



WomanView

Fall 2012

*The Newsletter of the Section for the Advancement of Women
Society of Counseling Psychology (Div 17)
American Psychological Association
Yu-ting Su, Editor*

Table of Content

<u>Notes from SAW Chair</u>	1
Julie R. Ancis, Ph D.	
<i>Words from the Editor</i>	
Yu-ting Su, Ph D.	
<u>2012 Woman of the Year</u>	4
Dr. Tania Israel	
<u>New Book Released</u>	6
<i>Oxford Handbook of Feminist Multicultural Counseling psychology</i>	
Carol Enns and Libby Nutt Williams	
<u>Inquiring Minds</u>	6
<i>Helpful Advice when Preparing for General Examinations</i>	
Erin Woike, M.A.	
<i>Being a Counseling Psychology Graduate Student During the Economic Recession</i>	
Katie Middendorf, M.Ed.	
<i>Facing New Challenges: Women in Graduate School During a Down Economy</i>	
Anna Strelau, B.A.	
<u>Early Career Psychologists</u>	11
<i>The transition from Graduate Student to Assistant Professor</i>	
Yu-ting Su, Ph D.	
<i>Early Career Transitions in Academia</i>	
Laurel Watson, Ph D.	
<u>Enclosed:</u>	14
<i>SAW Governing Board, Ex-Officio, and Committees</i>	
<i>Membership Form</i>	

Notes from SAW Chair

Julie R. Ancis, Ph.D.



*Hello SAW!
Greetings from your
new Chair. SAW has
had a significant
influence on my
personal and
professional
development over
many years, from my
days as a graduate
student to today. I*

*consider it an honor to serve as Chair of a
section that has contributed so much to the
field.*

*I would like to thank several individuals for
their service and commitment to SAW. Dr.
Corinne Datchi, Assistant Professor in the
Marriage and Family Therapy Program at
Seton Hall University, served as SAW Chair
for the past 2 years. Corinne has a grace and
level-headedness that has served SAW well.
She has been a fine leader, and I look
forward to continued partnership as she
serves as Past-Chair.*

Members of the Executive Committee included:

*Dr. Libby Nutt Williams,
Dean of the Core Curriculum and First Year*

Experience at St. Mary's College of Maryland, who completed her tenure as Past Chair.

Dr. Laura Smith,
Assistant Professor of Psychology and
Education at Teachers College, Columbia
University who served as Membership Chair.

Dr. Debra Mollen,
Associate Professor at Texas Woman's
University who served as Student Award
Coordinator.

Dr. Riddhi Sandil,
EdM Program Coordinator at Teachers
College, Columbia University who served as
APA Student Poster Coordinator.

Thank you and congratulations to:

Dr. Meghan Davidson, Assistant Professor of
Counseling Psychology at the University of
Nebraska-Lincoln, who served as Treasurer
and was just re-elected.

Dr. Yu-Ting Su, Assistant Professor of
Counseling Psychology at University of
Wisconsin, Platteville will serve as the
incoming Newsletter Editor.

Dr. Riddhi Sandil has agreed to serve as
Membership Chair.

Debra Mollen has agreed to remain in her
position as APA Student Poster Coordinator.

Erin Woike is also continuing as Student
Representative.

What a great group of women scholars!

*Every year, SAW honors contributors to the
field of counseling psychology. Dr. Tania
Israel, Past President of Division 17 and
Professor in the Counseling, Clinical, and
School Psychology Program at the University
of Santa Barbara, California received the 2011
SAW Woman of the Year Award. Tania gave an*

*inspiring and creative address at this year's
APA Conference in Orlando about advocacy,
community, and making a difference. Excerpts
from her talk are published in this newsletter.
At the end of her speech, in addition to leading
the audience in song, Tania provided audience
members with two pens with the inscription "I
am woman." Tania asked that audience
participants give the second pen to another
woman. In my case, I gave the second pen to
my young daughter, and she cherishes it.*

*Dr. Dawn Szymanski, Associate Professor of
Psychology at the University of Tennessee,
Knoxville received the 2012 Woman of the
Year Award. Dawn will present her Woman of
the Year Address at next year's APA
Conference in Hawaii. The SAW 2012 Student
of the Year is Sonia Carrizales, Counseling
Psychology Doctoral student at Texas
Woman's University. And the 2012 Foremother
Award was given to Dr. Donna Hawhurst,
Training Coordinator at the Women's
Resource Center at the University of Utah.
Congratulations to our outstanding awardees!*

