

AAPL EXAMINER

American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law



FALL 2024

IN THIS ISSUE

AAPL Annual Meeting

President's Column

Medical Director's Column

Ask the Experts

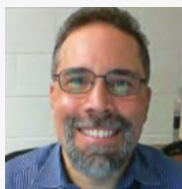
In the Media

Childs Column

Committee Perspectives

Editor's Note: Time for (More) Change

Joseph R. Simpson, MD, PhD



This is my final column as Editor of the AAPL Examiner. My connection to this publication (not counting as "just" a consumer, which I've been for 20 years) began in 2016, when I became an Associate Editor of the AAPL

Newsletter. I was appointed Editor in 2018; the first issue I edited came out in early 2019. With the essential collaboration of a great group of Associate Editors, the AAPL Photographer, and AAPL office staff, editing the Newsletter and its new incarnation, the Examiner, has been a wonderful, and very educational, experience.

Now the time has come for me to pass the torch to a new Editor. As those of you who have been following developments in the organization over the past few years are aware, there has been a significant changing of the guard in the post-pandemic years, with the retirement of longtime Executive Director Jackie Coleman, and the conclusion of the second five-year term of Medical Director Jeff Janofsky and the appointment of Debra Pinals as AAPL's fourth Medical Director. Coincidentally, the global COVID-19 pandemic

- Ageism: A Call to Advocacy
- COVID Effect amid Ongoing Challenges
- Gender Issues - Pronouns
- Consequences of Counterterrorism Policies and Wrongful Accusations
- Women Scammers: Undue Influence in the Digital Age

APA Assembly Report

Faces of AAPL

Editor

Joseph R. Simpson, MD, PhD

Associate Editors

Philip J. Candilis, MD

Ryan C. W. Hall, MD

Stephen P. Herman, MD

Neil S. Kaye, MD

Britta K. Ostermeyer, MD, MBA

Karen B. Rosenbaum, MD

Renée M. Sorrentino, MD

AAPL Photographer

Eugene Lee, MD

and the technological adaptations it triggered accelerated a variety of changes that were already underway in how professional medical organizations such as AAPL generate revenue, and how they keep their members engaged and informed. For AAPL members whose formative years as psychiatrists were in the 20th Century or the early years of the 21st, the various changes AAPL has made in the past couple of years, such as the introduction of virtual AAPL (VAAPL), moving the Newsletter to a fully online format, and new approaches to aspects of the upcoming Annual Meeting, may seem like a lot to absorb. Meanwhile, I would guess, the younger generation of early career psychiatrists, fellows and residents are for the most part happy with the shifts AAPL has made since 2020.

As it happens, the timing of my stepping down as Editor is not related to any of the changes discussed above. I decided to hand over the baton at this year's Annual Meeting because I believe I have been able to accomplish most of the goals I had set for myself for my tenure as Editor (for example, ensuring the timely publication of each issue, and creating opportunities for the indexing of certain articles on Google Scholar). Also, while being the Editor has been very enjoyable, and I could certainly continue on for a few more years, it seemed fair after six years to give someone else a turn at the helm.

As the Examiner turns the (virtual) page on my editorship, I want to express my appreciation for current and former Associate Editors Philip Candilis, Ryan Hall, Stephen Herman, Neil Kaye, Britta Ostermeyer, Karen Rosenbaum, Renee Sorrentino, and Joel Watts; AAPL Photographer Eugene Lee; and current and former AAPL staff Haley Burns, Dana Cooper, Jackie Coleman, and Kristin Loney for all of their great efforts in the service of AAPL publications. Also, I would like to thank Jeff Janofsky, Debra Pinals, each AAPL President from 2019 to the present, and the many AAPL Committee Chairs who generated the bulk of the quality content I and the Associate Editors had the pleasure to prepare for the page.

And to everyone I say, Keep reading, and never stop learning!

AAPL Annual Meeting

Cheryl Wills, MD



The 55th Annual AAPL Meeting will occur at the Sheraton Vancouver Wall Center Hotel in Vancouver, BC, October 24 – 27, 2024. The theme is *Forensic Treatment, Ethics and Administration*. All delegates must carry proof of citizenship and identity. U.S. Citizens must present a valid U.S. passport, passport card or Nexus Card to enter Canada.¹

As of October 3, 2024, 160 delegates have registered for AAPL's Annual Forensic Psychiatry Review Course and 678 plan to attend the Annual Meeting. Late registration remains open for those wishing to attend. We anticipate a lively event with plenty of educational, networking and social activities.

