



Progress Notes

A Look Back and a Step Forward

Welcome to the Department

I hope the new year finds you rested and well. Our department has much good news to report. As we, like others across the country, persevere through budget-related strains, faculty remain committed to both graduate and undergraduate students. In 2008, we navigated the department's decade review required by the Board of Regents. This involved a thorough self-analysis of all aspects of our work: the quality of our major and graduate programs, the quality of our research, grant productivity, the impact of our outreach programs, and alumni feedback and success. Three faculty from peer institutions reviewed our report, and we hosted their whirlwind site visit. I am pleased to say that their evaluation was very positive; they were particularly impressed with the quality of our faculty and their dedication to

teaching, research, and service. The review process was an opportunity to reflect on past accomplishments and plan for the future.

This newsletter mirrors our looking back and stepping forward. Emeritus faculty member, and roving reporter, Robert Peterson shares his experiences at the 100th birthday of Dr. Sid Bijou. We treasure Dr. Bijou's years at UNR and miss both his intellectual contributions and warm interpersonal style. Articles on three newer faculty share our excitement about their work and the new opportunities they bring to graduate students.

We are working hard to continue to offer students the best possible education in psychology, even with budget constraints. However, student funding is limited. I know you are called



Victoria Follette, Ph.D.

Psychology Department Chair

on to support important causes while feeling limited in your resources this year. I greatly appreciate any donation to our scholarship programs you can make. Page 6 lists our scholarships and describes how to contribute. This year we were able to provide support for graduates to present research at national conferences, but without additional funding we may not be able to continue this help. Thank you for your support and, as always, please contact me if you have any questions or concerns about the department.

-- Victoria M. Follette

Sidney W. Bijou: The First 100 years

Robert F. Peterson, Professor Emeritus University of Nevada, Reno

On November 12, 2008 Sid Bijou celebrated his 100th birthday. For those not familiar with his career, Sid was a clinician, a developmental psychologist, a theoretician, and one of the founders of applied behavior analysis. His work has had widespread influence. His Mexican students and colleagues call him "The father of behavior analysis in Mexico." Students, practitioners and faculty in the United States, Canada, Japan, Norway, Taiwan and several other countries have stood on the shoulders of Sid's work and further advanced our understanding

of behavior and clinical practice.

Here's a bit of history. Sid studied with Iowa psychologists Curt Lewin, and Kenneth Spence (from whom he received his PhD in 1941) and while Director of the ...(cont. p4)



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A New Face in Faculty: Clinical Psychology Tony Papa, Ph.D.

Our new faculty, Tony Papa, comes to us from a three-year postdoctoral fellowship at the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (NCPTSD) at the Boston VA Healthcare System under the mentorship of Dr. Brett Litz. During his fellowship, his work consisted of clinical intervention with veterans' service-related psychopathology, research on the development of early interventions for trauma and pathological grief in both military and civilian populations, and research on internet-delivered psychotherapy. Prior to that, Tony

completed his Ph.D. at Teachers College, Columbia University under the mentorship of Dr. George Bonanno where his research focused on (1) how expression of specific emotions in social contexts can influence long-term adjustment in bereaved and non-bereaved populations, (2) functional theories of emotion, and (3) the features and course of pathological and normal grief.

At UNR, Dr. Papa plans to continue his work on the effect of non-verbal expression of emotion on availability of social resources during



*Tony
Papa
Ph.D.*

*Clinical
Faculty*

copied with adversity, the links between people's temperament and patterns of non-verbal expression and recognition of specific emotions in clinical and non-clinical populations, and the development of effective treatments for pathological grief. He brings to our clinical psychology program expertise in prevention and treatment of mood and anxiety disorders, especially as a consequence of trauma and loss.



*Jeffrey J.
Hustler,
Ph.D.*

*Cognitive
Brain
Science
Faculty*

Faculty Spotlights: Cognitive Brain Science Jeffrey J. Hustler, Ph.D.