*We held several successful SAW sponsored
events this year. SAW has established a new
Task Force entitled "Women and Girls in the
Justice System." Corinne Datchi, Meghan
Davidson, and I are the coordinators of this
Task Force. This initiative was sparked by my
2012 SAW Woman of the Year Address in
which I discussed research on women's
experiences in family court. The significant
impact of the legal system on individuals,
families, and communities is an area that has
not been sufficiently addressed within the field
of counseling psychology, yet one where
counseling psychologists can play an important
and helpful role. Relatedly, SAW, in
conjunction with Division 17, sponsored an
APA Symposium entitled "Women and Girls in
the Justice System: What Role for Counseling
Psychology?" Thema Bryant-Davis, Jennifer
Murphy, and I served as the main speakers
with Corinne Datchi and Meghan Davidson
serving as discussant.*

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

At the APA Convention in Orlando, we also held an Interdivisional Roundtable Discussion to discuss ways in which SAW could partner with other Divisions and Sections on this initiative. More specifically, the roundtable aimed to begin to broadly define the key role of psychologists with regard to the promotion of gender and culturally sensitive practices in work with forensic populations.

Representatives included those from SAW, Division 51, and Division 43. For more information about this Task Force or if you are interested in getting involved, please email julieancis@gmail.com. More information on the details of our future efforts is forthcoming,

The SAW Breakfast and Executive Board Meeting was well attended by many doctoral students who expressed an interest in becoming involved in SAW. It was wonderful to meet these up and coming scholars, and I am excited about their continued participation. On behalf of SAW, welcome!

It was an exciting APA conference for me for the reasons I have presented herein. In addition, I was awarded Fellow status last year and gave my Fellows talk in Orlando. Sharing the stage with other Counseling Psychology Fellows was a highlight of my career.

Another significant life change has been accepting a position as Associate Vice President of Institute Diversity at Georgia Institute of Technology after serving as a Counseling Psychology professor at Georgia State University for many years. I am excited about the challenges as I engage in this new role, an extension of my diversity efforts throughout my career.

Looking forward to an exciting year ahead!

~ Julie R. Ancis

Words from the Editor

Yu-ting Su, Ph.D.



It is a great honor for me to serve as a newsletter editor for SAW (Section for the Advancement of Women) for the following two years. Although I am brand new to SAW, I have read and heard about great contributions that SAW members

have made to the scholarship of counseling and feminist psychology in the past few years. I am very excited to be part of this wonderful group!

In this issue of WomanView, you will find a new column, Early Career Psychologists. It is designed to provide a space for new PhDs to share their experiences and life-career issues and/or to ask seasoned psychologists questions. This new column, along with the excerpts from SAW Woman of the Year address, and the Inquiring Minds written by students, presents a wide spectrum of perspectives of SAW women at different phases of their career development. This newsletter is truly a forum for us to exchange ideas, share news and information, and make connections to one another. We would like to invite you to send us your thoughts about counseling and psychology of women for the publication of the winter and spring issues.

I would like to express my deep appreciations to all the women who contributed to this issue of WomanView. In addition, I am very grateful to have the help from the SAW Chair, Julie, the assistant editor, Laurel, as well as my graduate students, Krystle, Chris, and Lindsay. I hope you will enjoy reading this WomanView!

~Yu-ting Su

2012 Woman of the Year

Dr. Tania Israel

All I Need to Know about Being Woman of the Year, I Learned from "Buffy, the Vampire Slayer"

Excerpts from SAW Woman of the Year address presented at APA August 2, 2012

In order for this speech to make sense, I'm going to need to provide some background to those of you who are not yet fans of Buffy the Vampire Slayer. As we hear in the intro to each episode: "In every generation there is a chosen one. She alone will stand against the vampires, the demons, and the forces of darkness. She is the Slayer."

For six seasons, we hear about Buffy being the Chosen One. There are many potential Slayers in the world, but only when a Slayer dies does a potential slayer become THE Slayer, and then that Slayer is the Chosen One. But, just like there's only one Woman of the Year, there's always only one Slayer. Until the final episode of the series.

