

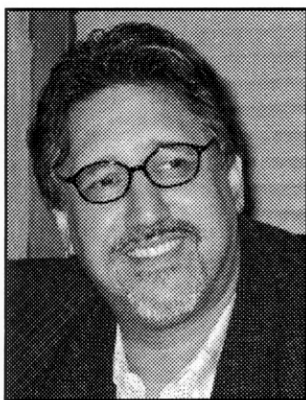
Intermittent REINFORCEMENT

Winter 2004

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NEWSLETTER OF THE PH.D. PROGRAM IN CLINICAL AND SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

“Schare”ing Thoughts: A Note from the Director



Author: Mitchell Schare, Ph.D.

While in office as mayor of New York City, Ed Koch frequently asked his constituents, “How’m I doing?” as he sought feedback on his performance. While we laughed at his simplistic but forthright method in seeking this information, Koch was demonstrating that outcomes from his policies and programs mattered to him. We assumed (or hoped) that this feedback would be valuable in future decisions and not merely a ploy to score political points.

As a graduate program faculty, we too are concerned about how our curriculum, practicum, and procedures yield the outcomes that we hope for. Rather than using the “man on the street” methodology of Koch, we use survey methodology to obtain this valuable information from our alumni. During the summer of 2003, a survey was taken of recent graduates, those who completed the program between 1998 and 2003, which has yielded much interesting data about our alumni. Below are some results from this survey. To all who participated in this process, we are grateful for your time and candor.

Credentials	School psychologists	85%
	Licensure	99%
Employment positions	At least one job	99%
	Two jobs	52%
	Three jobs	21%
Primary employment	School psychologist	42%
	Clinical psychologist	38%
	Academic	16%
Second job	School	6%
Professional memberships	Clinic	60%
	Academia	34%
	NYSPPA	10%
Journal subscribers		68%
Attend professional conferences		89%



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Of the 115 surveys that were mailed out, 55 were returned, for a 48% return rate. Most of the survey respondents are located in New York and New Jersey and have either obtained or applied for professional credentials. Interestingly only 26% of the respondents have a single job; most hold two or three positions. Hofstra alumni are busy people! Regarding their main source of employment, averaging 36 hours weekly, 42% work as school psychologists, 38% work as clinical psychologists and 16% work in academic settings as post-docs or professors. We find a great diversity in their positions as well. These data support the faculty's contention that our alumni have a great amount of flexibility in employment opportunities. They also support the efficacy of our Combined Model—that it provides integrated training across the specialties of clinical and school psychology.

The survey contained many questions (some Likert format, some open-ended) about specific program objectives as articulated by the faculty. These objectives fall in the global domains of general psychology knowledge, assessment skills, intervention skills, diversity and continuing education. Whereas alumni ratings of the general knowledge base were found to be "good", overall preparation in the assessment area was found to be "very good to excellent". In particular, "excellent" ratings were given for cognitive assessment skills and communication of assessment findings. "Very good" ratings were given for the various behavioral interventions listed (e.g., ABA, BT, CBT), while family and group approaches rated "good". Almost uniformly, the survey respondents acknowledged sensitivity to issues of diversity and gave powerful examples of these issues as they apply to their work. Alumni responded that the Ph.D. program had given them very good preparation for lifelong learning. As the table shows, alumni were found to be members of many professional organizations, subscribe to journals, and attend a professional conference every few years.

Surveys such as this one provide the Ph.D. program with the opportunity to study its mission and objectives. We are happy that our alumni reported outcomes that are strongly in line with the competencies we expect of our graduates. We will use the survey feedback to make curricula modifications (e.g., strengthening our teaching of consultation skills) and to report on our program to the APA as part of our regular accreditation cycle.

Alumni Data & the Electronic Age

As we continue to move further into the electronic age, the business of university education is conducted quite differently than in the past. E-mail communications with students to answer PERCC questions, co-authoring manuscripts with colleagues thousands of miles away with instant sharing of information, running and reviewing data analyses with dissertation candidates online, conducting psych lit searches are just a few examples of how life at Hofstra has changed over the past few years. (It wasn't that long ago that I was seen as one of those unusual computer nerds as I schlepped my Apple IIc between my home and the University... or was it?) Over the last two years, I have developed a fairly comprehensive Web site dedicated to the Ph.D. program, but with an emphasis on new student recruitment. Please visit www.hofstra.edu/ClinicalSchool to view the site.

