitive dissonance because dissonance research startled the psychological community in the 1950s when it was found that small rewards or threats produce more pronounced and longer lasting effects than did large rewards or threats. Reinforcement theory could not account for this. Even more importantly, the methodological advances required by dissonance research fostered the growth of experimental realism in social psychological research. Aronson wrote that the demands of the hypotheses "brought into focus more clearly than any other body of work ... the fact that the social psychological laboratory, with all its contrivances and complex scenarios, can produce clear, powerful effects which are conceptually replicable in both the laboratory and in the real world" (p. 27). Sadly, Aronson pointed out that 20 years later this important body of work was largely forgotten as the profession became swept up in the wave of cognitive heuristic research. In the 1990s the circle is continuing, and the limitations of purely cognitive explanations are apparent. Once again the role of motivation is recognized. Just as Festinger

(1957) suggested was needed 40 years ago, social psychologists are now looking to integrate cognition and motivation into a single explanation of behavior. But Aronson pointed out, that rather than place this marriage of processes under the umbrella of dissonance, which is consistent with the findings, a plethora of new mini-theories are being developed. Aronson cited self-affirmation, symbolic self-completion, motivated reasoning, self-evaluation maintenance, self-discrepancy, and self-verification theories as examples of the profession's emphasis on analysis rather than synthesis. By that he meant going for micro-level delineation and differentiation of concepts seems to be more valued in the field than is the macro-level of looking for the commonality in various research outcomes, and subsuming them under one theoretical umbrella. To this reader it seems that we have done more than lose dissonance theory. We are losing the Law of Parsimony which is so crucial for science.

The need to turn away from this tendency to develop progressively more narrow theories was reiterated in the essay by Eliot Smith and Diane Mackie. Unlike Aronson, however, Smith and Mackie saw social cognition as the vehicle to provide the perspective for integrating research. They argued that there are two universal principles which exist and contribute to unifying the theoretical base: social construction and social influence.

Miles Hewstone wrote that the number of universal parameters which are fundamental to social psychology was three: level of analysis; methodological approaches; and statistical sophistication. Bibb Latane proposed four components of an overarching dynamic social impact theory as crucial for changing people's behavior. His perspective is quite optimistic in that he viewed the numerous subcultures within a society as being responsive to external as well as internal cues to action. This offers hope for developing interventions which may impact on the many social issues which threaten our society.

Several other essays emphasized that understanding the role of culture was social psychology's biggest challenge. Michael Billig pointed to the language of social interaction as being critical. He built a strong case for integrating historical and anthropological context into the explanation. Social psychological research is often criticized as being a study of the obvious; common sense would predict the results as well as the theories we develop to explain behavior. Billig presented an analysis of the role of socially constructed views in producing a social group's own common sense. To the extent that research findings are consistent with our national identity, which Billig contended was defined by our ideological common sense, it is not surprising that the results are perceived as obvious. Rather than being a shortcoming, perhaps it could be looked upon as validating the research finding to have the results be consistent with one's identity and ideology. Like Aronson, Billig looked for synthesis rather than analysis. He suggested that we need what seems to be an even larger umbrella under which to place our explanations. Billig wrote that this broad conceptualization of issues needs to be a more interdisciplinary world view. It is not clear to me, however, at what point this multidisciplinary synthesis becomes too general to be useful as a theory. Despite

this caution there are many good reasons to include understanding the cultural component as important for making sense out of social psychology, and as necessary for resolving societal issues, presented in this and in other essays in the volume.

Albert Pepitone, on the other hand, challenged the idea that there can be universal theories which make the same predictions across cultures. He stressed that culture has profound effects on nonmaterial beliefs, such as magic, spirits, and paranormal abilities. Pepitone has found that these nonmaterial beliefs are a strong influence on people. He suggested that social psychology will continue to struggle with trying to understand behavior until these elusive concepts are incorporated into the research agenda.

Marilynn Brewer built a good case for the we-them phenomenon as being a natural outgrowth of the competing forces of assimilation and differentiation. She wrote that the universal positivity bias towards people we perceive to be similar to ourselves is a necessary adaptation to group living. Willem Doise saw a similar lesson in social psychology, and he also pointed to the need to integrate multiple theories into an overarching governing principle.