The world is facing evil that Buffy cannot defeat on her own. She needs all of the potential slayers to rise to their Slayer calling and stand with her. Buffy is the chosen one, but she honors the potential in others and, with the help of her powerful witch friend, makes it possible for all of the potential slayers to fully realize their slayer abilities! She knows that sharing her power will not take anything away from her; it will make her and everyone else stronger.

When I was trying to figure out the topic of my Woman of the Year speech, I knew I wanted to impart this wisdom gleaned from Buffy. Being Woman of the Year is a huge honor for me. I was selected by my feminist counseling

psychologist peers, by the Division 17 Section for the Advancement of Women, the first professional organization in which I had a leadership role. Being named Woman of the Year encouraged and challenged me to rise to the title. And, it's a very cool title with quite the wow factor, and I thank my foremothers for naming it such.

It's awesome being Woman of the Year. And when I look around, I see so many other people deserving of this title. People who are fighting injustice by working in their communities, by teaching and mentoring, by generating knowledge, by leading our organizations, by doing all these things while struggling with personal challenges. And I want all of you to be recognized, to feel appreciated and honored, to dig deep within yourselves to find your Women of the Year potential. Only with all of our collective powers can we face the challenges of our society. I learned from Buffy that only together can we save the world from injustice.

So I ask each of you to join me. Are you ready to embrace your power; to find your inner Woman of the Year? I should mention that, even if you don't identify as a woman, in my book, you can still tap into your inner Woman of the Year. So I encourage all the male, genderqueer, and otherwise non-woman-identified folks to stick around.

Buffy wears cute outfits, she engages in witty repartee with vampires before she stakes them, and she's young and blond. People might easily dismiss her. But these qualities are her gifts. They lead her enemies to underestimate her; and they make her a more complex and whole person. They are superpowers, too.

I have some characteristics that make me seem like a strong, powerful leader. I am relatively bright and self-confident and articulate. But then there's the whimsy. Of course, there's

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

nothing wrong with being a little silly, but perhaps it could seem a bit unprofessional to

- Jump up and down and clap my hands in research team meetings
- Sing at the SCP business meeting
- Write the SAW membership report in the style of “Winnie the Pooh”
- Run a meeting while wearing a tiara
- Sing my Chinese-Jewish version of “Half-Breed” in front of colleagues and students
- Attend conferences with purple hair
- Name a professional group the “More Pie initiative” and start the meetings with an icebreaker: “if you were a kind of pie, what kind of pie would you be?”
- And, of course, give a speech at APA about Buffy the Vampire Slayer

Sometimes I worry that my whimsy interferes with my credibility. Somehow, though, people seem to like the whimsy. When I’m working in the community, starting a presentation by singing a song I wrote about community-based participatory research makes research and me, as a researcher, seem less intimidating.

The lesson is: know your destiny, identify your superpowers, and don’t be afraid to use them.

There’s a musical episode of Buffy in which everyone sings uncontrollably and reveals truths they might prefer to hide. Remember that whole thing about using your gifts? You might have figured out by now that I happen to have a quirky muse who has granted me the gift of writing song lyrics. Not music, just the lyrics, so I have to borrow the melodies. I have written songs about politics, cats, people’s birthdays, poker, cheese, breast reductions, Latin American countries, and Buddhism, among other topics.

I prefer not to sing alone. At the closing session of the 2009 Multicultural Summit I invited

everyone to sing “We Shall Overcome.” As 600 psychologists joined hands and raised their voices in song, I felt so much love for my profession and hope for the world.

And so, to close, I will ask you to sing with me. How many of you know Helen Reddy’s song, “I Am Woman”? Well, I have a new version, and I hope you will join me...

I am Woman of the Year
I will fight and persevere
I have lessons from the Slayer and a pen
‘Cause I know my destiny
I let others support me
No one can hold me to rules from outdated men

Oh, yes, I can sense
The potential in us all
And I will commence
To make changes big and small
I have gifts
I have a lineage
I am Woman of the Year

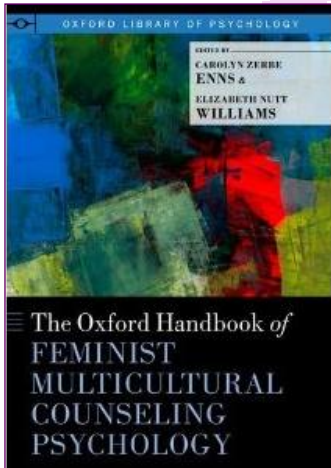
The complete slide show and audio for the speech are available at:
<https://sites.google.com/site/taniaisrael/videos>

