

Models, Modes, and Standards of Professional Training

An Invited Interaction

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ABSTRACT: *Six professional psychologists join in an invited interaction of models, modes, and standards of professional training in psychology. The first represents California Psychologists Concerned with Professional Standards, a group questioning "the proliferation of institutions in California offering the doctoral degree in psychology outside the framework of any established set of professional guidelines"; the second represents a university-based professional school of psychology not in California; the third is a member of APA's Accreditation Committee; the final three represent professional schools of psychology in California.*

California Psychologists
Concerned with Professional Standards
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Committee on Accreditation
American Psychological Association
1200 Seventeenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Members of the Committee:

As members of the APA, we are writing to express our profound concern with the proliferation of institutions in California offering the doctoral degree in psychology outside the framework of any established set of professional guidelines. The following is a partial list of programs established in California in the past number of years that offer a doctorate in psychology and/or related fields. (Those listed are primarily in Northern California; there are additional schools in Southern California.)

1. California School of Professional Psychology (CSPP)—San Francisco.
2. CSPP—Los Angeles.
3. CSPP—San Diego.
4. CSPP—Fresno.
5. Wright Institute—Berkeley.
6. Pacific Graduate School of Psychology—Palo Alto.

7. Palo Alto School of Professional Psychology—Palo Alto.
8. California Institute of Transpersonal Psychology—Palo Alto.
9. Psychological Studies Institute—Palo Alto.
10. Fielding Institute—Santa Barbara.
11. American International University—La Jolla.
12. Humanistic Psychology Institute—San Francisco.
13. Professional Training Program in Marital, Family and Child Therapy—San Rafael.
14. Psychosynthesis Institute—San Francisco.
15. California Institute of Asian Studies—San Francisco.
16. Columbia Pacific University—Mill Valley.

Numerous other schools are reportedly ready to open within the next year or so. Although we have no exact figures or estimates of how many students are enrolled in these programs, the total number of doctoral students graduated from these California institutions could reasonably rise to *several thousand per year*. Besides the issue of professional standards and competency, other issues arise:

- Are there a sufficient number of clinical training facilities in any one particular geographic area to provide adequate and competent training and supervision to such large numbers of students?
- Can the current and future job market absorb this number of doctoral graduates?
- What impact will these large numbers of graduates have on current and future salary ranges for psychologists—that is, on supply and demand?
- What is the perception of the public and other professional groups toward a profession that allows such proliferation without providing some basic and uniform professional standards?
- What is the impact on the number of admissions and on the independent evaluation of doctoral students when the administration and faculty of the school are almost entirely dependent on student tuition for their economic support and survival?

We understand that several CSPP campuses have applied for APA approval. We would like to urge extreme care in your committee's investigation. We are not opposed to CSPP nor to the concept of professional schools in psychology. However, as the forerunner in the professional school movement, the model that CSPP presents in California may directly or indirectly encourage the proliferation of other institutions that threaten the image and substance of professional psychology. We are concerned about the maintenance of standards and how we are perceived by those outside our profession. The following questions, which reflect our concerns, apply to CSPP as well as to all the recently established professional schools:

1. What are the standards for admission to these programs?
2. What are the student-faculty ratios?
3. Is there student accountability in terms of adequacy of academic competency? For example, are there written exams or other equivalent achievement measures used to determine academic proficiency and competency? At what levels of training are these present?
4. Is there a vehicle for the enforcement of the above standards? What proportion of students are failed or actually dropped from the program if they fail to meet standards of competency (excluding those dropped for nonacademic reasons)?
5. Are uniform standards applied in establishing the structure and content of courses in the curriculum?
6. Are basic and traditional competencies (e.g., graduate courses in physiological psychology, neurology, learning theory, etc.) included and required in the curriculum?
7. What standards are followed for selecting faculty? Do these standards assure that the faculty is specifically competent and qualified to teach a particular course? (We do not believe in the sometimes common practice of having the generic state psychology licensure constitute a sufficient criterion to qualify an individual to teach in all areas of psychology.)

8. How and by whom are field placements chosen, and what are the criteria that determine the adequacy of the field placement to provide training?
9. What levels and types of supervision are available to the student at the field placement?
10. What coordination exists between the school's clinical faculty and the student's field placement?
11. Are these evaluations done by field placement supervisors? If so, what becomes of them and to what use are they put?
12. Is there an ongoing evaluation of field placements by the school's clinical faculty?
13. What percentage of field placements are paid placements, and what percentage are volunteers? Is there a different type of commitment from the student and/or the field placement toward paid or volunteer trainees? What effect does this have on the nature of the commitment of the student and/or faculty placement supervisor and field placement supervisor?
14. Are there fellowships, scholarships, loans, and so forth, available to students? If not, to what degree does this influence the racial and social-class composition of the student body?

