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Appraising School Psychology's Past, Present and Future

Caven S. Mcloughlin
Amity Noltemeyer
Kent State University

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University instructors teaching the introductory class in school psychology to their new cohorts of students have relatively few choices when selecting required or support texts. These lean pickings do, however, include some gems. This review details the contribution of one of them; the third edition of *School Psychology: Past, Present and Future* by Thomas Fagan and Paula Sachs Wise, published by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). But first ... the context of school psychology. There are approximately 230 university affiliated training programs in school psychology across the USA (plus a smaller number, estimated at 15-20, of freestanding programs) with a new group enrolling each year totaling about 1,900 students. Of these programs about 175 follow the training template of NASP's 'training standards' (NASP 2000).

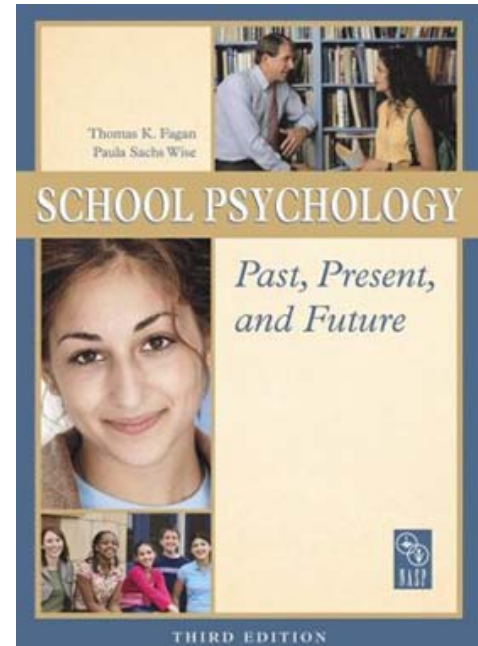
Practitioner-level school psychology training, where it is conducted according to the standards of NASP generally comprises two-years (or its part-time equivalent) of didactic coursework and practica followed by a one year full-time supervised internship located in public schools. For successful completion, students receive a master's degree or the educational specialist degree (Ed.S.). In all cases where the NASP dictates have been followed this is more properly called "specialist-level" training since this coursework rarely comprises fewer than 35-semester credit hour equivalents *following* the award of a master's degree. Coursework is fairly

precisely prescribed by NASP, acting as the learned-society, and there is therefore a relatively high degree of similarity both in content and sequence for programs that have sought or gained "Approval" by NASP through the national college accreditation agency, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

The initial year of study generally opens students' awareness to the scope and impact of the profession. It ensures that students understand the contribution of the dual foundational pillars of education and psychology, the importance of an evidence-base to practices, the nature of collaborative relationships with stakeholders, and the traditional role of service to children in school special education settings through assessment and intervention. "Best-practices" are emphasized (i.e., procedures based on empirical support), along with the necessity to establish accountability through evaluation, as is practice that accords with legal, ethical and professional standards.

In the second year the curriculum broadens so that students may learn about and then demonstrate skills in practicum settings in consultation, working with families, advanced skills in specialized assessments and interventions with special populations (perhaps including neuropsychological assessment, evaluation of children from non-US backgrounds, direct service to children with autism, etc.), and service to children out of the school's mainstream educational track (specifically children matching the criteria for disability promulgated by federal regulations such as IDEIA, 2007). Typical coursework includes the following topics: Normal & abnormal development; School organizational systems; Learning theory; Counseling theory & practice; Statistics & research; Applied behavior analysis as an intervention; Psychological and educational assessment; Consultation skill development; and Diversity or multiculturalism explorations.

Skill acquisition is practiced in a variety of school and agency settings so that by the end of the second year of coursework, students are readied for their supervised apprenticeship in public school settings. NASP requires that the culminating practical experience comprise no fewer than 1,200 clock-hours of practice; virtually all programs interpret this to mean a nine-month, 180-day, academic year in one or more public school settings generally within a single school district. This internship experience is supervised by both a field-based professional and by university faculty who join in the appraisal of the student's readiness for independent practice by the end of this third year. Whereas the first two years may be completed on a part-time basis, if programs allow this sequence, the internship is almost always full-time within a single academic year (Fall through to the following mid-summer) and involves placement within the schools of a specific local education agency.



