ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR PARAPSYCHOLOGISTS: ASPIRATIONAL GUIDELINES

Revised January 2005

Preface

This document is an updated version of the original guidelines developed in 1980. The intent, according to decisions of the PA Board of Directors, is to describe a set of aspirational guidelines for ethical conduct.

In 1977 the Council of the Parapsychological Association (P.A.) appointed a Committee on Professional Standards and Ethics. Its purpose was to develop guidelines for the membership in these areas. The members of the Committee were: Ian Stevenson, Chairman; John Beloff; John Palmer; and Montague Ullman. The Committee presented its recommendations to the Council, which, after some modification of the guidelines, authorized their publication and distribution to the membership for the purpose of soliciting additional comments. A number of P.A. members submitted comments on the guidelines.

In 1980 Ian Stevenson, who had assumed the office of President of the P.A., resigned his chairmanship of the Committee responsible for the guidelines, and Council appointed Rex G. Stanford as Chairman. At the suggestion of Dr. Stevenson, the committee was reconstituted to allow direct contact between its members for the purpose of making final revisions of the guidelines. William G. Braud was appointed as the other member of the Committee. After careful review of the comments of members, the Committee revised the earlier document. The comments received from the membership proved very helpful and were used extensively in this process. The Committee's revisions were, finally, reviewed by Council.

Members should be aware that these guidelines are subject to modification by future actions of the P.A. The guidelines of the P.A., like those of, for example, of the American Psychological Association, are intended to constitute a code of ethical and professional conduct for our membership. As in other professional organizations the full interpretation these guidelines is expected to evolve through experience.

In 2004, Roger Nelson accepted the charge of the P.A. Board to update the guidelines and prepare an electronic version for publication on the P.A. website. The 1980 text has been changed to remove allusions to adjudicatory policy and to reflect modern usage.

The American Psychological Association is a national professional society that provides relevant ethical guidelines that parapsychologists may wish to consult. The APA Ethics Office web site at **http://www.apa.org/ethics/** offers access to the APA's ethics code, the Ethics Committee's rules and procedures, and other key documents.

ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Protection of Participants

Informed Consent

Persons should be informed in advance that they are participants in or have the opportunity to participate in a scientific study, and they should be allowed to decide for themselves whether they wish to do so. The appropriate exception to this rule is a case in which there are clear scientific advantages to not informing them in advance, and in which informing about such participation could not realistically be expected to result in reluctance or refusal to participate on grounds of possible or actual inconvenience, hardship, or harm to well-being. Researchers should exercise careful circumspection before claiming that a particular study merits the exception discussed above.

Most studies will provide that persons are informed in advance about the possibility of being in a scientific study and are asked whether they wish to volunteer. In such circumstances possible participants should be informed in advance about any aspects of the study which could realistically be expected to influence willingness to participate on grounds of possible or actual inconvenience, hardship, or harm to well-being, and should be asked whether they wish to volunteer for such a study. Researchers are urged to exercise careful circumspection to insure that persons who participate do not feel compromised with respect to what they have been told in advance about the study.

The above guidelines apply not only to persons in psi research who are attempting to produce psi events, but also to those who may be target persons for possible psi influence whether of a psychological, behavioral, physiological, or medical sort.

Accommodation of these provisions in a study does not always mean that a participant must be told in advance all the specific tasks of a study or about hypotheses being tested. Investigators should bear in mind that telling too much in advance about a study can compromise the participant's incentive for being in the study because it could make the study invalid and, thus, a waste of time.

If participants in a study are to be asked to sign a consent and release form and if that form states or implies that the participants have been given in advance certain information about the study (e.g., told of any possible risks involved), investigators should be sure that such information is given before the participant is asked to sign.

When persons who have not reached the legal age of consent participate, parents or Guardians should give the informed consent. Regardless of such consent, children should never be forced to participate against their will. When adult persons, such as the mentally ill, who may be unable to give meaningful, legal informed consent are to be involved in a study, a person who has such authority, such as a doctor, guardian, or parent, should be asked to give it. In the case of mental illness, the approval of a qualified therapist in charge should always be obtained before involving the patient in a study.

Special problems regarding informed consent may be posed by double-blind studies of psychic healing. In such a study a given patient may or may not be treated by the

person(s) intending to produce psychic healing, and, by definition, the patient cannot be told whether a genuine attempt at psychic healing is involved. How is informed consent handled in such circumstances? In analogous medical studies, for example, double-blind drug studies, patients are told that they may or may not receive the experimental drug and, at least at the time of data gathering, they do not learn which they had. In some such studies persons are told that if they do not get the experimental treatment at the time of the study they may, if they wish, receive it later. Researchers in double-blind studies of psychic healing may wish to consider these medical precedents in planning their studies. Studies of psychic healing of medical conditions in human participants should involve some collaboration with or supervision by medically qualified person(s).

