CHAPTER 10

AN INTERVIEW WITH R. ERIC LANDRUM

A Pioneer Scientist-Educator for Improving the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology



R. Eric Landrum

R. Eric Landrum is a professor and chair in the Department of Psychological Science at Boise State University. He obtained his PhD from Southern Illinois University–Carbondale. His major area was learning, memory, and

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cognition, and his minor area was quantitative methodology. The title of his dissertation was 'Memory and Transfer in Problem Solving (Landrum, 1989), supervised by Dr. Robert C. Radtke. He received his bachelor's degree from Monmouth College in Illinois, majoring in psychology, speech communication, and theater arts and his master's degree from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in experimental psychology, also directed by Robert C. Radtke. He is married to Lisa Landrum and lives in Meridian, Idaho. Together, they are proud of Eric's daughter and son (Allison and Scott) and Lisa's daughter and son (Alyssa and Alex).

Landrum was born in Pensacola, Florida and raised in Grayslake, Illinois. His father was Alva Landrum, a retired Navy serviceperson with the rank of senior chief petty officer. His mother was Alice Landrum, a homemaker who dropped out of college. Landrum was the youngest of four children. His father's job required frequent travels, and because of that, the young Landrum developed a very close relationship with his mother. As a child, he played baseball and basketball with his friends. As an adolescent, his close friends were members of his drama and debate teams.

With admiration and respect, Landrum remembers two high school teachers who significantly impacted him. Mr. Clarence Williams was the debate team coach, and Mr. Andrew Gregory oversaw the theater department and was his sophomore Honors English teacher. They implanted in him important seeds about what constitutes an effective teacher. They were caring and dedicated teachers who cared about him and were able to call him out when he occasionally messed around. They inspired the young Landrum to believe in himself and to pursue his academic and professional dreams.

Although he was not impressed with his high school psychology course, he double majored in speech communication and theater arts and psychology at Monmouth College. He remembers that psychology was the last of four majors that he considered and was not convinced that was something for him. Then, he attended Southern Illinois University–Carbondale for graduate school in the experimental psychology program. Little by little, he discovered his passion for the content of psychology and its utility value. After obtaining his PhD, he became a professor of psychology.

About his mentors, Landrum highly values his colleagues who have mentored him. Dr. Charles Meliska was a key mentor while he was an undergraduate student, and with him, he conducted research and authored his first peer-reviewed scholarly publication. Dr. Jane Halonen from the University of West Florida also has significantly impacted his life and career. She is an inspiration, and he learned so much from her about pedagogy and assessment. He admired and highly respected Dr. Wilbert J. (Bill) McKeachie and learned important life-lessons from him, such as the respect McKeachie had for all things and all people and his knowledge of the science of psychology and his sincere faith in a loving world. Teaching psychology is Landrum's passion. For him, teaching psychology aims to help students understand themselves, others, and the world. He wants his students to learn the necessary skills the psychological content is the necessary fuel but not sufficient alone. Student should have the skills to help them live a successful life and advance their career goals. He believes that effective teachers of psychology's most critical competencies include their desire for continuous improvement. College teachers' primary role is no longer content delivery but to serve as a designer of student experiences.

As an educator, Landrum does not focus on lectures and definitions. Instead, he wants to provide students opportunities to experience where they could demonstrate their understanding of the content and apply skills. To that end, he includes in his instructions the pedagogical power of storytelling in psychology education while he is aware of the affordances and alignments of continuing challenges in advising undergraduate psychology majors. Landrum's research focuses on improving teaching and learning, including the long-term retention of introductory psychology content, skills assessment, improving help-seeking behavior, advising innovations, understanding student career paths, the psychology workforce, and successful graduate school applications.

Landrum has received several important awards and honors. He is the recipient of the Charles L. Brewer Distinguished Teaching of Psychology Award; recipient of a Society for the Teaching of Psychology Presidential Special Recognition; selected as Honored Faculty Member by Karyn Levin, a 2018 Top Ten Scholar Recipient of the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Service Award; recipient of the ASBSU College of Arts and Science es Golden Apple Faculty Award; and recipient of an American Psychological Association Presidential Citation from APA President Nadine. Landrum has received numerous grants, including "PERSIST: Promoting Educational Reform Through Strategic Investments In Systemic Transformation" from the National Science Foundation; "Research on Teaching and Assessment Meeting" from the Association for Psychological Science for Teaching and Public Understanding of Psychological Science; and "An Evaluation of the St. Luke's Regional Medical Center Performance Appraisal System" from St. Luke's Regional Medical Center, Boise, Idaho.

Landrum has more than 400 professional presentations, 23 books/textbooks, and published more than 80 peer-reviewed journal articles. He is the inaugural co-editor of the *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology* journal, has served as the Society of Teaching of Psychology president, and is a charter member of the Association for Psychological Science, president of the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association, and president of Psi Chi, the International Honor Society in Psychology. Landrum always has opened the door of his office for colleagues and students to help them with anything they may need. He is a caring teacher whose passion for learning

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and teaching is very contagious, and that is why he has collaborated with more than 300 colleagues and students. He is a charismatic teacher whose motivational instruction inspires his students to pursue their highest potential in any field they want to pursue.

Landrum's significant contributions as a scientist-educator, along with his outstanding research, focused on improving the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) in psychology is commensurate and laudable. He hopes to write a few more books and complete some projects. He would like to invest some effort into PsychChamps and PsychSessions. He would like his students and colleagues to remember him as a decent human being who tried to be as good as he could be, and as one who tried to be generous and funny and as someone who worked hard at his profession on behalf of his students. He also hopes that his family thinks of him as a good father and a good husband.