For Richard Petty the lesson was that social psychologists need to stop looking for single effects and single processes as explanations. He believes that the wide range of human behavior is too complex to be reduced to such minute relationships.

Martin Fishbein was the lone voice in this volume warning that this Festschrift might actually be appropriate because social psychology may be nearing the end of its career. Social psychology has not been as responsive as Fishbein believes it should be to social issues. He pointed to the splintering off of sub-fields of applied social psychology into separate disciplines, such as consumer, environmental, and health psychology, because social psychology has been unwilling to deal with those real-world issues. Fishbein's lesson is a cautionary one to the field. We need to pay attention to the relevancy of the discipline for solving real world problems if social psychology is to survive. He indicated that the fundamental question social psychologists should be asking is simply "Why do people behave the way they do?" It is fundamental because it is the pathway by which we can hope to effect the behavioral changes needed to solve contemporary social problems.

#### References

- Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.
- McGaraty, C. & Haslam, S. A., Eds. (1997). *The message of social psychology*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS: PEPB SILVER ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

1999 marks the 25th anniversary of the creation of what is now APA Division 34, Population and Environmental Psychology. The Autumn, 1999 issue of *Population and Environmental Psychology Bulletin* will commemorate the achievements of this quarter-century. **Contributions are solicited especially from members involved in the creation of the division and in the unification of population and environmental psychologists into one division. Personal recollections are particularly encouraged.**

**Send contributions to** Jennifer A. Veitch, Ph.D., Editor. Electronic submissions are preferred, by e-mail to [jennifer.veitch@nrc.ca](mailto:jennifer.veitch@nrc.ca).

### CONFERENCE ON AGING AND THE WEB Older Adults, Health Information, and the World Wide Web

March 25 - 26, 1999

Natcher Center, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland

In just 10 years, one-third of the U.S. population will be age 50 or older. This "maturing market" is the fastest growing market segment and the fastest growing group of Internet users today. We invite you to join nearly 250 leading academic, private, and government experts for a conference, "Older Adults, Health Information, and the World Wide Web" to gain a better understanding of the maturing market which will control an estimated 900 billion dollars in discretionary income. The conference is hosted by The SPRY Foundation, Washington, D. C. and The University of Georgia Gerontology Center. It will take place on the National Institutes of Health campus in Bethesda, Maryland, March 25 - 26, 1999. Experts from the National Institutes of Health - National Library of Medicine, National Institute on Aging, The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, The Health Care Financing Administration, and other government agencies, as well as universities, and private and corporate organizations from around the country will meet to share effective strategies using the World Wide Web to reach older adults with important health care information. The conference will be of particular interest to basic and applied researchers in cognition and aging, clinicians, senior marketing management for products and services for the elderly, communications managers, and website designers.

#### Conference Objectives:

1. Identify the "state of the art" work being conducted to increase the use of computers and the World Wide Web by older adults. Both (a) basic applied cognitive aging research in this area and (b) hands-on application through innovative demonstration projects focused primarily on the delivery of

health care information and health care provision will be included in the discussion.

2. Isolate the current problems in health information delivery to older adults and their caregivers and construct models via the World Wide Web to alleviate these problems.

3. Identify key impediments which older adults currently face regarding use of the World Wide Web to access health information. Determine solutions to these impediments through a cross-fertilization of ideas between basic researchers in aging and computer use and health information providers.

4. Define specific areas of future research on older adults' use of the World Wide Web that will support functional independence.

5. Identify key individuals and institutions involved in developing these areas of work, thus encouraging communication on this topic among basic researchers and health information providers nationally and internationally. Electronic Poster Boards Two rooms in The Natcher Center will be set aside to accommodate up to 24 tabletop personal computers (PCs) that will be hooked up to the Internet via a T3 local area network (LAN) connection. We invite attendees to display current health information websites, particularly those that have been designed specifically with older adults as the target audience, in addition to other business or institutional Websites. All pre-registrants to the conference will be provided a booklet containing forms seeking constructive critiques for each display website. Attendees can fill out these forms at their leisure while attending the conference. There is a charge of \$250 to display an electronic poster.