The summer survey contained a number of questions about how alumni would like to remain connected to the Ph.D. program. Respondents gave near universal approval to having a Web page on our site dedicated to the alumni, a LISTSERV for discussion of professional issues and posting of job announcements. Most were enthusiastic about a referral listing being part of the Web page or an alumni directory of some type. This year we will work on reconnecting with our alumni over the Net.

With more than 700 alumni, we have done our best to keep accurate contact information on all of you. However, people move and often do not remember to forward us current information. If you have received this copy of Intermittent Reinforcement, then at least we have a mailing address that works for you, but we may not have phone or e-mail contact information. Please send us your current information by either filling out the slip contained in this newsletter or e-mailing Ms. Joan Connors, the program assistant, at PSYJTC@hofstra.edu. Please ask your friends from Hofstra to forward their information as well, so that we can reconnect.

A Final Note: Comings & Goings

In September of this year, Howard Kassinove stepped down from his role as department chairperson after 14 years of service. However, Dr. Kassinove is still a fulltime faculty member, and we won't allow him to even consider retirement. Taking the position of interim department chair is Bob Motta. As many of you know, I was appointed acting program director when Kurt Salzinger left us to head the Science Directorate at APA in 2001. I was named the permanent director last year. Dr. Salzinger will be returning to us in January 2004 in his capacity as a senior scientist and professor emeritus. He will conduct research, write, and supervise graduate student projects. This past year we hired Bill Sanderson, who came to us from Rutgers University. Please read the interview of Dr. Sanderson in this issue.

I will try to be less "intermittent" with this information in the future. Let me hear from you! -Mitch

Trauma, PTSD, and the DSM

Author: Robert Motta, Ph.D., ABPP, Interim Chair

At times of crisis in the world we as psychologists naturally direct our attention to the emotional, behavioral and cognitive impact of trauma. The attack on the World Trade Center, the war in Iraq, the plight of those who have lost family members, and the unimaginable stress on rescue workers and members of the military lead inevitably to a consideration of reactions to trauma and to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Some of us try to seek understanding by delving into the DSM-IV to better understand the symptoms of PTSD, but there is something hollow in this search. The DSM simply lists a series of symptoms and causes. Thus, we learn that those who have been traumatized often experience sleeplessness, nightmares, hyperarousal, hypervigilance, intrusive thoughts and images, withdrawal, an increased use of drugs and alcohol, and an increase in anxiety, depression and suicide. These descriptions seem bland and are somewhat similar to describing a work of art as an admixture of colors and sounds. These are certainly accurate descriptions but one does not get a real sense of the phenomena under investigation. One cannot understand the emotional experience of great art or the experience of PTSD by reading descriptions. Often the only way to actually understand art is by seeing and hearing the art itself and ignoring the descriptions. Similarly, one cannot understand the devastating impact of trauma unless one is traumatized. This is not a practical avenue to understanding, so we are left with words to help us understand. And so, I too will try to explain PTSD with words, knowing full well that the words will likely be deficient.

One of the primary causes of trauma reactions like PTSD is that our basic assumption of the world and of life is shattered by extreme stressors. We live our lives in the comfort of certain beliefs and assumptions. Some of these beliefs include convictions that if we do the right thing we will be rewarded. If we work hard we are likely to succeed. We assume that we are protected by laws, that a life of honesty is a good life, that compassion and kindness will prevail over dishonesty and greed. Many of us believe that despite human failings, there is goodness in people. We know who we are and what we believe in. All of these assumptions provide us with security and a sense of control and predictability.

This well-constructed perception of security is annihilated when we are suddenly confronted with an unimaginable horror like war, rape, lethal car accident, or terrorist devastation. Imagine yourself beginning your busy day in New York city when suddenly a violent explosion knocks you to the floor, your papers and books go flying across the room, there is fire, smoke, people are screaming and in a state of incomprehensible hysteria. Around you people have died. Immediately, a terribly shocking realization screams into your consciousness—“I am going to die.” “This will be my last day on earth, I will never see my family or friends again.” “This is the end.” The profound shock of this experience, assuming you live through it, can be indelibly imprinted in your mind forever. Your view of yourself, your world, and life itself is shaken to a degree you had never imagined. Your basic assumptions of security and predictability have now been negated. You no longer have the control over the life that you thought you had.

