This represents the first step in developing a new publication for Division 36. Even in this interim form this newsletter symbolizes a new identity. While this builds on the achievements of PIRI, it also addresses itself to the new tasks that lie before us as the division representing the psychology of religion. A transformed newsletter signals our awareness, as founding members of this division, of our obligations to the future.

Division 36 members have good reason to celebrate this new beginning but in the same moment we must also recognize the mature challenges that lie before us. These include the numerous practical and administrative decisions with which the Board of Directors must deal in this transition period. More important than these activities, however, is the overall cooperation of the members in two significant projects which are highly important in solidifying our identity. These are the program for the Washington Convention and the development of new membership. While the division has official committees working on these matters, the involvement of as many members as possible in these matters is essential. Our first A.P.A. program is a defining event for us to the rest of the scientific community. As such, it demands that the richness of experience and the maturity of our member’s professionalism be clearly evident.

It is equally important to our identity to encourage membership by interested colleagues. In order to be genuinely representative of the broad base of interest and activity in religious psychology, we need the presence of the ablest of our peers. We all share in the responsibility of informing the psychological community of our existence and purpose.

Perhaps most significant is our common commitment to define relevant contemporary issues for American psychology at large. Our failure to serve the entire scientific community in this way could only be attributed to a lack of vision and leadership. We have both the responsibility and the opportunity to reflect together on the question that lie at the intersection of religion and psychology.

Eugene Kennedy, Ph.D.
President, P.I.R.I.
PSYCHOLOGISTS INTERESTED IN RELIGIOUS ISSUES
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of the
AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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Margaret Gorman, William Hunt, John B. Murray.
EDITORIAL

Our first steps as DIVISION 36 have been started and we seem to be walking quite well. All colleagues who signed our petition for divisional status automatically became members of 36 as of the beginning of this year. Thus, we have a nucleus of 442 which at the present constitutes the division. Unfortunately, many PIRI members who are also APA members failed to sign our petition and therefore they must apply and be approved by the Membership Committee for divisional status. We have mailed application blanks to all such prospective applicants and we are receiving a good response. APA sent to us 134 names of colleagues who are interested in joining our division. This is very encouraging because it represents potentially a very rapid growth of our division. Of course, all who are applying for divisional membership now will have to wait to become official members of Division 36 until January 1977, because of the APA procedural policies. This means they won’t be able either to run for offices or cast their vote on divisional ballots. We will, however, keep their names on our unofficial list and supply them with all the divisional information as soon as their applications are approved by the Membership Committee.

What happens to those PIRI members who are currently associate members, i.e. who are not members of the APA? In accordance with our new by-laws (which we included in the last issue of this NEWSLETTER), they will become Affiliates, thus being able to take part in all divisional activities except that they won’t be able to hold office or vote. If a PIRI member who is an APA member should choose not to apply for divisional membership, he/she could continue as divisional affiliate (although this would not make much sense). Our Membership Committee is in the process of developing criteria for acceptance of new applications for affiliate status, because we are receiving inquiries from colleagues of disciplines other than psychology who want to belong to Division 36. Our Executive Committee will have to approve their criteria for Affiliate status which then will be ratified at the annual meeting.

During this bi-centennial year our division will have its first annual meeting as part of the APA in Washington, D.C. Eileen Gavin and her committee have been working hard on our first program and she has put together a very impressive schedule. As a new division we have not been allocated many hours for our program, but these hours, as we soon will see, are being used very well.

There are a few questions which have to be answered during the transitional process. At the present, we are still functioning in a dual role: as Division 36 and as PIRI, Inc. The aim would be to slowly transfer everything to the division and cease the existence of PIRI as an independent organization by the coming summer. We have the mandate for this action of the PIRI membership already. However, while we are trying to give up our independent status, other divisions (i.e. Division 8) are trying to establish themselves also as independently incorporated entities. Our Executive Committee and the PIRI Board of Directors are studying this question carefully and we all would appreciate membership input on this matter.

