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***News and Reflections - 4/25/2008***  
**Federation of Behavioral,  
Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences**  
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**This email newsletter is sent to scientists who are members of Federation societies, affiliates, plus interested governmental agency officials. Its goal is to inform researchers in the field about Federation activities, federal funding issues, and other relevant topics.**

**If you would like to learn about the Federation's foundation, i.e., Foundation for the Advancement of Behavioral & Brain Sciences, please visit <http://www.fabbs.org>.**

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## **SPENCE HONORED IN FABBS' PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTING IMPORTANT SCIENTISTS**

Janet T. Spence, PhD, the Alma Cowden Madden Centennial Professor, Emeritus, and the Ashbel Smith Professor, Emeritus (Retired), at the University of Texas, is the current scientist featured in the FABBS' program which honors outstanding individuals. Drs. Susan Fiske (Princeton University), Lucia Gilbert (Santa Clara University), Judy Langlois (University of Texas), and William Swann (University of Texas) nominated Spence for this honor and contacted colleagues and friends to contribute to this effort. Spence's work has focused on the interplay of motivational and individual differences in determining performance in both laboratory and real-life situations, and she is considered a major figure in American psychology. To learn more about her career and contributions, please visit [http://www.fabbs.org/spence\\_honor.html](http://www.fabbs.org/spence_honor.html). Also note the gallery of scientists who have previously been honored in this way. Congratulations to Janet Spence on this honor.

## **NIMH HOLDS ANNUAL "PROFESSIONAL COALITION ON RESEARCH PROGRESS" BRIEFING**

On April 18th NIMH hosted its now annual briefing for the Professional Coalition on Research Progress, of which the Federation is a member. This briefing was intended to promote a dialogue between the professional societies the work of whose members NIMH supports. At this year's briefing, four topics were on the agenda: a sneak preview NIMH strategic plan; a report on research on Public-health and Disasters, War and Trauma; an update on NIMH's intramural research on autism; and a report on new opportunities for early detection of and intervention related to schizophrenia.

NIMH director Tom Insel reported on the development of a strategic plan for NIMH which will be made public in the next few months. While he was not free to reveal exactly what would be in the plan, he did present the general thrust of the plan. At the most general level he discussed disruptive innovations in mental health that are shaping the way we think about mental disorders. He mentioned four fundamental changes in our thinking: 1) mental disorders are brain disorders; 2) mental disorders are developmental disorders; 3) mental disorders result from complex genetic risk plus experiential factors; and 4) current treatments may be necessary but are not sufficient for recovery. He went on to elaborate on these points and gave examples of how they have changed the kind of research that is being done, using research on depression

and schizophrenia as examples.

In the discussion, several members from the associations noted that the thrust of Dr. Insel's remarks indicated a shift away from a more purely biological explanation of mental disorders and a move toward the effects of experience and the environment in the development of mental disorders, that is, more emphasis on behavioral factors and less on brain and genetic factors. Dr. Insel agreed with this interpretation and noted a renewed emphasis on non-pharmaceutical interventions in treatment. In particular, cognitive-behavioral therapies were mentioned several times as proven effective treatment methods and in many instances more effective than drug therapies.

Dr. Robert Ursano, Director of the Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, gave an overview of research on stress in the aftermath of traumatic events such as being a victim of violent acts, natural disasters and combat. He stressed PTSD as a public health problem that was much more common than is generally believed and called for increased research and training for first responders and others involved with those who have suffered from traumatic experiences.

Dr. Susan Swedo, Chief of the Pediatric and Developmental Neuropsychiatry branch, spoke about the NIMH intramural program of research in autism. This program is just getting underway and involves the study of autistic children who are being treated in NIMH facilities. The program studies sudden onset of autism and concentrates on new ways to predict autism as early as a child's first birthday. While there is some promising research in identifying the underlying genes involved, we are still a long way from understanding the causes of autism or developing effective interventions to prevent or ameliorate the disease.

Dr. Robert Heinssen, Jr., the Acting Deputy Director, Division of Services and Intervention Research, reported on research that has led to the development of promising methods of early detection of schizophrenia before the onset of full-blown psychoses. Early detection offers the opportunity for interventions that appear to be effective in preventing or ameliorating later stages of more deteriorated functioning. In early interventions, therapies such as CBT appear to be more effective and drug therapies that are effective after psychoses have developed.

## **JOINT CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE IN NATIONAL SECURITY**

A Joint Hearing of the U.S. House Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities and the U.S. House Subcommittee on Research and Science Education was held on April 24, 2008, to highlight "The Role of Social and Behavioral Sciences in National Security."

Subcommittee Chairmen Reps. Adam Smith and Brian Baird, as well as Subcommittee members, heard witness testimony from Colonel Martin Schweitzer, USA Commander, 4th Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg; Dr. André van Tilborg, Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense (Science and Technology), Department of Defense; Dr. Mark Weiss, Director, Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Science, NSF; and Dr. David R. Segal, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Research on Military Organization, University of Maryland.