Landrum is one of the world's leading authorities on the teaching of psychology. His scientist-educator disposition has made him an icon in psychological science. He has established that teaching psychology is more than teaching content or memorizing theories. Psychology is a living science that helps explain covert and overt behavior and that through scientific assessment and measurement it is possible to understand thoughts, actions, motivation, emotions, feelings, and beliefs. That is why Landrum is an acclaimed and most admired contributor to the development and enrichment of The International Honor Society in Psychology (Psi Chi). His efforts are directed to develop his students' skills.

Landrum has devoted his entire profession to preparing students for living their lives and pursuing careers where they can fulfill their dreams and reach their highest potentials. He embodies what a dedicated teacher is. He learned from his mother, his high school teachers, Mr. Williams and Mr. Gregory, from his college mentor Dr. Meliska, Dr. Halonen and Dr. McKeachie continued influencing throughout his professional career, resulting in seminal contributions beyond the classrooms. Landrum's pathbreaking contributions to psychology assure that there is psychology as a science for many more years to come and that psychology taught by scientist-educators would continue having remarkable success educating the next generation of scientists, teachers, doctors, secretaries, social workers, accountants, engineers, police officers, and world leaders. Indeed, for his brilliant mind and caring disposition, Landrum is a pioneer scientist-educator for improving teaching and learning scholarship in psychology.

INITIAL INTEREST IN PSYCHOLOGY

MHAT WAS YOUR aim in life as a child and as a teenager? What were some of the most important lessons you learned from your family?

I lived a very sheltered and privileged middle-class upbringing. I'm afraid I can't remember much of an aim in life as a child or a teenager growing up in the 1970s in the Midwestern U.S., other than playing baseball and basketball as much as possible. I don't remember having career aspirations as a teenager. As to important lessons learned from my parents, it would probably be simpler if I could provide some quick answers like "work hard" and "treat other people nicely." And, perhaps, I overthink things. However, for me, this question is complicated. My father was 39 years old, and my mother was 38 years old when I was born.

My father quit high school just after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 to join the Navy. He did not finish high school but received quite a bit of education and training through the Navy, retiring after 26 years with an honorable discharge at the rank of senior chief petty officer. My mother graduated from high school and then attended Southern Illinois Normal School for 1½ years before dropping out—this school would later be renamed Southern Illinois University–Carbondale, and my sister received bachelor's and master's degrees there, and I earned my doctorate there.

I was the last of four siblings in my family, yes, the baby. For most of my formative years, my father worked for a company where he did repairs of their equipment installed worldwide and in the United States. So, he would often fly out of O'Hare on Monday morning and return on Friday



Photo 10.2 R. Eric Landrum with his father and mother when he was about 6 months old in Pensacola, Florida.

night or Saturday afternoon. For a great deal of my childhood, my father was literally out of the house, working. I learned from him that hard work is paramount, and sacrificing for the family is part of one's expectation. Although I loved my father, because of the age differential and the amount of traveling he did and his personality preferences, in many ways, I didn't know him that well.

As the youngest of four siblings, my next closest sibling is my sister, who is 8.5 years older than I am. Thus, from about age 10 to age 18, I was the only child in the house. Because of that gap, I had my bedroom most of my childhood, just like an only child would. I would either be hanging out with friends or involved with organized sports like baseball or basketball with any free time. I was very social with a small group of individuals by the time I got to high school. I played a lot of baseball and basketball growing up. Of course, this was a time of pre-Internet and pre home-style video games.

My best friends as a younger boy were kids that I played sports with. As I grew older in high school, my best friends came from my interest groups through drama and debate. My mother was often more like a friend, especially having conversations at dinner, running errands together, or going shopping, and I was trying to be helpful as the dutiful son, especially when my father was away. As an adult, my mother had to become self-sufficient because my father was away so much; that notion of self-sufficiency may be

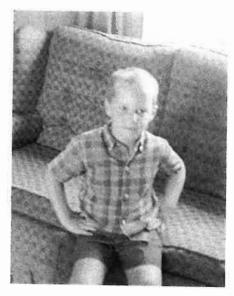


Photo 10.3 R. Eric Landrum at about 8 years in his childhood home in Grayslake, Illinois.

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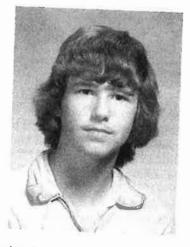


Photo 10.4 R. Eric Landrum's school picture at about age 16 in Grayslake, Illinois.

the most important lesson I learned from my mother. Spending that much time with my mother due to my father's travel meant that not only did we have a mother-son relationship, but we also had a friend-friend relationship at times, especially as I entered high school, as we could keep each other company as we lived together at home.

ELL ME ABOUT one of your K-12 teachers who has had a tremendous positive impact on you and why?

Two K-12 teachers from Grayslake Community High School, now Grayslake Central High School, in Grayslake, Illinois, Mr. Clarence Williams and Mr. Andrew Gregory, have had a tremendous positive impact on me. Mr. Williams was the debate team coach, and Mr. Gregory was in charge of the theater department and my sophomore Honors English teacher. I was actively involved in debate and drama all 4 years in high school, and these two gifted, talented, and dedicated faculty members gave endlessly of their time to help teenagers grow and mature and gain skills and confidence and so much more. There were 205 seniors in my graduating class of 1981, and I was lucky enough that two faculty members knew me by name and knew me well. When they saw me messing up, they cared about me enough to call me out on my poor behavior. They cared about me enough to pull me aside privately to tell me to get my act together. This personal connection with positive male role models was so important-when they were disappointed in me, it hurt-and it motivated me to get my act together. Their disappointment was worse than any punishment that they could have provided.

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HAT CALLED YOU to teach psychology?