The above are just general questions and concerns raised by many other California psychologists; we have been asked to place these before you for your consideration. We are presently preparing a list of other psychologists who share these concerns; this list will follow shortly. We would be pleased to provide you with additional specific information to assist you in your deliberations.

Most Sincerely,
Ira Polonsky, Chair¹

Responses

Ronald E. Fox:²

The proliferation of institutions offering the doctoral degree in psychology is a national phenomenon that should concern all professional psychologists. The

Editor's note. In the middle of August 1978, California psychologist Ira Polonsky, representing California Psychologists Concerned with Professional Standards, wrote to the Accreditation Committee of APA "to express . . . profound concern with the proliferation of institutions in California offering the doctoral degree in psychology outside the framework of any established set of professional guidelines." A copy of the letter was sent to the Editor of the *American Psychologist*, Charles Kiesler, for consideration for publication. Because the issues raised in the letter confronted matters of pressing concern to professional psychologists and their trainers around the country, Associate Editor Peter E. Nathan, asked by Kiesler to handle the letter, decided to publish both Polonsky's letter and five replies to it, solicited from persons with "insiders' views on the issues. Among matters addressed in this six-person interaction are models of professional training, modes of their delivery, procedures for ensuring adequate standards for both models and modes, and the role of organized psychology in monitoring models, modes, and standards.

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last search I made turned up 20 programs in various stages of development in states of the union other than California, and I am confident that my search was incomplete. Education in professional psychology is in a position somewhat analogous to that of medical education in the early part of this century. Prior to the famous Flexner Report, medical schools seemed to spring up wherever a critical mass of physicians assembled. In the 1910s there were eight "medical schools" in the city of St. Louis alone! Other professions, notably dentistry and optometry, experienced similar episodes of uncontrolled growth prior to instituting powerful professional controls. There are differences between psychology's educational system and that of other professions. One of the major differences is psychology's tripartite (rather than unitary) system for providing access to professional education: There is the largely university-based system of APA-

¹The coordinating council of California Psychologists Concerned with Professional Standards is comprised of the following members: Harvey Allen, Judith Fabian, Leonard Schwarzbud, Gerald Manus, and Ira Polonsky (Chair).

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accredited programs, housed for the most part in departments of psychology; there is the growing network of free-standing (non-university-based) professional schools, institutes, and so on; finally, there are the numerous psychology-related programs, such as guidance and counseling, and rehabilitation counseling, which are typically university based. For the most part, the psychology-related programs do not seek APA accreditation even though their graduates frequently apply for licenses. We are in danger of losing control of our own profession through our inability to control access. From a survival standpoint the profession is endangered not only by the uncontrolled establishment of free-standing schools but also by the existence of "psychology-equivalent" university-based programs that fall outside the purview of university psychology departments. The California Psychologists Concerned with Professional Standards are addressing only one aspect of the larger problem of how psychology can control the education and training of professional psychologists.

The balance of this response addresses two of the broad issues raised by Polonsky: (1) How to ensure academic accountability in programs established outside of the traditional university environment and (2) how to ensure professional accountability for field placement training experiences.

Questions of academic quality and accountability seem to be raised automatically in the minds of many when programs are established outside of the university environment with all of its traditional constraints and controls. Begging the question of whether such controls are effective, most of us accept the fact that the university environment, by its very nature, does provide for a number of checks and balances not necessarily inherent in free-standing schools. The APA Task Force on the Revision of the Accreditation Criteria (of which I was privileged to be a member) struggled at length with the question of free-standing schools. A reading of the accreditation criteria in law, dentistry, medicine, and optometry reveals that all of them have addressed the issue of nonuniversity programs. Most of the other professional standards show a marked bias in favor of university programs, but none goes so far as to actually bar free-standing schools from accreditation. The most recent version of the proposed new APA accreditation criteria states:

Whenever possible the [professional psychology] program should be a part of a university because of the educational milieu and support thus provided. If not a component of a university, a school of professional psychology must be incorporated as a non-profit institution with a board of trustees composed of public spirited persons having no financial interest in the operations of the school or its associated services.

Thus, for the first time, psychology's accreditation

criteria address the university-based/non-university-based issue. Many of the curricula and programmatic criteria in the new standards were written with the ideas that they would be applied to university and free-standing programs alike.