For more information about registration for the Conference or registration to display an electronic poster, please contact: The SPRY Foundation 10 G Street, NE, Suite 600 Washington, D.C., 20002-4215 spryfoundation@pcpssm.org Telephone: (202) 216-8467 FAX: (202) 216-0779 or The Georgia Gerontology Center 100 Candler Hall The University of Georgia Athens, GA 30602-1775 rmorrell@geron.uga.edu Telephone (706) 542-3954 FAX: (706) 542-4805 Or visit the SPRY Foundation Website: <http://www.spry.org> or the UGA Gerontology Center Website: <http://www.geron.uga.edu>.

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**STUDENT RESEARCH GRANTS  
SOCIETY FOR THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF  
SEXUALITY**

Each year The Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality awards three grants of \$750 each to students who are doing sexuality research. Funds to support these grants are provided by The Foundation for the Scientific Study of Sexuality (FSSS), a nonprofit organization devoted exclusively to supporting scientific research related to sexuality.

The purpose of the research can be a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, but this is not a requirement. Applicants must be enrolled in a degree-granting program.

*Deadline:* February 1, 1999; September 1, 1999

*Contact:* Ilsa Lottes, Ph.D. The Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality (SSSS) P.O. Box 208 Mount Vernon, IA 52314-0208 USA. Phone: 319-895-8407 FAX: 319-895-6203  
WWW: [http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/ssss/awards\\_grants.htm](http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/ssss/awards_grants.htm)

The full call may be read at <http://www.usalert.com/htdoc/usoa/fnd/any/any/proc/any/ssss06259801.htm>

Reprinted from the National Communication Association listserv.

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**SOCIETY FOR THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF  
SOCIAL ISSUES (SPSSI)**

**SPSSI Grants-in-Aid Program 1998-99**

The SPSSI Committee on Grants-in-Aid has funds of up to \$2,000\* per grant available for scientific research in social problem areas related to the basic interests and goals of SPSSI and particularly those that are not likely to receive support from traditional sources. The Committee especially encourages proposals involving (a) unique and timely research opportunities, (b) under-represented institutions, new investigators, (c) volunteer research teams, and (d) actual, not pilot, projects. Funds are not normally provided for travel to conventions, travel or living expenses while conducting research, stipends of principal investigators, costs associated with manuscript preparation, or the indirect costs of institutions.

Funding up to \$1,000\* is available for graduate student research, with strong preference given to applications from students at the dissertation stage of the graduate career. Such proposals must be accompanied by an appropriate official university agreement to match the amount requested. This matching requirement will not be waived for institutions that have adopted a policy of not providing matching funds to support graduate student research.

SPSSI wishes not only to be responsive to research on social issues but to stimulate the development of proposals in certain areas. Clara Mayo, SPSSI President, 1981-1982, had a particular and energetic commitment to the study of sexism and racism. In honor of her memory, we therefore welcome proposals in these areas. The Grants-in-Aid Program is sponsored in part by the Sophie and Shirley Cohen Memorial Fund and through membership contributions.

Proposals for highly timely and event-oriented research may be submitted at any time during the year. They will be reviewed within one month of receipt on an ad hoc basis by the committee. Investigators who believe their proposal fits this category should clearly state that fact in a cover letter accompanying the proposal. All other applicants should submit proposals **postmarked by November 13 and April 1** for consideration at the fall and spring committee meetings, respectively. Applications are evaluated by at least two committee reviewers. Funds are made available immediately upon approval. Institution IRB approvals must accompany all submissions.

*How to Apply:* There are no formal application blanks-, interested persons should submit four complete copies of a statement that includes:

1. A cover sheet stating title of proposal, name of Investigator, address, phone, and fax number.
2. An abstract of 100 words or less summarizing the proposed research.
3. Project purposes, theoretical rationale, and research methodology and analytical procedures to be employed.
4. Relevance of research to SPSSI goals and Grants-in-Aid criteria.
5. Status of human subjects review process (which must be satisfactorily completed before grant funds can be forwarded).
6. Resume of investigator (a faculty sponsor's recommendation must be provided if the investigator is a grad student; support is seldom awarded to students who have not yet reached the dissertation stage).
7. Specific amount requested including a budget. For co-authored submissions, please Indicate only one name and institution to whom a check should be jointly issued if selected for funding.