Dr. Hutsler's research focuses on the organization and development of the cerebral cortex in humans and how circuits in the human brain might be specially constructed to support complex cognitive abilities. Currently, his lab studies the organization of the cortex in autism spectrum disorders in order to better understand how alterations to the micro-circuitry of the brain might be related to the pattern of cognitive strengths and weaknesses demonstrated by individuals with autism. In addition, Dr. Hutsler has an interest in primate brain evolution and how changes to specific periods of development may drive the elaboration and evolution of neuronal circuits and the complex behaviors that they support.

In humans much of the maturation of the cerebral cortex occurs after birth and extends through the first several years of life. During this time

connections between cortical neurons are being added and removed. Thus, the establishment of connectivity between cortical neurons occurs when the developing cortex is exposed to a great deal of postnatal environmental input. This is important because cortical organization relies on the interplay between genetic instructions, relatively fixed expectancies in the environment, and variable exposure to specific events to shape the connections between both local and distant cortical neurons. Dr. Hutsler's work is specifically interested in how these processes construct the cortex in autism spectrum disorders. In autism it is has been proposed that there are both local, short-range over connectivity and long-range under connectivity. Previously his laboratory has found evidence of increased connections on single neurons in the cortex of autistic individuals that are associated with greater levels of cognitive impairment. Currently, he is examining whether connections between the two halves of the brain are also altered. If long-range connections are altered in autism, this would limit the

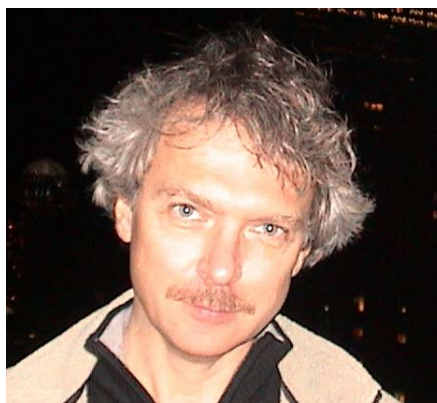
coordinated activity between brain regions that is critical to the performance of complex cognitive tasks. Such findings have potentially profound implications for early intervention, treatment, and childhood education in this population.

Dr. Hutsler's lab also explores issues of cortical evolution and its contribution to complex cognitive abilities in primates. He has just finished a study examining the evolutionary relationship between the early environment, cortical expansion and social behaviors in a dataset that includes over 100 primate species. Interestingly, there appears to be a very strong relationship between early developmental periods when young primates are attached to their mother and the expression of intelligent behaviors such as tool use, social learning, and the ability to produce innovative problem solving. This relationship persists robustly even when factors such as group size, species size, lifespan, and overall brain size are controlled...

(cont. p 3)

Faculty Spotlights: Mark Alavosius, Ph.D. Behavior Analysis Program

There is a startling high occurrence of unintentional injuries in the context of everyday life. Workers are injured or killed while at work. Commuters suffer similarly during travel. Athletes are hurt or killed during sports. An inventory of sad outcomes across common, every day exposures is extensive and is in part due to risks inherent in the activities that we do at work and play. Underlying these unfortunate events is our behavior that might prevent harmful outcomes or make them more likely. Most people attribute 'accidents' to chance or some random events and dismiss deliberate actions by themselves to prevent such 'accidents' as unnecessary caution. Again and again people take risks because they either have not learned safer alternatives or choose to take risks. For example, machine operators may not have learned the safe sequence for energizing equipment... and are caught in moving parts. Or, a forklift driver chooses not to wear a seatbelt as it feels restrictive and believes the chance of a roll-over incident is slight. Similarly a skier enters the Chutes at Mt. Rose without wearing a helmet or checking the latest avalanche report, or cyclist commutes to UNR and swerves through traffic on South Virginia Street and ignores traffic signs. These are ubiquitous events that occur in everyone's experience and occasionally



Mark Alavosius, Ph.D., Behavior Analysis

lead to life-changing and devastating outcomes.