Obviously, universities are not in the business of controlling professions or even of being the final arbiters of professional standards for education. Ultimately, the profession itself controls access to the profession, and one vehicle for such control is accreditation. Once the profession sets educational standards for accreditation, curriculum-related issues often arise and conflicts with academic freedom are all but inevitable. Universities typically abhor the idea of any loss of curriculum control and understandably resist outside constraints. However, the public and the profession must have some means of separating the wheat from the chaff with respect to the various programs that claim to train professional psychologists. Are they really psychology programs? Is the basic science of psychology included in the curriculum? The questions are numerous and profound. The solutions are few and often simplistic.

The second broad issue raised by Polonsky is how to ensure professional accountability for field placement training experiences. As a former director of a psychology internship center and a founder of the Association of Psychology Internship Centers, it is clear to me that this is one of our profession's most vexing problems. However, it is not a problem that is restricted to free-standing schools. Most programs send their students to distant training sites over which the program faculty has no control, with which it has minimal contact, and about which there may be little useful information. There are advantages and disadvantages to the practice of using external settings for the teaching of critical professional skills and attitudes. However, since the program faculty has responsibility for the total professional education of the student, it seems logical to assume that there will be increasing pressure from credentialing bodies for the faculty to become more and more involved in the details of the field experience. In our own institution we have planned the total education of the student around a psychological delivery system controlled by the same faculty responsible for the academic program. Such an option is expensive, but it does ensure that field training is integrated into the total education of the student. This option ultimately places the total responsibility for the entire professional education of students where it belongs—on the faculty.

In summary, all professions must ultimately control entry to the profession. This control applies to (1) free-standing professional schools, (2) "psychology-equivalent" programs in other academic disciplines, and (3) the traditional academic psychology programs. It is virtually impossible to write academic standards

for the first two that do not impact on the academic freedom of the third. The profession will have standards and it will insist on a minimal core curriculum of psychology as one method of determining whether a particular program in education or human relations or Eastern philosophy is "equivalent" to a psychology program. It is virtually impossible to control all those "bad guys" without also controlling us "good guys." Society controlled airplane hijackers at the cost of loss of freedom for everyone who travels on airplanes. Psychology will have to control its own professional training. In so doing there will be some inevitable loss of freedom. In the final analysis, the issues are national in scope and affect the whole of professional psychology. They cannot be restricted to California nor to the issue of free-standing schools.

Arthur N. Wiens:³

Polonsky raises issues and asks questions about professional standards and competency, about guidelines for training in professional psychology, and about issues of quality control in graduate training programs. These issues and questions are pertinent to the concerns of many groups involved in training, accreditation, and credentialing of psychologists; they are obviously of concern to the APA Committee on Accreditation. The following comments, however, are observations from only one member of the Committee on Accreditation; they do not necessarily represent the views of the other members of the committee and they do not represent a committee response to Polonsky's letter, inasmuch as the committee has not had the opportunity to discuss his letter.

There are undoubtedly different models of graduate training programs that could be conceptualized. One interesting model of graduate training is presented by Fritz Machlup, Professor of Economics at New York University, in an article entitled "A Recipe for a Good Graduate Department" (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 1978, 17, 79). Briefly, his recipe is:

Take 12 juicy professors of different brands and ripeness and place them together with 50 preheated, thoroughly selected students at different stages of preparation on the same floor of a building, around a fine collection of books and journals and well-equipped laboratories; stir them for five to six hours a day; allow them to boil over several times and keep them simmering near the boiling point. Most students will be well done after about four years.

This recipe has many similarities to the scientist-professional or practitioner-scientist model of graduate education on which psychology's accreditation standards have been based for many years. For example, current accreditation criteria state that a psychology training program should have

a sufficient number of mature, full-time persons who are clearly committed to and identified with the program to provide leadership and supervision of research and practice. A good program cannot rest on the work of junior faculty or on the contributions of visiting or part-time persons whose primary role is outside the university.

This criterion implies that professors are available to their students. For example, professors who only show up for their lectures and then leave cannot form the basis of a good training program. Faculty should be around in their offices or laboratories, available to students, and interested in their students' work and progress. This standard clearly implies a manageable number of students for whom the professor is responsible.

