

# Welcome to the Society for Occupational Health Psychology Newsletter!



Society for Occupational Health Psychology

## Volume 5, January 2009 Editor's Welcome



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### Note from the Editor

This, the fifth issue of the *Newsletter of the Society for Occupational Health Psychology*, covers a diverse set of topics. The series devoted to graduate programs in occupational health psychology continues with an article by Rachel Daniels and Kristi Zimmerman on the program at Portland State University. Previous issues of the newsletter described OHP programs at the University of South Florida (<http://sohp.psy.uconn.edu/SOHPNewsletterV3May2008.pdf>) and Colorado State University (<http://sohp.psy.uconn.edu/SOHPNewsletterV4October2008.pdf>). Eventually, I would like to see feature articles on every OHP program in North America and elsewhere in the world.

Our *Across-the-Pond* feature begun in the last issue continues with Peter Kelly and Jonathan Houdmont's report on the Professional Practice Forum at the EA-OHP's November conference in Valencia, Spain. It is clear from the article that professional practice is an important part of OHP. SOHP President-Elect Janet

Barnes-Farrell reports on a meeting that took place at the conference that paves the way for greater international cooperation in OHP. And we include in this issue an announcement of the upcoming "Work, Stress & Health 2009 Conference" in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in November 2009.

Beginning with our first issue, I commissioned a series of articles about OHP-related activities at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. In this issue, Claire Caruso continues the series with an article on NIOSH's efforts to prevent health- and safety-related problems associated with shift work and long work hours. In volume 1 of our newsletter, Jeannie Nigam wrote about NIOSH's research on work organization and the prevention of stress-related disorders within the framework of the National Occupational Research Agenda. And in volume 3, Ed Hitchcock wrote about NIOSH's efforts to improve health and safety in the trucking industry (<http://sohp.psy.uconn.edu/SOHPNewsletterV3May2008.pdf>).

This issue has a pair of articles on a topic suggested by SOHP president Bob Sinclair, namely on resources that could be useful to our readers. Initially I planned one such article, but I liked the idea so much that when the opportunity arose I decided to publish two articles. Paul Landsbergis describes two resources that could help our readers implement intervention studies. And Nathan Bowling covers a technique for assessing emotional expression that can be adapted for OHP research. Many of our readers may not be aware of this technique. I know I was unaware of it until Nathan brought it to my attention.

Bob Sinclair also organized a piece on the future of occupational health psychology. He developed eight key questions that bear on OHP's future, and posed them to five leading contributors to OHP. The first four questions and the responses to them are presented in this issue. The remaining questions and answers will appear in the next issue.

With the current economic downturn on everyone's mind, I commissioned an article concerning its impact. Tahira Probst and Lindsay Sears write about the consequences of economic stress on individuals' sense of well-being and on the functioning of the workplace. Tahira and Lindsay present a number of constructive suggestions for adjusting to economic stressors, suggestions that are applicable to individuals and organizations.

Our two final articles keep our readers up-to-date about SOHP business. Chris Cunningham covers the last meeting of the SOHP's Executive Committee, and apprises us about the Society's budget and growing visibility in professional circles. Mo Wang covers the membership committee, and a new benefit it offers. Judging from these two articles, one can see that the Society is steadily advancing on a number of fronts including visibility, membership, and member benefits. A new member benefit not mentioned above is that the newsletter will now include announcements of books written or edited by members of the Society. Our first member book announcement is in this issue. I encourage readers who are not yet members to join.

And don't forget our survey. Maria Karanika-Murray, Leigh Schmitt, and I have written a brief note asking readers to complete a survey of the publication outlets they use in OHP. Readers will find a link to the survey in this issue. We will publish the results in future SOHP and EA-OHP newsletters.

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## Editor's Welcome (cont'd.)

As the newsletter has grown, the workload of the editorial team—we are all volunteers—increasingly competes with other tasks to which we are committed (e.g., grading final exams, writing papers). With the assent of our two associate editors and the SOHP leadership, I invited a third person to become an associate editor. I welcome Alfred Rosenblatt, the recently retired managing editor of *IEEE Spectrum*, the monthly magazine published by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers for its 360,000 members worldwide. I recruited Al because when I occasionally consulted with him on a small number of editorial matters, I was impressed with his knowledge of publishing.

Finally, I want to encourage readers of our newsletter to consider writing an article for a future issue. If you're interested, please start by emailing me a proposal at [ischonfeld@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:ischonfeld@ccny.cuny.edu). I am pleased to report that Nathan Bowling, whose article appears in this issue, responded to a similar request I broadcast in the OHP listserv. If you have an idea for an article, please get in touch with me.

Thank you!

Irvin Sam Schonfeld, Editor  
City College of the City University of New York

"Eventually, I would like to see feature articles on every OHP program in North America and elsewhere in the world."

### Guidelines Regarding the Submission of Articles

If you would like to submit an article to the *Newsletter of the Society for Occupational Health Psychology*, please consider these guidelines. We welcome variety in the articles we publish. Articles you submit can bear on practice or research. If you are a newcomer to the field of occupational health psychology, a student, or a veteran researcher or practitioner, we encourage you to submit an article. Our aim is to publish two newsletters per year.

Please email your proposals and submissions to: The Editor, Irvin Sam Schonfeld, [ischonfeld@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:ischonfeld@ccny.cuny.edu)

#### Short reports

You can submit a short report (1300 words or fewer) on research findings, practice, or policy issues. You can also submit a brief literature review. When you write a report for the newsletter, please consider that our readership is diverse, and ensure that the report will be accessible to readers outside your specialty area.

#### Reports about education and organizations

The newsletter staff welcomes articles about teaching OHP at the undergraduate or graduate level. We also welcome articles about your organization's OHP-related activities. If you are engaged in an OHP-related activity as part of a solo practice, and you think the newsletter's readership would be interested, consider writing an article about the activity.

#### Other reports

The newsletter also publishes conference announcements, continuing education announcements in OHP or related areas (e.g., epidemiology, statistics, etc.), or reports on national or international news that pertain to OHP.

## Survey of Publication Outlets in Occupational Health Psychology

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An interesting discussion took place a few weeks ago on the Occupational Health Psychology (OHP) listserv (the OHP online discussion list). A junior faculty member sought guidance concerning existing journal rankings of publications that are open to OHP research. The subsequent responses to the question showcased a need to establish a standard for such journals. In response, we decided it is time to have a closer look at the publication outlets in OHP in order to facilitate this pre-submission background work and align our OHP research with available journal outlets.

In the interest of taking a closer look at the publication outlets for OHP, we are conducting a survey on the topic. The survey explores a number of journals in terms of their overall contribution to OHP, theoretical and methodological rigor, and relevance to practice. The goal of this project is to categorize journals as OHP-specific or OHP-related to ensure as authors that we select the most appropriate journal for our research as well as to maximize the submissions' exposure to the relevant audience.

For the findings to be useful, it is extremely important that everyone's voice is heard. Therefore, your participation in this project will be greatly appreciated. All data provided will remain confidential and the outcomes will appear in aggregated form on the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology (EA-OHP) and Society for Organizational Health Psychology (SOHP) newsletters and websites.

To complete the survey please follow the link below.

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?  
sm=r1oY8\\_2b6HCNskgXzYM6Ut\\_2bQ\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=r1oY8_2b6HCNskgXzYM6Ut_2bQ_3d_3d)

This is a small but important contribution to the OHP community.

## Stress During the Financial Crisis

**Tahira M. Probst**

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**Lindsay E. Sears**

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It was there when the mail arrived—the dreaded year-end portfolio statement. Like a “Howler” message out of the Harry Potter series, it screamed to be opened, yet no one dared. How many years of savings would be gone? Would retirement have to be postponed? Could we still afford to send the kids to college?

As scenes like this play out across America, the impact of the financial crisis becomes real for many. But though the stock market's recent dramatic declines brought many to realize the full extent of the financial crisis, countless Americans were experiencing economic stress well before the autumn 2008 stock market plunge. The National Center for State Courts enumerated 2,163,464 foreclosures in 2007 (<http://contentdm.ncsconline.org/cgi-bin/showfile.exe?CISOROOT=/financial&CISOPTR=116>).

It gets worse. According to estimates from Realty Trac, there were 3,157,806 foreclosure filings in 2008 (<http://www.realtytrac.com/ContentManagement/pressrelease.aspx?ChannelID=9&ItemID=5681&acct=64847>). Large numbers of foreclosures are anticipated for 2009. Compounding the problem of foreclosures, unemployment recently stood at 7.2% (U.S. Dept. of Labor as of December 2008), reaching a record 15-year high. The Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated that the growing number of unemployed reached 11.1 million in December (50% higher than the number reached 12 months earlier), with 524,000 jobs lost in that month alone.

To add insult to injury, our government and our citizens have never been in greater debt. Credit card debt in the U.S. stands at \$900 billion and our national debt is increasing at a whopping \$4 billion each day (yes, that is a “b” for billion and yes, each day). Thus, Americans and, thanks to our intertwined global economy, much of the rest of the world are faced with economic insecurity at all levels: globally, nationally, and personally.

