

**ALSO INSIDE:**

- A review of mandated disclosures
- How state budget cuts affect psychologists
- Special section: A look at the many forms of interpersonal violence

*The Pennsylvania*  
**Psychologist**

Vol. 77, No. 3

MARCH 2017 • QUARTERLY

**Striving to Overcome  
Interpersonal Violence**



**June 14–17, 2017**

Omni Bedford Springs Resort  
Bedford, PA

## Pennsylvania Psychological Association

5925 Stevenson Avenue, Suite H  
Harrisburg, PA 17112  
717-232-3817  
[papsy.org](http://papsy.org)

### PPA OFFICERS

**President:** David A. Rogers, PhD  
**President-Elect:** David L. Zehrung, PhD  
**Past President:** Beatrice R. Salter, PhD  
**Treasurer:** Bradley C. Norford, PhD  
**Secretary:** Jeanne Slattery, PhD

### APA REPRESENTATIVES

Linda K. Knauss, PhD  
Dianne S. Salter, PhD, Esq.

### BOARD CHAIRS

**Communications:** Mark R. McGowan, PhD  
**Internal Affairs:** Marie C. McGrath, PhD  
**Professional Psychology:** Nicole P. Quinlan, PhD  
**Program & Education:** Dea Silbertrust, PhD, JD  
**Public Interest:** Tim Barksdale, PsyD  
**School Psychology:** Susan Edgar Smith, PhD  
**PPAGS Chair:** Amanda L. Sellers

### STAFF

**Executive Director:** Krista Paternostro Bower, MPA, CAE  
**Director of Professional Affairs:** Samuel Knapp, EdD  
**Director of Legal & Regulatory Affairs:**  
Rachael L. Baturin, MPH, JD  
**Director of Government Affairs:** Justin C. Fleming  
**Prof. Development Specialist:** Judy D. Smith, CMP-HC  
**Director of Administration:** Iva Brimmer  
**Member Services Coordinator:** Erin Brady

### PENNSYLVANIA PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Pauline Wallin, PhD  
**Secretary-Treasurer:** Williametta S. Bakasa, PhD  
Joseph Black, PhD  
David A. Rogers, PhD  
Beatrice R. Salter, PhD  
Dianne S. Salter, PhD, Esq.  
Jeanne M. Slattery, PhD  
David Zehrung, PhD  
Krista Paternostro Bower, MPA, CAE, Ex Officio

*The Pennsylvania Psychologist* is the official bulletin of the Pennsylvania Psychological Association and the Pennsylvania Psychological Foundation. PPA dues include member subscriptions. Articles in the *Pennsylvania Psychologist* represent the opinions of the individual writers and do not necessarily represent the opinion or consensus of opinion of the governance or members or staff of PPA or PPF.

*The Pennsylvania Psychologist* Quarterly is published in March, June, September, and December. The copy deadline is the eighth of the second month preceding publication. Copy should be sent to the PPA Executive Office at Pennsylvania Psychological Association, 5925 Stevenson Avenue, Suite H, Harrisburg, PA 17112.

**Copy Editor:** Karen Chernyaev  
**Graphic Design:** LiloGrafik, Harrisburg

Vol. 77, No. 3

# The Pennsylvania Psychologist

Editor: Tracie Pasold, PhD

March 2017 • QUARTERLY

## REGULAR FEATURES

- [2](#) Presidential Perspective
- [3](#) Executive Director's Report
- [5](#) Legal Column
- [8](#) Happenings on the Hill
- [9](#) The Bill Box
- [44](#) CE Questions for This Issue

## SPECIAL SECTION—PPA2017

- [12](#) Welcome to PPA2017
- [13](#) What to Look For
- [14](#) Keynote Speaker
- [15](#) Psychology in Pennsylvania Luncheon Speaker
- [16](#) Continuing Education Credits
- [17](#) Convention Schedule At a Glance
- [18](#) Highlights
- [20](#) Workshops
- [24](#) Registration Rates
- [25](#) Registration Information
- [26](#) Accommodations

## SPECIAL SECTION—THE MANY FORMS OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

- [28](#) Act 105: Protecting Victims of Human Trafficking
- [29](#) Police Brutality, Privilege, Betrayal Trauma, and Justice for Healing
- [31](#) Title IX and College Campuses
- [32](#) Interpersonal Violence in a Clinical Setting:  
The Experience and Impact of Client Stalking Behaviors
- [34](#) Reflections on Bullying

## SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY SECTION

- [36](#) School Violence: Learning From Our Past and Shaping Our Future
- [38](#) Bullying and Cyberbullying: Perspectives for Educators

## ETHICS IN ACTION

- [40](#) Title IX: Legal Requirements and Ethical Obligations

## ALSO INSIDE

- [10](#) Check Out PPA's Exciting Upcoming Events
- [41](#) Classifieds
- [42](#) Welcome New Members!