Students may be able to identify the "bad" professor (dull, ill-prepared, etc.), but they cannot be expected to identify the "good" professor because they cannot know whether he or she is presenting obsolete material. Professorial colleagues will have to make this judgment based on reading what their colleague is writing and, in turn, on the work of his or her students as it will be reflected in theses and dissertations. A professor should not have to depend on being popular with students lest this preclude being able to take unpopular positions and survive. A community of scholars is not likely to develop in a training program with high faculty turnover, or where faculty members do not have the opportunity for relatively frequent and continuous interaction, or where they are part time with primary interests and efforts directed elsewhere.

Just as professors are expected to devote themselves full time to a training program, so are students in that program expected to do so. Current accreditation criteria state:

Students selected for training in professional psychology should be intellectually able to master the concepts of the field, professionally motivated to enhance the human experience, emotionally and socially mature, and sufficiently curious about the unknowns of psychology to sustain a career of scientific pursuits.

The program with such enrollment standards will have students who are intelligent, diligent, creative, and original, as well as highly motivated and persevering in their efforts to learn from their dedicated faculty. Obviously, the students going into the recipe for a good graduate training program will be full time, on campus, taking formally scheduled courses and being continually assessed and assisted in their learning. The demands of the program will likely preclude stu-

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dent employment elsewhere, and students will not assume that their life experiences to date obviate the necessity for formal instruction from their faculty. Students and faculty will be physically located (i.e., in residence) on a common campus.

In fact, according to Professor Machlup's recipe, professors, students, books, and laboratories should be in close physical proximity. An intellectual atmosphere and scholarly excitement depend on physical togetherness. Most of the students and most of the faculty members should be at their desks or their laboratories most of the time during most of the day. A student puzzled over a course assignment, a patient problem, a methodological or technical complexity, needs immediate access to an ever-present faculty. In both the research laboratory and the patient consultation room, the basis of training continues to be the apprenticeship in which the student is emulating the role model and activities of the faculty. Student research, writing, and practicum training that are not closely supervised by faculty mentors are wasteful of the student's time and of the training program's resources. According to Dr. Machlup, "Apprenticeship is the method that takes advantage of the availability of a master; for undirected, unsupervised work the student may just as well be elsewhere, alone to discover in years of hard work what he could have learned from his professors in a few conferences."

In preparing these comments I was impressed with how apt the observations of a professor of economics are to the standards of professional training embodied in our own accreditation criteria. His observations reminded me again that we are members of a larger community of scholars who include representatives from different disciplines and that quality graduate training has characteristics that transcend course content for a specific discipline or specialty course content within a given discipline, for example, psychology. The image and substance of training in professional psychology can be assessed by colleagues from different specialty areas within our own profession and by colleagues in other disciplines. Departures by training programs from commonly held formats of good graduate education are sure to be noted. This is especially likely to be the case when the training program is located away from a university campus and away from the context of university teaching supports such as other faculty groups, libraries, laboratories, and the like. Free-standing professional schools of psychology will undoubtedly be scrutinized closely both from within and from without our profession to see whether it is possible for the criteria of good graduate education to be met in training programs not located in the supportive context of a university setting.

*Theodore R. Dixon:*⁴

I am pleased to have this opportunity to participate in the dialogue that should take place if we, as members of APA, are first to understand the issues and then to take constructive action concerning what has sometimes been called "the burgeoning professional school movement." Before I proceed, however, I would like to emphasize that I am not the spokesperson for the professional school movement, nor am I the spokesperson for all of the psychologists who are associated with the four campuses of the California School of Professional Psychology (CSPP). Moreover, I do not place my loyalties with any particular camp but with psychology itself in the most generic sense. Nonetheless, I consider myself qualified to address some of the issues raised in Ira Polonsky's letter because I have spent my career as a psychologist/educator concerned with the nature and quality of doctoral-level education in our field. Before becoming the Dean of the Berkeley (formerly San Francisco) campus of CSPP 3½ years ago, I served as a tenured full professor in a traditional doctoral program. During my time with CSPP I have participated in a sufficiently wide range of educational and credentialing activities to believe that I am familiar with most of the issues and problems that are highlighted by the professional school movement. I hasten to add that this familiarity has made me more aware of the complexities of problems rather than providing me with their solutions. I have attempted to make this prologue short and still give the reader some idea of "where I am coming from." I hope the comments that follow will be considered from that perspective.