These conditions contribute in many ways to the stress Americans experience. We hear stories of increasing worry and concern over job security and financial well-being. As the U.S. job market shrinks, more people lose their jobs and job searches become increasingly competitive. To make ends meet, some may settle for jobs for which they are overqualified, and become what is referred to as underemployed. Those who keep their jobs may still be concerned about losing them, especially in economically vulnerable industries (e.g., banking, automotive, retail, hospitality).

Financial insecurity is often coupled with unemployment, underemployment, and job insecurity. People use their income not only to acquire necessities like food, shelter, clothing, and transportation, but also to achieve a comfortable lifestyle, pay off debts, and build a secure financial future. Clearly, when income is at risk, insufficient, or nonexistent, such goals cannot be met and people experience stress, among other adverse outcomes. While the unemployed must cope with a complete loss of income, the underemployed struggle to pare down their lifestyle to match their lower incomes. And, those worried about the future of their jobs

begin tightening their belts.

### *Consequences of Economic Stress*

Unemployment has been found to be one of the top 10 traumatic life experiences. However, some researchers suggest that financial stress, job insecurity, and underemployment may be equally - if not more - potent stressors. Individuals faced with unemployment, underemployment, job insecurity, and/or financial stress have strikingly similar outcomes.

In reviewing research on unemployment, underemployment, job insecurity, and financial stress we have found numerous studies that document negative psychological and physical outcomes. Psychologically, individuals faced with these economic stressors show more depression, anxiety, worry, strain, anger, fear, hostility, paranoia, loneliness, pessimism, despair, helplessness, self-doubt, and social isolation. Economic stress also takes a physical toll and has been associated with fatigue, backache, headache, muscular pains, higher levels of blood pressure and cholesterol, sleep problems, and excessive drinking.

Unemployment, underemployment, job insecurity, and financial stress can also have serious implications for the partners and dependents of affected employees. Research on unemployment has documented increases in spousal abuse, marital stress and dissolution, wife battering, and spousal depression and psychiatric disorder. Similarly, underemployed husbands and wives are less satisfied with their finances and marital relationships than fully employed couples. Economic stress also appears to be somewhat “contagious”; the economic worries of one member of a couple can actually predict the perceived job insecurity of the other partner.

This contagion affects children as well. Their perception of work, attitudes toward work, and beliefs about work are influenced by their parents' job insecurity. Furthermore, children whose parents face economic stress act out more frequently, have more emotional problems and cognitive difficulties, and do poorer academically. These outcomes are particularly alarming because they suggest a potential negative cyclical relationship. Parental economic stress leads to lower academic performance in their children, which, in turn, leads to fewer and/or lower-quality employment opportunities.

Not surprisingly, the adverse effects of economic stress have implications for the workplace as well. Individuals who are underemployed, insecure in their jobs, or financially stressed tend to report lower job involvement, job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, and trust in management, and they report higher job-related stress and turnover intentions. Economic stress has also been linked to poorer job performance including reduced productivity, creativity, and safety, as well as increased work withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism, tardiness, and task avoidance.

Given the myriad negative consequences stemming from economic stress, the 64-dollar question (or perhaps more accurately, the \$700 billion question) is what can be done, by government, organizations, and employees to counteract these effects?

### *Organizations Should Remember: People are Assets*

Organizations and individuals can take steps to protect themselves from the adverse effects of economic stress. Struggling organizations looking to ... (Continued on page 4)



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University, Vancouver



**Lindsay E. Sears**  
Clemson University

## Stress During the Financial Crisis (cont'd)

(Continued from page 5) ... downsize to cut costs should first consider other ways to enhance profitability. But if workforce reduction is inevitable, organizations should do so fairly and responsibly by developing a strategy, offering severance packages, and providing outplacement programs. Frequent communication and employee participation can also minimize job insecurity among layoff survivors.

The underemployed, even if high-performing, are more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs and eventually leave. Organizations could restructure jobs for these individuals, or provide advancement opportunities so their education, skills, experience, and expertise are optimally utilized.

Organizations can also work to improve their employees' financial well-being. Whenever possible, organizations should pay workers a living wage, offer opportunities for full-time employment with benefits, and provide paid leave. In addition, research suggests that providing financial education and counseling can alleviate financial stress. For employees experiencing "financial emergencies," organizations could provide low-interest loans, offer transportation assistance, and allow for scheduling flexibility.

While these strategies are intended to prevent and reduce economic stress, they can also build employee commitment to the organization. Moreover, organizations may find that acting in these socially responsible ways enhances the public image of the company, which may improve its business.

### Recommended Readings:

- Cheng, G. H.-L., & Chan, D. K.-S. (2008). Who suffers more from job insecurity? A meta-analytic review. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 57, 272-303.
- Feldman, D. C. (1996). The nature, antecedents, and consequences of underemployment. *Journal of Management*, 22, 385-407.
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## A Message from the Membership Committee

### Mo Wang University of Maryland

Greetings! As the membership committee chair, I am writing to share information with SOHP members and readers of the *Newsletter* who are thinking of joining the organization. First, I would like to remind our members that we have started the membership renewal process for 2009. For those members who have already renewed, THANK YOU! For those who have not done so yet, please visit the SOHP website (<http://www.sohp-online.org/>) and use the Membership Renewal link on the home page to access the renewal form for 2009. The web site also includes information the reader needs to join. Thanks to Dr. Janet Barnes-Farrell, we now have fillable Word versions of the renewal

and membership application forms on the SOHP website for you to download. If you are renewing or joining with a credit card, you can complete the form and directly email the form to me at [mwang@psyc.umd.edu](mailto:mwang@psyc.umd.edu). If you are renewing with a personal check, you can mail the form and the check to the following address:

**Attn: Prof. Mo Wang  
Membership Chair, SOHP  
Department of Psychology  
University of Maryland  
College Park, MD 20742**

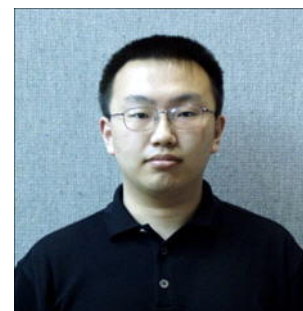
Second, I would like to inform our members that starting in 2009, we have a new membership benefit. SOHP members will receive a discounted membership rate for joining the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology (EA-OHP). The discounted

membership dues for joining the EA-OHP as a full member is 40 EUR (originally 80 EUR); the rate for SOHP student affiliates is 35 EUR (originally 50 EUR). The EA-OHP's membership includes a free subscription to *Work & Stress* and many other benefits. Please visit the EA-OHP's website (<http://www.ea-ohp.org/>) to find out more about the member benefits.

Finally, I would like to encourage SOHP members to take advantage of all our membership benefits. The strategic goals of the membership committee are two-fold: (1) grow the membership of SOHP; and (2) create attractive membership benefits. Please feel free to contact me to share your ideas about how the membership committee could better serve you and other SOHP members.



"Clearly, when income is at risk, insufficient, or nonexistent, such goals cannot be met and people experience stress, among other adverse outcomes."



Mo Wang  
University of Maryland



**Book Announcement**  
Pamela Perrewé of Florida State University

*RESEARCH IN OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND WELL BEING (Vol. 7)*  
*Recovery from Job Stress*  
Published by Emerald Publishing

For decades, researchers have examined the relation between job stressors and outcomes for both individuals and organizations. Until recently, however, we have known little about the processes that reduce or reverse the harmful effects of job stress. This volume aims at filling the gap in the literature by focusing on processes related to recovery and unwinding from job stress. The book integrates various perspectives on the topic. One chapter covers physiological, particularly anabolic, processes related to recovery. Another chapter summarizes research on sleep as a core recovery mechanism and examines how sleep affects job-related outcomes. Two chapters address short-term, within-person processes and emphasize affect regulation. One chapter is devoted to research methodology in the domain of recovery and provides advice about conducting research on recovery. Finally, two chapters integrate the study of recovery into a larger context; one chapter examines recovery in the context of the work-family literature; the other presents a model regarding how business trips can be seen as recovery experiences. The book demonstrates that recovery research is a promising approach for understanding more fully the processes of job stress and relief from it, and that recovery processes are an important component of job-stress interventions.

This volume aims at filling the gap in the literature by focusing on processes related to recovery and unwinding from job stress.

**On the Use of Facial Expressions to Measure Employee Emotions**  
*Research Resource*

**Nathan A. Bowling**  
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Much recent research has focused on the role of emotions in the workplace (Lord, Klimoski, & Kanfer, 2002). The research has examined several different areas relevant to occupational health psychology (OHP), including emotional labor, burnout, and job attitudes. Unfortunately, most existing research has assessed employee emotions using participant self-reports. Although there are benefits to self-report measures (Spector, 1994), researchers should make more use of alternative measurement strategies. Indeed, the use of self-reports to assess emotions assumes that participants are aware of their emotions and able and willing to report them to researchers. These assumptions are not always tenable (see Motowidlo, 1996; Schwarz, 1999). Alternatives to self-report measures may also be useful as a means of reducing the influence of

common-method variance. Accordingly, the current article briefly discusses the use of the Facial Action Coding System (FACS; Ekman, & Friesen, 1978) as an alternative method for assessing emotions. I first discuss how the FACS works and give examples of how it has been used in previous research. I then describe the process required to become proficient in using the FACS and discuss how the instrument can be employed in OHP research.

