



CSOR

*Though I have fallen,
I will rise. - Micah 7:8*

25th Edition

December 2019

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CSOR Newsletter
P.O. Box 27051 Denver, CO 80227
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New Findings Officially Shared at the ATSA Conference

Susan Walker



Tami Floyd and I arrived back in Denver the evening of November 9th from attendance at the ATSA Conference (Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers). A highlight of our trip on the fun side was to go to dinner the last evening at the Juke Joint in Atlanta, Georgia. We had great southern food, and a wonderful band and singer! There were eight of us either at the Conference or working in Georgia on registry issues that got together to eat that evening (enjoy the post dinner picture of our little group – Tami and I are center front)! Others in the picture are people who also belong to NARSOL (National Assn. for Rational Sex Offense Laws).

The opening plenary presentation was by Dr. Theresa Gannon of Kent University in the U.K. I had corresponded with Dr. Gannon about a year ago regarding her meta-analysis after finding out that she had significant findings in terms of what makes treatment successful and what does not. She sent me her unpublished findings at that time which I believe I shared with all of you before the actual publication. Following are the main points of her now published study.

The main question for the study was: What program variables are important in the treatment of people who have sexually offended? Here are the findings.

1. Modality – Group versus combined group and individual = Better
2. Supervision – Frequent staff supervision and direct interaction from a trained and educated Psychologist = Better
3. Arousal Conditioning present = Better
4. Polygraph – not utilized = Better (Belief and rationale are that the group treatment bond between the clients and the therapist is better and more trusted without the polygraph than with it).

Based on these findings, Colorado has a lot of re-thinking to do regarding the millions of dollars that have been spent on and in many cases, exacted directly from our men and women, to pay for services that they would do better without!

It is true that the State of Colorado, heavily beleaguered already by the costs of some of our archaic criminal justice approaches, continues to pay for part of treatment and polygraph costs, at least in the Denver area. However, I do not hear the same from men in the Colorado Springs parole and treatment environs.

The question is, will the Colorado Sex Offender Management Board, currently heavily endorsed by, albeit not necessarily totally agreed with by the Colorado Legislature, be willing to see its approaches to treatment and supervision more clearly aligned with Dr. Gannon's meta-analysis findings?

The polygraph industry is not going to be happy about this finding now in publication, and in some cases, polygraph examiners are getting into additional fields such as electronic monitoring of computers and phones in order to somewhat minimize the effects of the possibility that polygraphs will not continue to be utilized at the present speed of dizzy! It was great to learn that RSA's treatment program stopped utilizing the plethysmograph with the invention and use of The Look! These inhumane practices involving the polygraph and the plethysmograph should go away sooner rather than later. However, the Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) seems to be able to get away year after year with letting their "researcher" declare this level of research invalid and being allowed to wallow on in untruths regarding the efficacy of some of its "tools".

Things that are Hard but Make Me Happy and Give Me Hope!

Susan Walker

Besides hearing great stories through your letters and occasional phone calls regarding the progress many of you have made or are making in treatment and moving through your prison sentences, it is great to have reminders from the community here in Colorado that we are doing work that is important and appreciated by many around us. I wanted to share just a few examples of how the work that CSOR has done and is doing is recognized and appreciated, not in fluffy and showy ways, but quietly in requests for help with difficult situations, as well as through statements of recognition that we have been able, through our outreach and advocacy efforts, to help others providing services to do an even better job of accomplishing their mission(s)! Here are a few examples!

1. Recently we received an e-mail stating that our work at CSOR was helping a much bigger organization with many more monetary resources than ours, serve men and women registrants through the provision of housing, case management and sometimes monetary resources as well. They were asked to present as part of a panel at a federal permanent housing conference on Housing Barriers and Housing Plans and how communities across the U.S. are successfully housing individuals with various backgrounds (such as ours) in competitive housing markets.