According to Polonsky's letter, a group of California psychologists wish to express their "professional concern with the proliferation of institutions in California offering the doctoral degree in psychology outside the framework of any established set of professional guidelines." I have several responses to their concern. First, many of us in the professional school movement share these concerns. The concern is certainly not limited to California. Professional schools with differing formats are springing up all over the country. Recognizing the need to establish professional guidelines was one of the main reasons that the National Council for Schools of Professional Psychology (NCSPP) was founded two years ago. An elaborate set of guidelines was set forth to establish criteria for different levels of membership in this new organization. These criteria are far too detailed to state here, but they can be obtained by contacting

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Gordon Derner at Adelphi University. He is the first and current president of NCSPP. Gordon and I are now in the preliminary phases of planning a national-level conference concerning many aspects of the quality monitoring of students, faculty, and curricula in all institutions offering the doctorate in professional psychology. This will no doubt be a very large undertaking, and it will require a number of years in continuous development. We now plan to hold our first congress in 1980, and we hope that concerned groups within APA, such as the Education and Credentialing Steering Committee, will join with us in these efforts. For those California psychologists who are concerned with professional standards, I offer the following counsel at this juncture. Please know that many of us share your concerns about quality education, and we are beginning to mobilize the complex, and sometimes resistant, forces necessary to deal effectively with all of our concerns, not the least of which is the public interest. In the meantime, what is probably going to happen in this "burgeoning" movement?

As Polonsky's letter indicates, there are at least 16, and probably more, relatively new institutions in California alone that are trying to establish themselves as competent to offer doctoral degrees in what has come to be known, somewhat overgenerally, as professional psychology. There will undoubtedly be more all over the country. In this important respect, several things should be kept in mind.

The professional school movement is probably here to stay. It is, in my opinion, a series of attempts to answer a wide range of problems that have not been resolved, and in some cases not even acknowledged, in our field and in our society. There is a sense of history unfolding before us. We do not always understand what we are witnessing and we are sometimes threatened by, or even opposed to, what we think we see. Nevertheless, it is happening. For some, psychology itself is beginning to come of age and address itself to determining its many roles in the society it both serves and studies. For others, there is the fear that the parochialisms we have thus far labored to develop and defend will be diluted beyond retrieval. Perhaps both are true. In any case, it is important that we all care, become informed, and participate.

Meanwhile, what is already being done about the many aspects of quality control in the public interest while we are resolving our in-house credentialing criteria problems? In most states, it is relatively easy to obtain the legal right to open a school of almost any sort. Hence, the proliferation of specialty professional schools in psychology, law, and many other disciplines. It is quite another matter for such schools to be fully accredited by their regional accrediting associations. In California this accrediting body is

the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Many of these new schools, upon initial application to WASC, are not accepted as applicants. In addition, the criteria for becoming an actual candidate for WASC accreditation continue to become more rigorous with the advent of so many new applicants. This accrediting body is well aware of the resources and educational mechanisms necessary for any particular institution to assure adequate quality control. To my knowledge, all major institutions of higher learning in California become accredited and are periodically reviewed by the WASC regional accrediting agency. Once full accreditation is achieved, the member institutions themselves become voluntary resources, where appropriate, for the periodic review of other institutions. The process is a fair and extremely competent one. Having participated in WASC site-visit teams, I can personally assure all of those psychologists who are concerned with educational standards that most of their educational concerns have been taken into account. Each of CSPP's four campuses has been accredited independently by WASC. It was a long and arduous process that took several years, and the resulting formal self-studies and WASC recommendations have been of great value to CSPP. At this point, and with all deference to the many other aspiring professional schools, I suggest that those psychologists who are concerned about standards in California, and probably in most other states, contact their regional accrediting agency and determine the status of any particular school they might have reason to question. At the risk of belaboring the obvious, all schools or departments of psychology are not the same.

There are many more specific points brought up in Polonsky's letter that I would like to address, but there is not sufficient space here to do so. I and many others who hold various views would surely welcome an effective forum for continuing this dialogue. Some of the questions we might consider are the following: How effective will be the recommended National Commission on Education and Credentialing in Psychology, which will address many of the concerns we have? Has the excellent work of the National Register of Health Service Providers been in vain, or is it one more important piece in this difficult puzzle of professional identity, competence, and responsibility? Painfully and finally, are there any unfortunate self-serving guild interests in the concerns voiced about proliferation, or is the public interest the central issue? Such questions as how many and what kinds of psychologists are needed in America indeed raise a very complex and important set of issues, which we must begin to address. I personally would probably come down on the slightly conservative side of many of these issues. At any rate, I welcome the opportunity to participate constructively in the future development of a socially responsible and intellectu-

ally rigorous psychology. I am confident that along with Polonsky, there are many of us who look forward to this challenging and exciting time in our history.