A recommended length for the combined Points (1) through (4) of the proposal is 5-7 double-spaced, typed pages. The entire submission should be sent in quadruplicate (4) to the Chair of the Grants-in-Aid Program. Applicants may submit only one grant application per deadline.

*Send to:*

SPSSI

Attn: Grants-in-Aid Program  
P.O. Box 1248  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248

*Overnight Mail Only:*

SPSSI

Attn: Grants-in-Aid Program  
343 S. Main St., Suite 200  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

**Committee Members:** Chris Crandall, Ph.D., Chair

\*Under exceptional circumstances or in cases of unique merit, awards in larger amounts will be considered.

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## SPSSI-SPONSORED CONFERENCES

### **International Conference on Immigrants and Immigration**

Toronto, Canada  
August 12-15, 1999

#### CALL FOR PROPOSALS

This international conference will bring psychologists and other relevant researchers together to discuss all aspects of research on immigrants and immigration, including responses of members of host countries to immigrants and immigration, and the experiences of immigrant groups. Possible topics include: determinants of policy support, intergroup attitudes and relations, multiculturalism, ethnic identity, and acculturation.

We invite proposals from all researchers examining issues relevant to immigrants and immigration. The program will include symposia, posters, and round-table discussions. Graduate students are encouraged to participate. *Deadline:* The deadline for receipt of proposals is Monday MARCH 15, 1999.

For further information and to obtain copies of the call for proposals, contact: Victoria Esses, Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario Canada N6A 5C2, telephone: 519-679-2111 Ext. 4650, Internet: vesses@julian.uwo.ca. Additional information and updates on the conference will be available on the internet at [www.spssi.org/immigrantcnf.html](http://www.spssi.org/immigrantcnf.html)

### **Hate Crimes: Research, Policy, and Action Conference**

University of California at Los Angeles  
October 8-10, 1999

#### CALL FOR PROPOSALS

This conference, sponsored by SPSSI, will be the first opportunity for individuals to convene together and comprehensively address the problem of hate crimes. The conference will bring together professionals in the fields of mental health, human relations, social science, law enforcement, advocacy, and public policy.

Proposals are solicited for the following formats. Each proposal should include a 100 word abstract, a summary of up to 1000 words, presenter name and address, and two self-addressed envelopes. The proposal should address one of the conference topics of research, intervention, prevention, or public policy. *Formats*

1. Original Research and Project Descriptions Preliminary field studies and new researchers are encouraged to submit their work to be presented in poster format at the program.

2. Knowledge-Building Workshops Experienced professionals in the field of hate violence prevention and intervention are encouraged to submit proposals for three hour skill and knowledge building sessions on any aspect of the field of hate crimes and intergroup relations. Workshop sessions will emphasize skill and knowledge development for audience participants.

3. Concept and Research Papers are solicited for inclusion on panels concerning hate violence research, prevention, and response.

*Deadline:* Send proposals to Dr. Amy Marcus-Newhall, Dept. of Psychology, Scripps College, 1030 Columbia Ave., Claremont, CA 91711-3948 no later than MARCH 1, 1999.

For more information, contact Dr. Jeanine Cogan at (202) 543-3842 or by e-mail at [jeanine.cogan@mail.house.gov](mailto:jeanine.cogan@mail.house.gov). You can also get information from the conference web site at [www.spssi.org/hatecrimes.html](http://www.spssi.org/hatecrimes.html).

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**RECONSTRUCTING HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY:  
CRITICAL AND QUALITATIVE APPROACHES**

An International Conference

29-31 July, 1999

St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada

The past decade has seen a growing interest in critical ideas and qualitative methods throughout psychology. In addition, there is increasing awareness of the social, cultural and material foundations of health and illness. This conference has been convened to consider the impact of these ideas within health psychology and to discuss how health psychologists can develop theories and methods which can not only lead to a better understanding of health and illness but also contribute more to the creation of a healthier society.

The conference will consist of keynote papers by leading international speakers, workshops and free papers.