Parapsychologists in the United States should be aware that the federal Government has regulations for the protection of human participants. These regulations are of direct concern to anyone who conducts research in an institution receiving or applying for federal funding. The relevant document at present is: Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Public Welfare, Department of Health and Human Services, NIH Office for Protection of Human Subjects, Revised Nov. 13, 2001, Effective Dec. 13, 2001. In institutions receiving federal funding, there exist Institutional Review Boards that are charged with the responsibility of insuring that human participants are protected and that the federal regulations are met. Two useful websites are:

http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm

and

http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/ictips.html

Whether or not a parapsychologist is conducting research in an institution with federal funding, which thus falls under these regulations, it is generally desirable that the possible problems involved in protecting participants in a given research project be discussed with colleagues at one's own institution and/or elsewhere. The opinions of persons not directly involved with a specific project can often prove helpful and may lend special objectivity to the discussion.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be respected for participants in all parapsychological research, whether such persons are involved in experiments, field studies, or spontaneous case studies.. Participants should have the right to remain anonymous when results are reported, including having their names or any potentially identifying data concealed in publications, news releases, and nonprofessional conversations, unless they specifically authorize use of their real names or potentially identifying data. It is preferable to obtain such authorization in writing. This guideline helps to protect participants from various possible untoward social consequences of their participation in our research and from possible exploitation by the public media.

Deception

Deception of participants in the course of research is justifiable only when it doesn't violate the guidelines concerning informed consent. Before deciding in favor of a study involving deception, a researcher should very carefully consider the alternatives available and their possible consequences for the participant and the research program. Because the planned deception does not violate the informed consent guidelines does not necessarily make it advisable. Deception-based research may, for instance, engender, at least in the long run, an atmosphere of suspicion and experiment-specific paranoia in the participant population, which may be counterproductive. From the experimenter's standpoint, it may compromise his or her feeling of openness and genuineness toward participants. It is possible that such considerations are important to the outcomes obtained in studies.

Debriefing

In deciding whether the participants in a study should be debriefed and, if so, how this is to be done, the investigator should carefully assess what is the participant's best interest and should act accordingly.

Feedback

If Participants realize they are participating in a study, it may be fair and often may be useful to inform them in advance about whether or not they will receive feedback about the outcomes of the study and what kind(s) of feedback they will receive. Will they have a report on their personal performance? What about the general outcomes of the study if it involves one or more groups of participants or a single participant tested so as to evaluate certain hypotheses or to allow their formulation? Two rules are very important concerning feedback: (a) whatever feedback is promised should always be given; and (b) whatever feedback is given should be given in such a manner that it is readily understood and is unlikely to be misinterpreted.

Point (b) emphasizes, among other things, the importance of aiding participants in understanding the feedback so that they do not develop unrealistic impressions of their own psychic ability. Sometimes specific warnings about misinterpretations are desirable, for instance that it is unrealistic to try to evaluate psi ability on the basis of performance in a single session, that even a significant individual score may represent only chance variation unless it can be repeated in later work. Similarly, when feedback about general outcomes is given, participants should not be given misleading impressions about the finality of conclusions from a single study. This is all the more true in the case of studies which are basically exploratory.

Treatment of Participants

Participants should be treated with respect, concern for their welfare, and recognition of their own needs which are being subserved by participation in a study. Careful planning and conduct of a study are needed to insure that the time and efforts of participants are not being wasted. If possible, this should include conducting a power analysis to make sure the probability of achieving a significant result is not negligible, given reasonable assumptions about the effect being studied. Participation in a study should serve the needs of science, and attempts to make participants' presence in a laboratory serve the

personal needs of an experimenter may be unethical. Sexual exploitation of participants is a specific example of such unethical exploitation of participants for personal needs.

Nonhuman Animal Subjects

Researchers who wish to use animals as subjects should exercise the greatest circumspection to insure that the housing, care, and experimental treatment of these animals is genuinely humane. There is no way to insure this except by the sincere efforts of the individual researcher. Laboratory animals are in the truest sense "subjects" and occupy a status of subjection that we generally strive to avoid when thinking about human participants and their role in our studies. An animal does not have the option of leaving the experimental situation if it does not like it, and the only person who can exercise due caution against abuses is the experimenter in charge.

The temptation toward abuse in animal studies is magnified by the fact that some researchers turn to animals when they cannot possibly use humans in the kinds of studies they envision. Whether this attitude of convenience toward animals is justified depends upon whether and to what degree a study could realistically speaking, lead to amelioration or elimination of discomfort, harm, illness, or death in humans or other animals.

Investigators in animal studies should also bear in mind that humans, but not, presumably, lower animals, can generally understand the significance and the limits of what is happening to them in a study and can relate to the experience in that perspective.

In short, those wishing to use animals in experimental work bear a heavy responsibility for insuring the humane housing, care, and experimental treatment of their subjects. Laboratory animals cannot be their own protectors. In all cases investigators are obliged to use every available means to insure that no unnecessary pain, hardship, or harm is experienced by any subject human or animal, and that appropriate safety precautions are taken.

Though clearer guidelines cannot be given, cases of abuse of animals in parapsychological experimentation should be regarded with the same seriousness as the abuse of human participants, especially since animals are potentially subject to greater abuse.