I wish I had a profound answer for you. I had one psychology course in high school, and the course was unimpressive. I went to Monmouth College in Monmouth, Illinois, as a mathematics major. I took Calculus I and Calculus II and changed my major. I changed to business and took Accounting I, and decided I would not be a business major. I ended up being a double major—speech communication and theater arts, and psychology. Psychology was the last of four majors that I tested out as an undergraduate. It doesn't feel like much of a calling to me.

I enjoyed the college atmosphere; I joined a fraternity in my junior year in college. That same year, I joined Psi Chi, the national honor society in psychology, which is now international. Since I like college and psychology, the next natural step appeared to apply to graduate school in psychology. I applied to psychology, but I still wouldn't call that a calling.

I attended Southern Illinois University–Carbondale for graduate school in the experimental psychology program, earning my master's degree and my PhD in cognitive psychology. Given that I still liked going to school and I still seemed pretty good at it, the next and only logical step was to become a college professor; thus, staying in school perpetually, which I have done for 32 years. I understand the term *calling* and how it is differentiated from a job or an occupation. I do not feel like my decision-making process and career sequence could accurately be labeled a calling, but perhaps a stumbling.

HO HAVE BEEN your mentors?

Héfer, this is such a difficult question to answer, and I fear that I will leave someone out. They all deserve their book chapter: Grayslake Community High School: Clarence Williams, Andrew Gregory; Monmouth College: Charles Meliska, Dean Wright, Bill Hastings; Southern Illinois University–Carbondale: Bob Radtke, Rob Jensen, Jack McKillip, Gordon Pitz; University of Wisconsin–Platteville: Bob Velzy; Boise State University: Mark Snow, Garvin Chastain, Tedd McDonald, Cynthia Campbell, April Masarik, Kimberly Henderson; Boise State University (outside of discipline): Susan Shadle, Vicki Stieha, Amy Moll, Tony Roark, Leslie Durham, Karen Viskupic, Anthony Marker, Doug Bullock, Eric Martin, Steve Villachica, Caile Spear, Cindy Clark.

Others outside of my former academic institutions: Jane Halonen, Regan Gurung, Susan Nolan, Sue Frantz, Maureen McCarthy, Dana Dunn, Garth Neufeld, Tom Heinzen, Bill Buskist, Randy Smith, Steve Davis, Ted Bosack, Barney Beins, Nadine Kaslow, Jon Grahe, Dan Corts, Betsy Morgan, Martha Zlokovich, Melanie Domenech Rodriguez, Anna Ropp, Leslie Cramblet Alvarez. It is difficult to only elaborate on one or two of the above key individuals, but I will do so. Dr. Charles Meliska at Monmouth College was a key mentor while I was an undergraduate student. I first met him while taking one of the introductory psychology courses in the multi-course sequence at Monmouth. After a chat in his office one day during that course, he asked me about my interests and noticed that I was doing relatively well. He expressed an interest in me as a student and as a person—and this expressiveness was a turning point in my academic career, and perhaps in my life. It's that moment during my freshman year of college when someone you respect and admire believes in you when you don't know enough to believe in you. I went on to work with him as an undergraduate research assistant, coauthored conference posters and presentations, and my first peer-reviewed scholarly publication is co-authored with Dr. Meliska.

Another key mentor in my life is Dr. Jane Halonen from the University of West Florida. I have had so many wonderful and positive interactions with Jane in numerous and varied venues, from an audience member at dozens of her regional and national keynote presentations to a collaborator on national task forces and conferences to a podcast interviewee and more. The melding of mentorship and friendship and inspiration and my admiration for Jane make for a unique place in my life and heart. The acquired expertise in so many aspects of psychology and higher education, including pedagogy and assessment, is impressive, but then coupled with the experiential skill set and the knowledge of knowing what to do when—and just watching her do this with aplomb. She is a masterful teacher to watch in her element and the type of educator that I can continuously aspire to become but know that I will never achieve—and I can be okay knowing that.



Photo 10.5 R. Eric Landrum with his college's mentor, Dr. Charles Meliska (left) and he and Landrum were able to collaborate again, resulting in a poster presentation collaboration.

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OU WERE HIGHLY respected by Dr. Wilbert J. (Bill) McKeachie, and he spoke very positively about you. What are some of the lessons you learned from him?

I could probably write an entire chapter about Bill McKeachie's direct and indirect positive influences on my personal and professional development as a faculty member. With my podcast co-host Garth Neufeld, we traveled to Ann Arbor, Michigan, in February 2018 and interviewed Bill in his assisted living facility. It was magical to get to see him again. He was still sharp in many ways; he had the two most recent copies of American Psychologist tableside, and I believe he had been reading them. As Bill usually was, he was so generous sharing the details of his life, talking about his wife Ginny and his two daughters. He talked about the challenges of getting his first job as he was finishing his PhD, and his struggle did not sound that indifferent from that struggle that some face in today's job market. During that interview, our time with Bill was recounting a life well lived; he attributes much of his success to luck, but I believe the credit goes to his incredible work ethic and the loving support of his wife and family.

As I think about that experience, what I learned from him was the epic amount of respect he had for all things and all people. He always seemed to depict the future in a hopeful frame, combining his knowledge of the science of psychology and his sincere faith in a loving world. It's just one of those aspects of him that made him so special.

TEACHING

HAT DO YOU like best about teaching psychology?

Psychology is a topic that is relevant to every human being's life on the planet. I know it sounds cliché, but what could be more exciting than ourselves? Teaching psychology means teaching others how to use tools to understand themselves, others, and the world around them; when harnessed accurately, these are tools that can serve us for a lifetime and lead to positive change. Psychology is relevant to everyone, whether they know that yet or not. If I cannot make psychological science important and fun to someone else, that's on me, not them.