[Read more](#)



A promotional banner for the AAPL Annual Meeting. It features a dark blue background with a yellow border. The text 'REGISTRATION NOW OPEN' is in white, bold, uppercase letters. Below this is the AAPL logo, which is a white circle containing a caduceus and scales of justice. The text 'AAPL Annual Meeting' is in white, bold, uppercase letters, followed by 'October 24-27, 2024' and 'Vancouver, BC Canada' in white, bold, uppercase letters. At the bottom, a red button with white text says 'REGISTER NOW'.

President's Column

Psychiatric Treatment and Hospitalization as Instruments of Oppression

Charles C. Dike, MD



Throughout history, psychiatric hospitals and psychiatric treatment have been used as instruments of oppression. Government officials and politicians, sometimes in connivance with psychiatrists but at other times through the power of the instruments of the state, have used psychiatric hospitals for political control, social control, or to maintain social order. Here are some examples.

[Read More](#)

Request for Contributions to a New *Examiner* Regular Column "Thank You for Being My Mentor"

AAPL members are invited to submit a brief piece (three to four paragraphs) on one of their mentors for publication in the *AAPL Examiner*, which is published online three times per year.

The first paragraph would be a brief bio-sketch of the mentor, the second and third paragraphs would share important lessons learned that have been key in the contributor's practice, and the last paragraph would be simply to say thanks. Submissions should be sent to newslettereditor@aapl.org.

Medical Director's Column

Lots Going On: AAPL Connections, Legal Updates, and the Political Landscape

Debra A. Pinals, MD



With spring squarely behind us and summer almost over, and elections on everyone's mind, there is a flurry of activity. The AAPL staff and leadership have also been busy making plans for the upcoming meeting in Vancouver, and I hope to see many members there and to be able to talk to people at the meeting. When I was selected to be AAPL's Medical Director, one of my goals was to help make members of AAPL feel connected. To that end, I encourage people to introduce themselves at the meeting to each other, and if I do not know you yet, please feel free to come up to me to say hello. That is one of the reasons

I have always cherished AAPL. It is a great place to connect with people we have known for years and still meet new friends along the way. Especially after the COVID-19 years, it feels even more special to be able to travel to nice places, learn interesting things and mingle with fascinating and fun colleagues. Vancouver is an incredible city for the meeting. I have fond memories of the last time we were there and know it will be good to be there again.

[Read more](#)

NEW AAPL PRACTICE RESOURCE

Reproductive Psychiatry/ Women's Mental Health in Forensic Psychiatry Practice

This practice resource seeks to describe salient issues within reproductive psychiatry (also known as women's mental health) for the practice of forensic psychiatry. Understanding is critical and can help combat gender bias in such evaluations. Forensic psychiatric evaluations in the criminal realm, including evaluations related to neonaticide, infanticide, filicide, child abuse, and kidnapping by Caesarean, require an understanding of reproductive psychiatry. Download the new practice resource [HERE](#), and view this and other resources at: www.aapl.org/guidelines



If you're dedicated to elevating mental health care...

YOU BELONG HERE.

No disability evaluations. No benzodiazepines. No stimulants. No insurance companies.

- 40-hour workweek with flexible schedules, including 4/10s
- Multiple locations throughout CA
- 401(k) and 457(b) plans (tax defer up to \$46k – \$61k per year)
- Potential NHSC Loan Repayment (depending on location)
- Relocation assistance available for new hires with the State of CA
- Visa sponsorship opportunities
- State of CA retirement that vests in five years

PSYCHIATRISTS

Learn about our increased salaries and bonus structure. Discover how to join our team.



Submit your CV to MedCareers@cdcr.ca.gov.



CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL
HEALTH CARE SERVICES



Ask the Experts

Ask the Experts

*Neil S. Kaye, MD, DLFAPA; Graham Glancy, MB, ChB, FRC Psych, FRCP;
Ryan C.W. Hall, MD*

We will answer questions from members related to practical issues in the real world of Forensic Psychiatry. Please send questions to nskaye@aol.com. This information is advisory only, for educational purposes. The authors claim no legal expertise and should not be held responsible for any action taken in response to this educational advice. Readers should always consult their attorneys for legal advice.