Funded Research

Misuse of Research Funds

In accepting research funds provided in support of a particular proposal an investigator assumes an obligation to complete a particular research program, usually within a specified period of time and to do that research with the quality assurance suggested by the details of the proposal. It is improper for the investigator to use the funds, equipment, personnel, supplies, etc. afforded by or made possible by the grant in ways which compromise the timely realization of this obligation.

There is, however, no objection to the use of all or part of the research funds or things afforded by them for other objectives than those for which they were originally intended, provided this is done with the prior knowledge and consent of the granting agency or

individual. Also, if it should happen to be possible to accomplish other research objectives simultaneously with or subsequent to the funded grant period, and to do so using the equipment and/or resources afforded by the grant without in any way compromising the timely realization of the obligation discussed above, this, too, is not objectionable from the perspective of these guidelines.

Openness in the Conduct and Reporting of Research

Parapsychological research should be pursued in a way that maximizes benefit to society. Ordinarily this includes open publication of research. Completed research should be readily and immediately communicable to other members of the scientific community in an open, public fashion. Circumstances of clear and great importance related to national security may justify exceptions to this principle, as would circumstances involving partial or temporary restriction of publication as part of reasonable compensation to providers of risk capital which allowed important and beneficial research to be done which would otherwise probably not be carried out.

Parapsychologists are, at least from the perspective of these guidelines, under no obligation publicly to identify the amount or sources of research funds. They may, of course, actually have an obligation, on other accounts, to make known this information. They also should recognize that within their own scientific community, and perhaps elsewhere, there may be social repercussions of secrecy in this regard.

Responsibilities and Rights of Scientific Collaborators

The Roles of the Chief Investigator and Subordinate Workers

In many research projects or programs there is a single individual who plays the role of chief investigator, though often two or more persons may equally share this role. The chief investigator ordinarily has primary responsibility for planning a study, executing, evaluating, and reporting it. Except by explicit agreement with the chief investigator, no other person should assume or usurp these responsibilities. For instance, it is improper for someone working under a chief investigator to appropriate data for his or her own use or independent publication or presentation without explicit approval by the chief investigator, either before or after an initial publication or public presentation of a study. Disagreements about interpretation of the data, the conduct of the study, or conclusions do not constitute justification for making an exception to the above consideration.

On the other hand, once research has been published or publicly presented, anyone connected or not connected with the conduct of scientific research has the right publicly to comment upon that research, whether this be in print, in electronic media, or in a public presentation. Nothing said above should be understood as prohibiting the free exercise of that right. Once a study has been presented in a public format by or under the auspices of the chief investigator, anyone should be able openly to comment upon or to criticize the study or its conclusions whether or not that person worked on the study in question and whatever their relationship to the chief investigator. Ordinary channels for such remarks are letters to journal editors or subsequent published papers, and relevant electronic forums.

It should also be noted, as will be discussed below, that whenever a scientific worker has clear knowledge of investigator fraud, that worker has a responsibility to discharge with respect to the knowledge, whether or not that fraud involves a chief investigator who may be a "superior" to the worker who has such knowledge. Nothing said above should be construed as abrogating or denying any such responsibility.

No chief investigator or other person connected with a piece of research should offer contracts, inducements, or bribes, or make threats to other project workers, which directly or indirectly serve to prevent or discourage open discussion or criticism of any research.

The role of chief investigator is often established by formal agreement between a grantor and an institution. Regardless of whether the funding agreement designates a chief investigator, this role may, for particular projects, be designated by formal agreement among the researchers or through other intra-institutional means. The role of chief investigator should be more than a merely formal one; the person who actually plays that role in the research should be designated as and regarded as effectively the chief investigator. In the event that there exists no formal designation of chief investigator, the individual shall in any disputes or necessary decisions, be regarded as chief investigator who actually has or had the responsibilities ordinarily implied by that role and who had been or is executing them.

Authorship Assignment and Publication Credits

Only persons who have made major contributions of a professional character should be listed as author(s) of a publication, and the investigator, experimenter, or author (if there is a single one) who made the principal contribution should be listed as first author. When several authors have made contributions of approximately equal importance, this should be acknowledged in a footnote, and the order of authorship determined in a way mutually acceptable to these several authors. Others who legitimately can be listed as authors should, so far as possible, be listed in the order of the importance or magnitude of their contributions. Minor contributions of a professional character, such as editorial assistance, or other nonprofessional assistance such as extensive clerical aid, may be acknowledged in footnotes or in introductory material.

In the discussion above, the phrase major contributions of a professional character implies substantial, and meaningful contribution to the planning, design, evaluation, or write-up of a study or other written publication. It implies a substantial role in the conceptualization underlying a study or the written publication, in the planning of how a study is to be done and executed, or in the actual writing of the material to be published. A person who merely plays a supervised role, paid or unpaid, in data gathering, tabulation, and/or evaluation, should not be listed as an author of a paper. This interpretation of the term "professional character" is in line with decisions by the American Psychological Association concerning authorship assignment. (The 1980 document referred to *Casebook on Ethical Standards of Psychologists*, American Psychological Association, Inc., 1967, p. 61. A more current reference is Nagy, T.F. (1999). *Ethics in plain English: An illustrative casebook for psychologists*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.)