THER THAN CONTENT knowledge, what are the life-learning lessons you hope your students get from taking your classes?

I have to say that I'm not so concerned about content knowledge because content knowledge can be retrieved from devices that have access to Internet databases. I hope students pick up practical skills to apply in their daily lives, like thinking like psychologists and thinking critically about situations and evidence and making decisions. I also hope that the students could write articulately and with clarity or demonstrate empathy and communicate the science of psychology to others in multiple venues, whether that be a podcast or an infographic or a blog or a speech. I want them to learn a skill. The psychological content is the necessary fuel but not sufficient; the skill is the engine that allows us to go places and advance. I'm not too particular about what content per se, as long as it is empirically founded psychological content; I don't want to argue about the critical content of psychology, but I want to focus on the skills that psychology students, psychology majors, and psychology graduates should have that are the engines that allow for advancement.

HAT IS YOUR classroom management approach?

It depends on the class. I teach a 100-level, completely online asynchronous course that is both self-paced and mastery-based. It is a two-credit, pass-fail course that contains 15 assignments. Each assignment is graded pass/fail. When students complete all 15 assignments, they pass the course, but they must pass all 15 assignments by the end of the course.

In my 300-level Research Methods course, students do hands-on research. They designed a survey-based study from scratch and administered that study to students enrolled in our PSYC 101 Introduction to Psychology course. They analyze the real data using SPSS, write a complete manuscript conforming to APA style/format standards, and make a brief presentation about their outcomes during the final exam. For my 400-level Capstone course, I want seniors on the cusp of graduating to realize their diverse skill sets and recognize the many ways they can communicate psychological science to multiple audiences. In the Capstone course, they generate an infographic about a topic from the history of psychology. They write a script in APA style about a psychological concept in the form of a public service announcement. Then they record it as a podcast, and they work as part of a six-member consulting group and work with a campus-based client to conduct a real consulting project over the semester.

OW DO YOU promote equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice in your classroom?

Héfer, this is an important topic that I am working hard to improve in my courses. When I have students do personal reflections during the course, I often center on equity and justice. Given the developments of Summer 2020, #BlackLivesMatter, and the murder of George Floyd, and so many others, I have infused more discussions about race and antiracism into my classroom. For my senior-level Capstone Perspective: History & Systems

course for Fall 2020, I adopted the book *How To Be an Antiracist* by Kendi (2019) as my singular text for the course, and we'll be discussing it chapterby-chapter over the semester. I want my students to learn how to have discussions about sensitive topics that could be controversial. My goal is not to tell students how to think about race and racism, but I think my students and this goes for me—need conversations about difficult and touchy subjects. To get good at that skill, we must practice that skill—so I will create a space and a set of ground rules where we can do that.

HAT DO YOU think are the most critical competencies of an effective teacher of psychology?

The acknowledgment, desire, and follow-through for continuous improvement are most critical. As I write this, I have completed 32 years of college teaching. I am not yet done learning how to be a better college teacher. There is work still left for me to improve my courses and improve my students' learning experiences. The day that I stop thinking about how I can make my classes better and improve my students' learning experiences is the day I retire from being an educator.

I think the work originally conducted by Keeley, Smith, and Buskist (2006) and the Teacher Behavior Checklist is quite good for the specific competencies. When they identify professional competencies, some of the items that uniquely load on that scale include confidence, effective communication, knowledge about the subject matter, authority, and technologically competent. It's difficult to argue with those characteristics!

OU HAVE POSITED that you "believe that a college teacher's primary role is no longer content delivery, but to serve as a designer of student experiences." Please tell me about this belief.

Fifty years ago, and even at the start of my career 32 years ago, psychological science college teachers' essential contribution was to find existing scientific knowledge about human behavior, curate it, and develop methods for presenting it to students in memorable ways. This was through books, talks at conferences, overhead transparencies, slides, chalk talks in classrooms. That content no longer has to be found by the professor to be delivered to the student. A student, currently on their own, can now conduct a search of PsycInfo, Google Scholar, Web of Science, and other databases, find reliable and valid scientific evidence, and make their own judgments.

My role as a college teacher has changed. I don't need to spend time lecturing about the definitions of terms by presenting those terms on PowerPoint slides; that content is readily available. My role is to design course experiences—time in class and out-of-class, assignments, activities, term papers, even quizzes, and test perhaps—that allow students to engage with that content, demonstrate their understanding of the content, practice using that content in the context in the application of a skill, and more. I want my students to do tasks and practice skills in their courses to the extent possible, such as to conduct a research project from start to finish, write an APA-formatted manuscript, record a podcast, create an infographic, work as part of a team and complete a consulting project.

HAT IS THE pedagogical power of storytelling in psychology education?

The essence of storytelling is this—as humans, stories powerfully influence us—we are naturally more influenced by storytelling than we are by presenting scientific data and figures in peer-reviewed journals. We should leverage this power of storytelling whenever possible, but properly. When we want to tell a story about a topic or content in psychology and want to be persuasive, we need to understand the existing psychological data first and then ensure that the story is synchronous with the data. Good storytellers sometimes bend the truth and take poetic license; when we use storytelling in psychology education, we don't want to do either. Stories are compelling, and stories are memorable. Whenever family and friends gather, they recount past stories, and these stories bind people together in powerful ways. Some of the best teachers are the best storytellers, but the story's underlying knowledge and facts must be based on accurate psychological information.

HAT ARE THE affordances and alignments of continuing challenges in advising undergraduate psychology majors?