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

New Book Released

Oxford Handbook of Feminist Multicultural Counseling Psychology

Carol Enns and Libby Nutt Williams



A big congratulations to Dr. Carol Zerbe Enns and Dr. Elizabeth Nutt Williams on the publication of their new book, "The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Multicultural Counseling Psychology"! Both

Carol and Libby have provided tremendous leadership to SAW and contributed significantly to the advancement of our knowledge of feminist psychology. Many chapters in this book were written by SAW members. A description of the Handbook is as followed:

"Multicultural and feminist perspectives are characterized by a variety of similarities, and the integration of multicultural and feminist perspectives in counseling psychology has been a key aim of those in these fields for decades. However, the effective implementation this approach often has been proven challenging and elusive, with difficulties defining the complexity of feminist and multicultural factors in inclusive and meaningful ways.

Rising to the challenging of integrating multicultural and feminist perspectives, this book features the accumulated knowledge of approximately 40 years of scholarship that flows out of feminist and multicultural efforts within counseling psychology. It brings a

feminist multicultural perspective to core domains within counseling psychology such as ethical frameworks, lifespan development, identify formation and change, growth-oriented and ecological assessment, and career theory and practice. Emphasis is placed on the intersections among social identities related to gender, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, social class and socioeconomic status, religion, disability, and nationality. Chapters provide insights and perspectives about specific groups of women include African American women, Latinas, women with disabilities, women in poverty, women who have experienced trauma, and American Muslim women. Also featured are a range of additional multicultural feminist psychological practices such as feminist multicultural mentoring, teaching, training, and social activism. Affectively blending multicultural and feminist approaches, the theme of working toward social justice for all people permeates all chapters of this handbook."

Publisher: Oxford University Press, USA; 1 edition (September 19, 2012)

Inquiring Minds

Helpful Advice I Received when Preparing for General Examinations Erin Woike, M.A.

It is the fall semester of my third year in my doctoral program and I recently completed one of the most difficult parts of my graduate experience, general examinations. Though general examinations can be a stressful experience, there are things you can do to manage your anxiety. I was fortunate to have received valuable advice from faculty and students who had already been through the process. I thought it might be helpful to share this advice with you as you work towards your degree.

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

One of the most useful things I did in this process was to mobilize my support systems. I talked with my husband about the generals process to prepare him for the amount of studying I was about to do. As a result, he was able to spend time with his friends when I was out studying. His support was invaluable during this process! Students who are a year ahead of me recommended scheduling a weekly study session with our cohort. We scheduled this on Sundays about two months in advance. We were able to commiserate, collect materials, create study guides, and hold each other accountable for studying individually. Our cohort bonded during this process. We even made t-shirts and brought snacks! This made the exams less intimidating and helped us to feel more confident because we were going in there as a team. My supervisor recommended finding a person in my cohort who has similar study strategies. She and I met regularly going over each topic and creating our own study guides. These meetings were probably a major contributor to my success in generals.

I mentioned study guides in the previous paragraph. Students from my program recommended we look through our material and narrow down what we felt was most important. Since the exam is called “general examinations” or “comprehensive evaluations” they stated it was too hard to remember every detail. When we got together as a cohort, we discussed what we found important about the coursework and narrowed down our study guides accordingly. Some students made flashcards; some made computer documents; and others made a binder. They advised breaking it down into manageable chunks and organizing the information in a format that is easiest for you to study.

Faculty recommended changing our mindset going into the test. This is an opportunity to show them what you know; and you DO know this. You have been preparing for years up

until this point. The information is in there. That advice changed the entire process for me. With the combination of generals and coursework, I found myself feeling overwhelmed. My advisor recommended scheduling time for generals, coursework, and other requirements. She suggested only focusing on what was scheduled and telling myself I would worry about the other requirements when I scheduled them. For example, if I scheduled studying for Couples from 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm on Monday, I would only focus on couples. I would wait to think about my Advanced Child presentation until its scheduled time slot of 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm on Tuesday. I also made sure I scheduled time for fun activities so I could unwind.