Authors of papers should take care to acknowledge correctly in a footnote or elsewhere persons who should not be ascribed authorship credit but who played roles that warrant such acknowledgment. Such acknowledgment ordinarily includes an indication of the contribution made by the individual.

Correct assignment of authorship credit is particularly important in the Parapsychological Association, for the membership status and, therefore, rights and privileges in this organization are closely related to authorship of papers. Care must be taken that any person deserving authorship be given it and that persons not meeting the authorship criterion discussed above not be listed as authors.

Responsibilities Related to Scientific Publication

Full Publication of Research

Within the limitations imposed by the publication outlet, publication or presentation of research should include sufficient detail such that scientifically trained readers can make independent judgments concerning the appropriateness of the methods used, the competence with which they were employed, the quality of the analysis of the results, and the justification for the author's interpretations of the results. The author(s) should withhold from publication or presentation no information that could reasonably be expected to cause other scientists to modify their judgments about the significance or proper interpretation of research outcomes. The author(s) also incur obligations to respond fully and fairly to requests of colleagues to supply information relevant to questions that are raised concerning their published research or work presented in a scientific forum. (These obligations are discussed in a later section.) Similar considerations apply to the question of whether, in the case of a particular study, to publish it or not. The importance of full publication for a proper representation of the state of scientific knowledge has become clear because of Meta-Analyses. The P. A. encourages members to publish all legitimate research whether the hypothesis was supported or rejected. Both significant and non-significant results in experiments can provide useful information.

Refereeing of Scientific Papers

Any person should, before agreeing to referee a scientific paper or electing to intervene in a decision about publication, carefully examine himself or herself for possible conflict(s) of interest. If such a conflict of interest could reasonably be said to exist, that person should not agree to referee the paper in question and should not intervene in the decision regarding it. This guideline applies equally to papers submitted for publication and for presentation at a scientific meeting.

Proper Credit

An author should always give credit in publication to another person whose ideas or words are being used. It is unfair to knowingly take credit for ideas or words that are not originally one's own, either by explicitly claiming them as one's own or by failing to acknowledge their source.

Responsibilities and Obligations Towards Colleagues

Sharing Data with Scientific Colleagues

Researchers in a multitude of disciplines have often found that new analyses of data collected by colleagues for other purposes lead to important findings. The discovery of decline effects by retrospective analyses of old PK dice data is an excellent example in parapsychology. As a stimulus to scientific discovery, the Parapsychological Association encourages data sharing among individual investigators.

Conditions for Open Discussion and Criticism

Open discussion, including criticism, of reported work in various forums, including print publications and electronic media such as websites and email lists, is an important part of the scientific process. For this reason, no one should use personal inducements, bribes, threats, or coercion to try to prevent criticism or open discussion of work that has been publicly reported or which is to be thus reported. Similarly, there should be no personal retaliation for fair and reasonable criticism of work. Reasoned argument, including the marshaling of relevant facts, is the only deliberate means investigators should use to thwart intended criticism of their work or to reply to such criticism.

It is appropriate and desirable, when criticizing publicly reported or published work, for such criticism as is intended for publication or public presentation to be conveyed in detail to the person whose work is being criticized. This should be done at an early time, and there should be a statement of when and where the criticism is intended for publication or presentation. The author(s) of the criticized work should be given every opportunity for an early, if not a contemporaneous, reply in the same journal, electronic medium, or other forum. This scientifically useful rule of professional courtesy applies to criticism intended for publication or formal presentation, not to personal conversations or to teaching. In the case of criticism made in books, it may be impracticable to allow a direct reply by the person(s) whose work is criticized — though it would be desirable if possible. The rule of courtesy under discussion here is primarily intended for communications to scientific journals and certain scientific meetings or forums in which the rule is workable. This rule of courtesy in no sense implies any obligation that the author of an intended criticism must first communicate with the person whose work is being criticized before a criticism is sent, for example, to a journal. But the latter person should be informed of the criticism as early as possible to allow for an early, and thus potentially effective, reply. It is unfair to delay communication of a criticism to the person whose work is criticized to a degree that lessens the impact of that person's reply. Either the author of a criticism, the journal editor, or a program chairperson may send a copy of the criticism to the person whose work is being criticized, but the author of the criticism has an obligation to be sure that the criticism is communicated at an early date.

It is unethical to send a copy of an intended criticism to the person whose work is being criticized for the deliberate but undisclosed purpose of using a possible personal response by the latter person as the basis of strengthening the criticism prior to its publication. Copy that is said to be ready for publication should be exactly that insofar as its author can ascertain. Similar remarks hold for responses to criticism. It is, of course, legitimate, and sometimes desirable, to make advance factual inquiries of the person whose work is

to be criticized, for this may obviate the need for criticism or may strengthen its legitimate basis.