*Mervin B. Freedman.*⁵

The letter from the California Psychologists Concerned with Professional Standards certainly addresses important issues. I have no or little knowledge of the schools listed in the letter except for my own, the Graduate School of Social-Clinical Psychology of the Wright Institute, Berkeley, California, and I therefore base my response to the questions on my experience in this school.

The School of Social-Clinical Psychology was founded in 1969. To the best of my knowledge, at that time the institutions in California that were offering clinical experience along with a PhD in psychology were the Universities of California, Berkeley and Los Angeles, the University of Southern California, and Fuller Theological Seminary. In nine years we have awarded 65 PhD degrees. Almost all of our alumni are productively employed in appropriate situations. More than one third of our alumni are of minority origin; they come from communities or represent points of view that are poorly represented in psychology as a whole.

Our faculty is deeply concerned with the issues of education, training, evaluation, and the like, to which the letter calls attention. If the reader will indulge me in an effort directed at luster by association, may I say that our core faculty are alumni of Columbia, Minnesota, Yale, Missouri, Michigan, Harvard, and the University of California, Berkeley. We could hardly be happy with an educational program that violated the traditions or standards with which we have been imbued.

I can only agree with what is said in the letter. The general issues posed in it should be addressed by local, state, or national bodies, and the schools offering graduate degrees in psychology should address these issues in the context of their education and training. I must say, however, that I am at least as concerned with issues not raised in the letter as I am with those that are. The letter assumes that what is, is good—that traditional psychology departments afford an appropriate model for emulation. Presumably, the chief concern of the California Psychologists is clinical training, and their stance seems to be that the way they were trained is the way to do it. Nowhere in their letter does one encounter the suggestion that a school may have been founded to do something different from—perhaps even better than—what is done now in conventional or traditional clinical training programs.

The Wright Institute adheres to the scientist-prac-

itioner model of education and training. We are unhappy to note that traditional academic psychology has little to say about social change and that the contribution of traditional clinical psychology to such change has been minimal. We would like, therefore, to foster a problem-solving, generalist approach to graduate education, in which responsible social action and theoretical concerns are complementary. We are struck by the limitations of traditional clinical approaches to the understanding of human life and to beneficent intervention in it. People cannot be understood apart from their social context. On the other hand, it must be noted that all too often these days in programs in community psychology and in other programs with a social emphasis, concern with social theory and structure has replaced interest in personality and inferred intrapsychic processes. We are therefore concerned with fostering the integration of personality and social perspectives in the consideration of human behavior and social issues.

We regard with skepticism the idea of a value-free science, the belief in an objective world of fact that may be dispassionately studied by the objective scientist-observer. The concept of a value-free science masks all sorts of hidden values that operate most coercively. Underlying the value-free commitment to methodological purity of the traditional academic researcher is a fierce moralism, according to which anyone who does not adhere rigorously to a paradigm of research based on 19th-century physics or chemistry is beyond the pale. So it is that some of our dissertations are not of the traditional experimental variety. They may be case histories, they may be accounts of participant observation, or they may be based on grounded theory methods. This is not to say, however, that we relegate empiricism to the ash heap. We attempt to be as quantitative, rigorous, critical, and systematic as our subject matter will allow.

Since more than one third of our faculty and students are of non-Caucasian or non-Anglo-American background, I regard with some amusement the concerns expressed in the letter about racial and social-class composition of student bodies. Are the writers saying that traditional schools are doing well in this respect? Presumably, it does not even occur to them to question the racial or social-class composition of faculty.

Psychology—or those facets of it that are concerned with alleviation of social problems or improvement of the human condition—is a discipline or pro-

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profession in search of a paradigm, if I may borrow from Thomas Kuhn. Psychology is searching for a set of concepts or a body of theory that will guide actions and provide criteria for the choice of problems to be studied and the ways in which to study them. I hope that both new and traditional schools will contribute to this venture.

*Deane H. Shapiro, Jr.*⁶

I have carefully reviewed Polonsky's letter and am pleased to have the opportunity to respond. I believe he raises some important and critical issues regarding the future of psychology in general, and professional psychology in particular. I hope this dialogue can be a further step in enhancing the much-needed communication among professional psychologists, graduate schools of professional psychology, and the psychology community in general (e.g., Shapiro, 1977).

Basically, Polonsky's concerns seem to fall within two broad categories: (1) issues of quality control in clinical training and (2) job/marketplace considerations. I will respond to each of these concerns in turn. In so doing, I hope to suggest that they are really separate questions and therefore require different frames of reference for discussion, though both are important issues involving professional schools.

