

NOTES FROM THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Anne Doherty Johnson

I am delighted to be joining SCEH as your new Executive Director, and under the excellent guidance of Michele Hart, have been getting up to speed on the organization's members, programs, history and plans for the future. I look forward to getting to know many of you and of course, to meeting those of you who will be in San Antonio this fall. Details on the annual conference are outlined in this issue, and the sessions and speakers again this year offer many opportunities for learning and networking.

I am impressed with SCEH's rich history and looking forward to assisting your Board in continuing to provide you with the information and services you have come to expect from your society. In the way of a brief introduction, I bring to the table an extensive background in association management, marketing and meeting planning across several industries, including technology, insurance and professional services.

I strongly believe in the ability of associations to empower their members. Please know that I am here to help you access SCEH programs and fellow members to support your professional and personal goals. Please say hello and let me know your thoughts about SCEH and how we can help you better utilize, understand or advance hypnosis in your work.

Sincerely yours,

Anne Doherty Johnson
Executive Director
Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis
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Society for Clinical &
Experimental Hypnosis

FOCUS

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

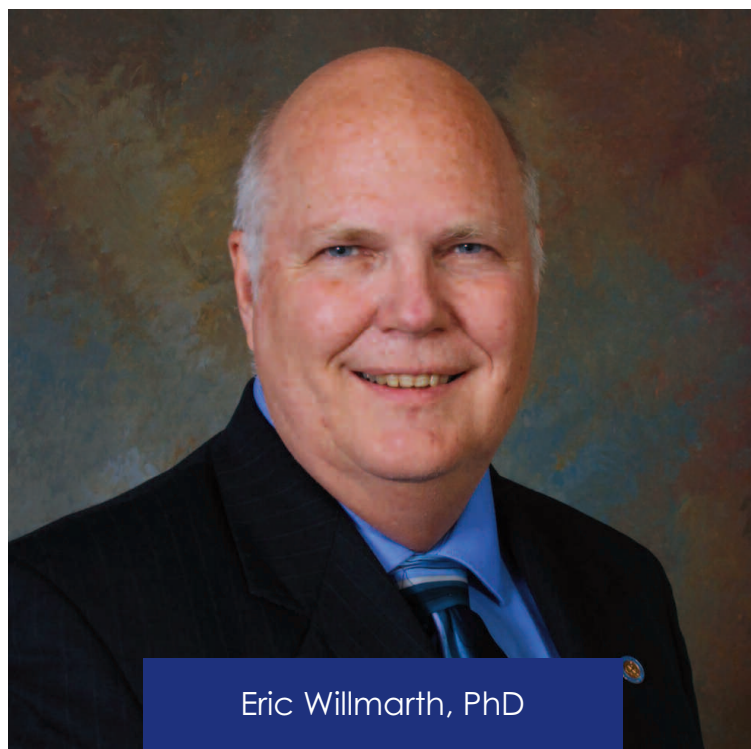
Eric Willmarth, PhD

The fact that I am writing this "Letter from the President" highlights the tragic loss of Edward Frischholz, who died on May 10th, 2014 at the age of 58. This issue of FOCUS will contain two of the many eulogies for Ed that flooded the hypnosis world's Listservs and emails in the days that followed Ed's untimely death. I had the opportunity to attend Ed's memorial service in Chicago on May 17th and was reminded of how Ed was such a force of nature, not only in the world of hypnosis but also with family, neighbors, friends and colleagues. A neighbor who knew him well offered: "He was bigger than life but had too short a life." So true.

Many of us were with Ed just weeks before his death, in San Diego at the ASCH conference where he campaigned tirelessly for a unification of ASCH & SCEH. This is a controversial issue, but those who knew Ed, know that he was fearless when it came to controversy. The issue of combining ASCH & SCEH will be a "hot topic" in the weeks and months ahead and I have asked several people to share their thoughts on this topic in this issue of the FOCUS. Ultimately the SCEH Board and membership will decide if SCEH remains independent, or if we choose to try to transform ASCH into a unified organization that represents both the clinical and research interests of hypnosis. I've had many conversations on this topic over the past months. Some, who asked not to be named, feared that the loss of SCEH would eliminate a place for non-licensed researchers and academic instructors. Another member offered: "In this world there are splitters and lumpers. I'm a lumper. We're too small to stay split up!" While this debate continues, I welcome your thoughts and hope that you will share your opinions.