It's clear to me now that you looked at my CV, Héfer. For me, the undergraduate psychology major's affordances mean that because of the way and nature the undergraduate psychology major is viewed in the U.S., that viewpoint allows psychology graduates to enjoy certain opportunities and encounter certain limitations. As for opportunities, the psychology major affords preparation for a wide variety of jobs and occupations in the USA—the bachelor's degree is very versatile in that regard. However, the psychology major's limitation is that the bachelor's degree does not uniquely qualify the graduate for any particular job. Thus, the well-qualified psychology baccalaureate competing for the best jobs will compete with the best, well-qualified graduates from sociology, social work, criminal justice, and depending on the job.

For me, alignment is a term that refers to how well a student understands their interests, capabilities, and motivations regarding their post-baccalaureate plans as compared to how well they understand the existing psychology workplace, the process of applying to graduate school, job opportunities with a master's degree and a doctorate. Students who have spent a meaningful amount of time reflecting on their wants and needs and have spent

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time studying their options after earning their psychology bachelor's degree would be depicted as having higher alignment levels. However, there are commonly mismatches in alignment, misunderstandings about the demands of graduate school, or even the graduate school application process, or a lack of understanding about the importance of networking for a launch into the psychological workforce, or an inability to prepare an effective resume. Affordances are about the inherent traits or characteristics embodied by the major. That is, some majors "lock" graduates into known career paths (e.g., nursing, teacher education, architecture). Other majors have no pre-determined career outcome and are quite generalized (e.g., psychology, sociology, history). Thus, groups of majors could be studied to understand their general, overall levels of alignment or misalignment.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

YOU ARE THE past-president, former secretary, and former chair of elections and appointments of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology. What are some valuable lessons you learned from serving this professional organization? Tell me about some of your accomplishments.

The Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP), which is also Division 2 of the American Psychological Association, has been a professional home for me since 1988, one year before earning my PhD. This organization, and more specifically, the people in it, have made my life better. I have formed lifelong friendships by working for and working with my teaching heroes and mentors for decades.

I served on various committees and subcommittees for several years, and I was very fortunate to publish in Teaching of Psychology frequently over the years. I served as secretary of the organization before serving as president in 2014, which is one of my professional career highlights. It was time for me to give back, and I was honored to do so. I hope to be able to continue to give back to STP in whatever small ways that I can for the remainder of my career. I was able to form task forces during my presidential year that centered on my interest areas; those topics centered on (a) the role of skills in the psychology major, (b) the power of stories, and (c) a better understanding of the career paths that psychology baccalaureates pursue.

Society in Psychology (Psi Chi). How do those multiple roles fit into your overall teaching career?

I have an extraordinary relationship with Psi Chi. I feel like I am that very rare person—and I am sure there are others—who, over a long period (37

years and counting), got everything out of Psi Chi possible and maximized the benefits. I joined it as a junior in college, and in my senior year, I served as chapter president. Not long after I arrived at Boise State University as an assistant professor, I served as a chapter advisor for 8 years, which eventually led to the role of vice president of the Rocky Mountain Region for 2 years, and then international president for the 2017–2018 year. I benefited so much from attending Psi Chi sessions at conferences, giving Psi Chi sessions and workshops at conventions, meeting famous psychologists, and working with world-class psychology educators and staff members through Psi Chi leadership and central office tasks.

OU ARE ONE of the inaugural co-editors of the APA journal Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology. Why did the field of psychology need another journal focused on teaching and learning? What is the mission of the new journal? So far, what is the success of the journal?

It was a great pleasure to be an inaugural co-founder of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology with my colleague and dear friend Regan A. R. Gurung from Oregon State University. Why did the field need another journal devoted explicitly to psychology regarding teaching and learning? Around 2014, there were only two psychology-specific journals, Teaching of Psychology and Psychology Teaching & Learning. Some of the thoughts were that some excellent papers were being submitted for publication that were being rejected—and I must tell you I felt this way about my work. Second, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) was coming into its own in psychology, with more people doing more research; thus, part of this was "if you build it, they will come." Third, and let's not try to be coy here, APA Publications believed that this journal could be commercially successful in this niche, remembering that APA is a non-profit organization.

OU ARE THE chair of the Psychology Department at Boise State University. How do you engage your faculty to reach common goals? What is your chairpersonship style? If any, how have you tried to overcome a weakness in your chairpersonship style?

We have a fantastic group of colleagues. About 3 years ago, we had an allday summer retreat that launched us into a year-long process to define who we are, our departmental goals, and what we believe. This was an essential process in the best possible way. By doing this process and emphasizing transparency, openness, and respect daily, engaging the faculty to reach common goals naturally follows. What is my chairpersonship style? I tend to over-communicate. Before COVID-19, I had a mostly open-door policy. My weakness is that I am an introvert, so I would much prefer to be working in my office, alone with the door shut. As a department chair, I know that is

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not the right choice, and I have worked hard not to do that during the first year of this term of serving as chair, which started on July 1, 2019.

VOU HAVE CONDUCTED nearly 100 podcasts, "PsychSessions: Conversations About Teaching N' Stuff." You also have broadcasted "pod-ference." What are the purposes of these pods? What is your favorite part of conducting these pods?

Co-founding the podcast PsychSessions: Conversations About Teaching N' Stuff with Garth Neufeld from Cascadia College has been one of the unexpected yet highly rewarding activities of my career. At first, the goal was to capture the thoughts and opinions of these learned educators that they knew or learned about—to capture the types of conversations you might have at a conference dinner or having coffee at a convention. Yes, we'd talk about teaching and research, but we would also talk about other topics vital to us, perhaps share a little bit about our families, our upbringing—other stuff.