QUALITY CONTROL

Dr. Polonsky's concerns regarding the quality control of graduate professional schools fall into three general areas: (1) the nature of *clinical* (and I think we could profitably add *research*) training—nature and type of clinical training and supervision, field placement, curriculum and so forth; (2) issues relating to the quality of students (admission), nature and type of student evaluation and competency assessment; (3) issues related to faculty (training and skill of faculty, faculty/student ratio, and so on).

All of these issues relate primarily to the quality control aspects of the effectiveness of the training a student receives and to the competence of the student as a clinician once he or she is graduated from the school. Briefly, I would like to highlight some of the ways the Pacific Graduate School of Psychology has attempted to deal with the very real issues of quality control that Polonsky's letter raises. These are issues with which we have been grappling and for which we have no pat answers. At one level, as a new graduate school in psychology, we feel we have a responsibility to take a conservative posture, to err on the side of "overtraining." We realize that we are being judged by peers and colleagues and that at this point, the burden of proof is on us to show that we can maintain a quality program. All students are required to take a core clinical sequence, research

courses, and assessment courses, and to do practicum, internship, and dissertation within the context of the school. Before granting the PhD we require 176 quarter units.

We offer a broadly based program with no single clinical orientation but several different approaches (Garfield & Kurtz, 1976), and we have chosen to pursue a rigorous research program, emphasizing clinical, outcome-based research (Azrin, 1977). We are constantly in the process of evaluating and upgrading our curricular offerings via the self-study, and we are currently studying seriously the proposed APA guidelines on accreditation (Asher & Asher, 1978). It is our intention to graduate a competent clinical psychologist who is also broadly based in the fundamentals of general psychology.

Our students have not had difficulty in securing field placements and internships. In fact, we have more requests from sites wanting our students than we have students to be placed. Through our clinical coordinators, we maintain close contact with the field placements on a quarterly basis, receiving written evaluation every quarter of the nature and quality of the students' work. We have specific contracts between the field supervisor and the school detailing the amount and nature of clinical supervision that will be provided by the field supervisor.

In addition, students are evaluated by their instructors at the end of each course. Furthermore, all students are evaluated twice a year by a student evaluation committee. All students are required to take a comprehensive examination in order to receive a master's degree, and a clinical competency exam in order to advance to candidacy. All students must complete 96 quarter units including all required course work before being allowed to advance to candidacy. Finally, we are making an effort to move toward competency-based assessment. This is a difficult task involving (1) the creation of a vision of the ideal clinical psychologist after he or she is graduated, (2) the writing of behavioral objectives detailing skills necessary for reaching that vision, and (3) the subsequent arrangement of courses in a competency-based sequence so that we can determine levels of knowledge and skill acquisition as the student progresses. We take great care to select faculty who not only are competent clinicians but also have the ability to teach and communicate the clinical skills we ask them to teach, and to hire those faculty who have gained recognition in the professional community for the nature of their scholarly and professional work.

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Because we have decided to limit the size of the school to no more than the equivalent of 65 full-time students, we have found that we can be selective in our admissions. As a result, the quality of our students has improved each year. Before even being considered for admission, a student must have taken courses in the following areas of study—physiological psychology, abnormal psychology, statistics, experimental psychology, and two of the following: history of psychology, personality theory, social psychology, developmental psychology, motivation, learning, perception, and memory. Furthermore, because we train only a limited number of graduate students, we can concentrate more fully on doing a high-level professional job. The Pacific Graduate School of Psychology was founded primarily to enable those students who have master's-level degrees and who are currently working within the Bay Area to have an opportunity to upgrade their skills (Kantor, 1977). In this way, we do not add appreciably to the number of mental health workers in the field but are primarily involved in upgrading the training of those already practicing. We see this as helping the professional community by providing a very specific continuing-education function. We are one of the few graduate schools that allow part-time enrollment of students. Therefore, the profile of our students is different from what one would expect in a more traditional graduate school. Students often have several years of experience, usually one advanced degree, and an average age of 35. The high quality of the student body of the school is a definite asset. The students seem quite mature and quite committed to a course of study leading to a PhD in professional psychology.

Therefore, in response to Area 1, we agree that the issues Dr. Polonsky raises are vital. We would actively request and can only hope that others have the conscientiousness of Polonsky and his colleagues in helping us in the task of training better professional psychologists.