*Overview of the FACS*

Psychologists have long recognized that facial expressions can be used to assess human emotions. The FACS, which has emerged as the premier method for assessing facial expressions, identifies 44 unique Action Units (AU) that can be used to describe elemental facial movements. AU 1, for example, involves the raising of the inner portion of the eyebrows and AU 15 involves the lowering of the corners of the mouth. Once researchers have identified the AUs that are present in the photographs (or videos) that they are coding, the next step is to use an emotion dictionary to translate the resulting combinations of AUs into their corresponding emotions (Ekman, Friesen, & Hager, 2002).

Although the FACS has not yet been used in published OHP research, it has a long history of use in other research areas including social, personality, clinical, and health psychology. Harker and Keltner (2001), for example, used the FACS to detect Duchenne smiles in a

set of college yearbook photographs. Duchenne smiles, which involve both AU 6 (the contraction of the muscles around the eyes, which produces raised cheeks, crow's feet, and bagging below the eyes) and AU 12 (the raising of the lip corners), are considered authentic smiles and are in contrast to "phony" or "forced" smiles which involve AU 12 without AU 6. Results of that study indicated that the presence of a Duchenne smile predicted several positive life outcomes (e.g., psychological health, the absence of physical symptoms, marital satisfaction) 30 years after the yearbook photos were taken. Other research using the FACS has found that expressions of anger are related to poor cardiac health (Rosenberg et al., 2001), that winning an Olympic medal produces positive emotion (Matsumoto & Willingham, 2006), and that facial expressions can be used to distinguish between suicidal and non-suicidal depressed patients (Heller & Haynal, 1997).

*Becoming qualified to use the FACS*

Researchers interested in using the FACS can become proficient after a minimum of 100 hours of self-study of the FACS Manual (Ekman, Friesen, & Hager, 2002). The most recent version of the manual, which is available for purchase from Joseph C. Hager's web page ([http://face-and-emotion.com/dataface/facs/new\\_version.jsp](http://face-and-emotion.com/dataface/facs/new_version.jsp)), includes several ... (Continued on page 6)



**Nathan A. Bowling**  
Wright State University



## On the Use of Facial Expressions to Measure Employee Emotions (cont'd)

(Continued from page 5) ... practice videos and still photographs that can be used to hone one's FACS-coding skills. In addition, researchers have the option of learning the FACS by participating in a FACS seminar, such as the 5-day workshop led by Erika Rosenberg (<http://www.erikarosenberg.com/>).

Once a researcher is comfortable with the coding process, he or she can complete a certification test that formally qualifies the researcher to use the FACS (<http://face-and-emotion.com/dataface/facs/fft.jsp>). Receiving this certification is vital for those wishing to use the FACS in their research. For the purpose of computing reliability estimates, it is also necessary that two FACS-certified coders be used to rate the study photographs or videos. As a result, most research teams have multiple members who are FACS certified.

*Potential OHP topics that could be examined using the FACS*

As suggested above, several areas of OHP research could benefit from the

use of the FACS as a measure of employee emotions. Emotional labor researchers, for example, could use the FACS to assess participants' emotional displays during interactions with customers. Among other things, this research could examine individual differences in workers' abilities to suppress negative emotions or whether emotions experienced in the context of customer service activities predicts employee well-being. Other research could examine whether the emotions one experiences while working on a laboratory task predict self-reported emotional reactions to the task. Using an approach similar to that of Harker and Keltner (2001), researchers could also examine whether facial expressions displayed in posed photographs (e.g., those from yearbooks) predict subsequent self-reports of employee well-being. Finally, the FACS could prove useful in developing stimulus materials used in laboratory studies on employee emotion. A researcher interested in examining a worker's ability to recognize co-workers' emotions, for example, could

code a series of videos and then ask participants to report the emotions seen in the videos. The accuracy of participants' ratings could be determined by comparing them to the ratings provided by FACS coders.

### *Summary*

Although it has been used in previous studies in social, personality, health, and clinical psychology, the FACS has attracted little attention from OHP researchers. The current article provides a brief summary of the FACS and illustrates how it could be used in research on employee health and well-being. Given the lack of FACS-certified researchers who are interested in OHP topics, I would be happy to hear from those who are interested in collaborating on projects using the FACS to assess employee emotions.

*Author Note: The author wishes to thank Kevin J. Eschleman for providing helpful feedback on an earlier version of this article.*

"Although the FACS has not yet been used in published OHP research, it has a long history of use in other research areas including social, personality, clinical, and health psychology."

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## New Resources for Conducting and Evaluating Work Stress Interventions

Paul Landsbergis

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Health Science Center at Brooklyn

A new comprehensive textbook on work, stress, and health, titled "Unhealthy Work: Causes, Consequences and Cures," to be published shortly by Baywood publishing, will be a resource for graduate OHP courses and for researchers planning intervention studies. The book contains chapters not only on work in the context of the global economy and scientific findings on the effects of work stressors on employees' health, but also detailed case studies and discussion of various approaches to improve both working conditions and workers' health. Such case studies include: Using Participatory Action Research Methodology to Improve Worker Health, The San Francisco MUNI (Mass Transit) Union-Management-Researcher Health and Safety Project, Reducing Hotel Workers' Injuries, and A Labor-Management Program to Improve Working Conditions for Janitors in Los Angeles. Additional chapters cover models of job stress interventions, stakeholder perspectives on work and stress, occupational and environmental medicine in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, emotional labor, and a National Work Security Index.

Copies of the book can be obtained from Baywood Publishing Company, 26 Austin Ave., PO Box 337, Amityville, NY 11701, phone 631-691-1270, fax 631-691-1770, toll-free orderline 800-638-7819, email [baywood@baywood.com](mailto:baywood@baywood.com), website <http://baywood.com>.

# UNHEALTHY WORK

## Causes, Consequences, and Cures

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Marnie Dobson  
Ellen Roskam

Associate Editors:

Deborah R. Gordon  
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Baywood Publishing Company, Inc.  
Amityville, New York  
<http://baywood.com>



Paul Landsbergis  
State University of  
New York Health Science  
Center at Brooklyn

### Systematic Review of 90 Work Stress Intervention Studies

A comprehensive review of work stress intervention studies, published in 2007, provides another resource for OHP researchers, practitioners and graduate students.

LaMontagne, A. D., Keegel, T., Louie, A. M., Ostry, A., & Landsbergis, P. A. (2007). A systematic review of the job stress intervention evaluation literature: 1990-2005. *International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health*, 13, 268-280. Full details of reviewed studies available from first author upon request ([alamonta@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:alamonta@unimelb.edu.au)).

The authors evaluated the extent to which studies used a "systems approach." About half of the studies identified focused on stress management (a "low systems" approach), and some attempted to make changes only at the organizational level (a "moderate systems" approach). However, about one-third used a "high systems" approach, focusing on both organizational change and strengthening the individual's capacity to withstand stressors. "High systems" approach studies thus represent a growing proportion of published intervention studies despite the fact that the time needed to implement these studies is long, usually ranging from months to years (versus hours to months for low systems approaches).

Overall, 31 "low systems" approach studies were identified in the review as "highest quality" (i.e., these studies utilized either control or comparison groups). Of these, 30 studies measured and 25 found favorable changes at the individual level. However, only 10 studies measured organizational level changes, with three of those finding favorable changes at that level. In contrast, of the 19 highest quality "high systems" approach studies, 17 measured and 13 found favorable changes at the individual level - and 18 measured organizational level factors, with 17 of those finding favorable changes.

The most common organizational outcome measure in these studies was sickness absence. Eight of the nine highest quality "high systems" approach studies that measured sickness absence found a decline in sickness absence as a result of the intervention. A vast majority of these studies involved integrating occupational health with health promotion efforts to improve health habits such as smoking, diet and exercise.

"The book contains ... detailed case studies and discussion of various approaches to improve both working conditions and workers' health."

## Occupational Health Psychology at Portland State University

Rachel Daniels and Kristi Zimmerman

Portland State University

Portland State University (PSU) located in Portland, Oregon is one of a number of U.S. universities that offer graduate training in Occupational Health Psychology (OHP). OHP is offered as a minor within the Applied Psychology Ph.D. program at PSU. Although the majority of students who specialize in OHP receive training in Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology, students from PSU's Social and Developmental programs can also minor in OHP. The OHP program includes five full-time faculty, two affiliated faculty, and approximately 26 doctoral students. PSU's OHP program was founded in 2001 and has since produced four doctoral graduates. These graduates have all obtained jobs in research and/or industry.

The PSU OHP training program began in 1998 under a joint initiative supported by the American Psychological Association (APA) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH); a total of 13 universities were awarded seed money to develop an OHP curriculum. In 2001, PSU became the first institution to receive an OHP training grant funded by NIOSH. Currently, the core faculty in the OHP program includes Leslie Hammer (Director), Donald Truxillo, (Associate Director), and Keith James. We are currently seeking to fill two positions that were previously held by Robert Sinclair (who was instrumental in developing the OHP program with Leslie Hammer) and Mo Wang. There are currently 10 Portland State OHP students, including: Mike Buck, Rachel Daniels, Alison Dezsofi, Chris Harper, Jenna LeComte, Lauren Murphy, Nisreen Pedhiwala, Brittany Sale, Rob Wright, and Kristi Zimmerman.