The e-mail stated that this organization and the people who had attended our CSOR Meetings believed that their work as a much bigger organization had been enhanced by their association with CSOR, and that they would "love to speak briefly about the work CSOR is doing in the community and how seeking out groups like ours does help them locate landlords and other community supports, and further helps them obtain and maintain housing for their community members!"

Inconclusive: The Truth About Polygraphs

The American Polygraph Association, which sets standards for testing, says that polygraphs are "highly accurate," citing an accuracy rate above 90 percent when done properly. Critics, however, say the tests are correct only 70 percent of the time.

Professionals acknowledge that sometimes they are not after polygraph results as much as a person's reaction to the idea of taking the test. You can tell a lot by when you talk to someone and tell them, 'We'd like you to take a polygraph', Or, 'Here's a way to make us believe that you're telling us the truth — take a polygraph.' You can tell a lot from a person's reaction."

It's not a question of whether it works. It's a question of why we want it to work. Why are we so excited about the idea of hooking people up to a machine and seeing if they are telling the truth?

The premise is that people behave differently, and predictably, when they lie. But that's not necessarily the case. The polygraph measures autonomic responses, "and that is all it is measuring," Littlefield said. "Everything else is interpretation. If you want to look at a record and say, the blood pressure increases when asked this question, that could be for multiple reasons. There are a lot of reasons why your levels and physiology go up and down." Those include hypoglycemia, fear, confusion, PTSD, nervousness, alcohol withdrawal, psychosis and general anxiety. Tellingly, in her own experiment, Littlefield found that a person's body can trigger similar test results when undergoing "stressful truth telling" as well as when lying.

In some contexts, whether the tests work is beside the point, as they are often used simply to scare suspects into confessing to crimes or to drive away job applicants with secrets.

In the Dark - Inconclusive: The truth about lie detector tests

September 20, 2016 | by Jennifer Vogel and Madeleine Baran

As requested, we are preparing a short number of statements that they will be able to share while they are on this panel!

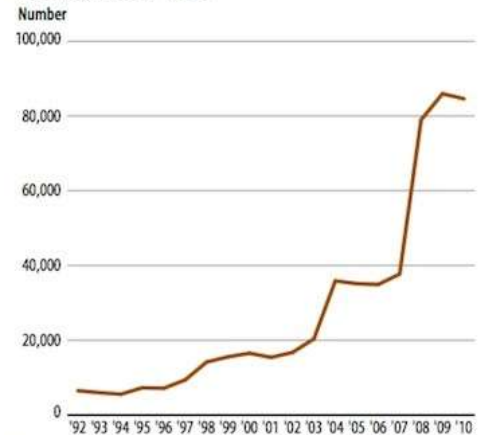
2. Today I received an e-mail from a deputy at a Denver detention facility asking for our help with a man who, upon committing a sexual offense, had his green card taken away. He is from a country where there is much persecution, and since his offense has been homeless and frequently beat up by others on the street. This is one of those impossible sounding requests for help that I get on a fairly regular basis. Because he has no green card, he cannot get an I.D. and many other things that he needs. He is afraid to go for medical assistance at a local clinic for fear of being beaten up. I hope that we can find an answer in this situation.

What is exciting about this besides trying to help resolve this difficult situation, is that a deputy from the jail knew about us, and reached out via e-mail to see if we could help with some resolution before he once again ended up on the streets of Denver post jail stay which is next week!

3. Another man reached out to us today. He had received an "S5 Code" from DOC because of a factual basis situation. He is now at a veteran's facility here in Denver and can't get into HUD Housing because of this S Code. Past drug and alcohol issues have had him in and out of DOC, but he has never had a sexual offense conviction. He cannot afford to pay an attorney to try to get off the registry. The treatment facility that parole sent him to told him he definitely did not need S.O. treatment.

I have reached out to a couple of my colleagues who work inside CDOC to see if there is any way that this "S code" can be removed. They are willing to take a look at it.