Lastly, students, supervisors, and faculty recommended taking care of yourself throughout this process. My supervisor told me she gave herself little rewards like cookies in bed and restaurants. My friend and I studied at a local pancake restaurant. At one point, when retail therapy did not help me, my husband met me at the door with my running gear and told me, put on your stuff, we’re going running. Running is a great way to increase focus and let off steam.

I hope you have found this advice as helpful as I did. I am so grateful for all the advice I received going through the generals process! If you have already finished generals, congratulations! If you are taking them in the future, good luck! The best part of generals is you are one major step closer to your degree!



Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

Being a Counseling Psychology Graduate Student During the Economic Recession

Katie Middendorf, M.Ed.



There is an increasing trend for individuals to pursue graduate studies during periods of economic recession as they hope to enhance their marketability and enter the job market when it recovers.

Balancing the workload and accrued debt through graduate school programs can be a challenging task. As graduate students training to become counseling psychologists, we are faced with academic coursework, research projects, and clinical practicum work, and hopefully some type of assistantship such as teaching or research to help alleviate the financial strain of tuition and means to live off of. Although stipend salaries vary according to the type of assistantship, stipends can range from as little as \$6000 to more than \$20,000 per year. In most University towns and cities where rent and utilities alone often exceed \$10,000 per year, this amount rarely covers true living costs. Increasingly, students, even with financial assistance, are forced to take out student loans.

Upon graduation, when we are expected to begin repaying our student loans within 6 months of leaving University, the debts of graduate school increase. Not only do we have the same problem of inadequate living wages—internships in the counseling psychology field still often pay little more than stipends during program studies—we are additionally faced with paying for our own medical insurance. In effect, as our debts are compounded by Fannie

May, our requisite costs of practicing and furthering our careers continue to rise.

To make matters worse, we may have difficulties finding work in the place that we would like, and there is the added stress of making choices based on where we are most likely to find a salary over what meets our personal needs, (i.e. family, partner, etc.) We must go to where the work is. So how is the economic recession affecting the field of mental health and mental health positions?

The need for mental health services may be on the rise, as individuals who have recently lost jobs seek support from mental health professionals. Job loss is not only a monetary stressor, but also affects identity and a person's sense of security ([LiveCareer, 2012](#)).

Additionally it provides a way for people to structure their time and contribute to society. Loss of a job can contribute or worsen depression, anxiety and substance use. The recession may also impact individuals who are able to keep their jobs, as the number of employees utilizing employee assistance programs, programs that offer employees short-term confidential counseling, is also on the rise (Reardon, 2009). Additionally the bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts growth in all areas of counseling up until 2016. More specifically, it predicts that growth in jobs for psychologists will increase by up to 22% between 2010 and 2020, which is faster than average (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). This is good news for counseling psychologists in training.

So what are the questions that I am left with? How can we provide for others in their financial difficulties, when our own financial futures seem less than secure? I personally worry about how I will pay back student loans and support a family while finishing my training. Thus, I wonder how feasible is it to acquire an internship or postdoctoral position that enables me to cover the cost of living not only for myself but also for my family? In short, who is providing for the needs of mental

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

health professionals, given the disparity between compensation and cost of education in the field? As mental health professionals working to provide a service to the community, how we balance this provision with the requirements of personal needs becomes increasingly precarious. Given this challenge, the support and wisdom of mentors and role models who have successfully undergone these challenges is an invaluable resource.

References

- Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012). Occupational Outlook Handbook. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/psychologists.htm>
- Counseling careers can be recession proof. Taken from LiveCareer. Retrieved from http://www.livecareer.com/news/Counseling-Psychology/Counseling-Careers-Can-Be-Recession-Proof_000625.aspx
- Reardon, C. (2009). Economic squeeze- The recession's impact on behavioral health. *Social Work Today*, 9, p. 12.
- Williamson, J. (2011). What the double-dip recession could mean for college students. *Distance-Education.org Column*. Retrieved from <http://www.distance-education.org/Articles/What-the-Double-Dip-Recession-Could-Mean-for-College-Students-427.html>



Facing New Challenges: Women in Graduate School During a Down Economy

Anna Strelau, B.S.

Pseudonyms are used for all graduate students interviewed in this article.



Women in graduate school have always had a lot to juggle, between work, school, family, and friends; and in the wake of this economic recession, it seems we have a few more balls to keep up in the air.