### Interdisciplinary Nature

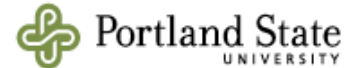
PSU's program is interdisciplinary. PSU faculty collaborate with both PSU and non-PSU colleagues in related safety and health fields such as ergonomics, industrial hygiene, and epidemiology, to name a few. The interdisciplinary nature of the OHP program can be seen in the required course on occupational safety and health. The course integrates various occupational safety and health disciplines including industrial hygiene, epidemiology, and ergonomics.

Another aspect of the interdisciplinary character of the

OHP program resides in the close relationship PSU has developed with our Portland neighbor, the Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU, which is about five minutes from PSU) and specifically with the university's Center for Research on Occupational and Environmental Toxicology (CROET). Recently, CROET faculty and PSU affiliate Dr. Ryan Olson initiated a graduate safety seminar to be taught at PSU in the spring 2009. The course provides an introduction to professional safety through an in-depth consideration of the construction industry as students engage in assignments related to advancing the science and practice of professional safety. In addition to course offerings, it is also common for CROET researchers to collaborate with PSU faculty and students on research projects. Dr. Kent Anger and Dr. Ryan Olson of CROET have both been awarded sub-contracts on Dr. Leslie Hammer's Work, Family, and Health Network research project, which was funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The PSU OHP program has an advisory board comprising regional occupational safety and health scholars and practitioners. These professionals meet semi-annually to provide expert advice for the continued improvement and growth of the OHP program. The professionals possess expertise in OHP-related areas ranging from neurotoxicology to ergonomics. In collaboration with the I/O faculty and a graduate student representative, these volunteers contribute to PSU's OHP program by (1) sharing their knowledge, (2) identifying new OHP opportunities in the Pacific Northwest, (3) providing advice on curriculum development, and (4) presenting special guest lectures in OHP courses. The advisory board takes the lead in planning an annual, one-day conference co-sponsored by CROET and our OHP program. The conference takes place at PSU and is open to occupational safety and health practitioners in the Northwest region (Oregon, northern California, Washington, and Alaska) as well as to PSU faculty and students. Recent conferences have examined workplace violence and drug use as well as employee and applicant reactions to workplace substance abuse policies. The November 2008 meeting examined health and safety implications of work-family stress. Typically, one national-level researcher is invited to serve as the keynote speaker. Keynote speakers have included David Hoffman, Julian Barling, Joel Bennett, and, most recently, Tammy Allen.

(Continued on page 9)



"The course integrates various occupational safety and health disciplines including industrial hygiene, epidemiology, and ergonomics."





Back Row: Dave Cadiz, Lauren Murphy, Chris Harper, Kristi Zimmerman, Brittany Sale, Sonqui Liu

Front Row: Leslie Hammer, Liz Heichelbech, Damon Drown, Jenna Lecomte, Jessie Zhan, Donald Truxillo

## Occupational Health Psychology at Portland State University (cont'd)

(Continued from page 8)

PSU offers a wide range of relevant classes that underline the OHP program's interdisciplinary character. Required courses include occupational health psychology, occupational safety and health (OSH), and advanced applied organizational psychology. In the OSH class various OSH specialists expose students to other disciplines. These disciplines include industrial hygiene, occupational medicine, ergonomics, and epidemiology. In addition, PSU offers electives covering a variety of topics, such as work and well-being, health psychology, stress and coping, and work and family. Further, a minimum of one elective outside of psychology is required. Students are encouraged to explore classes in the nationally-ranked Master's of Public Health program at PSU-OHSU and Oregon State University, including classes in program planning, environmental health, health behavior, epidemiology, and biostatistics.

### Community Engagement

Aside from the important contribution of relevant training, faculty and students at Portland State believe it is necessary for students to extend their learning beyond the classroom. The PSU OHP program promotes community engagement. Many community connections have been established since the program's inception. Students have fulfilled OHP-related practicum and internship requirements in the local community, and have used data collected locally for theses, dissertations, and journal articles. For example, a safety officer at a local water utility company, after attending a presentation by Portland State faculty member, expressed an interest in getting involved in OHP research—the OHP faculty reaches out to the general public by conducting public seminars to encourage greater understanding of occupational safety and health. Since that time, several students have spent their practicum and internship hours at the water utility, working in the safety department, giving presenta-

tions, and participating in meetings. OHP students have conducted research with both construction workers and office workers at the utility. Along the same lines, students have collaborated with a national construction company to conduct research related to safety climate and work motivation. Recently, students have had the opportunity to work with the Oregon Nurses Association on stress-related research as well as work-related drug problems. Similarly, students have also participated in OHP-focused internships in communities far from Portland. For example, one of our students, Lauren Murphy, recently won the American Society for Safety Engineers Foundation Liberty Mutual Safety Research Fellowship, conducting OHP-related research working with the Liberty Mutual Institute for Safety in Boston.

### Faculty

PSU faculty includes several well-respected OHP researchers. Leslie Hammer, Director of the OHP program, has an extensive background in OHP research and was instrumental in the creation of the Society for Occupational Health Psychology, serving as its Founding President. Currently, Dr. Hammer is the Director of the Center for Work-Family Stress, Safety, and Health at PSU. The Center is funded by a consortium of federal agencies under the umbrella of the Work, Family, and Health Network (<http://www.kpchr.org/workplacenetwork/>). The Center's efforts include training supervisors to be more supportive of family life, examining family-related workplace policies and informal practices, and studying the extent to which the level of control employees have over work schedules influences worker health. Dr. Hammer conducted a national, longitudinal study of dual-earner couples who care for children and aging parents, the study funded by the Alfred P. Sloan foundation. The research examined the relation of various work and family stressors to life satisfaction, depression, work-family conflict, absenteeism, and turnover intentions. Dr. Hammer co-authored a book with Margaret Neal, ... (Continued on page 10)

**"Aside from the important contribution of relevant training, faculty and students at Portland State believe it is necessary for students to extend their learning beyond the classroom. The PSU OHP program promotes community engagement."**



## Occupational Health Psychology at Portland State University (cont'd)

(Continued from page 9) ... Director of the Institute on Aging and a Professor in the School of Community Health at PSU, based on this research. The book is entitled *Working Couples Caring for Children and Aging Parents: Effects on Work and Well-Being*. Dr. Hammer is currently collecting a third wave of data on the "sandwiched" generation.

The new Associate Director of the OHP graduate training program, Donald Truxillo, is conducting research on how employees and potential employees perceive employer-sponsored drug testing and treatment. In addition, Dr. Truxillo has examined safety motivation at work. He is also working with colleagues in Italy and France to examine stereotyping of older workers. Dr. Truxillo is an associate editor at the *Journal of Management*, and he is a member of the editorial boards of *Journal of Applied Psychology* and *Personnel Psychology*. He is a Fellow of the Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology (SIOP) and APA and currently serves as member-at-large on the SIOP Executive Committee.

Keith James, a Founding Member of the Society for Occupational Health Psychology, studies work organization influences on employee health, ways organizations can reduce health costs, organizational diversity and health, and disaster and terrorism prevention and response at the organizational level. Dr. James's recent projects include studies of the influence of value conflicts in work units on cardiovascular health and intra- and inter-organizational influences on disaster and terrorism prevention and response. He is engaged in an ongoing effort to develop a taxonomy of major OHP constructs along with the nomological network of OHP constructs relative to other major organizational factors.

Portland State's OHP program includes two affiliated faculty members, Drs. Ryan Olson and Talya Bauer. Dr. Olson is a scientist at OHSU. His research includes developing and understanding effective occupational safety and health interventions. He is particularly interested in self-management methods and interventions for isolated workers. Dr. Olson has extensive experience with the transportation industry. Two of his current research programs concern commercial trucking. Dr. Bauer, of the PSU School of Business Administration, conducts research on safety motivation and employee reactions to workplace substance abuse policies. She has served on the Human Resource Management Executive Committee of the Academy of Management and SIOP Program Chair and member-at-large, as well as being a Fellow of SIOP. Dr. Bauer is the editor of the *Journal of Management*

and is on the editorial board for the *Journal of Applied Psychology* and *Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practices*.

### Student Commitment

There are currently 11 students in the OHP Training Program at PSU. Over the years, numerous students have demonstrated commitment to the field of OHP, as they have been authors and co-authors on papers published in such outlets as the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, and the *Academy of Management Annals*, in addition to serving as authors and co-authors on numerous book chapters. PSU graduate students have also been highly active in presenting at professional conferences. For example, this past year, eight students presented their work at the 2008 Work, Stress and Health Conference in Washington, DC, and Songqi Liu won the Student Research Award for his paper on Work Stress, Family Conflict, and Alcohol Use. Several other students presented their OHP-related research at the annual SIOP conference this past year, where PSU student Rachel Daniels, along with Leslie Hammer, was awarded the opportunity to present research connecting work-family variables and safety at the SIOP Top Posters Session.

Thus far, OHP graduates have primarily obtained applied research positions. For example, Nannette Yragui, was hired as an occupational health psychologist at the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention program, with assignments that include an assessment of supportive behaviors in supervisors of low-wage women workers in abusive relationships. Past PSU graduate Emily Huang serves as a senior research scientist at Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety and is chair of the SOHP conference committee for 2008-2009.