Our divisional nominations are being counted at the present, we even had to send an additional nomination ballot for the APA Representative slot. This was due to a non-anticipated surprise by our division receiving enough votes from APA members to have a position on the APA Council of Representatives.

Now, the next step will be the voting itself. All current division mem-
RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION AND MEANING IN LIFE

Doug Soderstrom

Modern Western man appears to be in existential trouble. Many of the great thinkers of recent time believe that we as a people are beginning to lose firm hold on our values, our spiritual grounding, and our meaning for existence. Johnson (1956) has emphasized the fact that modern Western man's central problems are of a religio-philosophical nature. His problems stem from an inner sense of valuelessness resulting in the question of whether life itself can any longer be considered meaningful. As early as 1938, Pitirim Sorokin believed that Western man was placing an inordinate and unwise emphasis upon materialistic and sensate values. Abraham Maslow (1970) recently noted that he believes that "the ultimate disease of our time is valuelessness (p. 82)." Irving Kristol (1974), at a recent conference on values in contemporary society sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, has pointed out that the United States, in particular, and Western civilization, in general, are at present experiencing a "crisis in values."

In addressing herself to our spiritual inauthenticity, Margaret Mead (1972) has stated that many Americans are not taking their religion seriously. She feels that many do not even acknowledge a connection between their everyday lives and their spiritual existence. Mead apparently believes that religion has become a meaningless ritual with little, if any, relevance for everyday life. McLaren and McLaren (1969) have gone so far as to state that our materialistic and secular pursuits are completely diabolical to Christian ethics and are presently in danger of becoming a debilitating "national sickness."

Joseph Fabry (1968) has quite well summed up man's dilemma. Man is in a crucial in-between period. Many no longer trust social institutions as a source of direction. Many reject God as a relevant source of direction in today's contemporary world. And few are able to shoulder the personal responsibility of finding direction in life by themselves. Thus, in rejecting institutional guidance, spiritual guidance, paired with an inability to existentially affirm his own inner sense of responsibility, man "feels unled, alone, unprotected, drifting, and in despair (p. 133)." Viktor Frankl (1972) concurs and believes that this feeling of despair has become ubiquitous. Dr. Frankl refers to this condition as "the existential vacuum." It is characterized by feelings of emptiness, boredom, valuelessness, and meaninglessness.

Dreyfus (1972) believes that this feeling of emptiness has also affected the youth of our society. Youth have expressed a generalized dissatisfaction for our values, our life styles, and direction offered by an overly secularized society. Frankl (1972) has of-
ferred evidence which states that youth all over the world are being engulfed by the existential vacuum.

In light of man's precarious existential predicament, Viktor Frankl (1963, 1965, 1967, and 1969) has proposed a unique approach for the study of man; logotherapy. It places central emphasis upon man's inherent spiritual (nöetic) nature and the transcendental need for man to find meaning in life. In his work, Frankl appears to place a strong emphasis upon a mature spiritual commitment as a basis for the discovery of meaning and purpose in life. Others have also expressed this belief. Paul Tillich (1952) has explained that an ultimate spiritual commitment to God — the ground of man's being — forms the basis for all of meaning in life. Walter Clark (1958) has concisely stated that "The most pervading reason for the eternal appeal of religion seems to be that religion more than any other human function satisfies the need for meaning in life."

Dreyfus (1972) has explained that he believes that many youth have turned to religious renewal, characterized by a transcendental love for God and an expressed dignity for all of mankind, in order to find an enduring sense of direction and meaning in life.

This then leads to the central thesis of this paper which states that a mature religious commitment should aid youth in their search for meaning in life.

Hence, in order to test out this proposition, the investigator commenced to study this phenomena. The writer administered a questionnaire to 427 college freshmen and sophomores between the ages of 18 and 20 enrolled in general psychology classes at six private religious colleges and two public state-supported colleges located in the states of Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas. Approximately three percent of the students who met the age and class requirements of the study did not tend to believe in God. They were not included in the study since it was felt that they might constitute a special group.