These traumatic experiences cause you to question who you are and what your world and very life are all about. What has happened is that everything you grew up believing, including your view of yourself, has been massively altered. You encountered a bewildering emotional experience that causes you a deep sense of dread and doubt. You cannot fit this experience in any way with the rest of your life. So profound is this emotional experience that some are permanently altered and unable to pick up the life they led before the trauma. This across-the-board change in one's world view, this dread, is what causes the hypervigilance, hyperarousal, sleeplessness, withdrawal, and tendency to anesthetize and dull one's emotions with drugs and alcohol. This is the “why” behind the DSM list of symptoms. PTSD is not a delineation of symptoms. PTSD is an alteration of self and with this self-alteration goes an alteration of beliefs, perceptions, feelings, behaviors, and essential philosophical perspectives. Treating PTSD is a tricky and deft combination of science, art and interpersonal sensitivity, and is a matter on which volumes have been written.

We have all been impacted to a greater or lesser degree by the terrorist acts we have experienced. No simple verbal description can capture the feelings of dread that many have experienced and that some continue to experience. Trauma alters people. Sometimes these alterations go on for a lifetime. Former Mayor of New York Rudolph Giuliani is right when he says that we must get on with our lives. Life must triumph over trauma. If it does not, then there is no real life. These descriptions of trauma may sound terribly morbid, and we may not wish to think of them. But, if you really wish to understand trauma, think of them you must. As future psychologists, it is necessary for you to understand to the deepest degree that you can, those factors that cause human distress and to do this you must go far beyond the pallid, lifeless descriptions that are found in the DSM.

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. William Sanderson

Author: Noreen Vail, M.A.

In the fall of 2002, the Psychology Department and the Clinical-School Ph.D. program at Hofstra University welcomed Dr. William Sanderson as a Professor of Psychology. Formerly a faculty member at the psychology department at Rutgers University, Dr. Sanderson, originally from Malverne, moved back to Long Island to join Hofstra's esteemed faculty.

When Dr. Sanderson attended SUNY Stony Brook as an undergraduate, he had no intention of majoring in psychology; in fact he was planning to attend law school. However, after taking a course with Dan O'Leary on behavioral disorders in children, he recognized psychology for the science it is and became very interested in it. Dr. Sanderson attended graduate school and earned a Ph.D. from the University of Albany, where he worked under the supervision of Dr. David Barlow in the areas of anxiety and depression. From there he was accepted to a fellowship position under Dr. Aaron Beck at the University of Pennsylvania, where he specialized in cognitive therapy. Dr. Sanderson's work with Barlow and Beck were major influences on his education and academic and professional career. In addition to these psychologists, Dr. Sanderson cites Dr. Jeff Young, his supervisor and director of the Cognitive Therapy Center in New York, as a major early influence. His work with these men made him aware of the amount of research that needed to be done in these areas. Consequently, Dr. Sanderson has maintained research interests in cognitive behavioral therapy and the areas of anxiety and depression for more than twenty years. Dr. Sanderson's current research interests include these areas, as well as evidence-based treatments and comorbidity.

Since he began teaching at Hofstra University last fall, Dr. Sanderson has established the Anxiety and Depression Treatment Program at the Saltzman Center's Psychological Evaluation and Research and Counseling Center (PERCC). The goal of the program is to provide assessment and treatment in the areas of anxiety and depression, as well as offer research opportunities in these areas. As an added benefit, the program allows students in the doctoral program who have earned a master's degree hands-on experience in carrying out actual cases, which are supervised by Dr. Sanderson in a group setting over the course of the academic year. The course provides an excellent learning experience in terms of exposing students to the clinical aspect of psychology and allows them to become involved in the application of therapy instead of simply hearing about it in the classroom. This is a perfect example of Dr. Sanderson's belief that training should bring together "theoretical information with real life experience," thus allowing for "direct translation" of theory into practice.