At Portland State University's OHP program, one can feel the energy and enthusiasm for the field. There is a welcoming atmosphere that allows for sharing ideas and collaboration on projects. The excitement of the OHP students is infectious. Graduate students outside of I/O are becoming interested in OHP, as demonstrated by several recent social psychology graduate students choosing to minor in OHP. Another reason why Portland State's OHP program is an exciting place is that students and faculty are highly involved in research and public service. Please visit our web site to learn more: <http://www.psy.pdx.edu/graduate/ohp>.

"At Portland State University's OHP program, one can feel the energy and enthusiasm for the field. There is a welcoming atmosphere that allows for sharing ideas and collaboration on projects."

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## The Future of OHP: The Experts Speak (Part I)

**Robert R. Sinclair**

President, Society for  
Occupational Health Psychology  
Clemson University

Over the last few years, SOHP has matured into a fully functioning professional organization with a growing membership, our own professional conference, an expanding partnership with EA-OHP, APA, and NIOSH, as well as a growing list of member benefits. These successes are largely attributable to a series of organizational-development initiatives taken by our committee chairs and members at large, the editorial staff of the SOHP newsletter (and the contributors), and all of the other members who have been involved in SOHP's efforts. Although we have much to be proud of, I think everyone recognizes that we are just getting started. So, where are we going? What does the future hold for SOHP as an organization and more importantly, for OHP as a scientific discipline?

For quite some time, I have wanted to have a strategic planning session with SOHP members to talk about the future of the field. This column is a first effort at such a session. For this column, I wanted to air the thoughts of five individuals who contribute to OHP in different ways and who are clearly recognized as thought-leaders in OHP. My criteria for selection included (a) international recognition in the field, (b) their *not* having served as President of SOHP in the past (bringing fresh perspectives), (c) their having paid 2008 SOHP membership dues, and (d) a willingness to participate. With these criteria in mind, I identified five individuals who have diverse perspectives on the future of OHP. I do not have the room for a full bio-sketch for each individual, but I bet that most of you know them. They include: Paul Spector and Tammy Allen of the University of South Florida, Nick Warren of the University of Connecticut, Lois Tetrick of George Mason University, and Tom Hilton of the National Institute on Drug Abuse<sup>1</sup>.

My methodology was simple. I wrote eight questions that address some of the major issues in OHP. In this issue of the *Newsletter*, the first four questions and the responses are presented. The second set of four questions and the responses to them will be presented in the next issue. The questions concern how the participants view OHP, their views about some of the important directions for SOHP and the OHP field, and their opinions about some key questions concerning OHP scholarship. It is important to note that each participant responded without seeing the answers of the other participants. I present their complete answers with only minor editing. Each person's first name indicates his or her answer. I hope that both my questions and the responses to them get you thinking about the issues covered as well as creative ways to address the issues. I also hope the responses will spark further dialogue on the OHP e-mail list or perhaps at future conference sessions. Finally, when you run into any of the respondents at a conference, be sure to thank them for their contributions!

### **Q1. You are all accomplished professionals in your chosen fields and specialties, what is it that drew you to OHP?**

**Paul:** I went to graduate school in the early 70s when the field of industrial/organizational psychology was dominated by the organizational effectiveness perspective. Everything we did and studied had to be justified as serving job performance and the organization's bottom line. For some reason, that perspective never resonated with me, and I chose to take more of an employee perspective, being concerned with things that affected employee health and well-being. My first research interest was in understanding individual and organization factors that contributed to employee aggression. Perhaps the biggest stimulus to my interest in what is now OHP was the 1976 book, *Work and Well-Being* by Peter Warr and Toby Wall. It sparked my interest in occupational stress. The development of OHP as a recognized specialty further expanded my interests into exposure to violence, and to some extent injuries. I see all of the various topics in OHP as fitting together rather than being distinct.

**Tammy:** I have been studying work-family issues since graduate school. I was attracted to OHP because it helps place the study of work and family within the larger context of employee health and well-being. It has served to broaden the questions that I ask with regard to work-family interactions.

**Tom:** I think I was born an I/O psychologist. It just took 25 years to recognize that my impulse to improve work environments was really a vocation. My graduate research was NIH-funded, so I spent a lot of time studying healthcare organizations. The more that I learned about healthcare organizations, the more attracted I became to health organizations. During my Navy career, and later at the FAA, I observed tangible evidence that a healthy, safety-minded workforce was a barometer of good people practices in the organization as well as an indicator of productivity. The National Institutes of Health (NIH), where I currently administer health services research grants, recruited me in part because it wanted to create a portfolio examining how the addiction treatment workplace affected patient recovery. In recent years I have been trying to broaden NIH attention to encompass alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among the general work-a-day population. That remains a quest.

**Lois:** This is difficult to say, but I believe that it was a convergence of an interest in occupational stress with the clear link between stress and work conditions and stress and health outcomes. It seemed natural that I/O Psychology had a lot to contribute, which was not necessarily recognized in the larger community.

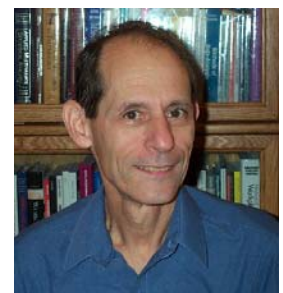
**Nick:** For me, it was a very long journey, occupying perhaps 20 years and still continuing. I had been involved in a very non-academic field for 20 years, as a woodworker and cabinetmaker. Injuries and illnesses ... (Continued on page 12)

Note: The opinions expressed here are solely attributable to the author, and do not necessarily reflect the position of the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Request for reprints should be sent to Thomas F. Hilton, Ph.D., National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse, 6001 Executive Blvd. Rm. 5197, Bethesda, MD 20892-958. [tom.hilton@nih.gov](mailto:tom.hilton@nih.gov)



**Bob Sinclair**  
President of SOHP  
Clemson University

"For this column, I wanted you to have the opportunity to air the thoughts of five individuals who contribute to OHP in different ways and who are clearly recognized as thought-leaders in OHP."



**Paul Spector**  
University of South Florida

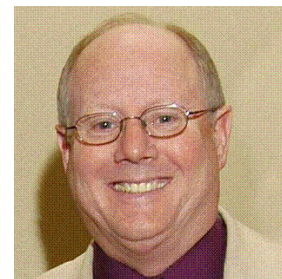


**Tammy Allen**  
University of South Florida

## The Future of OHP: The Experts Speak (cont'd)



"I think I was born an I/O psychologist. It just took 25 years to recognize that my impulse to improve work environments was really a vocation."



Tom Hilton

National Institutes of Health



Lois Tetrick

George Mason University



Nick Warren

University of Connecticut  
Health Center

"I believe that the mission of OHP is clearly interdisciplinary".

(Continued from page 11) ... experienced by co-workers led me into occupational health at UMass Lowell. Starting with an interest in industrial hygiene, then moving to ergonomics, and progressively towards psychosocial risk factors for musculoskeletal disorders and the roots of job-level risks: work organization and organizational culture and structure. At the same time, work on the OSHA ergonomic standard and its destruction in 2000 led me to practical considerations of how to convince owners/managers to improve working conditions, looking at the link between employee health and productivity and quality outcomes. So for me, the multi-disciplinary, multi-level foci of OHP, combined with its translational appeal to practitioners, were a very good fit.

**Q2. Everyone probably agrees that occupational health psychologists need to be informed to some degree by scholarship in multiple disciplines (occupational medicine, industrial hygiene, etc.). However, one on-going tension concerns the "size of the P" in OHP. In your opinion, is OHP primarily a discipline of psychology that is informed by other fields or can/should OHP be truly interdisciplinary?**

**Paul:** What distinguishes OHP from related fields in occupational health and safety is the P. Take that away and there is nothing unique. Thus, I think OHP will be primarily a subfield of psychology. That said, it will continue to borrow heavily from a variety of other fields both inside and outside of psychology. I see a lot of parallels with industrial/organizational psychology. Originally the field developed out of experimental psychology, but early on there were people from a lot of backgrounds who considered themselves I/O psychologists. I/O is quite interdisciplinary in its influences, but at its core it is psychology. I see OHP as taking the same path.

**Tammy:** OHP can and should be truly interdisciplinary. It has become evident that the really big and important questions that science needs to answer can only be answered through interdisciplinary efforts. We have the potential for greater impact if we maintain and grow our interdisciplinary roots.

**Tom:** Health services research, the context in which I most often work, has traditionally been multidisciplinary. There are economists, anthropologists, sociologists, physicians, criminologists, psychotherapists, and even engineers among my NIH colleagues and in my NIDA research portfolio. The occupational health field thrives on paradigmatic variety (from at least an epistemic perspective). However, it is the P that defines SOHP's explanatory paradigm. It is the P that complements the paradigmatic alphabet of nonpsychologist colleagues.

**Lois:** I believe that the mission of OHP is clearly interdisciplinary. Do I believe that any one individual can be a repository of all the necessary knowledge to achieve the goals of OHP? I don't think so. Therefore, occupational health psychologists need to be firmly grounded in psychology with sufficient exposure to other disciplines to be able to recognize other risks/hazards, communicate with other professions as well as know who to call, and be able to collaborate with the various disciplines necessary to create and maintain a healthy and safe work environment.