Truthfulness

The scientific enterprise is viable only to the degree that it is possible to rely upon the accuracy and truthfulness of what is reported in scientific papers. All scientists should, therefore, recognize that a fundamental obligation of the scientific profession is such accuracy and truthfulness.

Misrepresentation, deceit, fraud, or other forms of dishonesty in what is reported in a scientific communication can have several serious, even devastating, consequences for a field of investigation. First, the misinformation itself, especially if it is not discovered as such, can have a retarding effect upon the area of investigation involved, precisely because it is misinformation. Even if misinformation is eventually discovered or disclosed as being the result of experimenter fraud, there may still be direct retarding effects, for it takes some time for the false nature of such information to filter throughout the entire community of scientists involved in such investigations. Moreover, there is no way to be sure that a future investigator does not read the original fraudulent report and miss the later expose or disclosure. Second, there are psychological and sociological impacts of such exposure upon a field of investigation and those who work in it. The public-scientific image of work in a certain area can be seriously hurt; the morale of workers in the area can be harmed or undermined; opportunities for employment in the area may be reduced; progress in the area may be held back by a fear on the part of workers that future investigators in the area may be under heavy suspicion because of the taint of fraud; and funding for that area, or even similar areas, may be impaired. The possible impact of scientific dishonesty can go far beyond the individual caught in dishonesty and the specific project or problem supposedly studied in the fraudulent work. It can have devastating import for the entire field of study.

The consequences of scientific dishonesty may be especially great in a controversial and widely discussed area such as parapsychology. So, while the importance of truthfulness in any scientific field is fundamental, the secondary effects of a lapse in this regard may be especially great in parapsychology. For such reasons, investigators in this field should be especially circumspect in the conduct and reporting of studies to insure the highest level of accuracy and truthfulness. This is, after all, the ideal in any area of inquiry.

Scientific dishonesty most commonly involves deliberate falsification of the facts, data, or circumstances associated with an investigation. Such dishonesty can occur with respect to the hypotheses, planned and unplanned analyses, methodology, and data of a study. Scientific dishonesty certainly includes, though it is not exhausted by, false statements, altered or fabricated data, and the deliberate failure to give information that was definitely known to the author but would obviously bring into question the validity or reliability of the data or the conclusions of a study. Scientific dishonesty can, in other words, be due to creation of actual falsehoods, or can involve an attempt to cover up damaging facts.

Persons who become suspicious about the truthfulness of the work of an investigator should carefully scrutinize that work in light of that possibility and should, if possible,

gather or arrange to have gathered as much information as possible which could resolve those concerns. Private discussions with colleagues — including the one alleged to have been dishonest — may be needed and useful in deciding how to proceed to gather the relevant information and what to do with it. If apparently clear evidence of untruthfulness is forthcoming, the person(s) having knowledge of it should not hesitate to present such evidence to persons in a proper position of authority in the laboratory in question, if there are supervisors to the person whom the evidence shows to be dishonest. The information also, or alternatively, might be presented to one or more persons on the Board of the Parapsychological Association.

Allegations of scientific dishonesty are always of a serious nature for the person(s) involved and for the field, and should be treated accordingly. They can end careers and seriously damage reputations even if not adequately demonstrated. They should never be made in any form without supplying the basis of the allegation and without the person making the allegation being sure that it is based upon good evidence, not merely conjecture. An allegation of scientific dishonesty is a stronger statement than one that says there may be grounds for suspicion of such dishonesty. An allegation says that such dishonesty has occurred or is occurring. Even a statement about circumstances raising the question of possible dishonesty should always include the detailed nature of such circumstances and should include any sensible alternative interpretations. Anyone making either an allegation or a statement about possible "suspicious circumstances" bears a serious obligation to be sure of the alleged facts used as evidence. Personal checking of records, for instance, not reliance upon memory alone, should be used whenever possible. Persons must also be very careful in repeating any allegations they have heard from others, for the rumor-building process can work even among supposedly objective scientists. A person hearing an allegation about scientific untruthfulness should always ask for the documentation or facts behind the allegation, if they are not supplied. Failure to do this, if the story is reported to others, can easily result in distortion and, in any event, may result in unfair repetition to others of an unfounded or inaccurate set of circumstances. Repeating an allegation made by others is, in effect, a way of making such an allegation, even though one may not claim it oneself. Failure to claim it oneself does not absolve the individual of the responsibility of being sure that the alleged facts are accurate and the conclusions realistic before they are believed or communicated to others. It is cruel, unfair, and unethical to allege scientific dishonesty when those charges are known or suspected to be false. This is also the case with making poorly evidenced charges of the same kind. The above considerations apply whether the person against whom the allegations are being made is living or dead. They may even be especially crucial in the latter circumstance since the person is not living to defend his or her reputation.

"Suspicious circumstances" in the above paragraph refers exclusively to apparent irregularities in the conduct of the research that can be documented and could reasonably be expected to compromise the conclusions of the investigator. It is unethical to allege or even imply dishonesty on the part of an investigator merely because the outcome of the research seems unlikely on a priori grounds or because of effects in the data which, while perhaps consistent with a hypothesis of scientific dishonesty, can also be plausibly interpreted in ways that do not imply such dishonesty. Insinuations of scientific

dishonesty can be as damaging to an investigator's reputation as allegations of such dishonesty, and they are often much more difficult to defend against.