In addition to the Anxiety and Depression Treatment Program, Dr. Sanderson has spent a great deal of time researching and promoting the use of evidence-based treatment (EBT). He believes it is important to enforce psychology as a science in which accountability is the primary issue. Dr. Sanderson urges students to "become more scientifically oriented" in terms of both research and clinical practice. For both current students and clinical practitioners, he advocates for a more "activist" approach in the awareness and promotion of advancing therapies. Dr. Sanderson has sat on a number of guideline committees and task forces to promote these ideas. In keeping with this idea, it is important that current practitioners stay abreast of the new treatments in the field to avoid what Dr. Sanderson refers to as "stagnancy in the field."

When asked about his reception at Hofstra University, Dr. Sanderson said that the combined program has taken some getting used to in terms of the requirements for both components; however, he "likes the faculty and students" and has found them to be "very supportive" in terms of the courses he wants to teach and his areas of research. Currently Dr. Sanderson teaches both undergraduate courses in research methods and graduate courses in behavioral counseling and research design in addition to the therapy course described above.

When not teaching or conducting research, Dr. Sanderson maintains a private practice in Great Neck. In his free time he enjoys traveling and spending time with his family. He also enjoys physical activities such as racquetball and skiing. Last spring Dr. Sanderson joined the Psychology Department's softball team, The Straightjackets, coached by the one and only Rich O'Brien.

For more information on Dr. Sanderson, his research, or the Anxiety and Depression Treatment Program at the Saltzman Center, please visit his Web site at http://people.hofstra.edu/faculty/William_C_Sanderson/ or contact him directly via email at William.C.Sanderson@hofstra.edu or telephone at (516)463-5633.

Alumni Spotlight:

Dr. Melissa Klein

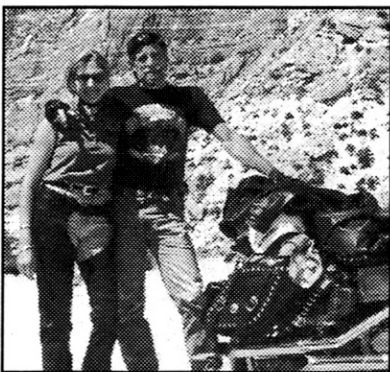
Author: Samantha Goldman, M.A.

Dr. Melissa Klein graduated from Hofstra's Ph.D. program in 1996 and currently works as a psychologist specializing in eating disorders. While completing her dissertation, Dr. Klein accepted an offer to work as a clinical psychologist at New York Presbyterian Hospital at Cornell Medical Center in White Plains, New York. Initially serving as a therapist on cognitive-behavioral treatment studies for eating disorders, Dr. Klein began working in an inpatient unit at the hospital. In this capacity, she serves as a primary care psychologist for each patient in the unit and facilitates groups in the unit. Currently Dr. Klein is an instructor of psychology in psychiatry at Weill Medical College of Cornell University. She commends a postdoctoral position at the hospital for providing excellent experience and contact with some of the most talented professionals in the field of eating disorders.

Dr. Klein explains that her role as a psychologist is multifaceted. In addition to her research and clinical work at the hospital, Dr. Klein is responsible for staff training with the primary goal of educating mental health workers and nurses about how to better serve the patients under their care. Many individuals with eating disorders enter the hospital with co-morbid diagnoses such as OCD, depression, or borderline personality disorder, and Dr. Klein seeks to promote awareness about these disorders and the integration of treatments. Dr. Klein similarly meets with medical students on rotation at the hospital to educate them about the characteristics and treatment of eating disorders. Furthermore, to supplement her clinical work at the hospital, Dr. Klein maintains two private practices in White Plains and New York City where she specializes in the treatment of eating disorders.

Dr. Klein also serves as a patient advocate when interacting with insurance companies. She emphasizes how psychologists need to possess a keen understanding of managed care in order to convey a patient's needs to insurance companies for provision of treatment coverage.

When asked if she has any advice for current students or recent graduates of Hofstra's Ph.D. program, Dr. Klein emphasized that clinical psychologists should "keep their options open." She recommends applying for positions that will most significantly aid in the pursuit of professional goals. With such a varied set of skills, Dr. Klein proposes that clinical psychologists have the flexibility to create their own jobs if necessary. Dr. Klein notes that beginning psychologists should never hesitate to "apply to a great place," even if the position may appear difficult to obtain. Finally, Dr. Klein stresses the importance of working hard to design a career in psychology that is both fulfilling and enjoyable. "If you don't like what you're doing," she stated, "keep looking."