**Nick:** I am not sure I buy the dichotomy implied by the question. I think that, whether or not psychology is the primary discipline, it is possible to be 'interdisciplinary'. That said, my path to OHP from occupational medicine and my work as a practitioner make it unlikely that I would view either psychology or occupational medicine as my 'primary' or home discipline. OHP is a framework for interdisciplinary methods. I experience the excitement and creativity of the dynamic mix of disciplines in my own practice and research as a road to new understandings of and approaches to employee health. Most of us have come to the discipline with a 'home' in some field, but I think our direction should always be expanding towards an inclusive approach to occupational health. And it is possible that younger students, schooled in the broad collection of our current disciplines, will not even understand the question you pose.

**Q3. Regarding OHP methodology: Do we really need another cross-sectional survey linking self-reports of stressors to self-reported outcomes? Why or why not? If not, what are the most important alternatives?**

**Paul:** The ultimate goal of stress research is to understand the underlying causal processes between the work environment and health/well-being. There are three steps to building a causal case: Establishing a correlation, establishing time sequence, and ruling out feasible alternative explanations. Cross-sectional, self-report (CsSr) studies are valuable as the first step in establishing a relation, and to some extent they are useful for the third step of ruling out alternatives. A good reason to use them is that they are cheap and efficient. However, once we have established a relation, we need to turn to the second step, which requires more difficult designs.

It would make sense to do more CsSr studies only if there we come up with new meaningful variables that need their interrelationships tested, or if we have some feasible alternative explanation to rule out. Additional studies of established variables have hit a point of diminishing returns using this design. However, we keep seeing CsSr studies published, even in top journals. Everyone talks in their discussion sections about the need for stronger designs, but the CsSr design dominates.

In my experience, there is a big disincentive for people to use stronger research designs. Because they are difficult and potentially expensive, people are reluctant to use anything other than CsSr until the relations among variables of interest are established. But reviewers of top journals seem to favor novelty over rigor, so submitting a paper using a strong design to test relations already established is likely to be met with the criticism that there is little value added to the paper. This leaves authors in a position of not wanting to follow-up on CsSr studies if all they are doing is providing more conclusive evidence for time sequencing or ruling out alternatives.

(Continued on page 13)



## The Future of OHP: The Experts Speak (cont'd)

(Continued from page 12)

**Tammy:** Self-reports will continue to provide valuable information. However, I would like to see more research that augments self-reports with other types of data. Physiological indicators of health (e.g., cortisol, blood pressure) as well as reports from other sources on variables of interest where relevant (e.g., family member reports of the extent the target's work interferes with the family) are all needed to provide a more complete understanding of the issues we study.

**Tom:** When I joined NIDA in the late '90s, I challenged our health services program by asking if after 100 plus evaluation studies showing that addiction treatment works, would 101 win over the skeptics? Similarly, I ask SOHP if one more OHP study linking stress to people's sense of wellness will create an epiphany that will change the world of work?

During the past several years, a small cabal of NIH colleagues and I have been encouraging a science-of-complexity perspective in behavioral health research. Newtonian reductionism has taken health science to its current level, but more recently that paradigm seems to be limiting the pace of discovery. Behavioral health is not awash in useful dynamic models of how people stay healthy, develop chronic illness, and recover. OHP can benefit from building dynamic models of the world of work and the other worlds with which it interacts. Dynamic models enable viewing workplace effects from the perspective of individual incumbents rather than aggregates of incumbents. The static causal models that dominate today's OHP reflect how things work "on average" and "all things being equal," which they seldom are. A big benefit of dynamic models is their potential to predict quantum changes in behavior - changes that create epiphanies that CAN change the world of work.

**Lois:** I believe that we have a preponderance of weak research designs including cross-sectional surveys using self-report measures. Would stronger designs be better? - Of course. However, is there still a place for the weaker designs - absolutely with some conditions. The simplest, weakest design may be useful for a really new idea that needs preliminary examination and which has promise to generate subsequent research with stronger designs. This should probably be the exception rather than the rule. It would be better to have longitudinal designs with "objective" as well as subjective measures and multi-source data (it should be noted that multi-source data are no panacea as they may reflect conceptually different constructs). Manipulation within a field lab study may be difficult for numerous reasons.

**Nick:** OK, so this is a relatively weak study design. I support more of them. They are inexpensive and provocative; they serve as jumping-off points for longitudinal studies, for studies linking administrative (non-self-report) data to self-reported exposures, and laboratories for developing hypotheses and theory. But we do get mightily into navel-gazing in some of our item and scale development in these projects. These studies are still valuable, but they do not stand alone, because of their weaknesses.

**Q4. What is the most important unanswered question in OHP scholarship? One way to frame that question would be that if you were encouraging a new graduate student to pursue an area of scholarship with great potential to contribute to theory and practice, what would it be (assuming of course that the student was interested in the topic)?**

**Paul:** There isn't a lot of intervention work. We know a lot about factors that potentially affect health/well-being, but we don't know a lot about how to intervene. Such research has the potential to help establish causal relations as well. If we can show that manipulating the environment has a positive impact on health/well-being, it goes a long way in making a causal case, especially when tied to cross-sectional self-report evidence.

**Tammy:** Tough question! Intervention research is clearly one area as you indicate in your next question. Also somewhat linked to your question regarding cross-sectional research, I think we need a better understanding of the role of time and changes across time in the phenomena that we study. I have been delighted to see a greater number of experience sampling studies within the area of work-family as of late. But longer-term research is also needed. However, I would not recommend that a graduate student tackle such studies!

**Tom:** Why do some people apprehend and react to events in unhealthful and destructive ways while others apprehend and react to events in healthful and constructive ways? An admirer of the late Albert Ellis, my psychology remains Jamesian (as in William) focused on learning how cognitions interact with emotions to animate behavior. I think that this remains the core question within OHP. Behavioral researchers have access to a growing quiver of tools that enable electronic methods for peeking dynamically into the in vivo human. These tools can help develop effective interventions to address the idiosyncratic ways people respond to the world of work. There seems to be limitless research potential for applying new technology in OHP.

**Lois:** I'm not sure that I can answer this directly, at least to identify a specific question, but let me try to answer in a somewhat more general way. It seems to me that OHP scholarship has included a wide repertoire of work conditions but this scholarship has included rather weak measures of "ill-health" and very few assessments of "positive health." There seems to be an assumption that ill-health and positive health are simply two ends of a continuum, but this may not be the case. Therefore, we need to address the relation between ill-health and positive health and relate this link to the work environment.

**Nick:** I am not sure about a single question, but I think a tremendous, relatively unexplored direction in OHP is the potential for incorporating the rapidly growing body of knowledge about brain architecture, physiology, and localization (or non-localization) of function (physical and mental) with the understandings and directions of OHP. The new information on the localization of brain activity derived from f-MRI work has tremendous potential to expand our work.

"I experience the excitement and creativity of the dynamic mix of disciplines in my own practice and research as a road to new understandings of and approaches to employee health."

"I think we need a better understanding of the role of time and changes across time in the phenomena that we study."



## Meeting of the International Coordinating Group for Occupational Health Psychology (ICG-OHP)

**Janet Barnes-Farrell**  
**President-Elect of SOHP**  
**University of Connecticut**

The November 2008 conference of the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology, held in Valencia, Spain, was also host to a meeting of the International Coordinating Group for Occupational Health Psychology (ICG-OHP). The ICG-OHP, currently chaired by *Work and Stress* editor Tom Cox, was initiated in 2000, and now includes representatives of the American Psychological Association (APA), the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology (EA-OHP), the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, the National Institute of Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH), the Society for Occupational Health Psychology (SOHP), and *Work and Stress*.

During the meeting in Valencia, the group discussed initiatives and cooperative efforts that can help to move the discipline of OHP forward. One of those initiatives is an exciting agreement between SOHP and EA-OHP that goes into effect in January 2009. This agreement allows members of SOHP to join EA-OHP at a reduced fee, which includes a subscription to *Work and Stress* and the member rate for registration at the EA-OHP conference. Likewise, members of EA-OHP can now become International Affiliate members of SOHP at a reduced fee; International Affiliate members will receive all of the benefits

of SOHP membership, including a subscription to the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* and the SOHP member registration rate at the biannual Work, Stress and Health conference.

Another important outcome of the ICG-OHP meeting is a coordinated meeting schedule for the EA-OHP conference and the Work, Stress, and Health conference organized by APA, NIOSH and SOHP. Beginning in 2010, the EA-OHP and Work, Stress, and Health conferences will be held in April on a rotating basis, starting with the April 2010 EA-OHP conference in Rome. The goal is to make it possible for those engaged in OHP research and practice to participate in both conferences.

Discussion also centered on growth of OHP in countries outside North America and Europe and ways to ensure that the ICG-OHP reflects the global nature of this field. The group agreed to investigate whether there are other identifiable professional groups that should be invited to join the ICG-OHP.

To ensure continuity of the ICG-OHP and its efforts, the group will meet annually during the Work, Stress and Health and the EA-OHP conferences. Chairmanship of the group will rotate among member organizations. In addition, both SOHP and EA-OHP agreed to commit some annual funds to support the activities of the coordinating group.