It is also unethical to attempt to damage the reputation of an investigator by personal or *ad hominem* attacks that do not bear directly on the professional competence or integrity of the investigator in that role.

Before it is initially alleged in print or in a scientific or public forum that scientific dishonesty has occurred, the person who is alleged to have been dishonest should, if it is possible, be informed of the charges and asked to respond to them. If that person makes no reply within a reasonable period of time, or if that reply does not adequately explain the apparent dishonesty on some legitimate grounds, then the person(s) or group wishing to make the public allegation should proceed with it. The person against whom the allegation is made should have adequate opportunity to reply to the charges in the same issue of the publication or in the same public or scientific forum if that is possible.

Fraud by Participants

The history of parapsychology shows that some participants, (and a few experimenters), sometimes simulate outcomes. More than a few supposed demonstrations of psi events have been fraudulent, and some of the bogus demonstrations are certainly the result of deliberate fraud by participants. Participants, who usually are not scientists, may not always share the same perspective or science-oriented value system as the investigator(s), and, in any event, the incentives connected with experimentation are different for participants than for researchers. The participant may have a reputation as a psychic to establish or defend. If the participant has a reputation to defend, a reputation built around performance under rather informal conditions, he or she may fear that failure under stringent test conditions may be perceived publicly either as a sign of "no psi ability" or as an indication that the performance under loose conditions was fraudulent. There may also be a felt need to please the experimenter, to receive his or her approbation. In the case of thoroughly fraudulent participants, there is likely the belief that fraud is necessary to perform. In any event, participants with real psi ability know that the production of psi events is not always available on demand, and even they may be led into temptation, especially if an inviting opportunity for simulation is present.

Given these considerations, it is easy to understand that to provide participants with obvious opportunities for psi simulation can be to lead them into temptation in that regard. Since a fundamental obligation of the psi researcher is to maximize the likelihood that supposed psi results really are psi results, investigators should feel a powerful inducement to establish conditions in research that do not allow the laxity or lapses of control which would permit and could encourage fraud by participants.

On the other hand, there is a belief among some parapsychologists that in studying participants believed to have some psi talent it is often helpful to begin with loose, rather lax conditions which could in no way intimidate them. After observing "possible psi" results under those circumstances, the investigator can proceed to tighten up conditions step by step and in a friendly, inoffensive manner, in the hope of obtaining unequivocal psi results under stringent conditions.

Researchers who wish to take this approach should recognize that it might provide encouragement for psi simulation at the early stages. Indeed, they should note that some participants might be intimidated by what they may infer to be a condescending attitude behind such an approach. Most participants will appreciate the need for adequate controls even when the experimenter personally trusts the participant. Many participants may be highly motivated to show evidence of psi under conditions in which they can be assured that they will not have been wasting their time, but really have been demonstrating their psi capacities, if the results are positive from the start. The above are considerations that should be borne in mind in selecting an approach to working with potentially talented participants. Which approach an investigation should adopt will probably depend upon several considerations, including, possibly, the level of presumed intelligence and education of the participant and the conditions of his or her accustomed performance.

If the approach of using increasingly stringent conditions is the one selected, it is important to recognize that in the early stages of the study one has set up a possible invitation to simulation and that acceptance by the participant of this invitation may or may not mean that he or she has no psi ability. It may mean nothing about his or her ability to demonstrate genuine psi under more stringent conditions.

Investigators who adopt the lax-to-stringent approach ought also to avoid the temptation, if for some reason the investigation never reaches the conclusive stage (as has often been the case), to claim that psi has "likely been shown" in the early stages. This may be a special temptation when the participant is never observed to attempt simulation. Deliberate simulation is a different matter from the unconscious or unavoidable influence by sensory cuing, for instance. Nor does "not observed to simulate" necessarily mean that a participant did not simulate, particularly during a lax stage of research. A similar temptation may be to infer, if the investigation proceeds to the final stages but the participant shows no psi under the more stringent conditions, that the participant surely had no psi ability from the start. The fact may be that a long, tedious process of experimentation simply tired the participant or resulted in reduced interest due to boredom.

The above considerations are not intended to recommend a particular approach or to discourage the use of another. They are intended to encourage workers to be circumspect about the possible consequences for their participants of the methods selected, especially as this methodology bears upon possible psi simulation by participants.

Unless the purpose of an investigation or a phase of an investigation is to learn whether a participant will simulate psi under conditions that could obviously allow it, to learn how deception is done under such circumstances, or to "ease" the participant into stringent conditions, it is advisable to institute and maintain conditions that adequately control against simulation. This will help prevent temptations in that regard and will help obviate psi simulation and its possible harmful effects to the overall investigation. In other words, unless there is some specific and cogent reason for doing otherwise, it is advisable to use conditions that would appear to stand the best chance of discouraging and circumventing psi simulation by the participant.