Personally, the impact of the economy as a graduate student began before I ever got to campus. It was one of the motivating factors in my decision to obtain a master's degree. Constantly worried about both my partner and I's job security, I felt the only way to alleviate that stressor would be to obtain a higher degree to allow for more options. Since my partner also decided to return to school at the same time, I then became not only a full time graduate student, but also the primary source for income and insurance. This has been both empowering and stressful. To help minimize the financial burden, I, like many, have chosen to take out federal loans. However, last year, the federal government decided to phase out subsidized loans for graduate students, a decision that certainly increased the financial stress of many individuals on campus.

My decision to return to school is a common one, as historically, a down economy typically leads to greater enrollments in graduate programs. According to David Daleke, the associate dean at the University Graduate School, Indiana University-Bloomington, "students choose to apply to graduate school for potential market opportunities as well as the lack of those opportunities once they finish their undergraduate work." Additionally,

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

applications for nonprofessional programs at Indiana University-Bloomington rose by nearly 10 percent when the recession began (Burnsed, 2010).

The University of Wisconsin-Platteville, where I am enrolled, is in rural southwest Wisconsin with approximately 8,000 undergraduates and 760 graduate students. 70 students are currently enrolled in the terminal master's program in Counseling Psychology. The flexible class schedule appeals to students who wish to continue working full time. In order to gain a broader perspective on this issue of returning to school during the economic recession, I asked my fellow counseling psychology graduate students about how the recession has affected them.

Question: What challenges are you facing as a woman in graduate school during this economic recession?

Carolyn: In order to balance full time work and my family, I could only take one class at a time. This meant that I could not receive any financial aid. It was very difficult paying for everything out-of-pocket. Thankfully, I had a very good support network both at home and at work.

Tanya: Because of the recession, the opportunity to go back to school to further my education is a backup plan in the event that my job gets cut. I am working full time and going to school full time because I carry all the health benefits. This, unfortunately, leaves little time for my family. Fortunately, I'm a veteran and I do get...education benefits from the military.

Mindy: My immediate thought is that I feel much more dependent on my partner than I ever have. Because he is working full time, he ends up paying for most of the bills. I'm so thankful to have him because of this. However, I've always been a very independent person, and I feel the economic recession has left me feeling more dependent and uneasy.

Jade: Because I HAD to work full time to support my family, deciding on what degree to pursue was based on what I could afford and what times the classes met during the course of the program. The hardest challenge was balancing full time work and attending classes, all at the same time being a mother to three small children. I am currently in the same position with more education than my associates, and I have not been given a higher salary. I now have more debt because of a degree and with no wage increase. But I have a supportive family...that's what helped me get through the hard times.

Choosing to return to school during an economic recession is like a double-edged sword. On one hand, there is the potential for more options and earning power in the job market. On the other hand, you have to invest more time and personal resources at school. There is always the risk that a higher paying job won't be available or that graduation might have to be postponed due to limited financial resources. The recent economy has placed many challenges in pursuing higher education; however, it is inspiring to hear that, despite these challenges, these women are finding a way to make it work, for themselves and their families.

References

Burnsed, B. (2010). Getting into graduate school made tougher by the recession. U.S. News & World Report. Retrieved from <http://www.usnews.com/education/articles/2010/04/01/getting-into-graduate-school-made-tougher-by-the-recession> on November 12, 2012.

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

Early Career Psychologists

The Transition from Graduate Student to Assistant Professor

Yu-ting Su, Ph.D.

Graduating from the Counseling Psychology program at Indiana University this summer, I felt very fortunate to be able to start my job as a faculty member in a counseling psychology program in the fall. I have always wanted to teach at the graduate school level, with the hope that I will contribute to the professional development of future counselors. I am interested in teaching and supervising counselors in training with diverse backgrounds. However, when I started my new position I did not realize that my ideas about this title, “assistant professor”, were rather vague and superficial.

It was not until the seventh week of teaching, that the picture of what an assistant professor looks like became clearer to me. With this new role of being a faculty member, I quickly learned to view things with a broader perspective. Due to the responsibilities of being an instructor and trainer, I want to think further and incorporate the viewpoints of my students, myself, my program, the profession, and the institution before making my pedagogical decisions. I felt that I was only beginning the socialization process of being a good member in the academic community, particularly in my program. Luckily, I have a caring and supportive mentor within my program who I can turn to when I have questions, and I also receive mentoring and guidance outside of my program. That has made the transition period much more manageable.