In the meantime, the SCEH executive committee has been very active in putting the finishing touches on the Annual Conference, to be held in San Antonio, TX, October 8-12, 2014. Dr. Devin

Terhune has overseen what promises to be one of our very best Scientific Programs ever, while also taking on the role of Conference Program Chair with the loss of Ed. Drs. David Godot and Gary Elkins have organized the Basic Hypnosis Workshops while Drs. Marcia Greenleaf and Laurie Lipman will host the Intermediate Hypnosis Training. Dr. George Glaser has prepared the Advanced Workshops that should have something for everyone. An extra adventure that we will pilot this year is an alternative web-based Basic Hypnosis Training led by Dr. Elvira Lang based on her NIH funded "flipped classroom" model. Students will complete 16 hours of web-based education prior to coming for an intensive one-day, hands-on training in San Antonio. Watch for more information on this in the days to come!



Eric Willmarth, PhD

Another, more painful change to report for our Society is the departure of our Executive Director, Michele Hart. Michele has been a quiet, competent force guiding SCEH over the past years and we will miss her calm and competence as she leaves us to spend more time with her young children. We will miss her greatly. Michele was instrumental in helping us find our new Executive Director, Ann Doherty Johnson. I believe that there will be a letter of introduction for Ann in this letter as well. Thank you Michele for all you've done!

A more positive change to report is that, as I move to the role of SCEH President, Werner Ab-senger and Shelagh Freedman have agreed to take over for me as Editors of FOCUS, beginning with this issue. It's great to have new young energy and talent in our organization! Many thanks to Werner and Shelagh.

Finally, since I have taken on the role of President of SCEH, while missing most of the two years of preparation as President-Elect, I will be reaching out to many of you for support and advice. I look forward to hearing your comments and concerns. I welcome any of you to contact me at ewillmarth@saybrook.edu or by my cell phone, 616-540-3682.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Yours in Song,

Eric K. Willmarth, PhD
President, SCEH

REMEMBERING ED

by David Godot, PsyD

There he goes, one of God's own prototypes. A high-powered mutant never even considered for mass production. Too weird to live, and too rare to die.

I first met Ed in my first year of graduate school. He took me under his substantial wing, and for the next 8 years I worked closely with him as we developed and taught hypnosis workshops, coordinated projects for the hypnosis societies, and conducted scientific research including my own doctoral dissertation. In 2011, I interned at Ed's practice, and I must confirm Rick's depiction -- everywhere he went, Ed committed himself fully and selflessly to helping and nurturing those

around him. He was always surrounded by the friends and neighbors who loved and relied on him. He worked tirelessly in the background to advance both the hypnosis community, and his local Chicago community, rarely accepting credit and never seeking it out. I have never known a more generous spirit, a more agile intelligence, or a more engaging conversationalist.

The world is a quieter, and colder place without Fast Eddy Frischholz. I know that others who had the privilege of knowing him well are as grief stricken as myself and my wife.

Godspeed you glorious bastard. You will be sorely, sorely missed. Rest in peace, dear friend.

David Godot, PsyD

EDWARD FRISCHHOLZ MEMORIAL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

Eric Willmarth and Donald Moss have provided initial funding for a student scholarship award in memory of Ed Frischholz, PhD. This will be a scholarship used specifically to encourage student attendance at SCEH meetings. The entire hypnosis community is encouraged to contribute to this fund.

Please send your contributions to:
SCEH, Dr. Frischholz Scholarship Fund
PO Box 252, Southborough, MA 01772

REMEMBERING ED

Eulogy for Ed Frischholz by Rick Kluft, MD, PhD

I felt both honored and overwhelmed when I was asked to write a blurb for the Hypnosis List about one of the most remarkable and unique individuals I have ever known. I hope I will be forgiven for offering you a personal rather than a primarily professional commentary about Edward J. Frischholz, PhD, who left us at noon on Saturday, May 10, 2014 after a brief but catastrophic medical illness. His wife Connie was at his side.