Thomas K. Fagan

Programs meeting NASP training standards require 60+ semester-equivalent hours of coursework, plus academic credit for the internship activity, for completion of the entry-level, 'scholar-practitioner' specialist-level training program. While there are many variations and hybrids in the delivery of instruction, including some innovative incorporation of asynchronous instruction, evening-weekend programs and partial on-line coursework, the requirement for direct practice with clients within school settings prior to and during internship mean that traditional models of didactic, face-to-face instruction predominate. Faculty in training programs generally serve the instructional needs of their school psychology cohort in classes that are restricted to students in their discipline. Excepting for the initial introductory class (often called 'Introduction to the Role and Function of the School Psychologist' or some close variant) school psychology classes tend to not welcome as enrollees from the mainstream of the university ~ excepting perhaps in selected coursework jointly arranged with counseling, special education or rehabilitation students, for example (e.g., 'Counseling Interventions for Human Service Professionals').



The majority of school psychology programs have a theoretical orientation (or at least a leaning...) that is behavioral in genesis, and most describe themselves as training 'scientist-practitioners.' This is both for scientific and for pragmatic reasons; the field celebrates an evidence-base as the foundation for effective practice ~ and it is behavioral contributions that have the greatest base of such evidence. This evidence-base is then reflected in the preponderance of questions within the national examination of school psychology knowledge (the 'Praxis Examination' published by ETS to which a leadership group within NASP has contributed test-items for more than a decade). More information about the Praxis test is found at <http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/PRAXIS/pdf/0401.pdf>.

Paula Sachs Wise

Although roughly twice as many specialist-level programs exist, leadership degree-granting programs in school psychology (both Ph.D. and Psy.D.) are also an option in the USA (Merrell, Ervin, & Gimpel, 2006). These programs, too, have a route to gaining 'approved' status from NASP. However, most doctoral granting programs use as their benchmark goal the standards of the American Psychological Association (APA). There is clear tension between the two professional associations about many issues facing the delivery of psychological services but particularly regarding which is the rightful entry-level for those who might be called 'professional school psychologists.' NASP has always contended that the entry level is legitimately at the specialist-level while APA only supports and recognizes the doctoral level (considering the specialist-level practitioner a supervised diagnostician). Since the vast majority of individuals employed as school psychologists find their employment within public schools as 'masters-plus' entrants, and since those settings have exemptions from the licensure demands of their respective state Boards of Psychology, then the *de facto* employment standard for school psychology is at the specialist-level. For these professionals, it is typical to hold a state department of education license to practice (a license *restricted to the public school setting* since this is a work setting exempt from state's Board of Psychology limitations).

School psychology programs are all-graduate and located either with the Education unit or the academic program serving Psychology. When placed in Education academic units they are frequently paired with Counseling (e.g., school counseling, rehabilitation counseling),

Educational Psychology, or Special Education. When in departments or programs of Psychology they are equally often initially paired with clinical training; however, school psychology and clinical psychology generally diverge after a year of graduate-level foundation.

School psychology entrants are typically female, predominantly from an undergraduate psychology background (and sometimes education); no educational prerequisite in undergraduate education or experiences exist nationally. However, each university sets its own requirements that may include particular academic preparation routes. The great majority of students entering the profession move directly from undergraduate studies to their school psychology training. As recently as 15-years ago entrants included a sizable minority of established, experienced teachers returning to graduate school to respecialize as school psychologists (Curtis, Hunley, Walker, & Baker, 1999). This entry route has shrunk almost to zero as school districts, the primary employer, restrict the number of years-of-experience that an entering professional can be advanced on the salary scale to as few as 5-years. This makes it financially counter-productive for an experienced teacher to respecialize as a school psychologist.

What is the Role and Function of the Contemporary School Psychologist?

This question is, perhaps, best answered by looking at the forces that school psychology practitioners attempt to counteract, by posing a follow-up question ‘Why might children need school psychologists?’ The reasons are generally thought to include: Learning difficulties; behavior concerns; fears about war, violence & terrorism; problems at home or with peers; depression & other mental health issues; attention problems; poverty and its consequences; and the existence of diverse populations reflecting different needs. The original reason for the relative proliferation of school psychologists was the introduction of P.L. 94-142 ‘The Education for all Handicapped Children Act’ of 1975 which mandated the right of each child with a disability to an identification and subsequent placement in a special education setting for those meeting benchmark indicators. Although this legislation has been updated numerous times, the very existence of this employment sector in education is beholden to its legislative roots and the continuing mandate for access to psychological specialists in schools.

School psychology practitioners (1) help children reach their academic potential using empirically supported interventions; (2) promote children’s social development & mental health; and (3) work collaboratively with others using interpersonal and communication skills. They express their work through the practice domains of: Assessment; consultation; prevention; intervention; staff, parent & student education; research & program development; mental health care; advocacy; and systems change.

NASP has identified eleven foci in the work of the effective school psychologist (codified as ‘Blueprint II’, Ysseldyke, et al., 1997). ‘Blueprint II’ was built upon an initial similarly-styled ‘Blueprint’ (Ysseldyke, Reynolds, & Weinberg, 1989) published nearly a decade prior. Although a more recent ‘Blueprint III’ (Ysseldyke et al., 2006) has been developed, it has yet to be adopted by NASP.