Further details are available on our web page: <http://www.med.mun.ca/health99>

You can also contact the conference office at [health99@morgan.ucs.mun.ca](mailto:health99@morgan.ucs.mun.ca)

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**TRANSPORTATION/AIR QUALITY PUBLIC  
INFORMATION INITIATIVE - EPA**

**"It All Adds Up to Cleaner Air"**

FY 99 Demonstration Communities

Request for Proposals

[Federal Register: January 13, 1999 (Volume 64, Number 8)]

**AGENCIES:** Office of Mobile Sources, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation (DOT).

**SUMMARY:** A few years ago, the EPA's Office of Mobile Sources (OMS) and DOT's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) began a collaborative public education and partnership building program to be implemented at the community level. This effort, entitled "It All Adds Up to Cleaner Air," is designed to inform the public about the connections between their transportation choices, traffic congestion, air pollution and public health. The

initiative emphasizes the ability of individuals to make a difference when they are informed about the environmental consequences of their daily travel choices. Through this document, OMS, FHWA, and FTA are soliciting proposals from organizations and communities around the country who would benefit from participation as Demonstration Communities in the "It All Adds Up to Cleaner Air" initiative.

**DATES:** Deadline for Proposals is March 5, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** This document can also be accessed at no cost by contacting: Federal Register Web Page:

[http://www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/aces/aces140.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html)

DOT/Federal Highway Administration Web Page: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/pubout.htm>

EPA's Office of Mobile Sources Web Page: <http://www.epa.gov/oms> - Click on "What's New"

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Susan Bullard, Director of Outreach and Communication; EPA Office of Mobile Sources; 401 M Street SW (Mail code 6401); Washington, DC 20460; (Phone) 202/260-2614; (Fax) 202/260-6011; [bullard.susan@epa.gov](mailto:bullard.susan@epa.gov).

The full call may be read at <http://www.usalert.com/htdoc/fed/epa/any/any/proc/any/fr01139901.htm>

Reprinted from the listserv of the National Communication Association.

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**DESIGN RESEARCH SOCIETY**

The Design Research Society was established in 1967, reflecting a belief among academics and professionals from different design communities that the essence of the activity called design was common to many disciplines.

The Society has facilitated an international design research network in 35 countries comprising members who maintain contact through the publications and activities of the Society. Members are drawn from diverse backgrounds, not only from the traditional areas of design, ranging from fine art to engineering, but also from subjects like psychology and computer science.

The goals of the Society are to:

- promote communication across the boundaries of all design disciplines
- provide a forum to exchange and communicate ideas, experience and research findings
- promote the improvement of practical design performance in all its aspects
- contribute to the development of a coherent body of scholarship and knowledge in design

Membership is open to individuals and costs only UK pounds 15 per year. Members are entitled to the following:

- Newsletter of the Society
- Reduced rate subscription to the journal 'Design Studies', published in association with the Society by Elsevier-Butterworth-Heinemann
- Occasional mailings to members

- Invitations and reduced admission charges to seminars and conferences organised by the Society

For further details and an application form, contact the membership secretary:

Professor Robert Jerrard, School of Design Research, Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, University of Central England, Corporation Street, Birmingham, UK B4 7DX. tel: +44 (0)121 331 7807 fax: +44 (0)121 333 5569. email bob.jerrard@uce.ac.uk

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Further information about the Design Research Society can be found at: <<http://www.drs.org.uk>>

**Free Electronic Services of the Design Research Society**

*DRS ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER*

DRS\_NEWS is the electronic newsletter of the Design Research Society. It communicates news about research throughout the world. It is mailed automatically at the beginning of each month. To have monthly copies of DRS\_NEWS emailed to you automatically, it is necessary to join the 'Design-Research' mailing list.

Send an email message to: mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk (leave the 'subject' line blank ie. press 'return')

Type a message which reads:  
JOIN DESIGN-RESEARCH yourFirstName yourLastName

Past copies of DRS\_NEWS can also be found at <<http://www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists-a-e/design-research> listed by month.

*DRS DISCUSSION LIST*

DRS is the discussion list now open for unmoderated discussion on all matters related to design research. To monitor and/or join discussions on design research emailed to you automatically it is necessary to join the 'DRS' mailing list.

Send an email message to: mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk (leave the 'subject' line blank ie. press 'return')

Type a message which reads:  
JOIN DRS yourFirstName yourLastName

Archived copies of these discussions can also be found at <<http://www.mailbase.ac.uk/lists-a-e/drs> listed by month.