The statistical analysis utilized in this study was one of analysis of variance. Because of limitations of time in the presentation of this paper much of the statistical data included in the original study will be omitted. However, all of the findings which will be discussed are based upon F ratios computed at the .01 level of significance, and Scheffé Tests for Multiple Comparison computed at the .05 level of significance.

Meaning in life was assessed by Crumbaugh and Maholick's (1964) Purpose in Life (PIL) Test. This scale was developed for the specific purpose of assessing Viktor Frankl's concept of meaning in life. The X meaning in life test score for all subjects in the study was found to be 106.08.

Gordon Allport (1959) has discussed two opposing religious orientations; intrinsic religious motivation and extrinsic religious motivation. The intrinsically motivated individual finds his most central and ultimate motive in life in his religious faith. All other motivations in life are secondary and subservient to this master motive. The religion of the extrinsically motivated individual is subservient to other aspects of life. It is instrumental in that it serves other concerns in life such as security, social status, and power. In-
Intrinsic-extrinsic religious motivation was assessed by Hoge's (1972) Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale.

The results indicated that the intrinsically motivated subjects were characterized by a significantly higher degree of meaning in life than were the extrinsically motivated subjects. The intrinsic subjects has a $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of 115.47 whereas the extrinsic subjects has a $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of 99.31; difference of 16.16 significant at the .01 level of significance.

Russell Allen and Bernard Spilka (1967) proposed a model for studying religious orientation. They specified two cognitive religious orientations; namely, “committed” religious orientation and “consensual” religious orientation.

The committed orientation refers to a religious belief system that is abstract, discerning, well-differentiated, flexible and open, and relevant to one's life. The consensual orientation refers to a religious belief system that is concrete and literal, vague, simplistic and undifferentiated, inflexible, and detached from life (Raschke, 1973). Committed religious orientation was assessed by the committed section of the Religious Viewpoints Scale (Spilka, Read, Allen & Dailey, 1968) and consensual religious orientation was assessed by the consensual section of the Religious Viewpoints Scale.

In reference to committed religious orientation, the results indicated that the “committed” subjects were characterized by a significantly higher degree of meaning in life than were the “uncommitted” subjects. The “committed” subjects had a $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of 116.26 whereas the “uncommitted” subjects had a $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of 101.32; a difference of 14.94 significant at the .01 level of significance.

In reference to consensual religious orientation, the results indicated that there was virtually no relationship between consensual religious orientation and meaning in life. Those subjects who were highly consensual had a $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of 105.95 whereas those who were low in consensuality had a $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of 106.36. Therefore, it appears that religious consensual orientation is not related in any significant way to the variable of meaning in life.

James Davidson (1972) has developed an extremely promising model for assessing religious orientation. He has conceptualized two religious dimensions; a vertical belief dimension and a horizontal belief dimension. Differential responding to these two dimensions thus results in an individual being classified as a true believer, a mainliner, an unbeliever, a fundamentalist, or a humanist.

For the purpose of this study the writer developed his own scale to assess Davidson's model; namely the Vertical-Horizontal Religious Commitment Scale. Vertical religious commitment refers to one's spiritual commitment to God and horizontal religious commitment refers to one's moral commitment to his fellow man. As in Davidson's model individuals were categorized into one of five classifications based upon differential responding to the vertical and the horizontal scales.

The true believer is characterized by a high moral commitment as well as a high spiritual commitment. The mainliner is characterized by a generally moderate moral and spiritual commitment.
The unbeliever is characterized by a generally low moral and spiritual commitment. The humanist is characterized by a high moral commitment and a low spiritual commitment. And finally, the fundamentalist is characterized by a high spiritual commitment and a low moral commitment.

The results indicated that true believers were characterized by a relatively high degree of meaning in life in that they had a $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of 112.52. The mainliners were characterized by a very moderate degree of meaning in life. Their $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score was 106.57. The unbelievers were characterized by a relatively low degree of meaning in life in that their $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score was 102.40.