The 'Blueprint II' foci include:

1. Data Based Decision Making and Accountability
2. Interpersonal Communication, Collaboration, and Consultation
3. Effective Instruction & Development of Cognitive/ Academic Competencies
4. Socialization and Development in Life Competencies
5. Student Diversity in Development & Learning
6. School Structure, Organization & Climate
7. Prevention, Wellness Promotion & Crisis Intervention
8. Home/School/Community Collaboration
9. Research & Program Evaluation
10. Legal, Ethical Practice & Professional Development
11. Integration of Technology in Service Delivery & Practice

Who Are Today's School Psychologists and Where Do They Work?

Seventy percent of employed school psychologists comprise women and veterans with 20+ years of experience; 45% work in suburban schools, 30% work in urban schools, and 25% work in rural schools (Curtis, Grier & Hunley, 2003). Their work setting includes a limited number of positions in independent practice, colleges & universities, community mental health centers and public agencies (e.g., Child Guidance Centers), institutional/residential facilities, pediatric clinics and hospitals, criminal justice system, and private schools. The vast majority serve public schools.

Ethnicity of School Psychologists

Wide gaps exist between ethnicity of practicing school psychologists and the students/families they serve. This is best illustrated by a review of the characteristics of the employed-school psychologists as they reflect US Census groupings (see Table 'Ethnicity of Practicing School Psychologists'). This discrepancy further can be exemplified by considering the linguistic needs and heritage of the general US experience: 18% of the US population over 5-yrs speaks a language other than English at home and approximately 11% of the US population is foreign born. By simple proportion there are five times as many persons of African-American descent as there are school psychologists of African-American descent (e.g., 26-61% of the population in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, South Carolina, & D.C. is African American). Similarly, while 25-42% of the population in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas is Hispanic fewer than 5% of *all* school psychologists combined are African American or are Hispanic (Curtis, et al., 2003; 2000 USA Census). There is scant parallel between demographics of today's school psychologists and the population they serve (e.g., Hosp & Reschly, 2002).

Ethnicity of Practicing School Psychologists	% School Psychology characteristics (2003 NASP membership survey)	% U.S. general population (2000 U.S. Census data)
White/Caucasian	91	70.7
Hispanic/Latino	1.7	12.5
Black/African-American	2.4	12.3
Asian-American/Pacific Islander	1.1	3.6
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.6	0.9

Summary

School psychologists work with children who demonstrate a need for their services by providing help to parents and educators (e.g., parents request ideas for managing children's mental health interventions and teachers ask for help working with students' complicated educational needs and tough-to-manage behaviors). As relatively autonomous school-based professionals they enjoy a flexible school schedule, assume a variety of responsibilities, and can work in a variety of settings.

School psychologists have confidence in stable employment: What compensation do school psychologists receive? National average annual salary is about \$50,000; doctoral level school psychologists on average earn a premium of \$5,000+ annually over specialist level school psychologists (Thomas, 2000). Salaries for school psychologists vary widely according to state & regional differences. For a state-by-state description of salaries and some other working conditions, see: <http://www.nasponline.org/publications/cq286salary.htm>).

The Context of School Psychology's Introduction Course ~ 'Introduction to the Role and Function of the School Psychologist' (or similar name)

To provide a sense of the context for course-texts selected for entry-level classes in school psychology, we used a simple Internet search to locate sample syllabi for such courses. This produces a far-from-scientific selection for item-inspection and the currency and accuracy of each listing has not been verified. It is provided here only to provide a glance at the array of topics, the course structure and expectations, and the text selection for the school psychology introductory course. There can be no generalization made from this listing ~ excepting to note that these are syllabi that instructors have made available on the world-wide-web and which were Googled using the search algorithm of "syllabus" + "school psychology" + "role" and similar searches (e.g., "syllabi" + "school psychology" + "role and function"). The posted syllabi may not be current. Nonetheless, simple inspection supports the claims made earlier that

among these eight course syllabi there is significant regularity in course content, and also in formatting and organization of both the course and student appraisal methods.

What follows is a rudimentary analysis we created from inspection of these eight course syllabi.