As in the case with experimenter deception, actual allegations of psi simulation or attempted psi simulation by participants are serious matters and should never be made in

a public format such as publication or presentation at a scientific meeting unless the bases of such allegations are made clear and are adequately convincing to support the allegations. Irresponsible charges about such deception are themselves unethical. This discussion is not meant to include situations in which participants are anonymous and a weakness in the experimental protocol may have allowed for psi simulation by one or more participants as an alternative plausible explanation for apparent psi results. That situation is more appropriately covered by the section on open discussion and criticism.

If, on the other hand, an investigator has found clear evidence of psi simulation by a participant, careful consideration should be given to whether or not to make public that finding. Ordinarily, in the case of a participant widely known for claims of personal psi ability, the investigator with clear knowledge of psi simulation by that participant has an obligation, once an investigation is completed, to make public that knowledge along with any other information gained from the investigation that may bear upon the public's perception of the psi abilities of this public figure. It is deceptive to issue a report on such a person and not include all the findings that bear upon how that person's claims of psi ability are to be interpreted. An investigator who deliberately hides knowledge of such psi simulation in making a public report on any participant is doing a disservice to the public and the scientific community, and is acting in an unethical fashion.

There are special cases, however, in which it may be inadvisable publicly to expose a participant who has engaged in psi simulation. Public exposure means both a statement that a participant engaged in actual or attempted psi simulation and identification of the participant. There is rarely, perhaps never, any justification for a public exposure of a person who is not a public figure and who shows no signs of becoming one. It serves no useful purpose and may unnecessarily harm the person who served as the participant. On the other hand, if that person later becomes a public figure making claims to have psychic powers, these circumstances may indicate the wisdom of making an exposure at that time. In any event, the way and the circumstances in which such exposures are made should serve the interests of the public and the scientific community, not primarily the private interests of the investigator.

Exposure should always be done responsibly. Care should be taken never to generalize beyond the evidence. The evidence often means "Person X simulated psi in this way under this set of circumstances". It should ordinarily not be construed to imply more than that. To claim more is to go beyond the evidence in a way that may be irresponsible.

There may be exceptional circumstances that justify a failure to expose publicly a person widely known as "psychic" who has engaged in psi simulation. These are circumstances in which humanistic considerations can be said to outweigh other considerations. A particular example of a case of this type might involve a child who has a reputation as a psychic but who has been detected using simulation to produce a typical performance. Even if the child has received widespread public attention, there may conceivably be justification for not making an immediate public exposure once fraud is detected. (There may also be justification for making such an exposure, and the circumstances require careful deliberation.) The justification for non-exposure rests on preventing possible psychological or social harm to a child who may, after all, have been the victim of circumstances involving adults and who, in any event, may not have been mature enough to recognize the consequences of engaging in psychic fraud and of possible exposure.

Humanistic considerations might weigh against public exposure in cases in which merely confronting the parent and/or child with the evidence of fraud and having a frank discussion might terminate the career of the child as a fraudulent "psychic." Here, too, if these humanistic measures do not thwart the fraudulent psi events, an exposure would later be fully justified. Also, continued publicity about the child's alleged ability, even in the absence of renewed performance, may make public exposure necessary. This could happen if media representatives asked an investigator to reveal the results of an investigation that detected fraud. Here, failure to be fully candid can be a way, in effect, of deceiving the public. That is unjustifiable.

Whenever it is agreed between the investigator(s) and the participant that the results of the study and the participant's identity are to be public knowledge, the report on the results must be made without regard to whether the outcomes are "favorable" or "unfavorable" from the participant's perspective. "Results" should include a report on psi simulation, if any is detected. Investigators should, however, be cognizant of the importance of clearly delineating the evidence supporting any allegation of psi simulation and of never making such a charge unless it is backed up by evidence. Charges of psi simulation are not warranted based on mere existence of flaws in an experimental design that might have allowed fraud. However, it is appropriate to point out such flaws as opportunities for possible deception. The statement that fraud might have occurred under a set of circumstances or even that a set of circumstances is compatible with the fraud hypothesis is not the same as allegation of fraud, provided that the distinction between fraud having occurred and circumstantial evidence compatible with it is clearly made.

If an investigator, based on observations in a study, believes a participant may be simulating psi or attempting to do so, he or she has no obligation immediately to confront the participant with that belief. It is legitimate to withhold confrontation in order to gain more definitive evidence of the simulation and/or how it is accomplished. A participant should always be informed, however, before charges of his or her fraud are prepared for public presentation through publication or in another public or scientific format. The participant's responses to those charges, if offered, should be carefully and fairly considered, and no attempt should be made to prevent the participant from replying to those charges in a public manner.

Responsible Dissemination of Information to the Public

A scientist should first report research and theoretical or methodological developments through refereed scientific and scholarly journals and books and through scientific-professional convention presentations that have been refereed. This may be accompanied by, or followed by, publication or announcements in public news media; but it shou1d not be preceded by such publication or announcements. It is particularly important for scientists never to appeal to the public "over the heads" of their colleagues or to appear to be doing so. It is appropriate to briefly describe the nature of work in progress as long as the scientist emphasizes that results are not in and no conclusions are to be drawn from this ongoing work.