It is a challenge beyond my capacity to write primarily about Ed's contributions to our field because foremost in my mind as I sit down to this task is my appreciation of some of Ed's human qualities, qualities that made him a remarkable friend and such an amazing person. They have always been so much in the forefront of my mind that when I think of Ed, I rarely remember his impressive professional achievements or his roles in the various hypnosis organizations. In personal conversation, Ed tended to be so interested in the people to whom he was talking that you might chat with him for hours and hear him praise many colleagues, yet never hear him mention any work, accomplishment, or projects of his own.

For those who only knew Ed, or only heard of Ed, in connection with some of the acrimonious conflicts and debates in which he played a role, it may be hard to come to any realistic appreciation of who Ed really was as a man and as a person when there was no conflictual matter at stake. Ed certainly could be a warrior for his ideas and causes, but that was only one aspect of his way of being in the world.

Ed and I shared a weird bond – We were both English majors who wandered into science and the healing arts. Ed's scientific career in hypnosis

began when he became an assistant to Herbert Spiegel, MD, in New York. Ed participated in Herb's major research projects concerning the Hypnotic Induction Profile, comparing various measures of hypnotizability, smoking cessation, and the like. Those publications alone would constitute a memorable research career. However, when Ed moved to Chicago to complete doctoral work in psychology, he became associated with Bennett G. Braun, MD, for a period of time and played a major role in studying the correlation of hypnotizability with various forms of psychopathology, and did important work in the study of dissociative disorders. Ed became increasingly interested in forensic matters and pursued a legal education as well. With Dan Brown and Alan Scheflin, he did crucial work related to forensic aspects of memory and dissociation, studied both problematic and accurate aspects of delayed recall, and helped document that many lawsuits against clinicians were based on the misrepresentation of state of the art trauma treatment as bad treatment. At any time Ed was thinking along several lines of future research.

Ed was energetic in promoting the careers of young colleagues. Further, Ed was a generous mentor – both to those who looked to him for advice and assistance and to those who did not. Ed was a great one for listening to a presentation at a scientific meeting, saying nothing to embarrass the speaker at the time, and then engaging the speaker later in a private conversation and making some observations and suggestions. I mention "those who did not" because I have been among them. Many times Ed's scientific idealism motivated him to take me to task, always kindly, and implore me to rethink an issue or to hold back a paper until "you get it right." I am embarrassed to report that every time he gave me grief, in retrospect I came to appreciate that he was right. On one occasion he was so helpful that I proposed giving him co-authorship, which he refused.

Ed served as Editor of the American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis during a period of time when the organization was so financially compromised that virtually everything he asked for was de-



President's Row at the recent ASCH meeting in San Diego. From left to right: SCEH President-elect, Eric Willmarth, PhD; ASCH President-elect, Moshe Torem, MD; ASCH President, Phil Colosimo, PhD; and the late Ed Frischholz, PhD.

clined on fiscal grounds. He often dug into his own pocket to get things done. Although his tenure was surrounded by controversy, much of which was political and groundless, the product he produced was exemplary.

Ed held offices/positions of responsibility in both ASCH and SCEH, rising to the Presidency of SCEH. He also held a number of offices in local Chicago groups, and became involved in a series of lawsuits that established precedents re: certain matters relating to real estate practices.

Both as an Editor and as an officer, Ed's idealism and direct style often generated strong reactions and opinions. Judged by substance rather than style, Ed was outstanding. One of the problems Ed encountered was that he often was ahead of his time. The primary example that stands out in my mind is that in the mid-1990s Ed saw the importance of assembling the research and clinical findings that validated the effectiveness and efficacy of the use of hypnotically-facilitated interventions in the treatment of various conditions, and in designing further studies to document its worth. He feared a coming wave of efforts to discredit and disenfranchise treatments that had not "proven their worth." His early efforts to promote this perspective encountered a degree of resistance that would be difficult to believe for those trained in more recent

years. Had his recommendations been followed, hypnosis would enjoy a far better reputation and standing today.

Not many people appreciated then, or remember now, that in the mid-1990s both ASCH and ISH were suffering financial difficulties.

Two weeks before I became President of ASCH, I learned that an employee had embezzled our funds, falsified our books, and left us profoundly in debt. Things were such a mess that we had no idea of the extent of the disaster we faced. Many ASCH stalwarts pitched in – their contributions dwarfed my own.