Dr. Alavosius began his professional interests in safety as a Staff Psychologist in a facility for the developmentally disabled in Massachusetts. At one point his caseload was comprised of medically-frail individuals who required routine nursing and medical care. He found that a number of his co-workers were injured during the delivery of services to these clients with back injuries being the prevalent problem. These were incurred during the lifting, transferring, and positioning of nonambulatory individuals.

When Dr. Alavosius entered graduate school at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, his mentor, Dr. Beth Sulzer-Azaroff was beginning a line of research in industrial settings

to study behavior-based safety. Dr. Alavosius conducted his thesis and dissertation research in the area of health-care safety and began an enduring professional interest in promoting occupational safety.

For a large segment of his career, Dr. Alavosius was a manager and researcher in a management company that provided worker's compensation programs for small employers in New England. As Director of Loss Control and then Vice President and Science Officer, Dr. Alavosius and his team conducted epidemiologic analyses to study how employees were injured on the job and to guide preventative efforts. He was Principal Investigator on several SBIR (Small Business Innovation Research) grants from the CDC/NIOSH to evaluate behavioral approaches to work safety. This research included development and testing of interactive instructional systems to teach employees how to effectively manage work behaviors. In the context of this work he visited countless small business across a range of industries to work with employers and employees to identify risk, develop effective control strategies, and evaluate outcomes. In small machine shops, boat-builders, construction companies, hospitals, and more he had the opportunity to study management systems that helped people stay in business and be safe...(cont. p4)

Jeffrey J. Hustler, Ph.D. (cont. from p2)

...In short, these results indicate that prolonged periods of early social interaction with the primary caregiver (in most cases the mother) may have co-evolved with both cortical expansion and the associated expression of intelligent behaviors.

Dr. Hutsler received his doctorate in physiological psychology from the University of California, Davis. His dissertation work focused on the prenatal and postnatal development of

the visual system in mammals. After completing his degree he went on to study human brain organization in the laboratory of Dr. Michael Gazzaniga at the Center for Neuroscience at UC Davis. Subsequently, he served as an adjunct faculty member in the department of psychology at Dartmouth College before taking an assistant professorship in the psychology department at the University of Michigan.



Dr. Hutsler joined the faculty of the UNR psychology department in fall, 2006. He lives in southwest Reno with his wife and son and enjoys woodworking, hiking, camping, biking, and cross country skiing.

The First 100 Years *(cont. from front)*

... Clinical Training Program at the University of Indiana audited courses from colleagues J. R. Kantor and B. F. Skinner. Sid also spent a sabbatical year with Skinner at Harvard in 1961-62.) Sid's primary concern was the behavior, education and welfare of children, particularly those with clinical problems and developmental disabilities. Sid's academic career spanned over 50 years and involved positions at the Universities of Washington, Illinois, Arizona, and lastly, Nevada. Ed Morris of the University of Kansas has an excellent forthcoming paper in Fall, 2008 in *The Behavior Analyst* on Sid's life and work while at the University of Illinois.

I was privileged to be invited to join Sid, his daughter Jude and son Bob

"Remember that each day is a day upon which you write your own history."

at his home to celebrate his 100th birthday. Sid was a member of my University of Washington PhD committee in 1965. He also functioned as my mentor as a post-doc in his lab and when I joined the faculty at the University of Illinois. Those who know Sid would describe him as an unassuming, laid-back, quiet person. True to form, his request for a birthday dinner was home-cooked onion soup and a cheesecake

dessert. The candle atop the cake said 100. The soup was delicious. We sang "Happy Birthday" and he opened several presents. Next Sid was presented with a large tray containing 125 birthday cards and greetings from 30 states and a dozen foreign countries. Sid was delighted! Former students, colleagues, friends and those who simply wished to honor him had indeed responded.