As it turns out, as Garth and I started to acquire the skill of interviewing and podcasting, we realized that other uses of the podcast were occurring and could occur. We became accidental oral historians, gladly accepting this role. We were fortunate to interview teaching legends Bill McKeachie and Charles Brewer in 2018, thanks to the travel support of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology/APA Division 2. That summer, we released a series of short episodes focused on introductory psychology, which we called IntroPsychSessions—we discovered more than just an interview platform. We can deliver instructional support and professional development to faculty members, and we can pivot quickly when necessary.

In 2019 we launched a feature called AskPsychSessions, where listeners could ask questions about teaching and learning, and we find learned psychologists to provide the answers. In 2020 we began SoTL PsychSessions, where we interview researchers about publishing new SoTL research and asking them to describe their research in their own words and talk about applying that research in high school and college classrooms. Marianne Lloyd from Seton Hall University curates AskPsychSessions, and Anna Ropp from Metropolitan State University, Denver, curates SoTL PsychSessions.

RESEARCH

OU IDENTIFY YOURSELF as a scientist-educator. What do you mean by a scientist-educator? What is the scientist-educator model?

I believe the first presentation of the scientist-educator model was presented by Bernstein et al. in 2010. Briefly, it means that rigorous scientific decisionmaking should also be applied when selecting teaching methods and making choices about educational approaches. Our choices about whether to lecture, to flip the classroom, to use team-based learning, to use just-in-time teaching—we should use rigorous scientific thinking, collect data about success, refine our methods depending on the outcomes—just as we would if we were in the research laboratory and we were testing a hypothesis.

As a cognitive psychologist, I wanted to go into the laboratory and test some new memory recall techniques. I would not just walk into the lab and start testing. I would conduct a literature review and study what has worked and what has not. I would read the literature and the grey literature; I might write some emails to the key researchers and investigate further because we know that the failed studies do not get published. I might have a hunch or working hypothesis on what I expect to happen with my memory recall technique, but I will have done my homework before I step into that lab setting. The same is true for the classroom. A scientist-educator will have studied the teaching and learning literature—the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) literature—before entering the classroom. They will have determined their desired student learning outcomes, formulated assessment strategies, and then considered teaching approaches—the backward design approach's essence.

A scientist-educator is interested in research on students' success. In my first job out of graduate school at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, and at the beginning of my career at Boise State University, my assistant professor positions' teaching and research functions were equally valued. Not just equally valued in an evaluative 40-40-20 kind of way, but truly similarly valued. Thus, if I need to be a good teacher, and I need to be a good researcher, a research topic like student success seemed like a place where I could double-dip my efforts. That is, my research about helping students succeed would certainly directly inform my teaching and the institution. On the surface, at least, it appears to be a win-win-win, me-students-institution.

HAT IS ACADEMIC success? How do you know that students experience success? What are some of the educational conditions that help academic success?

I do indeed leave the term success purposefully vague because success will be different for different students, and success to the institution may differ from success to the student, the student's family, the state, and the state legislators. Sometimes, for students, it means making it to the end of the semester and then dropping out of school. Sometimes, it means making it to the end of the week. For some students, success is graduating with their bachelor's degree, entering into their graduate or professional school or program of choice, or successful entry into the psychology workforce. I don't define success for my students; my role is to provide the tools, support,

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and infrastructure to my students for whatever they need whenever they need it to succeed—much easier said than done.

Regarding the educational conditions that help academic success, I can tell you, Héfer, that we have a clear idea of these from the literature. A sense of community and a sense of belonging to the university is essential. Academic success involves support from family and friends and positive role modeling. Intrinsic motivation and focusing on goals rather than focusing on avoiding adverse outcomes helps students to be successful. It also helps professors who demonstrate genuine caring and concern and provide mentoring opportunities. A chance to engage in meaningful work outside the classroom, often involving high-impact practices like research assistantships, internships, or cooperative field placements, promote academic success.

VOUR RESEARCH ALSO focuses on faculty members' ability to effectively leverage active learning strategies. What is active learning? How could a faculty know that students are actively learning?

Active learning is an imprecise term that does confuse. Let's start with passive learning. First, we all learn through passive learning techniques, such as reading this chapter right now, watching TV, or listening to a podcast the learning is not "doing" anything other than allowing information to be delivered via some medium. We can learn—and have learned—a great deal through these passive routes. We can learn by listening, and we can learn by reading—but that is mostly knowledge or content acquisition. To learn to do something, we almost always must be active. For instance, if a student wants to learn to write a paper in *APA Publication Manual*, 7th edition format, they could listen to a lecture on writing and read the publication manual. However, if you want to know if a person can perform a skill, we have the person do something. This is active learning. At the college level, the typical conflict is lecture versus active learning. First, this is an oversimplification because a class lecture session can involve a great deal of active learning.

Second, lecture advocates often think that active learning paints lectures as evil; lectures are not evil. Like the scientist-educator point made above, the course's goals need to match teaching choices, and the types of assignments students perform. If the overarching goal of the course were to have students be able to write in perfect APA format by the end of the semester and all the instructor did was the lecture about APA format and the students never actively engaged in writing exercises—it wasn't that writing is evil, it's just that the pedagogical choice was poor when paired with the desired course outcome. If the outcome for that same course was to understand the philosophical underpinnings of the written word, then perhaps an all-lecture approach is entirely appropriate.

CLEASE TELL ME how faculty can promote active learning. Who is more responsible for students' learning, the faculty or the student?

Faculty must come to a point in their career where they are willing to move out of their comfort zone. I suspect most faculty members active today had undergraduate instruction that was mostly lecture-based with occasional forays into active learning exercises. When instructors and professors start to teach, we teach the way we were taught. To adopt active learning strategies more actively, we must get to that point in our careers where it is less about the "sage on the stage" and more about the "guide on the side."