University	Primary Texts	Primary Assignments	Primary Lecture Topics
James Madison University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merrell, K., Ervin, R., & Gimpel, G. (2006). <i>School Psychology for the 21st Century, Foundation and Practice</i>. • Jacob-Timm, S. & Hartshorne, T.S. (2003). <i>Ethics and Law for School Psychologists (4e)</i>. • Frisby, C. L., & Reynolds, C.R. (Eds.) (2005). <i>Comprehensive Handbook of Multicultural School Psychology</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance/participation • Presentation project (paper done independently & presentation done in pairs) on an area of research/ practice critical to school psychology • Diversity discussion (discussion led by pairs on a chapter of the diversity text) • Midterm and Final exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of school psychology; understanding multicultural psychology • Overview of roles and dimensions of practice • Ethics • School psychology's role in Special Education (SPED)/IDEA • Diversity and the school psychologist • School psychology's role in regular education • Consultation, Intervention, Technology • Research and evaluation in school psychology • Future trends in school psychology
Murray State University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fagan, T. & Wise, P. S. (2007). <i>School Psychology: Past, Present and Future</i>. • Thomas, A. & Grimes, J. (2008). <i>Best Practices in School Psychology, Volume IV</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with school psychologist (and summary) • Notebook of current issues • Intervention summary • Intervention presentation • Chapter questions (6 sets) • Midterm and Final exam 	<i>Not specified</i>

Montana State University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reynolds, C.R. & Gutkin, T.B. (Eds.) (1999). <i>The Handbook of School Psychology, 3e.</i> • Thomas, A. & Grimes, J. (2008). <i>Best Practices in School Psychology, Volume IV</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short quizzes & activities • Paper (topic: ‘Your Role as a school psychologist’) • Final exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction/overview • Eligibility; history of school psychology • Role and Function: ‘Today and tomorrow’ • Legal/ethical issues • Problem-solving model • Behavioral and academic interventions • Psychopharmacotherapy • Crisis intervention • Counseling intervention • Psychology theory and research • “Your role as a school psychologist”
Loyola University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merrell, K., Ervin, R., & Gimpel, G. (2006). <i>School Psychology for the 21st Century, Foundation and Practice.</i> • Thomas, A. & Grimes, J. (2008). <i>Best Practices in School Psychology, Volume IV</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class participation and weekly journal reports • School visits • Interview with a leader in school psychology • Class portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past, present, and future of SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY • Employment context of school psychology • Cultural Competence and Social Justice • Consultation, Problem-Solving Model, and Evidence-Based Practice • Prevention/intervention • Assessment/RTI • Evaluation and Accountability/NCLB • Leadership/Systems Change • Ethics and Law • Practitioner Panel • Home/School Collaboration • The Future of School Psychology

Northeastern University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covey, S.R. (1989). <i>The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.</i> • Jacob, S. & Hartshorne, T.S. (2006). <i>Ethics and law for school psychologists (5e)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class presentations • Leadership project • Midterm (open book) • Term paper (12-page term paper concerned with how to involve parents of minority, poor, mainstream, or children with disabilities in a way that will increase their child's academic achievement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to school psychology history, role and function & credentials • School and systems organization • Ethics & law • Counseling and interventions • Personality traits (i.e., 'Seven Habits') • Parental involvement
University of Oregon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merrell, K., Ervin, R., & Gimpel, G. (2006). <i>School Psychology for the 21st Century, Foundation and Practice.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class participation • Important persons, developments, and events presentation and handout • Brief essay on the problem-solving orientation in school psychology • Interview with a practicing school psychology • 'Critical Issues' paper and presentation • Final written exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to school psychology and the University of Oregon training model • Contextual and historical aspects of school psychology • Training, credentialing, and employment issues • Diversity, legal and ethical issues • Data-driven problem-solving orientation • Assessment in school psychology • Prevention and intervention in school psychology • Promoting systems change • Research in school psychology
University of Toledo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas, A. & Grimes, J. (2008). <i>Best Practices in School Psychology, Volume IV</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance/participation • 10 quizzes (1-week that consist of 5 T/F questions on assigned readings) • Midterm and Final exams (50 multiple choice questions on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional foundations, Blueprint II, and history of school psychology • One class devoted to each of the Blueprint II competencies •

		each) •Blueprint II Standards & presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-based decision making • System-based service delivery • Evidence-based interventions •
Kent State University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fagan, T. & Wise, P. S. (2007). <i>School Psychology: Past, Present and Future.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied practice-research summary • Presentation of a researched summary topic • Interview with a practicing school psychologist and reaction paper • Final exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should be expected in a career as a school psychologist? • Introduction to school reform and the KSU training model & program • Characteristics of 'Effective Schools' • Regular education services and the school psychologist • Blueprint III, NCLB, IDEIA • Delivery of SPED services • Changing face of school psychology services in SPED • School psychology services in regular education settings: Research based interventions • School based mental health services as a role for school psychology practice

History of the book

The first edition of *School Psychology: Past, Present and Future* by Thomas Fagan, and Paula Sachs Wise was published by Longman (1994). The publisher declined a proposal for a second edition revision and NASP became the publisher of the second edition in 2000. This version modified the existing chapters by introducing new information published since the first edition, and added two separately authored chapters related to school psychology in Canada and international school psychology. NASP remains the publisher for the third edition which in

2009 is in the second printing with a third reprinting anticipated for 2010. By May 2009 there is no contracted 4th edition. In the first year of the publication of the third edition total sales were 976, with the same pattern for year two of the book's publication. In year one of the third edition's publication 72 university bookstores ordered the book; in the first half of year two, 81 bookstores and multiple users have made orders.