Dr. Rose with his wife on a recent trip to Bighorn Mountains in Wyoming

Dr. Nicholas Rose

Author: Samantha Goldman

Dr. Nicholas Rose completed Hofstra's Ph.D. program in 1982 and has worked for the Suffolk County Association for the Help of Retarded Children (AHRC) for the past 18 years. Dr. Rose currently serves as a supervising psychologist at the AHRC, where he provides clinical supervision to staff and implements behavior management programs and counseling with clients. Dr. Rose has also maintained a private practice in Commack, New York for the past 20 years, treating clients with a variety of needs. Although Dr. Rose serves a broad outpatient population, he specializes in marital therapy and the treatment of anxiety disorders, such as panic disorder. In addition, he is ABPP board certified with a specialization in behavioral psychology and has served as an examiner of prospective diplomats.

As an alumnus, Dr. Rose has collaborated with other Hofstra graduates and faculty members in academic pursuits. With Dr. Andrew Berger, another graduate of Hofstra's Ph.D. program, Dr. Rose has presented talks and papers regarding acceptance-based interventions in clinical psychology. More specifically, Dr. Rose and Dr. Berger have addressed the application of acceptance and commitment therapy to the treatment of both anxiety disorders and marital problems. Although not currently in the lecture circuit, Dr. Rose continues to employ many of these techniques in his private practice. In addition, Dr. Rose has worked with current faculty members Dr. Mitchell Schare and Dr. Joseph Scardapane on studies employing virtual reality simulators in the area of anxiety.

Dr. Rose encourages students to gain work experience in the field of psychology in order to apply skills learned in the classroom. This is particularly relevant for those who are interested in working with the population served by his agency. As he explained, on-the-job learning provided an invaluable contribution to his professional career. Dr. Rose credits Hofstra's Ph.D. program with affording him

the opportunity to develop sound assessment skills, which he utilizes when working with clients at the AHRC and in his private practice. He explains that psychologists are trained to consider a multitude of variables, which professionals in other disciplines may neglect. This skill fosters “a sophistication of thought” that proves invaluable when making sound decisions in clinical case formulation, diagnosis, and development of interventions.

Dr. Rose also advises both students and psychologists to maintain balance in their lives, both professionally and personally. By working at the AHRC only four days per week, Dr. Rose has reserved time in his schedule for other professional pursuits, recreation, and time with family. Regardless of the type(s) of position(s) a psychologist pursues, Dr. Rose emphasizes that it is important to “have a life” outside of one’s career.

An International Approach to Graduate School

Author: Marty Roberts, M.A.

Graduate school is certainly a time of many challenges. As students, we are constantly pushing ourselves to meet deadlines, complete research projects, keep up with reading and classroom assignments, finish assessments and make internship hours, all the while being inundated with more work, more research projects, more readings, and more therapy cases. It seems that we are perhaps too often only focused upon the things that “have” to get done today or—more likely—had to get done yesterday. Throughout all of this it is easy to lose sight of the many opportunities graduate school offers in terms of professional and personal growth as well as pleasure. One such opportunity often underutilized by students is international travel.

As a fourth level graduate student, I have traveled internationally twice with our professors and my fellow students. In June 2002 I had the wonderful opportunity to present at a conference in St. Petersburg, Russia, with Dr. Howard Kassinove, Dr. Sergei Tsytarev and a colleague from India. Professionally, I feel that I had the unique opportunity to share my experiences as a psychologist-in-training with Russian students and educators, as well as learn from their often different experiences. Moreover, this allowed me to develop professional and personal associates with whom I remain in contact.



From left to right: Marty Roberts, Dr. Howard Kassinove, Natalia Skritskaia, Michelle Gicz and Silvia Pastor

The cultural experience was amazing, and Dr. Kassinove proved to be an excellent tour guide (it having been his 18th trip)! Culture plays such a strong but invisible role in shaping our behavior and I believe that the best way to discover how your culture has shaped you is to immerse yourself in another. It is then that you recognize the obstacles your Western biases can create! I also believe that firsthand experience in the best way to better appreciate the style of psychology that developed from a particular culture. One of the cultural highlights of the trip was visiting Pavlov’s apartment, where I had the opportunity to play his piano. (If you see the photo in Hauser, you will notice that Dr. Kassinove is drooling to the sound of the piano keys!)