There also has to be some support to acquire the knowledge and have a safe space to practice these new classroom skills. Hopefully, there is a Center for Teaching and Learning close by, and hopefully, there is an administrator or a department chair who will be supportive the first few semesters when the polished lecturer switches to active learning, and student evaluations of teaching plummet—which they might. Faculty members need the support to try new techniques, and they need time in that learning curve to get up to speed—they should not be put in the penalty box for acquiring a new skill that will benefit student learning in the long run.

You also asked me who is more responsible for students' learning, the faculty or the student? This is a fantastically good question, Héfer. There is no real answer. The way one answers it reveals a philosophical orientation: my answer—the faculty member. No matter how motivated, how primed, how prepared, and how intelligent the best student in the world is—the wrong faculty member with the wrong attitude with the wrong perspective at the wrong time can ruin everything. This great student will likely figure out a way to learn independently, but a toxic faculty member can ruin everything. A faculty member with the wrong attitude or poor preparation can deflate the student, demotivate the student, or just provide the student with misinformation. Of course, the student is indeed a key participant in the process, but I believe that a poorly prepared teacher is much more damaging to the teaching and learning process than a poorly prepared student.

OUR RESEARCH ALSO focuses on the development and measurement of skills. Why do skills matter in psychology education? Can faculty accurately measure the skills that their students possess?

I have this belief—and sadly without much data to support this belief at this moment—that one of the benefits of the psychology major compared to other social science majors is the skill set of our graduates. The knowledge from the science of psychology is efficient, and when that knowledge is applied through skills, this not only allows us to improve our own lives but also the lives of others around us and our communities. To have psychology majors just memorize terms and concepts from various classes in the

curriculum and then regurgitate those definitions of terms and ideas on multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank tests seem pointless to me. I want to see psychology majors solve real-world problems or suggest plausible solutions—based on their content knowledge and their experiences from research assistantships, teaching assistantships, and internships.

Faculty members are not trained much to measure skills—for that matter, most psychology faculty—at the college level, at least—weren't even prepared to teach at all. I think many faculty members do acquire the skill to teach writing and assess writing. However, it is still challenging to measure critical thinking skills, oral communication, sociocultural, scientific thinking, ethical thinking, and professional development skills. We, the disciplinary we, need to provide a host of measures to faculty members that are reliable and valid—with rubrics for teaching purposes—and then provide training as desired for faculty members to become better at teaching skills and assess student performance in skill areas.

Yes, faculty could be sure of the students' skills during the class or the stories they share after graduation. Ideally, we would have national longitudinal studies that follow individual students' declaration of the psychology major through coursework and assessments to commence into the workforce and beyond. Occasionally, these studies are published, but they are complicated and costly to perform as everyone understands. I want to be part of that solution. In 2017–2018, during my sabbatical, with the help of four Boise State students, I founded PsychChamps, Inc., a national nonprofit educational organization dedicated to providing resources, advocacy, and support for undergraduate psychology students, majors, alumni, and educators.

My definition of assessment is not likely the traditional definition that is widely accepted. Let me start with grades first. Grades are information or feedback provided for students for them to improve their performance. Assessment data provide information or feedback to faculty members in order for them to improve their performance. Grading is not the same as the assessment. The grading process, if designed carefully—such as with the use of a rubric—could also yield assessment data. Nevertheless, grading student work does not necessarily indicate or provide data to a faculty member about improving.

I tend to add the word "meaningful" to imply validity and reliability. The assessment method must be measuring what we think we are measuring, and the outcomes must be consistent. If we are collecting student outcomes data in a perfunctory way because an administrator told us to and we never have any intention of learning from that data or changing our performance based on outcomes, then the entire process has been a waste of time, and I would not call that meaningful assessment.

HAT ARE THE promises, challenges, and next steps in measuring a baccalaureate's outcomes in psychology?

In some ways, this interview is an excellent opportunity for me to reflect on where we are to date with the U.S.'s psychology major. The psychology major has so many affordances and is so versatile-it leads to a large psychology workforce and professional school and graduate school opportunities, specific to psychology and outside of psychology. The psychology baccalaureate degree does have that double-edged sword quality, that jack-of-alltrades-master-of-none-the challenge is that it does not uniquely qualify anyone for a specific job. Thus, a person has not done adequate research and reflection about their career desires, the potential for misalignment is high. The next steps are about the tools that we need as psychology educators to help our majors and our graduates to consider their options better-whether that be to recognize their skills better, to help them prepare more persuasive and detailed curriculum vitae and resumes, or to build structured experiences in the undergraduate curriculum so that meaningful reflection must happen earlier to prevent the widespread senior-year panic of what's next?

OU RECEIVED A significant grant funded by the National Science Foundation, "PERSIST: Promoting Educational Reform Through Strategic Investments in Systemic Transformation." What was the purpose of the grant? What are the significant findings?

This was a rewarding grant project involving numerous colleagues on the Boise State campus. The grant's goal was to infuse active learning pedagogical approaches—evidence-based instructional practices, or EBIPs—into more undergraduate STEM courses. In a nutshell, we discovered in working with STEM faculty and departments that to get faculty members to move from lecture-centered toward active learning teaching strategies, it takes active learning advocates from within the department to affect change. Across years and utilizing different approaches and options, colleague-tocolleague interactions lead to the more significant consideration of adoptions of active learning strategies. Multiple other methods were available, such as access to Center for Teaching and Learning workshops and support for travel to discipline-based conferences.