# Police Brutality, Privilege, Betrayal Trauma, and Justice for Healing

Eleonora Bartoli, PhD, and Sneha A. McClincey, PsyD

Public incidents of police brutality toward African Americans continue to shock the United States. The media and justice system have portrayed most of these murders as isolated occurrences, regrettable consequences of police personnel having to make split-second decisions about who poses a threat. This narrative has perpetuated a denial of the targeted nature of police brutality, which is apparent when these events are examined in light of the history of oppression faced by individuals of African descent in the United States. Moreover, the consistent lack of indictment of the officers perpetrating the abuse speaks to the societal support of the institutional structures that have enabled these long-standing injustices to continue and have far-reaching effects on the physical and mental health of our fellow citizens. One explanation of the excess use of police force toward African Americans has been implicit bias, or a mental attitude toward a person or group held at an unconscious level (Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, & Hodson, 2002). In this case, the implicit bias is that African American men and youths are dangerous. In the United States, this idea dates back to slavery and has been reinforced by public discourse and the justice system over the centuries.<sup>1</sup> Despite the overwhelming available data about implicit bias and pervasive discrimination toward African Americans, much is left to be done to safeguard the lives of African American men and youths.

As mental health professionals, we are often taught to shy away from the political and consider such matters to be outside of our purview, yet issues of power and privilege are deeply relevant to our clinical work. Ignoring political forces in our work with clients only makes sense from the vantage point of privilege. In the absence of privilege, the



Dr. Eleonora Bartoli



Dr. Sneha A. McClincey

“personal” is very much “political”;<sup>2</sup> in fact, mental distress and trauma are two documented potential outcomes of marginalization (Carter, 2007; Brown, 2009; Kubiak, 2005; Root, 1992). Therefore, anyone interested in mental health cannot but enter sociopolitical conversations.

Developments in our psychological understanding of trauma have been useful in expanding the clinical conversation from an intrapsychic to a sociopolitical one. Traditionally, the hallmark of traumatic reactions has been considered *fear*—a core feature of PTSD (DePrince & Freyd, 2002). More recently, betrayal has been recognized as another core feature of trauma (originally theorized in the context of childhood abuse; Freyd, 1997). Freyd (1997) developed the concept of *betrayal* trauma (and later institutional [Smith & Freyd, 2014] and judicial betrayal [Smith, Gómez, & Freyd, 2014]) to highlight the imbalance of power implicated in traumatic interactions with individuals (e.g., caregivers) or institutions (e.g., the justice system) that are meant to have a protective function but end up perpetrating abuse or injustices instead. As Smith, Gómez, and Freyd (2014) argue, we have evolved to be dependent not just on other human beings but on social contracts (p. 454). With dependency comes vulnerability. Institutional or judicial betrayals are similar to interpersonal betrayals, especially for groups who may already be disenfranchised and have less power (i.e., marginalized groups; Smith & Freyd, 2014). This framework effectively

broadens the conversation from focusing on individual characteristics to a traumatizing environment; while “fear” places the pathology within the individual, “betrayal” places the pathology in the sociopolitical factors that allow for the abuse of power to exist and persist.

The concept of betrayal trauma illuminates how police brutality impacts not only the families and communities directly affected by those actions but more widely those who identify with the victims (e.g., Galovski et al., 2016). Institutional and/or judicial betrayals can elicit traumatic reactions in anyone who is reminded of his or her unprotected

---

*As mental health professionals, we are often taught to shy away from the political and consider such matters to be outside of our purview, yet issues of power and privilege are deeply relevant to our clinical work.*

---

status by implication. Thus, an entire segment of our population not only lives with a higher risk for experiencing societally sanctioned violence but also decreased protection from the very institutions designed to maintain their safety. It is at this very juncture that we as clinicians can make a difference.

## Justice for Healing

Psychologists can have a profoundly positive impact on individuals and communities impacted by institutional betrayal (such as police brutality). First, trauma thrives in silence and is intensified by social isolation and ostracism. Second, acts of omission add insult to injury, while public recognition of wrongdoing and apologies by relevant parties are healing

<sup>1</sup>For example, John Dilulio and James Fox promoted the concept of “superpredators” to describe African American children (Stevenson, 2014).

<sup>2</sup>Carol Hanisch coined the phrase “The personal is political” in 1969 to denote that what might appear as individual personal problems are in fact artifacts of political injustices.

Continued on page 30

## POLICE BRUTALITY

*Continued from page 29*

(Smith, Gómez, & Freyd, 2014). Finally, two key factors compound the negative impact of institutional betrayal (Smith & Freyd, 2014): seeing each event out of context (i.e., as an isolated incident) and maintaining a lack of awareness about the potential for injustice embedded in a given context (e.g., the idea that racism doesn't exist).

Psychologists can address these challenges by aligning their response with the three stages of trauma treatment (Herman, 1992): safety/trust building, remembrance and mourning, and reconnection. Safety can be promoted through transparency (Smith & Freyd, 2014) requiring an ongoing investigation of how we (as individuals or organizations) enact biases in our behavior and/or policies. Once such biases are identified and spoken, we can develop relationships and systems that are safer (rather than further traumatizing) for our colleagues and clients. Safety can also be demonstrated through public statements informed by research and knowledge about implicit bias, multicultural principles, and trauma. All of these interventions are powerful markers of solidarity and alliance building.

