For the Office of President

George S. Howard

George S. Howard is a professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Notre Dame. He received his Ph.D. in Counseling psychology in 1975 from Southern Illinois University. Professor Howard has served as the President of both the Division of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology and the Division of Humanistic Psychology of APA. Author of seven books and numerous professional articles and chapters, Dr. Howard's research focuses upon philosophical and methodological issues in counseling, clinical, personality, educational, sports and ecological psychology.

Contemporary worldviews overemphasize the themes of individualism and materialism to the detriment of values prized by many religious traditions (simplicity, interiority, generosity, faith, etc.). Division 36 can serve as a means of keeping psychology as a field of study to keep the spiritual dimension in its vision of human nature and the practice of psychology.

Edward P. Shafranske

Ed Shafranske has doctoral degrees in Clinical Psychology (United States International University, 1981) and Psychoanalysis (Southern California Psychoanalytic Institute, 1995) and is Professor and Luckman Distinguished Teaching Fellow in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Pepperdine University, where he directs the doctoral program in clinical psychology. He has served the division as Newsletter Editor (1988–93), President (1993–94), most recently as its Representative to APA Council (1997–2000), and serves as co-chair of the Task Force on Religious Issues in Graduate Education and Clinical Training. He is a fellow of APA (Divs. 36 & 29) and recipient of the William Bier Award. He was editor of Religion and the Clinical Practice of Psychology (APA, 1996) and Associate Editor of the Encyclopedia of Psychology (APA, 2000), serves on editorial boards and contributes scholarship to the psychology of religion, co-leads CE workshops on religious and spiritual issues in psychological treatment for APA, and actively supports the scholarship of others in the field.

It is an honor to be nominated to serve as president of our division. I am firmly committed to the task of fostering an appreciation for the psychology of religion within the wide scope of psychological practice, research, education and training. We are making significant strides in bringing attention to the significance of spiritual and religious involvement as a variable in psychology and I wish to contribute to that ongoing effort within our division and APA.

For the Office of Secretary

Joseph A. Erickson

Joseph A. Erickson is a member of the faculty of Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in 1990. Before this, he earned a master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul.

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Minnesota (1983) and a M.A. in Youth Ministry and Religion from Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota (1981). His research activities have been varied. Since 1983 he has been affiliated in one manner or another with Minneapolis-based Search Institute. In 1989 and again in 1993 he worked with Search President Peter L. Benson and former Search Institute research scientist Michael Donahue on articles focusing on adolescent religious development and the measurement of faith maturity. More recently he has been engaged in studying the effectiveness of service-learning in various cognitive and affective domains.

I have most recently served the division as Program Chair for Division 36 for the 1998 APA Convention in San Francisco. At that time I was struck by the enormous talent and energy of the members of this division. I believe this division is an "undervalued stock" in APA's portfolio, and I would hope to assist in some small way in making awareness of the activities of this division more well known among its members and the rest of APA. As secretary for Division 36, I would hope to continue my service to the members of this division and continue to learn from them.

P. Scott Richards

P. Scott Richards received his Ph.D. in counseling psychology in 1988 from the University of Minnesota. He has been a faculty member at Brigham Young University (BYU) since 1990 and is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education. Dr. Richards is co-author of A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy (published in 1997 by APA). He is also co-editor of the Handbook of Psychotherapy and Religious Diversity (published by APA in 2000). In 1999, he was awarded the William C. Bier Award from Division 36. Dr. Richards is a licensed psychologist and maintains a small private psychotherapy practice.

During the past few years, I believe that issues of religious sensitivity and diversity will become an important and influential part of mainstream psychology, psychotherapy, and graduate training. Division 36 and its members stand poised to provide leadership in this historic development. If elected, I will do my best to contribute to the continued success of Division 36 and its leadership role.

For the Office of Member-at-Large

Nancy Stiehler Thurston

Nancy Stiehler Thurston earned her B.A. in Religion at Hope College (1979). She received a doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Central Michigan University (1991). She recently joined the faculty of the Graduate School of Clinical Psychology at George Fox University as an associate professor. Prior to that, she served on the faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary Graduate School of Psychology for nine years. She is a licensed psychologist in California, where she has a private practice with a specialty of spiritual issues in therapy. She also conducted psychological assessments of candidates for ordained ministry. She is currently Secretary of Division 36. She also served for three years as Member at Large for Division 36, as well as serving our division for three years as Hospitality Suite Chair at the APA Conventions. She has made numerous publications and conference presentations in the interface of psychology and religion, including a chapter in Richard and Bergin's recent book, A Handbook of Psychotherapy and Religious Diversity. Her professional memberships have included the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Christian Association for Psychological Studies.