We think that a common set of guidelines worked out among members of the APA, the professional psychologists in the community, the state licensing boards, and the graduate schools themselves can only be in the best interests of all. This common set of guidelines would go far to resolve one of the questions that Polonsky raises about the perception of the public and other professional groups toward psychologists "who allow such proliferation of graduate schools without providing some basic uniform professional standards."

THE MARKETPLACE

The second set of issues raised by Dr. Polonsky's letter deals primarily with what we might broadly call the professional marketplace: What is the effect

of so many psychologists being turned out, and how will this affect both the students who will subsequently apply for a job and those who are already practicing? Again, we see these as very real and very important issues. One of the classic debates within the APA has been between tenured professors on the one hand and those who make their living from private practice on the other. We at the professional graduate school see ourselves as falling in the middle. Certainly, we hope to train clinicians who will be able to earn a salary in the marketplace. We also state very explicitly in our catalog that a tight job market currently exists and that students should carefully consider the implications of this before they apply. It seems important not to paint an unrealistic picture for individuals who are thinking of applying to our graduate school. On the other hand, a story told by Robert Kantor, the President of the Pacific Graduate School of Psychology and the first chief psychologist of the Veterans Administration Hospital in Palo Alto, is instructive. He noted that in 1946, when the Veterans Administration took on the role of training clinical psychologists in the Bay Area, there were only two practicing clinical psychologists. Yet even then there was a concern that there might be a proliferation of psychologists in the area, with no job openings! However, the new psychologists created new roles for themselves in the community. One might argue that there is a certain strength in numbers and that the expansion and health of psychology, by its very nature, involves the creation of innovative roles such as those of consultants to industry and government, providers of continued self-growth for individuals, and developers of nonpharmacological approaches to health areas such as stress, insomnia, obesity, and cardiovascular problems.

Psychology is a profession that is supposed to be for the benefit of humankind. Let us assume that we can reasonably solve (and we make no pretense that we have solved) the issues of competency and quality training. If we can help train a competent, skillful, empathetic professional, then from the standpoint of the consumer this can only be beneficial.

However, as Polonsky notes, this would result in an increased number of practicing psychologists and would seemingly make it difficult for both psychologists who are currently practicing and those who wish to practice to make a living. Saying that psychologists have to create more innovative roles for themselves is a truth but certainly no final solution.

Again, I sense a dilemma. On the one hand, we as psychologists could regulate schools to keep down the numbers of practicing psychologists and therefore keep salaries high. From the standpoint of the professionals this makes a lot of sense. However, we do need to be clear about not using one set of rhetoric (keeping the quality of the profession high) when we

have another reason behind it (maintaining a viable job market for psychologists). We have made the decision to train only a limited number of psychologists each year. We have based this number on what we as a school believe is optimal for training competent professionals. A real issue is whether the profession of psychology should regulate the supply of those trained from purely market considerations. On the one hand, we realize it is too simplistic to be humanistic and say, The more competent psychologists the better, because the consumer will have more access. This may be true, but we still need to have a sound financial base for those who do practice psychology. Presumably, professional psychology exists because it has some unique contributions to make to society's mental health; but it cannot contribute, nor will it be taken seriously, unless there are enough practitioners to permeate the national delivery system. On the other hand, it does not do any good to have too great a surplus of people, because this makes the field less attractive and leads to less qualified students. The issue is therefore one of balance and compromise. At this point in time, we would strongly suggest the need to (1) honestly assess the boundaries of economic viability (i.e., what we consider minimum and maximum acceptable incomes), (2) decide what represents a viable number of practitioners for a national delivery system, and (3) creatively pursue innovative roles for psychologists. These suggestions are not meant as final solutions but as a means of developing a working dialogue.

In summary, we appreciate the thoughtful issues raised by Dr. Polonsky and his colleagues. We think it important, however, to separate the issue of quality

control from the issue of the marketplace, while acknowledging both to be important. From a quality-control standpoint, we hope there can be continued dialogue and an upgrading of standards for accreditation of all graduate schools in professional psychology. We would be most willing to discuss these issues, sharing areas where we have had difficulty, as well as areas where we feel we have had success. On the level of quality, we feel there should be no compromise and are making every effort continually to upgrade all aspects of the quality of our program. As for the marketplace, we, like Polonsky, believe we have no easy solution. We only hope that letters like this and concerns of like-minded individuals can help us continue to exchange ideas and to work to maintain a strong identity for professional psychology and a healthy job market for those who are currently practicing and those who will soon graduate with degrees in clinical psychology. At the same time, we need to be responsive to the needs of the consumers, to whom we are ultimately accountable.

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