At this point it is interesting to note that very similar findings have been generated by three of the religious models. Intrinsic religious motivation, a committed religious orientation, and a true believing orientation were each indicative of a relatively high degree of meaning in life. On the other hand, extrinsic religious motivation, an uncommitted religious orientation, and an unbelieving orientation were each indicative of a relatively low degree of meaning in life.

In relation to vertical-horizontal religious commitment, it was also found that the fundamentalist orientation and the humanist orientation were both indicative of a relatively low degree of meaning in life. Respectively, their $\bar{X}$ PIL Test scores were 101.57 and 98.26. It is felt that these two groups obtained low meaning in life scores since each indicate a lack of religious integration; religious integration referring to a mature religious commitment characterized by a strong spiritual commitment to God paired with a strong moral commitment to one's fellow man. It appears then that a lack of religious integration may not be indicative of meaning in life, whereas religious integration is indicative of meaning in life as characterized by the high $\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of the true believers.

For the balance of the study, the writer used single-item measures to assess some of the more specific and central aspects of religious orientation.

For this single-item measure, the writer was interested in finding out which of two values might be more indicative of meaning in life; the Christian value (referring to the value of being a Christian) or the value of loving (referring the value of expressing compassion, love, and human concern for others). The relative emphasis placed upon these two values is important since it is possible for an individual to place a greater degree of importance on one value in reference to the other.

The results indicated that a belief which indicated that each of these values was of great importance was associated with a relatively high degree of meaning in life ($\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of 108.). On the other hand, a belief which placed high importance upon the value of loving and little importance upon the Christian value was indicative of a relatively low degree of meaning in life ($\bar{X}$ PIL Test score of 99.37). This belief may have received a relatively low meaning in life score since it was indicative of a lack of religious integration.
The writer was next interested in finding out how the perception of ultimate truth might be related to meaning in life. The results indicated that a belief that God and His wisdom was the most valid source of ultimate truth was indicative of a relatively high degree of meaning in life, with a \( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 111.53. On the other hand, a belief in an organized church or in one's own conscience as the most valid source of ultimate truth was indicative of a lower degree of meaning in life. Their \( \bar{X} \) PIL Test scores were 106.97 and 103.01.

In regard to a question dealing with the perception of God's nature, it was found that beliefs which indicated that God has personal qualities was more indicative of meaning in life (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 108.) than was a belief which indicated that personal qualities were not relevant to God's nature (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 101.27).

In reference to a question dealing with the trend of one's faith in God, it was found that the trend of having more faith in God was more indicative of meaning in life (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 108.89) than was the trend of having less faith in God (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 101.99).

The writer also dealt with the relationship between the perception of one's eternal destiny and meaning in life. It was found that a definite belief that one would go to Heaven was more indicative of meaning in life (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 113.07) than was a belief that one would simply cease to exist after death (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 98.86).

The following variables were also found to be indicative of a relatively high degree of meaning in life; a high frequency of church attendance (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 113.66), a high frequency of private prayer (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 110.11), a definite belief that one has been "saved" by placing his faith in Jesus Christ (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 111.92), a definite willingness to give one's life up for God's sake if necessary (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 114.84), an ultimate commitment to loving others (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 111.49), a definite awareness of what one believes about supernatural reality (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 113.91), a high degree of religious and spiritual satisfaction (115.45), and a strong belief that one's faith in God has been helpful in discovering meaning and purpose in life (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 112.84). Since each of the foregoing religious measures were found to have a significant linear and positive relationship with meaning in life, the obverse of each of these variables were generally indicative of a relatively low degree of meaning in life.

Before concluding the discussion of the results, one more point needs to be made. It was found that religious confusion was indicative of a relatively low degree of meaning in life. Hence, the results indicated that each of the following religious characteristics illustrate this trend: a high degree of confusion regarding what one believes about supernatural reality (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 93.72), confusion as to what will happen to one after death (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 99.63), confusion as to what one believes about the nature of God (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 96.27), confusion as to what is the most valid source of ultimate truth (\( \bar{X} \) PIL Test score of 98.32), confusion as to whether one's faith in God has been helpful or not in finding meaning in life.
(X PIL Test score of 95.86), confusion as to whether one has been “saved” or not (X PIL Test score of 101.72), and finally confusion characterized by a very erratic faith in God (X PIL Test score of 96.72).