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**HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR INFORMATION TRANSFER (HABIT)**

A free email newsletter for the health and behavior research community

HABIT is edited by The Center for the Advancement of Health for the Health and Behavior Alliance. The Alliance is 25 professional research societies, representing over 250,000 researchers, working together to increase the priority of and resources devoted to health and behavior research. Find

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The Alliance is organized by the Center for the Advancement of Health, a nonprofit policy organization that promotes an understanding of health as a dynamic relationship between biology, behavior, emotion, and social context. The Center is funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Nathan Cummings Foundation. Contact the Center: <[Rneff@cfah.org](mailto:Rneff@cfah.org)> or (202)387-2829. Visit our website: <<http://www.cfah.org/>>.

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**EDRA30 CONFERENCE**

EDRA 30 will be held at the Grosvenor Resort in Orlando, Florida, June 2-6, 1999. The conference organizers invite the participation of design educators and professionals, planners, social scientists, and others interested in the relationship of people and places and the design and management of places that are responsive to human needs. EDRA's annual conference provides researchers, practitioners, and others with an opportunity to learn about the latest developments in the field of environmental design research, and to exchange information on the state of behavior-oriented design and research. EDRA Conferences also qualify for AIA Continuing Education Credit.

For more information, visit the Environmental Design Research Association, on the WWW at <http://www.telepath.com/edra/home.html> or contact EDRA by e-mail at [edra@telepath.com](mailto:edra@telepath.com). Telephone: (405)330-4863 (voice) (405)330-4150 (fax). Mailing Address: P.O. Box 7146, Edmond, OK 73083-7146.

<p><b>Visit the APA Division 34 WWW Site!</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.up.ac.za/academic/psychol/apadiv34/apadiv34.htm">http://www.up.ac.za/academic/psychol/apadiv34/apadiv34.htm</a></p> <p>Webmaster Andre Fiedelday, Ph.D. needs your contributions to keep the page up-to-date. E-mail him at <a href="mailto:fiedeld@libarts.up.ac.za">fiedeld@libarts.up.ac.za</a>.</p>
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## NEWS FROM THE WORLD-WIDE WEB

### Does Living in California Make People Happy?

Study indicates why people sometimes think  
the grass is greener than it actually is

*September 1998 Psychological Science*

Do the sunnier skies and warmer climates of California make one more satisfied with their life? That, apparently is the perception, according to a new research article published in the September issue of *Psychological Science*, a journal of the American Psychological Society, that indicated that easily observed and distinctive differences--such as climate--between locations are given more weight in judging life satisfaction than they actually have in reality.

"It can be difficult to predict what it will be like to live in a different location," said researcher David Schkade, of the University of Texas, who, with Daniel Kahneman of Princeton University, co-authored "Does Living in California Make People Happy: A focusing illusion in judgments of life satisfaction."

Schkade added: "Without direct experience to rely on, we often focus on the new location's most easily observed features, especially those that differ from our current situation. Unfortunately, the most obvious differences between locations, such as climate, are not always the most important determinants of happiness."

Researchers asked Midwesterners and Southern Californians to rate life satisfaction for themselves and for someone similar to themselves in the other region. While response rates for their own satisfaction was similar in both areas of the country, participants expected Californians to be more satisfied than Midwesterners when they evaluated life satisfaction for their similar counterpart, citing climate-related aspects.

"When people focus attention on a possible change in their lives, such as moving to a new place, they are likely to exaggerate the effect of this change on their well-being, for better or for worse," Schkade said. "People sometimes wonder what it would be like to be in another job, in another city, or with another companion. These thoughts can lead us to false hopes, since the factors that determine how attractive something appears often differ from those that determine how good it is to have."

This illusion is not limited to how satisfied one is with his or her life, he added.

"A politician may take advantage of the focusing illusion by announcing small initiatives with great fanfare, encouraging the erroneous belief that these initiatives will make a substantial difference in citizens' lives," Schkade said. "We are also exposed to many messages in the media that encourage us to believe that changing our weight, our scent, our hair color (or coverage), our car, or our clothes will produce marked improvements in our happiness. Some of these changes may indeed make some people happier, but there are many more cases in which the messages merely exploit a focusing illusion."

Our research suggests a moral, and a warning: Nothing that you focus on will make as much difference as you think."

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