Sid lives in a Garden of Eden. He has his own apartment in daughter Jude's home and enjoys Santa Barbara's warm, Mediterranean climate. He is surrounded by beautiful flowers, a variety of cactus, orange and avocado trees and has a view of the ocean. He also has the company of two cats and of course Jude who looks out for him. He is in reasonable health, contented, cognitively sharp and follows sports, politics and current events. Although his step has slowed and his eyesight and hearing have dimmed a bit, Sid was able to remember vast details about the lives of the people who sent cards and greetings. I knew some of them and his memory was far better than mine. When asked how it felt to have lived for 100 years, Sid responded: "It's a miracle." He added that he would like to live to be 110 so he can see how Obama turns out.

My visit ended with a bit of serious adventure. The day after his birthday, Sid, Bob, Jude and I took a Trolley tour of Santa Barbara. Upon returning from a fine dinner at a local beach restaurant, we noticed smoke. The fires in Santa Barbara were burning dangerously close to Sid and Jude's home. By late evening the police ordered us to evacuate the house. We spent the night at a friend's home but fortunately were able to return the next day. Sid took it all in stride. When I asked him if he had any advice for those of us who have yet to reach the century mark, Sid said: "Remember that each day is a day upon which you write your own history." That's wise advice from a man who is a model for us all.

Mark Alavosius, Ph.D. *(cont. from p 3)*

...Dr. Alavosius has been studying and managing organizational behaviors for twenty-five years. He is an Assistant Professor in the Behavior Analysis Program at UNR and joined the faculty in 2006. He and his students are examining how important behaviors in organizations (like safety & health behaviors) are established and maintained. These are examined in work situations and also in the context of sports and everyday life. But learning effective practices is not enough as behaviors inevitably drift over time and variations often develop. So management practices at work, or coaching in sports, to maintain desired behaviors are another feature of efforts to improve performance. He and his lab are developing resources (training,

supervisory practices, support systems) to help improve organizational behaviors. Their program of research is being pursued to understand behavior in organizational contexts and develop technologies that are user-friendly and effective for end-users. The work spans interests in instructional design, supervisory systems, technology transfer, and community and cultural analyses.

Mark completed his B.A. in psychology at Clark University (Did you know that the founder of the UNR psychology department was a Clark University graduate?) and his M.S. and Ph.D. at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. In addition to nearly fifteen years work in business and industry, Dr. Alavosius held faculty appointments in the Behavior Analysis Program at West Virginia University and the Industrial/Organizational Psychology Program at Western Michigan University. He is a Trustee of the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies and member of their Corporate Safety Accreditation Team. More information on Mark and his lab is available at: http://www.unr.edu/psych/behavior/faculty_alavosius.html .



Faculty Profiles & Interests

Mark Alavosius, Ph.D. — Developing behavioral systems to improve performance particularly in the areas of health and safety.

Michael A. Crognale, Ph.D. — Visual electrophysiology and psychophysics, genetics of color vision, comparative vision, aging of visual pathways, vision and aviation safety.

Deborah Davis, Ph.D. — Witness memory, false confessions, issues of sexual consent, jury research.

Melanie Duckworth, Ph.D. — Behavioral medicine, Health behavior, Chronic pain syndrome, Traumatic stress, Physiological reactivity to stress, Coping styles and strategies.

Jane Fisher, Ph.D. — Clinical gerontology, applied behavior analysis, lifespan development, grief and bereavement, social competence, anxiety disorders, integrated healthcare.

Victoria M. Follette, Ph.D. — Trauma, couple problems, psychotherapy outcome, domestic violence.

William Follette, Ph.D. — Psychotherapy outcome, behavioral research methodology, clinical behavior analysis.

Alan Fruzzetti, Ph.D. — Interpersonal & family models of psychopathology (e.g., borderline personality, depression, suicidality), Dialectical Behavior Therapy with individuals, couples and families.

Allen Gardner, Ph.D. — Effects of raising young chimpanzees as human children, especially with respect to development and continuity between animal and human intelligence, and the relationship between social and intellectual development and its expression in language.

