

# Police & Public Safety Psychology (PPSP)

2018

# Definition of Police & Public Safety Psychology

- Bartol & Bartol (2004)
  - Police psychology is "...application of psychological principles and clinical skills to law enforcement and public safety."

# Brief History of Police & Public Safety Psychology

- Origins of the field
  - Psychology and Police Selection
    - 1916 Louis Terman
      - Measured IQ in police officers
    - 1922 Louis Thurstone
      - Stressed importance of intelligence as hiring criterion for police officers

# Brief History of PPSP, con't

- Evolving recognition of importance of police selection
  - Need to screen out inappropriate candidates
  - Need to select most appropriate candidates
- 1968 President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice
  - Recommended use of psychological tests in selection of police

# Brief History of PPSP, con't

- Police psychology began to expand into other areas in the 1960s
  - Recognition of stresses related to police work and need for mental health services for officers
  - Recognition of need for training for officers in psychological principles related to their work
- 1972 Martin Reiser published
  - "The Police Department Psychologist"

# PPSP Today

- 2007: Defining the Field of Police Psychology
  - Aumiller, Corey, Allen, Brewster, Cuttler, Gupton, & Honig
- 4 Domains of Psychological Services to Law Enforcement
  - Assessment
  - Intervention
  - Operational
  - Consulting

# PPSP Today, cont.

- The Assessment Domain: Examples of the proficiencies
  - Preemployment psychological evaluations of job candidates
  - Psychological fitness-for-duty evaluations of job incumbents
  - Evaluations for high-risk assignments
  - Test development

# PPSP Today, cont.

- The Intervention Domain: Examples of the proficiencies
  - Employee assistance counseling
  - Individual, group, couple, and family therapy or counseling
  - Critical incident intervention
  - Wellness programs/life coaching
  - Mental attitude preparation



# PPSP Today, con't

- The Operational Domain: Examples of the proficiencies
  - Criminal profiling
  - Psychological autopsy
  - Crisis and hostage negotiation
  - Threat assessment
  - Counterterrorism and counterintelligence

# PPSP Today, con't

- The Consulting Domain: Examples of the proficiencies
  - Organizational development
  - Executive, management, and supervisor consultation
  - Mediation
  - Development of performance appraisal systems

# Recent Milestones in PPSP

- 2011 American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) recognized PPSP as a specialty
  - Board certification in PPSP now possible
- 2013 American Psychological Association recognized PPSP as a specialty

# Training in PPSP

- Becoming a Police & Public Safety psychologist requires advanced education and training
  - Ph.D. or Psy.D. in Clinical or Counseling Psychology (licensure typically required)
  - Specialized coursework/continuing education in PPSP
  - Experience working with police

# Training in PPSP, cont.

- Education and Training Guidelines for the Specialty of Police and Public Safety Psychology
- Brewster, Stoloff, Corey, Greene, Gupton, & Roland, 2016
- Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 10(3), 171-178

# Careers in PPSP

- Employment Opportunities
  - Research (colleges, universities, government, private agencies)
  - In-house psychologist at a law enforcement agency
  - Independent consultant to a law enforcement agency (most common)

# Professional Organizations

- American Psychological Association  
Division 18: Police & Public Safety Section
  - <http://www.apadivisions.org/division-18/sections/police/index.aspx>
- Society for Police & Criminal Psychology (SPCP)
  - <https://policepsychology.org>
- International Association of Chiefs of Police-Police Psychological Services Section (IACP-PPSS)
  - [http://www.theiacp.org/psych\\_services\\_section/](http://www.theiacp.org/psych_services_section/)

# Further Information on PPSP

- Professional Journals
  - Psychological Services (Division 18)
  - Journal of Police & Criminal Psychology (Society for Police & Criminal Psychology)



# Current Issues in PPSP

- In process of developing PPSP-specific doctoral training programs & internships