

the client if related out of context to someone using the material for decision-making processes only.

From time to time, the University Counseling Service receives requests from outside agencies for information about students who have sought our services. Information about students is held confidential and will remain so with but two exceptions: (1) where files may be subpoenaed by a court of law (this has not happened, to our knowledge, in Nebraska, and we know of only two or three such instances in other states); (2) where a student signs a release to the Counseling Service, for the transmission of test scores to a qualified psychologist (as might be the case in applying for graduate study).

Notes made by counselors following an interview usually contain rather subjective impressions and are intended to be nothing more than that—subjective impressions. Because Counseling Service policy permits only the transmission of objective information (i.e., test scores), counselors' notes or recollections cannot be communicated to persons not on the staff of the University Counseling Service, even where a signed release has been provided by the student concerned.

On those occasions where a student seeks assistance from an agency similar to the University Counseling Service, the usual professional courtesies can be observed.

The statement is posted in our reception area, and an excerpt is included in a taped introduction to the Counseling Service. Copies are made available to anyone requesting information about clients.

We think this may be an approximation of an answer to our problem. We would welcome any comments our colleagues might care to make.

JAY M. TOEWS
HARRY J. CANON
Counseling Service
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The "Information Explosion"

As everyone who tries to keep up with psychological research knows, too much is published. Often one hears of the "information explosion," and most measures to cope with the situation center around information retrieval. Yet what do we know after all? The trouble is not too much signal, clearly, but too much noise, through which the still small signal is barely audible. The problem is to suppress misinformation. The latter is only a matter of raising standards. The question is, can one raise standards without freezing a modal conformity and excluding the spark of novelty and dissent?

I have two simple suggestions:

1. No study should be published unless the sample is clearly appropriate to the study's purpose, rather than being a convenient group of captives.

2. Most studies should be replicated prior to publication. This recommendation is particularly pertinent in cases where the results are in the predicted direction, but not significant, or barely so, or only by one-tailed tests.

In general, replication should not be blind repetition, but should involve varying the presumably unessential parameters.

The second requirement partly parries the blow of the first. Where a study has been done with the author's freshman psychology class, it can be replicated with an engineering class (if college students are appropriate) or a public school group or a group of soldiers, depending on the sense of the problem.

JANE LOEVINGER
Washington University

Ethics and Psychedelic Drugs

I would like to call attention to an ethical dilemma which I am confronted with in my professional role, and which many other psychologists are facing or probably will face soon.

I spoke on the topic of psychedelic drugs for a local psychological association, and the question was asked afterwards, "What do you tell a student who wants to take LSD-25, and comes to you for advice?" Many members of the audience indicated that this situation had arisen for them, and there was little clarity as to what their reply, as psychologists, should be. My reply was that I find out how serious the student is: if he is determined to take a psychedelic (as most of them are), I first remind him that the Federal law makes the purchase or manufacture of LSD-25 (and many other psychedelic drugs) illegal and that California law makes possession illegal. I then inform him of various factors that will tend to produce a "bad trip," such as personal psychological difficulties, poor settings, fear of prosecution, etc. And finally I recommend some good books on psychedelics so that if he is still determined to go ahead, he will at least have some authoritative information available.

This answer aroused some heated opposition. Quite aside from the legally ambiguous aspects of my response, the "traditional" professional position is that we psychologists are the possessors of knowledge and techniques that ordinary people do not have; we know psychedelics can lead in some instances to psychological catastrophes, especially in nonprofessional settings, and therefore, we tell a person he may not do this. In holding such a position, we act out of a genuine concern for their psychological health.

I do not think this situation is at all clear ethically, and so I would like to stimulate some debate on it. I shall argue that the traditional position ignores social

realities. Despite our professional status, we have no real control over who will and will not use psychedelics. The vast majority of the young people who want to try psychedelics already have a negative attitude toward authority: thus if you take the traditional position of simply telling them, "Don't," they identify you with the authority they are rejecting and ignore you. Despite my personal reservations about unsupervised use of psychedelics, if I do not put myself in the traditional authority position, I can provide some positive information that may do some good in the sense of reducing risks arising through ignorance.

This is the immediate ethical dilemma, but an even larger problem is connected with it. Our professional status and "power" as psychotherapists arises from our possession of specialized knowledge and techniques. Psychedelics can produce some of the most powerful psychological effects known. As a profession, we do not control their use and do little in the way of providing guiding information to the culture at large which would affect their mode of usage. Ponder the question: Is clinical psychology being bypassed?

CHARLES T. TART
University of California, Davis

Financial Assistance for Master's Degree Students

Though the amount of Federal support for doctoral training programs in psychology has in past years varied as a function of a number of factors, Federal funds nevertheless are available to students in doctoral programs. Such funds are far less available to graduate programs offering only the master's degree. In order to assess funding of graduate students in master's degree programs, a questionnaire was sent to 48 psychology departments. Twenty-three replied, representing 12 public and 11 private institutions. The ratio of public to private was comparable for those that did not reply. The dominant message of the respondents was that funds for master's level psychology students are not adequate (see Table 1).

A number of respondents stressed that since most of

the support for graduate training is for doctoral programs, departments now offering only the master's degree should move as rapidly as possible to the PhD degree. One respondent suggested that part of the blame for the general lack of support for master's programs lies in the stance "that professional psychology itself has taken" in demanding the PhD as the professional degree, and that inadequate funding at the predoctoral level is partly due to "the roadblocks that our own profession erects by the way it thinks." Whatever merit this view has, it is a fact that master's degree programs are training a large number of people, not just as counselors and school psychologists, but also as psychology teachers at the high school and junior college level. Assuming that financial support to worthy graduate students helps not only the student but also fosters excellence in achievement, possibly greater attention than has been paid heretofore by Federal and other agencies needs to be given to the task of providing financial support for students in master's degree programs.

EVA DREIKURS FERGUSON
Southern Illinois University

International Psychological Decade

In 1979 psychology will celebrate the centennial of what many psychologists have found it convenient to consider the beginning of scientific psychology—the opening of Wundt's laboratory in Leipzig in 1879. Looking ahead to that occasion I suggest that we might use it as the conclusion of what could be an effort to accelerate the development of scientific psychology and its applications worldwide. I propose an International Psychological Decade (IPD) to cover the period 1969 to 1979, wherein a number of extra activities would be undertaken to increase our knowledge and use of psychology. A planned program might include international data gathering and exchange of ideas and people at a much faster pace than has been typical. In particular two special matters could be attacked: First, on the basic side, some effort should be made by Western psychology such as the Russians and Americans to get especial understanding of Eastern psychology. Second, on the applied side, some cooperative attack on the psychological aspects of international problems is in order.

If such a scheme is desirable, the year between now and 1969 would seem to be about right for the organization of IPD. While I have previously proposed and they have graciously considered (and rejected) that the APA take the lead in this matter, this is something that another organization or that individual psychologists might consider or discuss. While I am sure that all psychologists are working hard doing important things, some refocusing, some new cooperation

TABLE 1
CATEGORIZATION OF REPLIES ON FUNDING OF
MASTER'S STUDENTS

Funding adequate		% students funded in some way		Adequate university help		Adequate state or federal support	
Yes	No	<50	>50	Yes	No	Yes	No
9	14	16	7	6	17	4	19