When I reflect on my professional development, I realize how formative it was for me to become involved early on in Division 36. Networking with other psychologists who have similar interests in the interface of psychology and spirituality has been both informative and encouraging for me. If elected, I will continue to serve our division in a way that will hopefully provide similar support and networking opportunities for our members (both current and prospective).
David M. Wulf

David M. Wulf earned a Ph.D. in personality psychology at the University of Michigan and is currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychology at Wharton College in Massachusetts. He is a Fellow of Division 36, from which he received the Bier Award in 1991. He has served the Division as Program Chair (1991–92), Member-at-Large (1991–96), and President (1997–98). He is a past Book Review Editor of the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion and is the author of Psychology of Religion: Classic and Contemporary (2nd ed., 1997), which has been translated into Swedish and Polish. He has also contributed chapters to a number of other books on the psychology of religion.

I would be pleased once again to represent on the Executive Committee—and thus to promote the Division as a vehicle—the scholarly study of religion from a psychological perspective. The phenomena we so easily sum up under the labels “religion” and “spirituality” are in fact diverse, complex, and ambiguous, foreclosing any simple formula or unequivocal advocacy. I would like to find ways to encourage Division 36 members to become more active in exploring and interpreting these phenomena in terms of diverse and interested psychological frameworks.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ULTIMATE CONCERNS: Motivation and Spirituality in Personality
Robert A. Emmons

Less than 20 minutes from where I live and work is a well-known gang infested area of South Central Los Angeles. Recent trends have more and more girls joining these gangs, not just as girlfriends, but as members and leaders, just as violent as the boys and men. Recently a television crew lent two such female gang members video cameras, and asked them to tape events in their daily lives. The results were, as expected, replete with graphic scenes of violence, crime and broken homes. Perhaps the most striking scene of all occurred when the girls were asked about their goals in life. Their blank facial expressions, as if asked a question in a language they didn’t understand, was disturbing. They reported having no goals or ultimate concerns. This bankruptcy of hope is shocking given the central role that motivations play in our lives.

The strivings we all share as humans, especially the spiritual and religious ones, have not been studied in much detail, for gangs or any other population. While this has been a long neglected area of study, the mainstream of psychological theory and research seems to be slowly musing toward inclusion of spirituality. Robert Emmons has presented an effective argument for the inclusion of such spiritual and religious factors in the motivational theory of personality in his new book, The Psychology of Ultimate Concerns. The book is a worthy attempt at giving psychologists a model for serious research on a topic that hasn’t been taken seriously enough.

The goal of the book is to “build a model of how motivation and spirituality might come together in the person and what the implications of this interaction might be for how personality relates to important life outcomes” (p 178). Emmons’ treatment of the empirical and clinical literature on religious strivings demystifies religion and spirituality, placing it squarely within the boundaries of acceptable, even laudable scientific examination. Building a motivational theory of personality without exploring the role of spiritual strivings is to hinder the theory from the start, according to Emmons, and is akin to committing academic malpractice. Life doesn’t make much sense with such concerns unexamined or removed, as the hopeless lives of gang members can attest.

In the first section of the book Emmons summarizes the literature on the links between well being and goals. He presents (Continued on page 4)
the "basics of a motivational approach to personality centered on personal goals, and explored the value of such an approach for understanding subjective well-being" (p.89). He includes in this section research on goal conflict, and has a very helpful section for those interested in making clinical applications. Though this section does present a good review of the literature, and appeals to my experimental leanings, those interested in more theoretical approaches may need to turn to the final chapter of the text first. Emmons' strength is in providing strong empirical evidence, much of it from his own lab, and a working conceptual framework that draws together the fields of personality and religion. Potentially tedious for the non-researcher, and short on theory for others, Emmons nonetheless seems to provide a good balance of theory and research.

In the last section of the book, Emmons describes the rationale and mandate for the scientific exploration of ultimate concerns. Here Emmons not only defines what constitutes spirituality and religion, but how personality psychologists can systematically examine these. For example, Emmons describes how spirituality is not some compartmentalized set of beliefs or practices, but is central in our search for ultimate meaning in life. He states that spirituality is "revealed though the ultimate concerns that center on the sacred" (p.157). The fully integrated life, according to Emmons, is one that unites such spiritual goal strivings into a coherent structure, the "sine qua non of effective functioning in life" (p.115). The definitional section is a quick overview of the field, and readers wanting more substantial overviews should consider other texts, like "Measures of Religiosity" by Hill and Hood (1990). Readers will be challenged, though, to consider the arguments presented for the value of exploring spiritual strivings using the existing conceptual and methodological approaches currently utilized in personality research. The last chapter is one of the most intriguing, as Emmons brings together much of the existing research into a theoretical framework that he calls "spiritual intelligence." Defining what constitutes this form of intelligence, and how it may bring together the fields of religion and personality, is worth the price of the book.

Conclusion

The Psychology of Ultimate Concerns is an excellent example of how we can increase the dialogue between the fields of the psychology of religion and other sub-disciplines, in this case personality psychology. Ignoring this dialogue will be the detriment of both fields. As Emmons concludes, "the biggest threat to understanding human personality is not the complexity of the subject matter (but) the failure to take seriously those phenomena which make us most human." (p.179).