Yet ASCH not only had to survive -- ASCH was to host the International Society of Hypnosis' 14th International Congress of Hypnosis in San Diego in two years, in 1997. I was the International Chair. Ed was a Scientific Program Co-Chair. Our work began before the previous International in Melbourne in 1994, and continued non-stop until the end of the Congress. The amount of work to be done was monumental. Our basic preparations had been excellent, but we had lost the ASCH Executive Vice Presidents who had put them in place. The rest of the work, the detail work, the notifications, and the follow-ups to correspondence should have been done by ASCH central office staff.

Just as preparations reached a fever pitch, ASCH, which was to coordinate logistics, realized the full extent of its financial distress. ASCH found it was so short of money that it drastically reduced its central office staff, ultimately retaining only a single secretarial employee. Little consideration was given to what was needed to support the upcoming Congress. Week after week I would call to check on whether the agreed-upon Congress-related goals for the week had been achieved, and I would be given false reassurances, or would be told that there was no time to do them. I found that other parties had convinced this single remaining staffer to help arrange another meeting its organizers had hoped to hold in conjunction with the International Congress. No meaningful work had been done on the International for many weeks. Proposals for workshops and scientific presentations had been received and graded, but the acceptance letters had not been sent out in any systematic fashion. People were calling to ask whether or not their proposals had been accepted. Invited speakers, many of whom needed documents of acceptance in order to be supported by their universities, were considering withdrawing.

I discussed the matter with Ed, who lived in Chicago. He went to the ASCH office to check on matters in person. He found that indeed the Congress preparations had deteriorated into chaos. Even less had been done than I had been led to believe. There was a Herculean amount of work to be completed on a very tight time line, one dysfunctional and distracted staffer, and no money to hire the help needed to do the job. I considered canceling the Congress, which would have been a humiliation and a disaster all around.

Ed would not consider permitting such an outcome. Although some who misunderstood the gravity of the situation were critical of our initiatives, the handful of people who actually did understand were astonished by what happened next.

Yes, the situation truly seemed impossible, but Ed took it upon himself to do the work of two or

three staffers. Yes, I did some extra work, but it was a mere pittance in comparison. Many crucial matters had been put off so long that Ed wound up telephoning some acceptances, and was up on the telephone in the middle of the night making phone contact with international figures and spent his evenings cajoling members of warring factions to attend rather than boycott the meetings. Ed got all of the loose ends tied up, assured the internationals sufficiently that they came, and made skillful program adjustments to satisfy more prima donnas than I care to enumerate. Thanks to Ed, they all came!

The meeting was a tremendous success, professionally and financially. Seventeen years have passed. Recurrent financial crises continue to afflict ASCH and ISH alike. But that 1997 meeting generated enough profit to keep both organizations afloat for the next few years. Whenever I get credit for this, I point out that the real hero was Ed. When ASCH did not have a functioning central office, one person carried the major workload of both the organization and the International Congress. Without Ed's efforts, attendance would have been diminished, and the meeting might have barely broken even, and could have lost money.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Ed's efforts gave ASCH enough of a boost to survive long enough to get back on its feet, however precariously. The same for ISH, I have been told. Without Ed's efforts, ASCH would not have been able to continue.

While I served as President of SCEH, I created two new awards, both to be given only under very special circumstances. The first was the Living Treasure Award, based on Japanese tradition. It was created to honor those who remained generative and vital as they grew older, enriching us with both their wisdom and their new insights. Not surprisingly, those honored have included Herbert Spiegel and Jack Watkins.

The other award was a Humanitarian Award. It has been given once – to Ed Frischholz. Here is the backstory.

Once I was scheduled to give a talk in Chicago, and Ed and I decided to make it a “guys’ weekend.” After the talk, we hit a Cubs-White Sox baseball game at Wrigley Field. It was a good day for the Cubs.