Besides transitioning from being a student to a faculty member, I am also learning to have a better balance between family, career, and self-care, which I assume is a common challenge

for many female, early career psychologists. It is not common for both partners in the academic field to find a job in the same geographic region, not to mention at the same university. Findings from research conducted in 2008 indicate that due to the increased number of women obtaining their Ph.D. degrees and becoming good candidates for academic positions, the need for universities to consider couple hiring is on the rise (Schiebinger, Henderson, & Gilmartin, 2008). This study also found that the lack of employment opportunities for the academic partner at the new location is the major reason female candidates rejected job offers. My partner and I are very grateful that we are able to work at the same university, but we are still exploring and working on how to use our time wisely in order to respond to the demands of different aspects of our lives.

It is exciting for me to know that this transitional period is the beginning of a life-long professional career with plenty of opportunities for researching, teaching, serving communities, and learning. Seeking licensure and obtaining tenure are my longer term goals, while the current important tasks for me are to accumulate clinical hours before taking the licensing exam, to make connections with other scholars with similar research interests, and to polish my skills and strategies for grant applications. Serving as a newsletter editor for SAW definitely is a good start for me to meet other female researchers with interests in women’s issues and contribute to a professional association. With so much on my plate, I deeply appreciate all the support and resources provided by my partner, colleagues, friends, and mentors. It certainly takes a community to support the personal and professional development of a counseling psychologist!

Reference

Schiebinger, L., Henderson, A.D., & Gilmartin, S.K. (2008). *Dual-Career Academic Couples:*

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

What Universities Need to Know. Stanford: Michelle R. Clayman Institute for Gender Research. Available at <http://gender.stanford.edu/dual-career-academic-couples-what-universities-need-know>.



Early Career Transitions in Academia

Laurel Watson, Ph.D.



Throughout my educational experience I realized how both research and teaching could foster important social change, and I knew that a faculty position in a counseling psychology

department would help me meet my goals. I wanted a career where I could both educate emerging counseling psychologists and engage in meaningful scholarship. I am happy to say that I recently accepted a job as an Assistant Professor in fall of 2012.

Although I am thrilled to have my new job, I have faced a number of challenging transitions. The most significant transition, perhaps, is in terms of how I view myself. I was a student for more than ten years, and although I gained enormous experience, which ultimately laid the foundation for my career, the transition to the professor role has felt at times jarring. Suddenly, I am “doctor” and “professor”, someone who is supposed to have answers, to have expertise. I do not mean to trivialize or diminish what I do know—I realize that I know a lot and have a lot to contribute—but my new social location is incredibly different from what I have known; I now have power that I did not have as a student.

As a feminist who values egalitarianism, I do not always know what to do with this form of power. In truth, there are times I do not like it at all, as it is something that I have to manage and develop a new relationship. I find myself second-guessing things I say or do (the old imposter syndrome is back), which can be very taxing. In my research team and in class I try to be very mindful of my power, as I want to create a safe learning space for all; a space that is thought-provoking and facilitates rich dialogue. But then there are times where I feel the pressures of tenure, and I simply want to cross things off of my to-do list, meet the learning objectives for the day’s class, and feel “productive.” This way of being goes against my pedagogy and core values as a person and educator. It is very important for me to maintain my values and who I am, despite the pressures of tenure. I would love some mentorship around this one!

This new role and power has also influenced how I relate to students. There are those students with whom I am close in age, and we share very similar interests. In the “old days” as a student, I probably would have been their friend, and therefore I have to be mindful of making sure that I relate to them as a professor. On the other hand, perhaps because of my age and/or my gender, I have had a few encounters with students who seemed to feel a little too comfortable with me, at times treating me like a peer. This new role creates an inner tension within me: I am not yet entirely comfortable in my role as a professor, yet I do not want to be regarded as a peer either. I trust that in time, and as my confidence in this role grows, the tension will mellow.

The geographical distance from my family has been very difficult. My beloved grandmother passed away around week four of the semester, and my father has a chronic illness. Needless to say, I find myself needing to return home often in order to be with my family. Initially, I worried a great deal about how this would be perceived, as I have missed a faculty meeting

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

here and there. I certainly had fears that I would be perceived as “flaky” or unmotivated. I informed my faculty mentor about my personal concerns, and she has been wonderful and supportive. Nevertheless, worrying about my credibility has left me feeling paranoid and anxious at times.