More information about the International Coordinating Group can be found at the ICG-OHP website:

<http://www.icg-ohp.org>

**"During the meeting in Valencia, the group discussed initiatives and cooperative efforts that can help to move the discipline of OHP forward."**



**Jonathan Houdmont of the EA-OHP and Janet Barnes-Farrell of the SOHP sign the agreement providing mutual membership benefits for the members of the two organizations.**

*Photograph by Eusebio Rial-Gonzalez*



## ACROSS THE POND: 2008 Professional Practice Forum

**Peter Kelly**  
Health and Safety Executive, UK  
Professional Practice Chair

**Jonathan Houdmont**  
I-WHO University of Nottingham UK  
EA-OHP Executive Officer

The European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology was founded on three pillars: research, education and professional practice. For almost a decade, working groups (forums) have introduced initiatives with the objective of advancing activities in each of these domains. Having attended EA-OHP conferences for many years we have been fortunate to be exposed to a wealth of excellent research, conducted across the globe, almost all of which has valuable implications for practitioners. However, we are also aware that practitioners are in the minority at such conferences and that they rarely have access to academic journals that serve to communicate the state of the art. As a result, there is a very real possibility that many occupational health psychology practitioners may find themselves unable to take advantage of knowledge developments in the field.

In view of these challenges, the Academy was eager to use the 2008 annual meeting of its professional practice forum as an opportunity to enable practitioners to meet and learn about the nature of professional practice in occupational health psychology across the globe. To that end a number of practitioners kindly agreed to share their professional experiences and to take questions. Speakers included Kevin Kelloway (Canada), Carol Schober (USA), and Barbara Wren (UK). The forum was attended by an international constituency of practitioners during the Academy's biennial conference in Valencia, Spain.

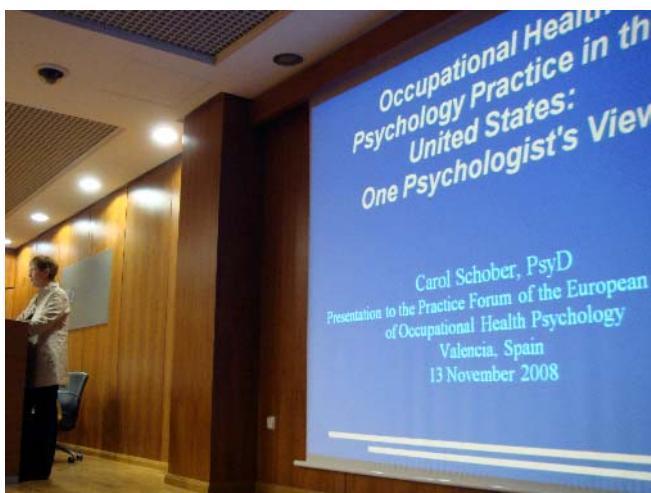
A number of themes could be identified across the presentations and within the subsequent group discussion. The issue of support for professional practice from na-

tional professional bodies emerged as a key topic. It was apparent that many national-level psychological representative bodies fail to recognize occupational health psychology and, as a result, it is difficult, if not impossible, for individuals to operate exclusively as occupational health psychologists in certain regions. Related to this, the forum noted the lack of international consistency in training and development opportunities. In Canada, for example, there are no undergraduate or postgraduate OHP courses and most individuals with an interest in the field will be qualified in another, related, area. This picture is not unique to Canada. Together, these factors highlighted the vital role of discipline-specific bodies such as EA-OHP and SOHP in the advancement of both education and professional practice in the field.

It was also apparent that practitioners often work in isolation, removed from opportunities to share best practice with professional peers. However, Barbara Wren described an interesting exception in the UK: the OHP Professional Practice Network, which meets quarterly to provide a vehicle for practitioners to meet socially and professionally. The forum agreed that the EA-OHP ought to encourage the formation of such networks. As a result, in 2009 the Academy will introduce a fund to support such activities. The fund will award one or two small grants per annum. If you are a practitioner and might be interested in establishing a local network under the aegis of the EA-OHP please contact us for further details.

In sum, the 2008 Professional Practice Forum was considered a great success. New professional relationships were forged and many participants reported leaving the session with a renewed sense of vigor! Most crucially of all, the Forum conveyed the value of professional practice in occupational health psychology and contributed to fostering a perspective that recognizes professional practice as of equal importance to research and education in the continued evolution of the discipline.

**"...the Academy was eager to use the 2008 annual meeting of its professional practice forum as an opportunity to enable practitioners to meet and learn about the nature of professional practice in occupational health psychology across the globe."**



Carol Schober discusses OHP practice in the US during the EA-OHP conference in Valencia.

*Photograph by Jonathon Houdmont*



Peter Kelly speaks at the Professional Practice Forum during the EA-OHP conference in Valencia.

*Photograph by Jonathon Houdmont*

## SOHP Secretary's Report Fall 2008



**Christopher J. L. Cunningham**  
The University of Tennessee  
at Chattanooga

In late September, the SOHP Executive Board met via teleconference to discuss the activities of the various subcommittees and to identify any other pressing concerns. What follows is a summary of that meeting.

**Visibility:** It was noted that OHP is becoming increasingly visible in professional circles. In particular, APA has started to recognize OHP as a distinct specialty within the broader field. Inquiries are being made with APS to determine if a similar acknowledgement can be secured there as well.

**Graduate Student Issues:** This sub-committee continues to work on improving the OHP experience for graduate students. New developments in 2008 that continue to be improved include the job/opportunity posting board on the main SOHP website and continued effort to increase student involvement in the ongoing Work, Stress, and Health conferences.

**Education and Training:** This SOHP sub-committee has been working with a similar group in the EA-OHP to identify basic OHP competencies that can serve

as the underpinnings for curriculum guidance in future training programs. This group also updates the SOHP website regarding education and training opportunities in the field and with identifying specific educational needs for students and practicing professionals.

**Membership:** SOHP and EA-OHP have reached an agreement to facilitate dual-memberships across the two organizations. The terms of this agreement are found in the 2009 registration packets for SOHP or EA-OHP membership. It is hoped that this agreement will help strengthen ties between North American and European occupational health psychologists.

**Treasurer's Report:** Thanks to the 2008 Work, Stress, and Health conference and efforts by the Membership Committee, SOHP has experienced an increase in membership. As a result, SOHP is doing well financially. The Executive Board discussed the development of a recurring budget to help with the planning and allocation of our resources from year to year. As the funding for this society is heavily dependent on membership dues, the importance of timely registration submissions was also discussed.

**Practitioner connections:** The committee has launched a survey to iden-

tify the needs of practitioners involved with OHP-related work. The results of the survey will help the committee make recommendations. We look forward to reviewing the results later this year.

**Conference Planning:** Work is underway for the 2009 Work, Stress, and Health conference. Now that SOHP is a planning partner for this event, members of the Executive Committee and broader membership have a more integral role in the design and execution of this conference. Stay tuned for more updates from this group in the spring.

**Update on the SOHP budget.** Since I serve as the Secretary-Treasurer, I am happy to report that as of December 2008, the SOHP is strong fiscally. As of early December 2008, the SOHP account balance is close to \$14,000, prior to our year-end expenditures and any remaining member renewals. I will prepare a more complete finance report for the next issue of the newsletter -- be sure to look for it.

If you have any questions or would like additional details about the issues covered in the fall Executive Board meeting, please feel free to contact the current SOHP secretary, Chris Cunningham, at:

[cjlcunningham@gmail.com](mailto:cjlcunningham@gmail.com)  
423-425-4264.



Chris Cunningham  
University of Tennessee at  
Chattanooga

"It was noted that OHP is becoming increasingly visible in professional circles."

## NIOSH OHP Activities

### Training Products for Workers on Shift Work and Long Work Hours

**Claire C. Caruso**  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has several projects targeting risks associated with sleepiness and insufficient sleep. In the May, 2008 *Newsletter*, Edward Hitchcock (<http://sohp-online.org/SOHPNewsletterV3May2008.pdf>) described activities in the Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities Sector addressing the problem of fatigue in truck drivers. The current article will describe another fatigue-related project, the purpose of which is to develop a training program that informs workers and managers of the risks associated with shift work and long work hours. A second aim of the project is to introduce strategies to reduce these risks.

About 15% of U.S. full-time workers are on shift-work schedules (McMenamin, 2008) and an estimated 20% work long hours (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004). Shift work and long work hours are linked to a growing number of health and safety problems including injuries, worker errors, cardiovas-

cular and gastrointestinal disorders, mental disturbances, and adverse reproductive outcomes (Arnedt et al, 2005; Barger et al., 2005; Bøggild & Knutsson, 1999; Caruso et al. 2004; Dembe et al., 2005; Folkard & Lombardi, 2006; Frazier & Grainger, 2003; Hanna et al., 2005; Knutsson, 2003; Landrigan et al., 2004; Mozurkewich et al., 2000; Rogers et al., 2004; Rohr et al., 2003; Sood, 2003; Thomas & Raynar, 1997; Tuntiseranee et al., 1998). In 2007, the International Agency for Research on Cancer of the World Health Organization announced that shift work coupled with circadian disruption is a probable carcinogen. A recent review of the literature reports that long work hours are associated with musculoskeletal disorders, which are possibly due to increased physical demands (Caruso & Waters, in press). Fatigue-related worker mistakes and errors can also affect families and communities through work/family conflict, vehicular crashes, patient care errors, and industrial disasters. The scientific community has generated knowledge about these risks and strategies to reduce them, but this information has not been sufficiently disseminated to U.S. workers and their managers. ... (Continued on page 17)



Claire Caruso  
NIOSH

## NIOSH OHP Activities (cont'd)

(Continued from page 16) ... To fill this need, NIOSH is developing work schedule risk prevention training products to educate four audiences in this regard - miners, nurses, retail workers, and truck drivers.