On the way back to Ed’s place from Wrigley Field on a Chicago L-, Ed overheard a bright young boy, maybe 9 or 10, maybe 11 at the most, telling his mother he didn’t understand a particular math concept. I didn’t understand that graduate level concept either. The kid was obviously a prodigy, and unaccustomed to being stumped. The next thing I knew, Ed was teaching the kid how to understand and apply the concept, using an advertisement inside the ‘L’ train as a visual aid. The kid’s eyes grew big as saucers, and then his smile could have lit up a dark night. The kid’s mother and I sat with our jaws hanging open in amazement. Finally the mother smiled too. I never got it. (Still don’t get it!) Within two L stops, Ed had done something astonishing, and we went out for a beer.

As we hung around, a number of Ed’s neighbors engaged him in conversation. It was always the same, thanking Ed for some kindness, or for his advocacy on their behalf in some legal matter, the real estate concerns I mentioned above.

The next day Ed and I hit one of Chicago’s celebrated breakfast restaurants, the same one where one day Steve Kahn tried to offer smoking cessation hypnosis to Barack Obama before the Secret Service curtailed his generosity. Then we began Ed’s Sunday “rounds.”

We stopped in on Chicago colleagues in failing health, and Ed helped one of them work on what would clearly be his last paper, readying it for publication. After these “rounds,” I was off to the airport, and Ed was off to a nursing home near where he lived, to do a volunteer social group for its aged residents. He told me that the most activating thing he did with them was to walk in to a room of elderly lifelong Chicago Bears fans wearing a Green Bay Packers shirt. That got them going even if no standard kind of intervention caught their attention. It evoked a past they could share, enjoy, relish, and share

stories from their relatively intact remote memories, even if they did not remember Ed from week to week.

In a million years, I would not have hit upon an intervention so deft, so simple, so elegant, and so effective. Did I mention that Ed was also a great clinician?

We will all miss you, Big Guy. Those of us who knew the depths of who you were have suffered a grievous and irreplaceable loss. I don’t think I will encounter another Ed Frischholz in this lifetime. I feel honored and privileged to have known the one and only.

Rick Kluff, MD, PhD

WE ARE STILL ACCEPTING SCIENTIFIC POSTER SUBMISSIONS

To encourage students, researchers and clinicians to present their scientific findings, case studies, or relevant research, the deadline for POSTER presentations remains open. Submissions will be evaluated on a rolling basis.

<http://www.sceh.us/call-for-scientific-papers>

65th Annual Meeting of the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis

At the
St. Anthony Wyndham Hotel
San Antonio, Texas
October 8 - October 12, 2014



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REMEMBERING ROBERT E. PEARSON, MD

SCEH thanks Dr. Karen Kamerschen for providing this information about her late husband.

Dr. Pearson was a general practitioner from 1953 to 1966, where he delivered more than 500 babies, set more than 3000 skier's broken bones, and made \$4.00 house calls. After practicing for 10 years, he stumbled into a basic workshop in clinical hypnosis by Milton Erickson, MD, where he "heard things he had never heard in his entire life." He became determined to become a psychiatrist and in 1966 got the chance to take a psychiatric residency at Traverse City State Hospital. During his three-year residency he and his wife raised six children on a \$16,000/year salary. Despite this hardship, Dr. Pearson attended the basic hypnosis workshop many times, and Milton Erickson took notice. Dr. Pearson became Erickson's student and later, after many years, the relationship deepened to that of colleague and friend. Together they founded the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis.

Making Dreams Come True

From the time he was a very young boy, Robert E. Pearson, MD, was inspired by his hero Charles Lindbergh. So much so, that the first book he read all by himself (with a flashlight under the covers in his bed) was Lindbergh's autobiography, "We". While at the Cleveland Air Races with his father in 1927, his father decided to spend \$5 apiece to take them up in a Ford Tri-Motor for

Bob's very first airplane ride. After they were aboard the 10 passenger plane, the pilot turned around and greeted them with "Hi. I'm Charles Lindbergh. Let's have a good flight." Bob was hooked on flying. Years later, having volunteered for the U.S. Army prior to the beginning of WWII, he found a way to fly. He signed up to become a glider pilot because color blindness prevented him from flying powered aircraft. Glider pilots weren't screened for color vision prior to training. After completing training and becoming very skilled with gliders, the army discovered his color vision deficit. Nonetheless, he managed to talk his way into becoming a power pilot since he was already trained and there was a great need. Bob flew the military's version of a Piper

Cub (L-4) and was a liaison pilot calling in target coordinates to the artillery. He modified his L-4 by mounting two bazookas to the struts of the plane, enabling him to fire on ground targets.