My family circumstances continue to teach me the importance of balance. This is incredibly difficult, as it is easy to sit in front of the computer all day reading and writing; but, I realize that I am doing myself, my colleagues, my students, and my department a disservice when I do not take care of myself. So, I try to breathe in fresh air by gardening, hiking, or biking whenever I can.

Certainly, the transition has not been all doom and gloom. I have already developed wonderful relationships with peers and colleagues, and working with students has been amazing. Each day I grow more comfortable and confident in my new role. Furthermore, I am continually reminded why I chose this career path when interacting with students and my colleagues. I am confident in my abilities to cope with the adjustments and maintain a needed balance in my life. Undoubtedly, I am where I am meant to be, and I have been well-prepared for it. Sometimes it’s just about reminding myself!

to address issues related to gender, sexuality, diversity, and social justice. This page will keep you up to date on the most current SAW information. It also provides non-members with a quick and easy way to join SAW. Like us on Facebook!



<https://www.facebook.com/SawDiv17APA>

Visit the SAW Facebook page for a great way to meet many like-minded individuals seeking

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

SAW Governing Board, Ex-Officio, & Committees

Governing Board

Chair

Julie R. Ancis, Ph.D.
Georgia Institute of Technology
jancis@vpid.gatech.edu

Past Chair

Corinne Datchi, Ph.D.
Seton Hall University
Corinne.Datchi@gmail.com

Chair-Elect

Vacant

Treasurer

Meghan Davidson, Ph.D.
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
mdavidson2@unl.edu

Membership Chair

Riddhi Sandil, Ph.D.
Teachers College
sandal@tc.columbia.edu

Newsletter Editor

Yu-ting Su, Ph.D.
University of Wisconsin-Platteville
suy@uwplatt.edu

Others

Student Representatives

Erin Woike, M.A.
University of Oklahoma
erin.woike@ou.edu

Student Research Award Coordinator

Laurel Watson, Ph.D.
University of Missouri, Kansas City
watsonlb@umkc.edu

APA Student Poster Coordinator

Debra Mollen, Ph.D.
Texas Women's University
dmollen@mail.twu.edu

More Pie Initiative Liaison

Tania Israel, Ph.D.
University of California, Santa Barbara
tisrael@education.ucsb.edu

SAW Task Force: Women and Girls in the Justice System

Julie Ancis
Corinne Datchi
Meghan Davidson

Newsletter Assistant Editor

Laurel Watson, Ph.D.

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.

SAW Membership Application/Renewal

The Section for the Advancement of Women (SAW) is seeking new members. Please pass along this membership form to a friend or colleague who may be interested in joining SAW. This form may also be used to renew your membership in SAW or update your information. Renewals are due in September of each year. If you have not renewed for 2012-2013, now is the time to do so.

There are three categories of membership:

Member: Any Associate, Member, or Fellow of Division 17 who has an interest in the goals of the section (see explanation below) may apply for SAW membership.

Professional Affiliate: Professional affiliates of Division 17, or Fellows or Members of APA who are not members of the Division but have an interest in the goals of SAW may apply for affiliate status.

Student Affiliate: Any student belonging to either Division 17 Student Affiliate Group or APAGS who has an interest in the goals of SAW may apply for student affiliate status.

Annual Dues

Annual dues are based on income:

\$15 ~ Over \$30,000/year

\$10 ~ Under \$30,000/year

\$5 ~ Student Affiliate

Make check payable to: *Division 17 Section for the Advancement of Women*

Complete the form below and mail with check to: **Riddhi Sandil, Ph.D**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

WORK PHONE _____ HOME PHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

WORK SETTING AND POSITION _____

CHECK CATEGORY OF MEMBERSHIP FOR THE FOLLOWING:

DESIRED MEMBERSHIP

APA:

Member _____

Fellow _____

Professional Affiliate _____

Student Affiliate _____

DIVISION 17:

Member _____

Fellow _____

Professional Affiliate _____

Student Affiliate _____

CATEGORY FOR SAW:

Member _____

Professional Affiliate _____

Student Affiliate _____

Note: The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology, or its Sections.