Patrick Ghezzi, Ph.D. — Child pathology, Single-case methodology, Gambling, Interbehaviorism

Linda Hayes, Ph.D. — The analysis of complex behavior, including verbal behavior, audience control, rule governance, equivalence, substitution of function, resurgence, choice, and self-control.

Steven Hayes, Ph.D. — Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Relational Frame Theory and the Behavioral analysis of language and cognition, Acceptance and Mindfulness, Values and Commitment.

Holly Hazlett-Stevens, Ph.D. — Generalized anxiety disorder, normal and pathological worry, anxiety and stress-related disorders, psychotherapy outcome research, fear reduction.

Ramona Housmanfar, Ph.D. — Cultural psychology, complex human behavior (with an emphasis on the analysis of cultural phenomena), organizational Behavior Management, instructional design.

Jeffrey Hutsler, Ph.D. — Cortical organization in autism spectrum disorders, development and organization of human auditory and language-associated cortical regions, comparative organization of the supragranular layers, the microanatomical structure of human auditory and language-associated cortices.

William O'Donohue, Ph.D. — Behavioral healthcare delivery, male sexual misbehavior, behavior therapy, philosophy of psychology.

Tony Papa, Ph.D. — Influence of expression of specific emotions in social contexts on adjustment, functional theories of emotion, the features and course of pathological and normal grief, the development of early interventions for trauma.

William Wallace, Ph.D. — Memory, spoken word recognition, statistics.

Michael Webster, Ph.D. — Color and form perception, face recognition, perceptual adaptation, vision and the natural environment.

Christopher Mark Wessinger, Ph.D. — Cognitive neuroscience, multi-modal investigations of conceptual processing, blindsight, conscious and unconscious processing.

W. Lawrence Williams, Ph.D. — Conditional discrimination processes in persons with developmental disabilities, organizational behavior management in human service settings, staff training, assessment of and clinical interventions for behavior disorders in the developmentally disabled populations.

*For more information about the UNR Psychology Faculty, including a more detailed list of interests and publications, visit our webpage at:
<http://www.unr.edu/psych/faculty.html>*



How to Donate to UNR Psychology and its Affiliated Scholarship Programs



*The Mack Social Sciences Building
Home of the Psychology Department*

The UNR Department of Psychology strives to further the academic and humanitarian aims of our programs by celebrating the breadth, diversity, and scholarly aspects of our field. To this end, several programs have been established to accomplish these goals.

* Professor Jim Mikawa, who spent 27 years in the Department of Psychology,

directed that upon his death, a foundation should be created at the University of Nevada, Reno for the purpose of establishing an ethnic minority fund for graduate students in the clinical psychology doctoral program.

* The Paul McReynolds Foundation facilitates a program that attempts to progress scholarly knowledge and debate during an annual program in which distinguished representatives from various areas of the psychological field are invited to conduct a two day workshop in which current issues in the field are discussed and relevant data are presented.

* The McQueen Psychology Scholarship Fund was established by Dr. Allen Gerson in appreciation of his mentor. This scholarship is designed to support talented general psychology students.

* The Robert L. Solso Award honors outstanding achievements in scientific psychology by Experimental Psychology program graduate students. Dr. Solso established the award prior to his death to recognize students' projects which demonstrate the highest level of innovation, thorough scientific investigation and excellence in writing.

* The Willard F. Day Jr. Memorial Scholarship is currently building its fund up to the \$10,000 minimum requirement needed to begin endowment. Dr. Day was a psychology professor at UNR until his untimely death. The scholarship honors junior or senior level undergraduates majoring in psychology and maintaining a GPA above 3.0.

Continuing support is both necessary and appreciated. If you would like to donate to any of these programs, please send a brief memo and a check to the UNR Foundation, Mail Stop 162, Reno, NV 89557. In the memo, please state the name of the program you would like to support. Stuart Golder, Director of Development (775-784-1222 or sgolder@unr.edu) may also be contacted for additional information about these programs. Thank you.

Let us know about you by filling out this card and mailing it to:

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University of Nevada, Reno

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