During a critical engagement with hostile German forces in which an allied force was slowed down by German tanks, he flew in and neutralized the threat, allowing both the survival of those on the ground and their continuance of their mission. Sixty-seven years after the

war, Bob unexpectedly met the Company Commander of that tank unit and the commander confirmed that Bob's plane was the one that knocked out one German tank and damaged the other.

Although he considered making the military his career, Bob decided to fulfill his other dream of becoming a physician, first practicing primary care in Boyne City (and owning his own plane), then taking his residency in psychiatry at Traverse City State Hospital and later heading both their Adult Services Unit and their Residency Training program before moving to Houston and into pri-



Robert E. Pearson, MD,
April 29, 1923 - August 31, 2013

(Image: Eric Willmarth, PhD)

vate practice. His love of flying continued unabated although he had not been an active pilot in years.

Dr. Pearson became an Odyssey Hospice patient on July 13, 2013. He and his family had previously planned to travel to the Kalamazoo Air Zoo in Kalamazoo, Michigan, where the Ford Tri-Motor would be present and offering rides. In 2002, Bob and one of his sons (who had made the military his career and adopted Bob's love of flying by becoming a private pilot) had attended an event in Oshkosh, WI, during which Bob took his son for a ride on what turned out to be the same Ford Tri-Motor Bob and his father had flown 75 years earlier. The plane in Kalamazoo is a 1929 version of the Tri-Motor and Bob's dream was to take his wife and five surviving children up with him for a ride. He reserved all ten seats and added two grandchildren and a son-in-law as well. After the ride, Bob was to be interviewed by two gentlemen making a documentary about WWII pilots. Hospice became aware of these plans on July 19, 2013, and immediately determined to make every effort possible to ensure that he could attend the event. It was felt that traveling by car would not be in his best interests and that he may need care during the time away from his home. To ensure his ability to participate, it was decided that he needed to be transported in such a way as to allow him the ability to rest. American Medical Response (AMR) ambulance service was contacted and agreed to provide transportation for him. Additionally, a hospice Registered Nurse was assigned to travel with him and provide for his care en route and while at the event.

Dr. Pearson successfully made it for the event and flew once again with family in the Ford Tri-Motor thus fulfilling a dream. He commented that it was, "the best day of my life". Many of his family members were in attendance and all will cherish these memories forever.

A second big dream of Bob's was to fly once again in the L-4, the plane he took into combat. One of Bob's sons had been working on finding an L-4 in which to take his father flying, but many complications proved to make that impossible

in the time frame needed. Then, serendipity (aka: divine intervention) entered the scene, and a local pilot in Sparta, MI, upon learning of Bob's desire and military history, volunteered to fly Bob in his Piper Cub, similar to the L-4. Although timing didn't work out for the Cub, another pilot who owned an L-2 still painted in military green offered his plane. Bob had trained to be a glider pilot in the L-2 and as such, it was the first airplane Bob ever piloted. On August 26, 2013, Bob got out of bed, rode to the Sparta Airport, and was met by two of his Odyssey Hospice nurses and the manager. While getting him out of the car, one of the nurses asked Bob if he was ready for his flight. His immediate answer was, "til the day I die." With much twisting and turning, several pilots helped Bob into the rear seat of the two-seat L-2, and he flew the skies once more. Once aloft, he took the stick (controls) of the plane and with his muscle memory returning in full force, he piloted it for nearly a half hour, even making a 3-point landing with the throttle assistance of the pilot. Those on the ground presumed the front seat pilot had done the flying and were astonished to discover it was Bob. It was hard to figure out who was most thrilled by the flight, Bob or all those who so lovingly assisted him to complete his dream and his bucket list.

On Saturday, August 31, 2013, Bob passed away peacefully with loved ones by his side. He is now "Safely Home." Odyssey Hospice of Grand Rapids feels honored and blessed to have been able to provide his care and help fulfill his two final dreams.