This project meets a NIOSH goal of bringing research to practice (r2p) to enable workers and organizations to benefit more quickly from scientific findings. The project will advance NIOSH r2p goals by disseminating to high-risk groups in an assessable and cost-effective way the latest scientific evidence linking work schedules and associated health risks. The *NIH Sleep Disorders Research Plan* (2003; <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/sleep/reschpln.htm>), the Institute of Medicine Report - *Sleep Disorders and Sleep Deprivation: An Unmet Public Health Problem* (2006; <http://www.iom.edu/CMS/3740/23160/33668.aspx>), and the NORA Long Work Hour Team publication (2006; see <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/workschedules/> for a series of relevant publications) recommend the development and testing of this type of training.

To develop the training products, external scientists and focus groups for each of the targeted audiences will provide input to improve the chances that the training materials will be practical and effective. The training content will include information about the need for sleep and dangers of sleepiness and fatigue, deficits in functioning associated with

sleep deprivation, other health risks, difficult work scheduling patterns, countermeasures, and shared responsibility in the workplace for reducing risks. After the training products are drafted, focus groups of managers and workers in the targeted audiences will give feedback and the project staff will make refinements to the training based on the feedback. A small-scale pre- and post-test evaluation will assess the impact of the training on knowledge, attitudes, and intended health behaviors in a group of nursing students and improvements will be made based on the results.

The goals of the training are to improve knowledge, attitudes, and intended behaviors related to risks associated with demanding work schedules. As a result, students, workers, and managers will be better prepared for these occupational hazards and will be more knowledgeable about countermeasures that reduce health risks. The longer-term goals of the training are to reduce injuries and illnesses. In addition, these improvements should reduce fatigue-related worker mistakes and errors that can result in far-reaching adverse effects on families and communities.

Final training products will be made available through CDC publications and the NIOSH web site ([www.cdc.gov/niosh](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh)). NIOSH personnel on this project include Claire C. Caruso, Edward Hitchcock, Akinori Nakata, Stephen Hudock, Robert Peters, Donald Eggerth, and Brenda Jones.

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Fatigue-related worker mistakes and errors can also affect families and communities through work/family conflict, vehicular crashes, patient care errors, and industrial disasters.



## Work, Stress, and Health 2009 in San Juan, Puerto Rico

Julia Limanowski

Conference Planning Committee

Join us in San Juan, Puerto Rico, for the 8th International Conference on Occupational Stress and Health. The [Work, Stress, and Health 2009: Global Concerns and Approaches](#) Conference will be held at the Caribe Hilton Hotel, San Juan, Puerto Rico, November 5-8, 2009, with preconference workshops on November 5. The conference is co-sponsored by the American Psychological Association, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the Society for Occupational Health Psychology, and the University of Puerto Rico.

### About the Conference

The Work, Stress, and Health conferences have addressed the constantly changing nature of work and associated implications for the health, safety, and well-being of workers. The conference organizers anticipate that conference presentations will be of interest to labor, management, practitioners, and researchers. Anticipated topics include work and family, workplace violence, long work hours, the aging workforce, and best practices for preventing stress and improving the health of workers and organizations. Expert presentations, panel discussions, and informal get-togethers with leading scientists and practitioners will provide an exciting forum for learning about the latest developments regarding work, stress, and health. This year the conference will highlight work, stress, and health as a global concern among developed and developing countries alike.

### CALL FOR PROPOSALS

We invite researchers, practitioners, business and organization representatives, labor leaders, and medical and social science professionals from all disciplines related to occupational safety and health to submit proposals for papers, symposia, roundtable discussions, and poster presentations. The deadline for all proposals is **March 19, 2009**.

The conference is also sponsoring a pair of competitions:

- The Best Practices Intervention Evaluation Competition
- The Best Student Research Competition

In addition, nominations are also being sought for the Early Career Achievement Award.

For more information and to find out how to submit, please visit <http://www.apa.org/pi/work/wsh.html>

### Important Conference Dates and Deadlines

March 16, 2009	Deadline for submitting all conference proposals
Summer 2009	Registration & hotel reservation information will be available on the website
June 22, 2009	Deadline for submitting manuscripts for the Best Practices Intervention Evaluation Competition
August 1, 2009	Deadline for submitting manuscripts for the Best Student Research Competition
September 1, 2009	Early Career Achievement Award nominations due
October 10, 2009	End of Early Registration period

With all that's awaiting you in San Juan, we know you'll enjoy "Work, Stress, and Health 2009: Global Concerns and Approaches." See you there!

For more information and to make online submissions, please visit <http://www.apa.org/pi/work/wsh.html>





## Work, Stress, and Health 2009 in San Juan, Puerto Rico (cont'd)

### Planning Your Trip

Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States; therefore, no passports or visas are required for U.S. citizens, and U. S. citizens may enter and leave the island without passing through customs. Requirements for non-U.S. citizens are the same as for entering the United States. Puerto Rico's currency is the U.S. dollar and the official languages are Spanish and English.

November temperatures in Puerto Rico range from an average low of 75 °F (24°C) to an average high of 85 °F (29°C), so pack accordingly.

### Getting There and Getting Around

San Juan's Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport (SJU) is accessible from around the world. There are direct flights from New York (JFK), Washington, DC (Dulles), Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas, Miami, and Orlando. From Europe, there are direct flights from Madrid. Additional information about travel arrangements and airline discounts will be available soon, so check the [WSH website](#) frequently.

The conference hotel, the Caribe Hilton, is just a 15-minute taxi ride from the airport (about \$20) and a 6-minute taxi ride from Old San Juan (about \$10).

Getting around San Juan on foot is easy. Additionally, taxis, buses, and "público" vans will get you anywhere you want to go. You may also take a no-charge Trolley Tour in historic Old San Juan.

### The Caribe Hilton Hotel

The [Caribe Hilton](#) is set on a private 17-acre peninsula situated between historic Old San Juan and the Condado area. It offers a private beach, great accommodations, and a variety of recreational activities. The hotel also has nine restaurants and lounges.

All of the resort's guest rooms have private balconies overlooking either the Atlantic Ocean or tropical gardens. In addition, each room has a coffeemaker, refrigerator, dual-line telephone with data ports and voice mail, electronic safe deposit box, MP3 alarm clock, a work desk and chair, and (for a small fee) high-speed Internet access. Additional amenities include free Internet access in the lobby, a knowledgeable staff, and a non-smoking environment.

Recreational opportunities on-site include a fitness center, playground, Camp Coco with supervised activities for children, three lighted tennis courts, a bird sanctuary, beach hammocks and umbrellas, sightseeing tours, a video arcade, and bicycle rentals. Check-in time is 4:00 p.m. and check-out is 12:00 p.m.

All WSH attendees will receive an excellent group rate of \$165 for a single room or \$185 for a double room, plus taxes. This rate will be available for stays between November 4 and November 9, 2009 (one day before and one day after the conference).

Information about hotel reservations will be available in summer 2009, so please bookmark the WSH website (<http://www.apa.org/pi/work/wsh.html>).

### Things To Do

For conference attendees who wish to arrive early or extend their stay, Puerto Rico offers a number of activities and sightseeing opportunities, including:

- Old San Juan, a 465-year-old neighborhood that has evolved into a charming residential and commercial district
- Various castles and forts, including San Felipe del Morro and San Cristóbal
- [El Yunque National Rainforest](#), renowned for its variety of tropical flora and fauna, jungle-like foliage, and numerous hiking trails that lead to spectacular waterfalls and crags
- The world's largest Bacardi Rum distillery, which offers an interactive tour through history and the production process;
- [Río Camuy Cave Park](#), including the dramatically illuminated 170-foot high Cueva Clara and the 400-foot deep Tres Pueblos Sinkhole
- [Arecibo Observatory](#), the site of the world's largest radio telescope
- Hacienda Buena Vista, with tours of its renovated "working" coffee plantation that recaptures rural life in 19<sup>th</sup> century Puerto Rico
- Snorkeling and scuba diving - Puerto Rico offers a comfortable ocean temperature of 81°F (27°C) and underwater visibility averaging 60 to 75 feet
- Kayak tours of two protected bioluminescent bays - at La Parguera and in Vieques
- Plaza las Américas, the largest shopping mall in the Caribbean

Visit the official site of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Tourism Company (<http://www.gotopuertorico.com/>) to learn more about Puerto Rico and San Juan.





Thank you for reading this issue of the Society for Occupational Health Psychology Newsletter!

Society for Occupational Health Psychology

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### ABOUT SOHP

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The Society for Occupational Health Psychology is a non-profit organization with the purpose of engaging in activities to instruct the public on subjects useful to the individual and beneficial to the community. These efforts are achieved (1) by obtaining, and disseminating to the public factual data regarding occupational health psychology through the promotion and encouragement of psychological research on significant theoretical and practical questions relating to occupational health and (2) by promoting and encouraging the application of the findings of such psychological research to the problems of the workplace.

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If you are interested in becoming a member of SOHP please visit our website at <http://www.sohp-online.org>.

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