Q. I evaluated a woman who was involved in a very severe motor vehicle accident and diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder. Now, I am being asked to evaluate the

woman's daughter, who was a passenger in the vehicle and was also badly injured. She is represented by a different attorney than the mother. The attorneys are okay with me seeing both of them for an evaluation. Do you have any advice as to how I should proceed?

[Read more](#)

In the Media

“Hallucinations to Homicide”: Cannabis-Induced Psychosis in the Law

*Preethashree Anbukkarasu (MD 2026 Candidate); Ryan Chaloner
Winton Hall MD*

For this In the Media column, we are going to review the cannabis-induced psychosis verdict in California that was covered in many news outlets, such as Rolling Stone and the Los Angeles Times, where a young woman stabbed her boyfriend over 100 times and received a sentence of probation for manslaughter. On Memorial Day weekend of 2018 in Longwood Oaks, California, Ms. Bryn Spejcher, 32, went over to the apartment of her date, Mr. Chad O'Melia, 26. Ms. Spejcher, a novice user of marijuana with no prior mental health history, claimed that she felt pressured by Mr. O'Melia to use more marijuana than intended that night. After taking two hits from a bong, she reportedly experienced a psychotic episode that caused her to believe that she was “dead” and that she “needed to kill Chad in order to return to life”. (1) She described seeing a “television screen” through which she watched her limbs moving out of her control. (2) Law enforcement found Ms. Spejcher later that night in a fugue-like state after she had stabbed Mr. O'Melia 108 times. She had also stabbed her dog, who did survive, and had self-inflicted wounds to her neck. (2)

[Read more](#)

Child Column

Diane Schetky, The Loss of My Mentor

Stephen P. Herman, MD

Mentor, in Greek mythology, was a friend of Odysseus. Mentor cared for and educated Odysseus' son, Telemachus, while his father was away. Mentor was a coach and a guide. At times, he found it necessary to admonish Telemachus for the boy's behavior and lack of interest in what he was being taught. (1, 2)

[Read more](#)

Committee Perspectives

Ageism: A Call to Advocacy

Sherif Soliman, MD

Geriatric Forensic Psychiatry Committee

On October 21, 1984, in the midst of a contentious election season, President Ronald Reagan and former Vice President Walter Mondale met for their second and final presidential debate. Diplomatic correspondent for the Baltimore Sun Henry Threwhitt, noted that President Reagan was the oldest president in history. Mr. Threwhitt added that President Kennedy had to go for days with very little sleep during the Cuban Missile Crisis and then asked President Reagan whether he had any doubt that he would be able to function in "similar circumstances." President Reagan responded, "Not at all, Mr. Trewhitt, and I want you to know that also I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience. If I still have time, I might add, Mr. Trewhitt, I might add that it was Seneca or it was Cicero, I don't know which, that said, 'If it was not for the elders correcting the mistakes of the young, there would be no state.'" (1) The room exploded in laughter and applause and the issue of age was defused effectively. President Reagan's humorous response contained the important truism that has been recognized by societies throughout the ages. We disregard the decades of knowledge and experience possessed by older adults at our own peril.

[Read more](#)

Competency to Stand Trial Evaluation and Restoration: COVID Effect amid Ongoing Challenges

Michael A. Norko MD, MAR

Forensic Hospital Services Committee

The increasing and overwhelming national demand for state hospital beds to provide restoration of defendants found not competent to stand trial has been referred to as “a national tragedy” (1) and a “national competency crisis.” (2) Data in the State Profiling System (SPS) (3) collected from 35 states demonstrated a 76% increase in adult forensic patients in state psychiatric hospitals from 1999-2014, with a 72% increase in competency restoration patients for the 27 states reporting that data.⁴ The noted “crisis” highlights the use of wait lists for admission to the hospital for defendants found incompetent to stand trial (IST) and restorable. In the SPS survey, 20 of 37 states reported they were facing contempt of court for failure to reduce wait lists that were up to a year or more. (4) At least 13 states are involved in class action lawsuits, consent decrees, or settlement agreements. (2)