SCEH PRESIDENT ELECT CALL FOR NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

**Please submit your nomination to
Stephen G. Pauker at:**

spauker@tuftsmedicalcenter.org

**with the subject heading: SCEH ELECTION
by July 15th, 2014**

ON THE PROPOSED MERGER OF THE ASCH AND THE SCEH

Peter B. Bloom, MD

Clinical Professor of Psychiatry
University of Pennsylvania

I have personally advocated for the eventual merger of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH) and the Society of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (SCEH) for many years. I am a Fellow of each society, being a member of each for over 30 years. Almost without exception, I have attended both national annual meetings as participant, teacher, and member of each society's governing bodies: the Executive Committee of ASCH and the Executive Council of SCEH. As past President of the International Society of Hypnosis, I have had the great pleasure of working with both societies in various ways in sponsoring and organizing the 14th International Congress of Hypnosis held in San Diego, in 1997.

Why merge? Some background first. In my clinical practice, I have followed the truism that the art of therapy is the fusion of scientific understanding and clinical insight. In my academic pursuits, I have had the great opportunity to measure the effects of hypnosis on those suffering from Sickle Cell Disorder in Martin Orne and David Dinges' Lab, while also seeking Amir Raz's tutelage on the recent advances in neuroscience relevant to clinical hypnosis. I am co-author and single author respectively in articles that were generated and subsequently published from these associations. While I am primarily a clinician, I have highly valued and learned from my research colleagues substantially enhancing all I do in my office and I hope that they have used my clinical experiences in like manner.

We clinicians and scientists need each other under the same roof. It is not enough that clinicians gather at one site and scientists gather at

another site (as black and white such a distinction makes). It is clearly the interchange at coffee breaks, mealtimes, and strolls on the annual meeting sites that spark the deepening of careers and the enhanced effectiveness whether in the clinical setting or in the laboratories. We all strive to ultimately benefit those who seek our care. If we are not exposed to scientific advances, and if we are not aware of the issues in the clinical office, we end up serving only ourselves and our partial and limited view of the specialty we embrace. If we are to survive over the decades of our professional lives, we must widen the scope of our training and increase the numbers of esteemed colleagues we personally meet whether they are very young and bright or very old and wise. As the social and financial context in which we live and work becomes more restricted, we must merge to renew, strengthen and maintain this wonderful fusion of knowledge despite availability of funds and time. In sum, we must merge to efficiently promote our individual growth, and balance in the years to come.

I would hope that by merging ASCH and SCEH, we can build bridges of scientific understanding and clinical practice at the same time, at the same place, and with an expanded and diverse group of friends and colleagues. We should accept no less.

St. Anthony Club Room. Image: Courtesy Wyndham St. Anthony Riverwalk



RESEARCH NEWS

John Mohl, PhD

Congratulations to John for recently defending his PhD dissertation!

We asked John about his research and interest in hypnosis:

Whenever I happen to see a stage hypnosis show, I seldom find it humorous. Rather, I focus on those volunteers who are capable of experiencing whatever the hypnotist may suggest and wonder why they have been endowed with the ability to hallucinate, alter their personality, or follow post-hypnotic suggestions. Such advanced hypnotic phenomena have been studied extensively in the laboratory. Some have examined the nature of the experience (e.g., Barber, Spanos, & Chaves, 1969; Hilgard, 1965), others have looked at how suggestions can overcome innate psychological processes (e.g., Raz, Kirsch, Pollard, & Nitkin-Kaner, 2006), while others have looked at how hypnotic suggestions can emulate psychological disorders (e.g., Bortolotti, Cox, & Barnier, 2012; Cox & Barnier, 2013). I wonder how such phenomena could benefit those people who are hypnotically talented, as studies in this area have been lacking. My dissertation research, which was just recently completed, was based on this framework. Specifically, I have been interested in whether experiencing hypnotic phenomena could assist highly hypnotizable people in learning.