In conclusion then, the writer believes that three integrative factors have emerged which are able to synthesize the results in this study. First, it appears that religious commitment is indicative of meaning in life, whereas a lack of religious commitment is not indicative of meaning in life. Second, it appears that an awareness of what one believes about supernatural realities is indicative of meaning in life, whereas confusion as to what one believes about supernatural realities is not indicative of meaning in life. And finally, it appears that religious integration is indicative of meaning in life, whereas a lack of religious integration is not indicative of meaning in life.

The writer believes that each of these integrative factors (religious commitment, religious awareness, and religious integration) may be theoretically subsumed under the concept of mature religious commitment since each appear to be an important aspect of a mature religious commitment. Hence, it appears that the one central factor to emerge in relation to the discovery of meaning in life is that of a mature religious commitment. The writer therefore concluded that the results of this study tended to strongly confirm the basic premise of this investigation which stated that a mature religious commitment should aid youth in their search for meaning in life.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Thomas C. Hennessy, S.J. has announced the availability of two articles: “Choosing a Pastoral Counseling Program” in the April, 1975 issue of Pastoral Life, and “A Religious Perspective on Sexual Counseling” in the Spring, 1975 (Vol. 5, No. 1) issue of The Counseling Psychologist. Letters of request should include an addressed stamped envelope for a copy of either or both. Please direct your requests to:

Thomas C. Hennessy, S.J.
Fordham University
Bronx, New York 10458

PIRI NEWSLETTER

A publication of Psychologists Interested in Religious Issues, Inc. and Division 36 of the APA.

Editor:
Vytautas J. Bieliauskas, Ph.D.
Xavier University
Cincinnati, Ohio 45207

Book Review Editor:
Earl J. Kronenberger, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
Xavier University
Cincinnati, Ohio 45207

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Editorial (Con’t from page 3)

I am sure that all will cast their votes through the APA. However, the rest of the current PIRI membership will also be able to vote via a special ballot sent to them. Their votes will be added to the divisional votes to determine the election. This seems to be the best procedure we could develop during this transitional period. What this means is: that only official members of the division can run for office this year, but all PIRI members will be able to cast their vote.

As one can see, all our offices and all our Committees have been very busy. We are continuing our process of transition and we are making good progress.

I am familiar with the earlier edition of Longstreth’s text: Psychological Development of the Child. The new edition shows improvement: 1) in coming to grips with problems like desegregation and Jensen’s views on intelligence which surfaced in the meantime; 2) most citations were to journal articles or books published within the last decade or at most 15 years ago; 3) bibliography is listed at the end of each chapter, an arrangement which should suit undergraduates better than the APA publication format, which places all references at the end; 4) a list of authors is included along with a clear and generous subject index at the end of the book; Piaget outdraws Freud, 5 to 4 in the number of times they are cited, a order which reflects modern trends of thinking about child development; 5) moral development is awarded a chapter, certainly a new trend or an old order returning; Piaget’s influence as well as Turiel, and Kohlberg’s contributions are evaluated along with parental, family and cultural aspects of children’s moral growth; 6) in language development, the research of Brown and Chomsky, as well as Piaget’s with children’s speech patterns has been included.

Finally, the printed format of the text is excellent: clear headings; helpful graphs and tables illustrating research cited; summaries and discussion of themes at the conclusion of each of the five major divisions: physical; learning; home; school; and moral development. Child rearing practices and sex-typing are treated under “The Home and Psychological Development”. I think the author’s aproach in including development of the child in home and in school instead of social and emotional dimensions of growth as other child psychology texts cover it, is good.