My involvement was to assist in the development of annual survey measures to assess the grant's progress. We were also able to develop two original measures that were eventually published; one measured instructional climate and measured where a person is on an evidence-based instructional practice adoption scale. Over the 5 years, we were moderately successful at getting STEM faculty to adopt EBIP approaches, especially compared to other faculty (not in STEM disciplines) compared over the same time frame.

NEW DIRECTIONS AND LEGACY

WAT WOULD YOU recommend for improving teaching and learning in psychology?

I recommend to everyone to read, listen, reflect, and research. It is essential to keep reading books, journals, blogs, and social media—keep reading about your teaching craft. It helps attend teaching conferences or the sessions about teaching at your conventions and listen to podcasts or speakers or TED talks about education. Reflecting on your teaching is advantageous—perhaps it's silent meditations, a conversation with a colleague on campus, or reflecting through attending a workshop through your Center for Excellence in Teaching. Finally, research the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) if that suits you and continue to seek out SoTL research to be informed about evidence-based and evidence-informed practices to be that scientist-educator.

RECENTLY, YOU DELIVERED a keynote address during the Fostering Future Faculty Conference at the Texas Woman's University, in which you shared

Faculty Conference at the Texas Woman's Oniversity, in which you shared lessons learned during your 30-year apprenticeship. What are some of the lessons you have learned in your teaching career?

In many ways, this talk was a recap of the talk that I gave in 2019 as part of my APF Charles Brewer Award Address, so I just wanted to be fair with the credit and tell you that, Héfer. The key lessons from both of those talks are very important to me. First, I learned to leverage whatever privilege you have. Different people have different amounts of privilege. I am White, a male, and born in the United States. I did not "do" anything to earn that level of privilege, yet that combination gives me an enormous amount of privilege currently. My idea here is to "use" that privilege to benefit others as much as you can. When I talk about tenure in the university system, I often use the phrase that those with tenure need to "take it out for a spin" now and again, meaning those with tenure need to use the benefits of tenure to protect others and advocate for others who might be at risk because they do not have the protections of tenure. The same is true for those who have the privilege to benefit others and advocate for others who may not have the same protection level due to having a lesser privilege.

Second, I learned that I cannot differentiate between 13 shades of grey (I do not use plusses and minuses in grading). If I cannot differentiate fairly and reliably between graded C+ and B- work, I should not use those grading categories. If you have the complete realm of plusses and minuses, that is 13 grade bins: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, and F. This lesson is about using a grading scheme that makes sense—for final grades, I only use A, B, C, D, and F, because I can reliably differentiate between those five categories as opposed to 13 shades of grey.

Third, I also learned that stories are just about everything (meaning, stories are just about the essential tool we have as humans). The key idea here is to make sure that the stories we tell as instructors are based on psychological science evidence—the story will provide the memory cues to help our students remember the details, but the story's contents must be accurate representations of the science.

Fourth, I learned about the importance of stretching your skillset and taking chances (just as we expect our students to do). I think instructors sometimes forget how hard it is to be a student and how challenging it is to be learning so many new ideas, concepts, and systems so often. Instructors may get frustrated when students ask questions about homework assignments repeatedly, but that is because the statistics software is new to the student, and the instructor has been using it for 10 years. The instructor forgets the challenge of when they first learned how to use SPSS. The instructor should think about their frustration in learning how to post Instagram stories or a Tic Tok video; new tasks are challenging, and instructors need to remember that. Finally, I take what I do seriously, but I try not to take myself too seriously. This is just my ego-check mechanism. My work IS important, but I'm not that important. Let's focus on my work and not focus on me.

HAT DO YOU see yourself doing in 5 to 10 years career-wise?

In 5–10 years from now, if my health holds up, I'd still like to be a college professor. I will have rotated out of the department chair position and back to a typical, full professor role. I have a few books still in me and some projects I'd like to pursue. I think there is a better way to communicate the story of psychology that would last, and I'm working on that with a dear friend. I want to invest some effort into PsychChamps and get it launched for real and start answering some of the questions that our psychology community needs to be answered. PsychSessions continues to be a blessing, so I hope to continue to make vibrant contributions to its growth—I think it is growing from its singular beginning into a network or hub of services to offer to psychology educators. This may be a weird observation, but it's taken me 32 years, post-PhD, to get to this point in my career, but now I feel like I have some agency, and I can do some important, lasting work. Maybe I'm just getting started. Fortunately, it is still fun.

OW WOULD YOU like your students and colleagues to remember you a few years from now?

Oh my, Héfer, this is the after you are gone question. OK, I will respond to your question in this order, and the order does matter. First, I hope my

family thinks that I was a good father and a pretty good husband. Second, I hope they think of me that most of the time, I was a reasonably decent human being, and that I wasn't perfect, and that they could say, he knew he wasn't perfect, and he didn't aspire to be perfect. He tried to be as good as he could be as much of the time as possible. Third, I would like them to think that I tried to be generous and funny, that effort mattered to me, and even when I tried to do something and failed, it was important that I tried. Finally, I hope to be remembered as someone who worked hard at my job, in my profession, and on behalf of my students.

s THERE ANYTHING you would like to add that I did not ask you?

Thank you, Héfer, for inviting me to do this interview and, more importantly, for the opportunity to answer your questions and reflect on my life and career. I appreciate you and your efforts! I realize that you have so many other distinguished individuals you could have invited to contribute their life's story. I am honored and pleased that you invited me.

It has been my honor to interview you. You are a contemporary pioneer in psychology education with wide-ranging interests, and you contributed significantly to our society and a better world.

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Teaching, Research, and Applications

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A CIP record for this book is available from the Library of Congress http://www.loc.gov

ISBN: 978-I-64802-853-3 (Paperback) 978-I-64802-854-0 (Hardcover) 978-I-64802-855-7 (E-Book)

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Printed in the United States of America