Participants, screened for medium to high hypnotizability, were given a chapter from a textbook on research methods (one that was not intended to be particularly interesting relative to what one reads for casual reading). Those assigned to the experimental condition were given a suggestion, given in the waking state, that they would have a delusional experience during which the reading was compelling ("...For some

odd reason, you will find it to be incredibly fascinating. It will be as if it were the most interesting and enjoyable text you have ever encountered... Every word will captivate and inspire you. You may even find yourself being amazed by how beautiful writing like this can be..."). Participants in the control condition were given task motivational instructions ("...If you really try, you can make this reading seem fascinating and fun to read. I know it may seem a little odd to pretend that it is great reading, but just do your best..."). After participants completed the reading (and the suggestion was cancelled for those in the experimental condition), they then rated how interesting the reading was, and completed an assessment of their reading comprehension. Those in the experimental condition were also interviewed about their experience with the suggestion.

Those who received the suggestion rated the reading as more enjoyable and interesting compared to controls, though there was no statistically significant difference for reading comprehension. Several participants in the experimental condition reported that the suggestion had a profound and often unexpected impact on how they read. Some reported that they were fully engaged in the reading, while others experienced few to no distractions (when normally they would have). Several stated that they wish



John Mohl, PhD (left) and Stanley Krippner at the APA Convention in Orlando, Florida, 2012
(Image: Eric Willmarth, PhD)

they had this tool when having to do assigned readings. Generally speaking, the suggestion was more salient for those in the upper range of hypnotizability (i.e., those with a Harvard score of 11 or 12). The lack of statistical difference between the experimental and control conditions for reading comprehension may have been due to large within-group variances. There was, for example, a wide diversity with respect to reading ability; some participants in both groups were proficient readers, and could comprehend and retain information regardless of how interesting it was. Still, many control group participants, when given the chance to experience the suggestion during the debriefing, reported that the suggestion did enhance their comprehension of the reading when they read part of the passage a second time. Taken together, these results provide some evidence that, when properly employed, hypnotic phenomena can potentially help people learn, though more research in this area is needed.

Scott Adams, who is the creator of the Dilbert cartoons and who has occasionally poked fun at hypnosis and its stereotypes, wrote of high hypnotizables as “people who can give birth without pain, or see an elephant in the room, or eat an onion and think it’s an orange... My name for that group is ‘lucky bastards’. For them, hypnosis can fix a lot of problems” (Adams, 2007, para 11). I agree that these people may be very

fortunate individuals, for their ability to experience hypnotic phenomena may be a very empowering attribute. The question of “how” is still in need of further examination. Such research might not only benefit highly hypnotizable people, but I do believe that hypnosis will reach a far wider audience when the experiencing of hypnotic phenomena is viewed as a talent and not as a means for amusement to onlookers.

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Grand Stair. Image: Courtesy Wyndham St. Anthony Riverwalk

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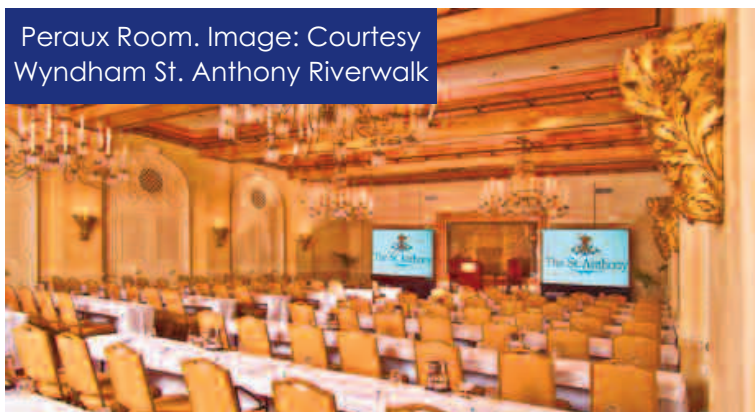
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Peraux Room. Image: Courtesy Wyndham St. Anthony Riverwalk



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Attendees will have coffee service at two scheduled snack breaks per day. Meals are NOT included in the registration fee except for the Awards Banquet on Saturday evening.

**The hotel will honor the group rate for booked dates three days pre-event and up to three days post-event (October 5 - October 15), if you would like a longer stay.

Image:
Courtesy
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Founded in 1949, the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (SCEH) is an international organization of psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, nurses, dentists and physicians who are dedicated to the highest level of scientific inquiry and the conscientious application of hypnosis in the clinical setting. The membership represents a rare union of some of the finest academicians, researchers and clinicians whose collaboration is designed to support and inform the clinical work and research of its members and other professionals.

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