The understanding of the "human terrain" in conflicts was a common theme throughout the hearing, with testimony emphasizing how behavioral and social science research can save (and is saving!) U.S., coalition, and civilian lives. A lot of time and interest was shown to a pilot program named Human Terrain Teams (HTT). Currently, this program includes 8 teams (6 in Iraq and 2 in Afghanistan) of 5-8 people. HTT are built around individuals from the social and behavioral science community and are tasked with gathering information about the individual and social aspects of the "human terrain" and turning these findings into usable information for military commanders. It was noted the success of HTT depends on a basis of trust and cannot be held to a "Western watch." The takeaway heard by Subcommittee members was that ideally there would be many more HTT units in conflict situations around the globe (and possibly with other agencies: CIA, State Department, etc.). COL Schweitzer made clear the "center of gravity"

in warfare is shifting and the understanding of people and their relationships with others (including a new government) is invaluable and life-saving.

Dr. Weiss showcased current NSF research that may be useful to the DoD and said that at least 10-15% of NSF research is of clear and appropriate relevance to the military. Subcommittee members posed questions to the witnesses as to the appropriateness of linking NSF with the mission-driven DoD in order to better apply basic science findings. Dr. Weiss noted that research proposals at NSF are reviewed on scientific merit, but also call for the impact of the research to be clearly stated in titles and abstracts.

The reoccurring question of the legitimacy and rigor of behavioral and social science was posed to the witnesses. Chairman Smith chimed in with an appropriate response stating behavioral and social sciences deal with percentages and up the odds of success, adding, "behavioral sciences are so important."

As always, Chairman Baird was supportive of behavioral sciences and the important role they can play in U.S. defense. He ended the hearing by giving the example of GPS which offers geographical terrain information and adding that the "human terrain" is equally important.

More information about this hearing can be found at:

[http://www.science.house.gov/publications/hearings/markups\\_details.aspx?NewsID=2161](http://www.science.house.gov/publications/hearings/markups_details.aspx?NewsID=2161)

A press release of the hearing is here: <http://science.house.gov/press/PRArticle.aspx?NewsID=2168>

## **DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CALLS FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH ACADEMIA**

DoD Secretary Gates made a remarkable speech to the American Association of Universities on April 14th in which he called for improved relations between the Defense Department and academia. He noted the often strained relations between university researchers and DoD and said that the fault lay to a considerable extent on DoD's side. He mentioned a dialogue with AAU which he hoped would lead to the establishment of what he called the Minerva consortium of research universities that would be supported by DoD research funds. He stressed that the research would be independent and published in the open literature. He also singled out the importance of the social sciences helping DoD understand different cultures and the importance of improving language instruction.

His speech can be found at <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1228>

## **NIH ANNOUNCES NEW ROADMAP PILOT: THE SCIENCE OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE**

NIH has instituted a Roadmap Pilot to highlight the importance and impact of behavioral sciences to the health community. During the course of this pilot, project leaders will host trans-NIH conferences and reach out to the National Academy of Sciences and Institute of Medicine in order to determine current and future trends in behavioral sciences. The results of this Roadmap Pilot will be used to identify larger Roadmap initiatives where the science of behavior change will have the most impact.

RFAs for this pilot will be released this fall. We will continue to update you as this pilot progresses.

A complete overview can be found at: <http://nihroadmap.nih.gov/behaviorchange>

## **REPORTS & GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **NATIONAL INSTITUTES HEALTH**

Brain Study May Lead to Improved Epilepsy Treatments

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/apr2008/niehs-14.htm>

Development of PET and SPECT Ligands for Brain Imaging (SBIR [R43/R44]) (PA-08-137)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-08-137.html>

Human Brain Appears "Hard-Wired" For Hierarchy

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/apr2008/nimh-23.htm>

Network(s) for Developing PTSD Risk Assessment Tools (R21) (RFA-MH-09-060)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-MH-09-060.html>

Newly Awarded Autism Centers of Excellence to Further Autism Research

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/apr2008/nimh-01.htm>

NIDA Researchers Identify Genetic Variant Linked to Nicotine Addiction and Lung Cancer

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/apr2008/nida-02.htm>

NIMH Administrative Supplements to Extend Neurobiological and Behavioral Methods, Approaches and Findings to Studies in Late Postnatal Development (NOT-MH-08-009)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-MH-08-009.html>

Pediatricians Alerted to the Developmental Nature of Underage Drinking In Special Journal Supplement

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/apr2008/niaaa-07.htm>

Rates of Rare Mutations Soar Three to Four Times Higher in Schizophrenia: Multiple Genetic Glitches Disrupt Pathways Critical for Brain Development