There are approximately 250 U.S. academic programs in about 220 universities that prepare school psychologists (250 separate programs are entered in the NASP database). There are from 8.4 to 8.9 program graduates annually (Fagan & Wise, 2007, p. 61) suggesting that the annual enrollment in school psychology programs approximates 1,900 students. These are the students who will likely experience a 'role-and-function' class early in their training programs. Thus, about half of them will be exposed to *School Psychology: Past, Present and Future* as their introduction to their new profession.

Organization of 'School Psychology: Past, Present and Future' (3e).

The following section will outline the structure of the book (using the 'Table of Contents' as the measure), and then offer a chapter-by-chapter outline of the highlights.

Preface and Acknowledgments

Section One

Chapter 1 ~ Introduction to the field of School Psychology

Chapter 2 ~ Historical Development of School Psychology

Section Two

Chapter 3 ~ The Employment Context of School Psychologists

Chapter 4 ~ Roles and Functions of School Psychologists

Chapter 5 ~ Evaluation and Accountability of School Psychologists

Section Three

Chapter 6 ~ The Preparation of School Psychologists

Chapter 7 ~ The Regulation of School Psychology

Chapter 8 ~ Practica, Internships, and Job Considerations

Section Four

Chapter 9 ~ School Psychology in Canada: Past, Present and Future Perspectives

Chapter 10 ~ International School Psychology

Chapter 11 ~ Perspectives of the Future of School Psychology

Section Five

Discussion Questions and Practical Exercises (Ch. 1 – 8)

Section Six

Appendix A ~ School Psychology Data Sheet

Appendix B ~ Primary Journals and Books on School Psychology

Appendix C ~ APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct

Appendix D ~ NASP Principles for Professional Ethics

References and Index

Chapter-by-chapter Highlights

Chapter 1 is organized around 14 basic questions that are often asked by beginning and prospective school psychologists. The importance of professional accountability and evaluation is appropriately and regularly emphasized. That is, being able to demonstrate that methods are effective and outcomes are accurate.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the history of school psychology. It summarizes the development of psychological services in schools in the context of the development of psychology and education and the changing treatment and status of American children. A major premise of the chapter is that the history of school psychology can be divided logically into two eras: The 'hybrid years' (1890-1969) and the 'thoroughbred years' (1970- present). This analytical structure is idiosyncratic to these authors (particularly to Fagan), in that the current reviewers cannot recall seeing it referenced by other writers in the field (except by reference back to Fagan's work). Nonetheless, it serves as a persuasive and seemingly natural division in the history of the field.

Chapter 3 examines the unique opportunities and challenges available to those who elect to practice psychology within the educational context. Included is a discussion of the goals and purposes of education; the structure of regular education, special education, administration, and special services; arrangements for the delivery of psychological services; and the significance of power and authority relationships in the system. The chapter also addresses the issue of clientage: *Who is the client of the school psychologist? The child? Parents? Teachers or administrators? The school board?* The notion of the school psychologist as a 'guest in the house of education' is first presented in chapter 3. In addition to the traditional public school setting for the school psychologist, alternative employment settings are explored, such as clinics, non-public schools and agencies and hospitals. As reviewers, we cannot recall mention of school psychological service to Charter Schools. Charter schools are public nonprofit, nonsectarian schools that are independently designed and operate independently of any school district under contract with an authorized 'sponsoring' entity. As of May, 2008 there were 1.26 million learners attending 4,303 public charters schools in 40 states and the District of Columbia (i.e., 3% of America's young learners). As *public* schools they are a prime setting for service by school psychologists; this oversight should be addressed in any future editions, we believe.