[Read more](#)

What Forensic Psychiatrists Should Know About Pronouns

Megan Stockamp MD; Juliette Dupre MD MA MsC; Nina Ross MD

Gender Issues Committee

Forensic psychiatrists encounter a wide range of individuals, whether in an evaluation or treatment capacity. This includes individuals using pronouns that differ from those assigned at birth, such as transgender, non-binary, gender non-conforming, or non-gendered individuals. As such, forensic psychiatrists need to be familiar with gender identity and have a basic understanding of how to inquire, record, and use a client's expressed pronouns.

[Read more](#)

Potential Consequences of Counterterrorism Policies and Wrongful Accusations

Hira Hanif, MD; Raina Aggarwal, MD; Sanjay Adhia, MD

Human Rights and National Security Committee

Mr. A, a 38-year-old Arab American male, underwent FBI surveillance involving wiretapping, secret house searches, and DNA testing of personal items taken from his home without his knowledge. Arrested outside his workplace, he was held at an undisclosed location without access to family or legal counsel. His family learned of his arrest through the news. Due to misidentification being the cause of his arrest, Mr. A was subsequently released. He filed a lawsuit against the United States, alleging civil rights violations and various damages. A forensic psychiatrist diagnosed Mr. A with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) due to the wrongful arrest, detention, and mis-association with terrorism.

[Read more](#)

Women Scammers: Undue Influence in the Digital Age

Jasmine McClendon, MD,MPH and Madeline Nykamp, MD

Early Career Development Committee

In recent years, there has been a growing fascination with the world of scamming and con artistry. Notably, there has been a surge in the popularity of television and film content centered on scamming, including the 2016 Amazon Prime series *Madoff* which focused on Bernie Madoff, who organized one of the largest Ponzi schemes in history. There was also the 2022 Netflix documentary *The Puppet Master: Hunting The Ultimate Conman* which revolved around Robert Freegard, who during the 1990s pretended to be a British spy, swindling nearly a million pounds from various individuals. There was the 2022 Netflix docuseries, *The Tinder Swindler*, which centered around Simon Leviev, who lured women online and exploited them, resulting in millions of dollars of losses. The surge in media fascination with scam artists has extended to some female "scammers." The Netflix series *Inventing Anna*, Hulu's *The Dropout*, and Amazon Prime's *LuLaRich* have all explored the stories of women accused of running scams or confidence schemes. Female scammers are not a novel development, despite the recent surge in media attention. This article aims to give a brief background of women scam artists, what is known about women scammers, and key concepts forensic evaluators should consider.

[Read more](#)

APA Assembly Report

APA Assembly Report

Danielle B. Kushner, MD

The 2024 APA Annual Meeting took place in New York City from May 3 to 5 with the theme, "Confronting Addiction from Prevention to Recovery." This was the presidential theme of outgoing APA President, Petros Levounis, MD, MA, focusing on key areas of Tobacco and Vaping; Opioids; Alcohol; and Technology.

[Read more](#)

Faces of AAPL

Faces of AAPL: Carolina A. Klein, MD

Philip Candilis, MD



Born in Chile to parents who met in Spain, Dr. Cara Klein undertook a journey to forensics that was as global as it was eclectic. Never intending to study psychiatry, Dr. Klein aspired to veterinary medicine, nurturing her appreciation for animals. The technical challenges of surgery training were the early draw, but a marine biology internship in Maine had Cara working with sharks and branching into scientific research. "I found myself searching at the edges of medicine to see if I could go beyond it, beyond my country, and beyond the study of humans," she recalls. What was missing was a sense of the world, an appreciation for travel, anthropology, philosophy, and the arts.

Carolina A. Klein, MD

[Read more](#)

The AAPL Newsletter is published by AAPL, One Regency Drive, PO Box 30, Bloomfield, CT 06002. Opinions expressed in bylined articles and columns in the Newsletter are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of AAPL or Newsletter editors. Manuscripts are invited for publication in the Newsletter. They should be submitted

to the editor via email to NewsletterEditor@aapl.org. The Newsletter is published in Winter (deadline for submission is November 15), Spring (deadline March 1), and Fall (deadline July 1).