Rev. John B. Murray, CM
St. John’s University
Jamaica, New York

Sister Vivien Jennings, OP. *The Valiant Woman: At the Heart of Reconciliation*. Alba House, NY 1974 112 pp. $3.95

Sr. Vivien Jennings writes exceptionally well. The reflections with which she begins each of the first four chapters are beautiful and inspiring and rich in meaning. The first half of her book is organized around the four seasons of the year. Delightful pictures are interwoven with the text, each complementing and enriching the other. The focus of these four chapters and of the whole book is the growing capacity of women to bring about renewal of the world and its reconciliation.

Sister Vivien Jennings reveals insights into women and their burgeoning role, which will reward readers, lay and religious, men as well as women, psychologists, counselors, confessors, teachers, parents, and the larger audience in search of fresh, even poetic, expressions of their world as seen through faith.
In the second half of her book, Sr. Vivien turns from the inspirational tone of reflections on the potential of women for the Lord’s work of reconciliation to specific roles in which valiant women can renew and reconcile the world about them, the busy mother who prays, sacrifices, edifies, and “gently guides her children to . . . gentleness with strength, courage without hostility . . . Christian discontent with a material world” which lacks depth; valiant women in organizations which seek renewal and reconciliation among the interdenominational differences of the “rent garment of Christianity”; valiant women prepared and ready to take on higher administrative duties on the Church’s far-flung organizational grid; valiant women, lay and religious, in the variety of ministries which reflect the care and concern of the Church for all, poor and old, young and sick, in ghettos and in prayer groups, in the more traditional roles of the teacher of the young or nurse to those with broken bodies or minds, as well as the newer roles in the communications media, TV, radio, newspapers, and the worlds of music, art, and drama.

Having ended her panoramic view of the valiant woman’s potential for renewal and reconciliation of the modern world with the words of Mother Teresa, an internationally influential valiant woman: “It is not possible to engage in the direct apostolate without being a soul of prayer”, Sr. Vivien concludes her book with a chapter entitled: “Needed: the contemplative Woman”. She is the valiant woman who has been to the mountaintop, returns to bring His word to the world below, and climbs the mountain again bringing another with her to share the vision.

Rev. John B. Murray, CM
St. John’s University
Jamaica, New York


Henry P. Durkin’s paperback “44 Hours to Change Your Life: Marriage Encounter” is worth all the money ($1.25) asked for it. Psychologists, marriage counselors, priests, religious, all could recommend this booklet safely to married clients, if they are experiencing marital disagreements, and better still to others who aspire to make marriages better. Religious, men and women, conducting retreats or making retreats could adapt the material with few changes to renewal in vowed promises.

A typical Marriage Encounter weekend is described through the story of a husband and wife who are hesitant about entering the Marriage Encounter, thus allowing the author to pose probable questions and clarify some misunderstandings. “Marriage Encounter is not a group experience; it is a very private and personal exchange between just two people; a husband and a wife. There are no sensitivity sessions, no open confessions, no mass exchanges of intimacy, no hysteria, no nudity, no psychiatric counseling, no psychological games, . . it is not marriage counseling: it is not a weekend of therapy for couples who have deep psychological problems.” (pp. 21-22.) In another place, the author remarked that marriage encounter aspires to make good marriages better and that
couples with psychological problems might spoil the weekend for the others. Couples seek a deeper understanding of each other; particularly, the goal is marital sharing and acceptance of each other’s feelings.

At the beginning, the author traced the Marriage Encounter Movement to its beginnings in Spain about 1950 and into the United States about 10 years ago. The last few pages describe the organization’s pioneers, leaders, and unfortunate differences in the Marriage Encounter movement in the United States. The middle of the booklet clearly sets forth the steps in the sessions of a marriage encounter weekend, the 44 hours which have changed for the better the lives of many marriages and raised the moral climate of our parishes, dioceses, and national Catholic life: married couples of other faiths also have joined and the marriage encounter movement has extended in other faiths.

Rev. John B. Murray, CM
St. John’s University
Jamaica, New York

Books Available for Review
Write to Book Review Editor: Dr. Earl J. Kronenberger, Department of Psychology, Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio 45207


PIRI - A DIVISION OF THE APA (36)

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PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED APPLICATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO:

VYTAUTAS J. BIELIAUSKAS, PH.D.
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