Chapter 4 examines the variety of roles and functions of school psychologists and discusses which roles are most common and most appropriate. These roles and functions are presented within the context of the ultimate goal of school psychology, which is helping children and families. The variables that influence the roles and functions of individual psychologists are also addressed, one by one. Readers are shown the differences between the traditional role (which relied heavily on traditional assessment techniques) and the emerging role (which relies heavily on curriculum-based measurement and the response-to-intervention movement). Readers are encouraged to view their role as shifting from a 'case analysis' (i.e., individual child focus) to a 'class analysis' (i.e., consideration of the school psychology's contribution to *all* children in a school). The paradigm shift described in chapter 4 evidences in appropriate detail the move away from a professional role definition tied to special-education service to one that encompasses school-wide interventions. References are suggested that should enable readers to learn more about topics presented briefly in chapter 4.

Chapter 5 focuses on the topics of professional evaluation and accountability. It examines how school psychological services are planned and evaluated and suggests methods for improving not only the effectiveness of school psychology but also the means by which school psychology and school psychologists are judged. The importance of professional accountability is again emphasized, reprising a focus first noted in the initial chapter.

Chapter 6 examines topics such as the training of school psychologists, professional standards and issues of accreditation. The authors present alternative models of training and introduce readers to the types and levels of training that coexist in school psychology. Opportunities for continuing professional development are outlined.

Chapter 7 focuses on professional control and the regulation of school psychology through three spheres of influence: *Accreditation*, *Credentialing*, and *Practice*. The section on practice regulations discusses the influences of litigation, legislation, credentialing, and ethics on professional role and functions.

Chapter 8 presents information about field experiences in school psychology, including practicum placements and internship settings, as well as post-internship employment in traditional and nontraditional settings. It also addresses some of the factors involved in selecting and obtaining an internship and eventually more permanent employment. A discussion of internship guidelines and provider standards expands on earlier discussions of credentialing and training guidelines. Readers are introduced to strategies on how to prevent or deal with professional stress and burnout.

Chapter 9 discusses the past, present and future of school psychology in Canada. It explores roles and functions, training, and regulation so that readers can make comparisons with USA systems of practice. Targeted mainly to those interested in practicing in Canada, this chapter is credited to seven Canadian faculty representing trainers in school psychology from five Canadian provincial universities. Chapter 9 appears to have minimal integration into the text's overall structure, taking a different reading format from other chapters in the book.

Chapter 10 expands the scope of the book to the practice of school psychology from an international perspective. As with the Canadian chapter, topics discussed include the prior, present and future of roles and functions, training, regulation. The chapter also describes the development of the International School Psychology Association for which the chapter's distinguished author, Thomas Oakland (University of Florida) is a former President.

Chapter 11 presents ideas as to what the future of school psychology may become. The first author's focus as a historian of school psychology bleeds through with an analysis that is heavily influenced by the principle that the 'past predicts the future.' Prior contributions to the field of school psychology are explored in painstaking detail, each as influences upon the future of the profession; the accuracy of past-predictions is meticulously explored. With a clear sense of transparency and full-disclosure the authors also examine their own predictions from prior editions of their book to see whether their predictions have come to pass. The clear intent of this section is to inspire discussion about how to bring about a positive future for school psychology.

The authors present information curious students want to know; from the 14 questions posed in chapter 1, to the exercises included in section 5, to the worksheets in Appendix A, to the national Rules and Regulations that govern the practice of school psychology.

Summary Comments

What follows are summary comments about introductory texts in any professional field in the human services professions, followed by commentary about the degree to which this particular text meets its intent.

Texts for entry-level or introductory classes rarely are successful when produced as edited books of in-depth chapters. That approach seems always concerned with conveying a particular theoretical viewpoint native to the selected chapter contributors. Few chapter contributors fail to hold in check their own advanced analyses in place of an *introduction* to a field. It seems that academicians find it especially difficult to write succinctly and on-point about beginner-information. Paradoxically, few practitioners ever contribute analyses of ‘what-its-like’ to do the job they practice every day. And, fewer still are the numbers of editors who are able to exercise sufficient discipline over their chapter-authors to dispel the reader’s feeling that the text is merely a meal made of disparate, weakly-integrated ingredients.

Whether topically arranged (e.g., *autism to zoophilia*) or ages-and-stages (i.e., *infancy through young-adulthood*) an encyclopedic approach equally holds insufficient structure for an *entire professional field* to become meaningful for beginning students. **In contrast, the approach of unfolding a professional field by disclosing the changes that have occurred over time, followed by a display of the current context and practice, with closing speculations on what the future may hold offers a winning combination for readers and instructors.** Fagan and Wise’s text elects to follow this route and provides an exemplary means for introductory-level students to learn what they want and need to know to begin their transformation into successful professionals.