In April 2003 I had the good fortune of returning to Russia with Dr. Kassinove and Dr. Tsytarev, as well as fellow students Natalia Skritskaia, Silvia Pastor and Michelle Gicz. We presented in both Moscow and St. Petersburg, and I believe that the experience once again provided personal and professional growth.

In January 2004 the Hofstra tradition of international travel continues with a trip to India. I am looking forward to expanding my knowledge of the different peoples and cultures, of the world we live in, and my place in it.

In addition to professional growth, international travel allows you the chance to get to know your faculty on a closer, more personal level (and it lets you get away with parenthetical comments like the one above!). I urge all students of human behavior to take advantage of this indispensable opportunity provided by graduate school.

Now, if only we had a trip to Japan.....hint, hint.



The Combined Clinical and School Psychology Program welcomes the Class of 2003!

Convention Announcements

American Psychological Association

(www.apa.org)

July 28-August 1, 2004

Honolulu, Hawaii

Association for Behavior Analysis

(www.abainternational.org)

May 28-June 1, 2004

Sheraton Boston Hotel

Boston, MA

National Association of School Psychologists

(www.nasp.org)

March 30-April 3, 2004

Adam's Mark Hotel

Dallas, Texas

CLASP- Clinical and School Psychology Graduate Student Association

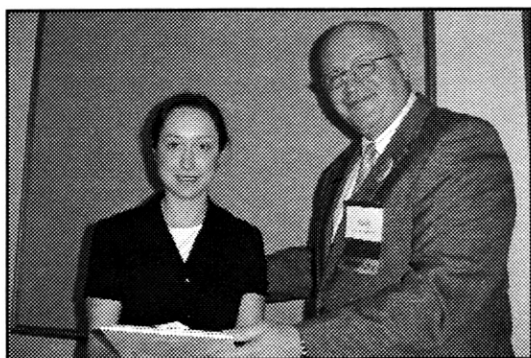
Welcome back! We would also like to introduce ourselves and tell you a little about CLASP's plans for the upcoming semester. CLASP (Clinical and School Psychology Graduate Student Association) is a graduate student organization that aims to provide a sense of community and promote unity among the members of our program. This year we are planning many events and suggestions are always welcome! This year the CLASP Board is composed of all second level students. Suzanne Main is president and Michelle Gicz is vice president. Other members are Susan Gaylord, treasurer; Karen Chin secretary; and Wanda Vargas, member at large. On September 16th CLASP hosted a very successful brunch in the graduate student lounge to welcome everyone back to the school year. It was a great way to bring together students and faculty. The feedback was very positive, and we look forward to hosting many more events like this. Our annual Holiday party was held on December 18th.

Student feedback is a key component in making positive changes and developing our program. It is for this reason that CLASP encourages all students to express their concerns, questions, and/or ideas. Students can notify CLASP's officers via e-mail or telephone, or by slipping a note into "The Suggestion Box" located next to the mailboxes in the graduate student lounge. Because it is difficult to accommodate all students' schedules, meetings are decided on a monthly basis. We look forward to hearing from you and we wish you all a great semester!

Congratulations to the following students, who completed their degree in 2003:

Dana Cavallo	Mariana Lantsman	Anthony Pinto
Robert Chang	David Lefkowitz	John Queally
Igor Davidson	Nicole Levine	David Roth
Orly Gadon	John Macri	Felicia Russin
Arthur Golub	Dionne Morgan	Heather Smith
Jennifer Hall	Lisa Orban	Anuragh Singh
Christina Labbata	Shane Owens	Nehal Vadhan

Congratulations to Eva Levine for receiving the Psychologist Early Career Recognition Award from the Clinical Division of the New York State Psychological Association.



Eva is pictured receiving her award from the NYSPA president Rudy Nydegger

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Mitchell L. Schare
Editor: Noreen Vail
Contributors: Dr. Bob Motta, Samantha Goldman,
Marty Roberts, The CLASP Board, and Joan Connors

If you have any suggestions or ideas for future Intermittent Reinforcement articles or are interested in writing an article, please contact Ms. Joan Connors at PSYJTC@hofstra.edu.

If you have recently moved and would like to provide your current address or if you have information regarding the address of a fellow alumni please return the form below to Ms. Joan Connors at Hauser Hall, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549 - PSYJTC@hofstra.edu

Name: _____

Address: _____

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