An appropriate exception to the above practice is that if a scientist has completed but has not yet published a failure in his or her own work to replicate his or her own work, this may be mentioned in a media interview in which the earlier, successful work is discussed.

A scientist should not, however, discuss with the media any unpublished work by other investigators without express permission from the investigators.

If a scientist has published research in refereed formats such as scientific and scholarly journals or books or by presentation at a refereed scientific convention, it may then be appropriate for that scientist to provide for the public news media certain elaborations, including background information that might not ordinarily be presented in the scientific outlets discussed above. Such additional information should not, however, include interpretations of data that the published data do not warrant and that would, therefore, be inappropriate for presentation in the ordinary scientific outlets. It is inappropriate for a scientist to present research in one of the scientific outlets discussed above with a "conservative" interpretation and then to encourage or deliberately allow an unwarranted "liberal" interpretation of the results in the public media. Elaborations for the public media should not include inferences from unpublished data nor include data not yet readily available to scientists through the traditional scientific outlets discussed earlier.

Journalists and others associated with the public media may sometimes incline toward presentation of research outcomes as more conclusive, important, significant, or sensational than is actually warranted by a scientific interpretation of the facts. In relating to the media, scientists should be aware of this possibility and should use all possible means to guard against it. Scientific workers share the responsibility for such media distortions to the degree that they have cooperated with media representatives without exercising proper care in what they say and without seeking appropriate restraining conditions, such as being allowed to approve a journalist's copy before publication for factuality and to assess the accuracy of supposed quotations. If a scientist chooses to communicate to the public through an organ of the media that has a history of inaccuracy or sensationalism, he or she incurs a special obligation to exercise care that these do not happen in his or her case.

Because the public media reach large numbers of persons, including a large majority who are unprepared to evaluate carefully the supposed science put before them and who would, in any event, lack the proper details needed to do so, scientists have a strong ethical obligation to do everything possible to insure that their interactions with the media lead to true, accurate, and un-sensationalized reports. Despite the best efforts of the individual scientist in this regard, it must be recognized that unfortunate outcomes of media interaction will still, sometimes, occur. Scientists have at times been deceived or misled by journalists. In such cases, the unfortunate outcomes should not be blamed upon the scientist involved. Such instances do, however, serve to emphasize the great importance of circumspection in interactions with the public media. Such interactions are, ultimately, interactions with the public.

Protecting the Professionalism of the Field

A parapsychologist should take a positive interest in maintaining the professional-scientific character of this field and its public image. To avoid possible harm to the professional-scientific character of parapsychology and to insure its public image as a science it seems wise for parapsychologists to observe the following suggestions:

1. A parapsychologist should not make claims related to psi phenomena in a way that suggests they have scientific support when in fact they do not. Similarly, if only a qualified statement about the scientific support for a claim is warranted, any statement by a parapsychologist that discusses such scientific support should be made with that qualification.
2. A parapsychologist should not by words or deeds encourage another person who is not a parapsychologist to claim or to imply that he or she is one. A parapsychologist should also exercise caution to insure that his or her name is not used by someone else to support a false claim of being a parapsychologist. The careful parapsychologist will in fact take advantage of any opportunity to debunk such claims.
3. A parapsychologist should not make statements that are claimed to represent the official position of the Parapsychological Association unless the Board of the Parapsychological Association has stated such positions in publications or expressly given written permission for such statements.

The standards of the Parapsychological Association are ultimately set and maintained by the conduct of its individual members. Although only the Board of the Parapsychological Association can authorize official statements related to the concerns of that organization, the general public and the scientific public outside parapsychology are likely to judge the profession and the Parapsychological Association by the conduct of our individual members. It is, therefore, reasonable to ask members not only to maintain the highest ethical standards themselves, but also to avoid countenancing in any way misrepresentation of parapsychology or themselves by persons who are not members of the Association.

No scientists' code of ethical or professional conduct can ever specify all the many circumstances and considerations with which an individual must be concerned in order to maintain proper ethical and professional conduct. Nor should it have to do so, for the general considerations that should bind the ethical scientist are the same as those applicable to anyone in any field. In essence, they come down to truthfulness, carefulness, and kindness. Serious failings on any of these accounts can ultimately serve to undermine both progress and public confidence.

Any member of the Parapsychological Association who confronts a situation touching on questions of ethical standards about which he or she feels uncertain should discuss the matter with one or more respected colleagues, in confidence if circumstances call for it. Any such member who desires to do so may discuss the matter with a member of the Board of the Association and may ask for and receive confidential discussion if it seems appropriate.

Provision for Review of Guidelines

These guidelines for ethical and professional standards will be reviewed by the Board from time to time and revised as necessary. Members who wish to suggest modifications and additions are requested to communicate their proposals to a member of the Board.

Applicability of Guidelines

These guidelines are drawn to be applicable generally to scientists working in the U.S.A. and Western Europe. Therefore, they may need to be suitably adapted to apply in other countries and cultures.

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