Remembrance and mourning is promoted by welcoming and fostering conversations that validate individuals and groups negatively impacted by institutional betrayal. Individuals who belong to groups who have suffered a history of oppression may further experience "betrayal . . . in the form of disbelief, minimizing, or otherwise devaluing the individual experience" (DePrince & Freyd, 2002, p. 77; Root, 1992). For those of us whose identities lie in mainstream groups, we have an especially powerful opportunity to recognize our role in contributing to, condoning, or perpetrating abuse, thus further validating the experience of our colleagues and clients. Finally, reconnection (vs. isolation) is enabled by experiencing solidarity; healing requires an openly antiracist stance that is *explicitly* and *outspokenly* promoted both within professional organizations and in our work with clients (Bryant-Davis, 2007).

The theory behind institutional betrayal (and betrayal trauma in general) is also helpful in understanding why it

*Speaking up requires an immense amount of courage and integrity to acknowledge the potential for threat and abuse in our institutional structures.*

is so difficult to speak up against police abuse. Speaking up implies "calling out" the very institutions from which we seek protection. Validating the experience of our clients implies a willingness to question the assumed "goodness" of an institution, whether it is the police force, the justice system, or our very own psychological theories/organizations/ interventions. Denial that institutions on which we depend have flaws tends to drive the conclusion made by public discourse (e.g., the officers were doing their job, the victim must have deserved it), and precludes the assessment of alternative hypotheses (e.g., implicit bias leads to incompetent actions; the established policies and procedures are inadequate or misguided; first responders themselves may suffer and act on the basis of their own traumas). Speaking up requires an immense amount of courage and integrity to acknowledge the potential for threat and abuse in our institutional structures.

Another fundamental step in being able to validate those who have experienced institutional betrayal is the understanding that individuals from marginalized and mainstream groups live in *different* worlds, with often *radically* different experiences of reality. Individuals from mainstream groups must open their hearts and minds to the experience of people in marginalized groups realizing they themselves often do not experience these directly. In the very history of our profession, the validity of traumatic experiences has been vehemently denied for decades and victims silenced by incredulity, whether they were male war veterans, female survivors of intimate partner violence, or children being subject to sexual abuse (Herman, 1992). It is imperative then that we acknowledge the cruelty and respond in a manner that is therapeutic.

As psychologists, our potential for reparation by speaking up,

acknowledging, naming, and validating, is profound. We can become the community that offers safety, opportunity for remembrance, and a space to experience reconnection. May we stand firmly in solidarity with each other realizing that "as with all interpersonal traumas, individual recovery is not sufficient; collective acknowledgment, justice, and prevention are critical" (Bryant-Davis, 2007, p. 142). ▮

## References

- Brown, L. (2009). Cultural competence. In C.A. Courtois & J.D. Ford (Eds.) *Treating complex traumatic stress disorder: Scientific foundations and therapeutic models* (pp. 166–182). New York, New York: Guilford Press.
- Bryant-Davis, T. (2007). Healing requires recognition: The case for race-based traumatic stress. *The Counseling Psychologist, 35*(1), 135–143.
- Carter, R. T. (2007). Racism and psychological and emotional injury: Recognizing and assessing raced-based traumatic stress. *The Counseling Psychologist, 35*(1), 13–105.
- DePrince, A. P., & Freyd, J. J. (2002). The harm of trauma: Pathological fear, shattered assumptions, or betrayal? In J. Kauffman (Ed.) *Loss of assumptive world: A theory of traumatic loss* (pp. 71–82). New York, New York: Brunner-Routledge.
- Dovidio, J., Gaertner, S., Kawakami, K., & Hodson, G. (2002). Why can't we just get along? Interpersonal biases and interracial distrust. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 8*, 88–102.
- Freyd, J. J. (1997). Violations of power, adaptive blindness, and betrayal trauma theory. *Feminism & Psychology, 7*(1), 22–32.
- Galovski, T. E., Peterson, Z. D., Beagley, M. C., Strasshofer, D. R., Held, P., & Fletcher, T. D. (2016). Exposure to violence during Ferguson protests: Mental health effects for law enforcement and community members. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 29*, 283–292.
- Herman, J. (1992). *Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence—from domestic abuse to political terror*. New York, New York: Basic Books.
- Kubiak, S. P. (2005). Trauma and cumulative adversity in women of a disadvantaged social location. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 75*(4), 451–465.
- Root, M. P. P. (1992). Reconstructing the impact of trauma on personality. In L. Brown and M. Ballou (Eds.), *Personality and psychopathology: Feminist reappraisal* (pp. 229–265). New York, New York: Guilford Press.
- Smith, C. P., & Freyd, J. J. (2014). Institutional betrayal. *American Psychologist, 69*(6), 575–587.
- Smith, C. P., Gómez, J. M., & Freyd, J. J. (2014). The psychology of judicial betrayal. *Roger Williams University Law Review, 19*(2), 451–475.
- Stevenson, B. (2014, December 9). Race, poverty, and change in America: The persistent dilemmas of equity and equality symposium, keynote speaker [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSNdOyra7IU>