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/science-news/2008/rates-of-rare-mutations-soar-three-to-four-times-higher-in-schizophrenia.shtml>

Scientists Find Genetic Factor In Stress Response Variability

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/apr2008/niaaa-02a.htm>

Scientists Link Chromatin Changes With Alcohol Withdrawal Anxiety

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/apr2008/niaaa-02.htm>

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## **FEDERATION SOCIETIES' UPCOMING ANNUAL MEETINGS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2008**

### ***MAY***

#### **ASSOCIATION FOR APPLIED PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGY AND BIOFEEDBACK**

Daytona Beach, FL: May 15 - 18

[www.aapb.org](http://www.aapb.org)

#### **ASSOCIATION FOR BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS INTERNATIONAL**

Chicago, IL: May 23 - 27

[www.abainternational.org](http://www.abainternational.org)

### ***JUNE***

#### **INTERNATIONAL BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE SOCIETY**

St. Thomas, VI: June 17 - 22

[www.ibnshomepage.org](http://www.ibnshomepage.org)

#### **BEHAVIOR GENETICS ASSOCIATION**

Louisville, KY: June 25 - 28  
[www.bga.org](http://www.bga.org)

***JULY***

**COGNITIVE SCIENCE SOCIETY**  
Washington, DC: July 23 - 26  
[www.cognitivesciencesociety.org](http://www.cognitivesciencesociety.org)

**SOCIETY FOR BEHAVIORAL NEUROENDOCRINOLOGY**  
Groningen, Netherlands: July 7 - 10  
[www.sbn.org](http://www.sbn.org)

**SOCIETY FOR MATHEMATICAL PSYCHOLOGY**  
Washington, DC: July 26 - 29  
[www.cogs.indiana.edu/socmathpsych](http://www.cogs.indiana.edu/socmathpsych)

***AUGUST***

**AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**  
Boston, MA: August 14 - 17  
[www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

***SEPTEMBER***

**HUMAN FACTORS AND ERGONOMICS SOCIETY**  
New York, NY: September 22 - 26  
[www.hfes.org](http://www.hfes.org)

**SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN PSYCHOPATHOLOGY**  
Pittsburgh, PA: September 25 - 28  
[www.psychopathology.org](http://www.psychopathology.org)

***OCTOBER***

**SOCIETY FOR PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGICAL RESEARCH**  
Austin, TX: October 1 - 5  
[www.sprweb.org](http://www.sprweb.org)

**NATIONAL ACADEMY OF NEUROPSYCHOLOGY**  
New York, NY: October 22 - 25  
[www.nanonline.org](http://www.nanonline.org)

**SOCIETY FOR EXPERIMENTAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**  
Sacramento, CA: October 24 - 25  
[www.sesp.org](http://www.sesp.org)

***NOVEMBER***

**INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOBIOLOGY**  
Washington, DC: November 12 - 15  
[www.isdp.org](http://www.isdp.org)

**PSYCHONOMIC SOCIETY**  
Chicago, IL: November 13 - 16  
[www.psychonomic.org](http://www.psychonomic.org)

**SOCIETY FOR JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING**  
Chicago, IL: November 22 - 24  
[www.sjdm.org](http://www.sjdm.org)

**SOCIETY FOR COMPUTERS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

Chicago, IL: November 13

<http://home.scip.ws>

**TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON...**

**MASSACHUSETTS NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

TBA

[www.massneuropsychology.org](http://www.massneuropsychology.org)

**SOCIETY OF MULTIVARIATE EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

TBA

[www.smep.org](http://www.smep.org)

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**PLEASE SUPPORT THE BEHAVIORAL & BRAIN SCIENCES**

The Foundation for the Advancement of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS) is an educational, non-profit organization established to promote and enhance understanding of the behavioral, psychological, cognitive, and brain sciences. Created to take over a substantial part of the educational mission of the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences on behalf of its constituent sciences, FABBS focuses its efforts in three directions. One is to educate the public about the contributions of these important fields to the well-being of individuals and society. A second is to educate Congressional staff and others in the Federal Government about our sciences (as distinct from lobbying them, which is the sole purview of the Federation). The third is to facilitate productive dialogue between scientists and relevant stakeholders in the public and private sector on topics at the intersection of science and public policy, such as human subject protections and new but risky scientific directions. We urge you to respond generously as the future health of our scientific enterprise is at stake. The President of FABBS is Susan Fiske (Princeton University).

Please visit: <http://www.fabbs.org>

**NOTE: The current featured scientist on the FABBS site is Dr. Janet T. Spence. To learn more about her, visit: [http://www.fabbs.org/spence\\_honor.html](http://www.fabbs.org/spence_honor.html)**

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**Norman M. Bradburn, PhD**

*Interim Executive Director*

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