A text for a course designed to be students’ first examination of the profession of school psychology places several significant demands on authors’ wordsmithing and organizational skills:

- An entry-level text may presume some, but only cursory prior coursework in undergraduate psychology and education.
- It must accommodate to the fact that readers arrive at their school psychology training from a variety of experience, education and employment backgrounds.
- It must serve the interests and reading pleasure of some students whose only experience of education as a service-delivery industry is as consumers in grade school through high school (i.e., their own 12 or so years as learners), and perhaps as parents of school children. Still others may have extensive experience in a variety of capacities within the school system.
- An entry-level text must easily be able to be integrated into subsequent coursework; the book is only a small part of each student’s total professional preparation. Yet, it needs to set-the-stage for future discussions of foundational topics in advanced coursework. The information in the beginners’ text will be discussed, expanded upon, and perhaps demonstrated through other classes and field experiences ~ and therefore the book’s philosophy, theoretical leaning, and practice orientation must be compatible with a panoply of alternative training models and orientations (generic vs. disability/age specific; state-specific vs. national, assessment focused vs. intervention-oriented, Theory ‘A’ focused vs. Theory ‘B’ focused, etc.).

- The typical entrant into school psychology programs is moving from the role of 'big fish in a big pond' into a world where they are 'in a small pond with other big fish.' The competitive entry standards of school psychology preparation programs mean that entrants are bright, achievers, and are selected to reflect appropriate professional dispositions. They know that the employment-market is strong for their talents (a view helped by a very vibrant job-market meaning full-employment virtually everywhere). They often are generally quite enamored by the information they bring to the table, and intellectually demanding of themselves and others. In summary, they are bright and capable students, interested in the subject matter of school psychology. Thus, the entry-level text must tease their interest with hints-and-promises for depth and detail, while ensuring that the foundations are first established. This is no small requirement to place on authors.
- Some readers of a professional-preparation introductory text will still be wondering whether school psychology is the 'right' profession for them to pursue, while others have been convinced from the outset of their interest in eventual employment that school psychology is the best possible career option for them. They enjoy children and they are interested and have done well in psychology's subject matter; they see school psychology as a pleasant way to combine these two interests. Some students remain skeptics throughout their entire graduate training debating the merits of clinical psychology or school counseling against their choice of school psychology. Many want to make a career as diagnosticians, others see their role in providing post-assessment interventions and are concerned about the amount of time they will spend testing relative to the amount of time they will invest in what they see as 'helping' children. An entry-level text must be sufficiently comprehensive and 'real' that it will authentically serve students engaged in decision-making about an appropriate career ~ particularly for those struggling to determine whether school psychology is appropriate professional identity.
- Authors must be strong proponents of school psychology but not blinkered to individual differences. They must acknowledge that school psychology is not the ideal profession for everyone; recognizing that each student must make a personal decision, carefully weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the profession before making a final selection. Although career decisions are in no way irreversible, spending three years or more in training to gain knowledge and to acquire skills never to be used is neither efficient nor advisable. An appropriate stance for an entry-level, introductory text is to help in the decision-making process for those students who are struggling to determine whether school psychology is appropriate professional identity for them.

The Fagan and Wise 2007 text provides a realistic overview of the past, present, and future of the profession of school psychology. And, by its organization and structure it does not fall into any traps of overemphasizing one model of the field at the expense of another; it is internally coordinated and consistent in style, temperament and word-usage. The professional taxonomy it describes is not recognizable as specific to any particular training strand ~ this generic approach makes it an especially attractive text for programs that wish, later, to 'brand' their own program's identity with specific advanced coursework or a particular theoretical leaning.

School Psychology: Past, Present and Future (3e) is ideally targeted, in our view, to the needs of its neophyte audience while remaining faithful to the goal of providing a pragmatic, levelheaded, contemporary and highly accessible read about a complex arena for professional practice.

The specific qualities of *School Psychology: Past, Present and Future, 3e*, will now be illustrated:

- The book examines fundamental questions and dimensions regarding the nature and delivery of psychological services within public schools ~ a necessity in any text offering a first look at a professional field. It provides an overview of some of the most important issues and challenges facing school-based psychology practitioners.
- It provides general information about facets of school psychology without overwhelming readers with detail and extraneous references that are mandatory for more advanced students but less important and often confusing within an introductory level volume. It reads as reminiscent of a 'best lectures in school psychology' format. Yet, these 'lectures' are integrated as a whole and do not read as disjointed ~ as is often a typical reader's reaction to the alternative format of an edited text where problems of coordination and integration create a stilted read.
- It is readable and thought-provoking, challenging excellent students to look forward to continuing their studies in school psychology while portraying the profession in an honest and realistic manner. It is neither overweening nor harsh in its appraisal of a vibrant, exciting and satisfying career.
- The authors link the history of school psychology to current developments and further to future professional directions. It presents a candid view of the past and present of school psychology while offering some educated hunches as to what school psychology may become in the future.
- This text celebrates that school psychologists do not operate in a vacuum. It teaches the influence of legal, regulatory, and societal changes and how the impact of each of these developments is felt within public school systems and specifically within the profession of school psychology.
- The book illustrates how changes in the profession also have come from *within*. For example, recent paradigmatic shifts have produced momentous role-changes for typical school psychology practice. Relatively recently a virtually universal role-shift has occurred for school psychology practice with a refocusing of efforts away from 'medical-model' oriented diagnostic emphases into seeking to analyze each student's 'response-to-interventions.' One immediate result has been seen in a dramatic modification in how daily tasks are performed. This contemporary refocusing aims to match an intervention with academic and social needs. It came not from legal, regulatory or social lobbying but, rather, from analyses conducted by the leadership within the school psychology profession.
- The book is immediately comprehensible by the new graduate student. The authors provide a balance of formal and informal information; speak directly to their reader and draw them into the discussion; use current analogies, terminology, case-studies, and engage in politically-correct forms. It asks readers to become actively involved by including questions and scenarios with no certain answers ~ that is, it

engages readers in honest and frank debate about tough-to-determine issues about which 'thinking professionals' will readily diverge.

- This text is designed to be read within the context of a total school psychology curriculum or program. Although it emphasizes particular areas—including history, demographics, and professional roles and functions—it also hints at and offers an appetizer of information about advanced ideas and formulations. As an entry-level text it is necessary to discuss many such vital issues quite briefly. There are frequent references to advanced-practice areas of study such as consultation, intervention, and assessment in this introductory book. Each topical discussion serves as an effective 'idea-teaser' for consideration in subsequent classes.
- The authors provide practical guidelines to expedite the passage from student to professional. The book is respectful to its readers, recognizing that as users of the text they will soon become future colleagues.

Conclusions

Expectations for an entry-level school psychology text are high. Not only must it provide a realistic and unbiased overview of the field and its history, but it also should be written in an accessible manner that does not assume prior coursework in the field. It must not be limited to one interpretation or theoretical construct for the profession. Further, the text must be engaging and avoid overwhelming readers with an unwarranted level of sophisticated detail.

School Psychology: Past, Present and Future undeniably meets these standards. This text—in conjunction with other books, articles, and resources—should seriously be considered by instructors of any introductory school psychology course as a means for introducing students to the field and developing a solid foundation from which to further develop skills in more advanced coursework.

A prerequisite for establishing and maintaining one's professional identity is understanding where the field of school psychology has been, where it is, and where it may be headed. Unquestionably, Fagan & Wise provide readers with the tools and information necessary to build this understanding and ultimately impact the development of their own professional identity and that of the field as a whole.

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About the Book Authors

Thomas K. Fagan has served as Director of the School Psychology Program at Western Illinois University (1969-1976) and Coordinator of School Psychology Programs at The University of Memphis (1976-present). Fagan has been active in the National Association of School Psychologists since 1970, having served as its President in 1980-1981 and again in 1987-1988. He served as an editorial board member to the *School Psychology Review* (the NASP journal) from its founding in 1972 to 2005, and was editor of the NASP's periodical *Communiqué* from 1981 to 1987. Fagan serves as historian to the NASP, the TASP and to the APA Division of School Psychology. He also serves as co-chair of the Historical Preservation Committee of the International School Psychologists Association. He has authored many publications on the historical development and delivery of school psychological services in the USA in addition to *School Psychology: Past, Present, and Future* including a co-edited *Historical Encyclopedia of School Psychology* (with Paul Warden; Greenwood Publishers, 1996). He also holds the 1991 Distinguished Service Award from the Division of School Psychology (APA). In 2007, he was granted NASP's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Paula Sachs Wise is a Professor Emeritus of Western Illinois University. In 1978 she was named Coordinator of the School Psychology Program at WIU and served in that capacity until her retirement in 2008. She is continuing to stay active in retirement through volunteer activities and professional writing.

About the Reviewers

Caven S. Mcloughlin, PhD, is Professor of School Psychology at Kent State University, Ohio. For over 20 years he has engaged in preparing preschool school psychologists supported by funding from the US Office of Special Education Programs. His publication interests have four themes: Exploring the importance of 'wellness' on children's health and happiness; exploring the power of NCLB regulations in changing the shape-and-feel of public education; providing parents and teachers with accessible information about contemporary forces in social policy affecting public education; and evaluating home-schooling & charter schools.



Amity Noltemeyer, Ed.S., NCSP, is a doctoral candidate also at KSU. She is employed as a school psychologist at Trumbull County Educational Service Center in Ohio. Amity's research interests include systems-level educational change initiatives and disproportionality in special education.





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Editors

Gene V Glass
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