FIGURE 11
Federal immigration suspects referred to U.S. attorneys, 1992-2010



Note: Includes matter with an immigration offense as the lead charge.
Source: Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, National LIONS data base, fiscal year.

Besides trying to support so many of you inside of CDOC, we stay incredibly busy here on the outside with constant referrals for these and other requests for help and support. While it is challenging, it keeps us positively busy and productive, along with all of those laboring alongside us to reach out to the poor, the poor in spirit and those with lonely, aching hearts who often have no-one left among family or friends who seems to care! It is our privilege and our joy to be part of all of your lives!

Writing Me Letters

Susan Walker

I look forward to receiving your letters. However, when some of you write me back again and again (I have a huge pile of letters where some of you have written three or four times before I get to answer just once), it makes my letter answering problem bigger than it has to be.

I have Jan H. and Terri B. who help with writing letters, but I definitely receive and answer the largest share. I have hundreds on my desk at any given time. I am so backed up right now that I doubt I will ever catch up. I have a volunteer named Conrad who has just been given the right to be on his computer, so he will be helping me answer letters soon. That will help. It is great that he can finally use the computer, as he can now more easily go through the list of people on the CSOR Mailing List and make sure where each of you are when it is time to send the next newsletter. Up until now, I have been doing it, or he has done it on his phone, which was incredibly challenging, as the print on the phone is so small.

That job in and of itself consumes hours. Some of you have moved, some have left prison, and others are in the same place! In spite of checking each person's current location, we still send some to the wrong place, as moves happen while we are in the process of sending the newsletter out.

Back to the issue of sending multiple letters before you hear from me (us). Here is a partial list of things I do: 1) answer phone calls, usually about getting off the registry, find housing, address problems with treatment and/or supervision, help find an attorney and so on; 2) pick up and deliver flip phones to people getting out of prison; 3) pick people up from prison or from DRDC to take them to parole and help them get through their first day out; 4) work on business for NARSOL (National Association for Rational Sex Offense Laws); 5) go to the Post Office to pick up and drop off mail; 6) answer e-mails from referral sources, families, colleagues, legislators; 7) take my dogs for a ride so they don't drive me even crazier than I already am!; 8) testify at revocation hearings for people who are usually being sent back for technical violations (take a hint – don't get technical violations for stupid things as treatment and parole will send you to jail where you will have a revocation hearing, and may end up back in prison at least temporarily; 9) go with people to court for sentencing hearings etc.; 10) go to lunch with families and or men and women who just need a listening ear or information regarding a variety of things; 11) go to the Legislature, go to meetings with the Parole Board, attend meetings with parole and re-entry, attend SOMB Meetings and some of their committee meetings; 12) answer phone calls from prison (folks can call once a month); 13) write to those of you inside.

Here are the facts. We never have enough housing nor is there enough money to get you all out of prison, especially not in the same month or even the same year. It is an extremely sad but true fact. There are some blessed people who have family and friends that can help them with the cost of getting out – many of you are waiting for blessings from others. Sometimes we can find ways to accommodate people with no money and no family – sometimes we can't. Writing me (us) MORE letters does not improve your chances of getting out, as it just makes my life more confusing! If you have written me once, there is a lot better chance that I will be able to get back to you than if you write me four or five times. I recently went through the mail and clipped together all of the multiple letters written by one person, and have set those aside, as I can't possibly get them all answered. I have been trying to answer the most recent letters as I don't know what else to do.

All of you can help me with this. Write one time and wait for an answer. I am doing my best to meet as many needs as I can. If you pray, pray that God will lay on the hearts of many other people the ministry of writing to people in prison – we need an army of people to read your letters, answer them, and try to act on the concerns and challenges that many of you, if not all of you, are facing. Remember also, that not everyone has a background in case management like I do, and it takes volunteers time to learn the system at CDOC and how to get in touch with the right people, and who those "right people" are!

Sometimes you present situations that are hard for me to decide how to handle. If men are telling me that they are in a dangerous facility and are at risk of being attacked, I can sometimes make it worse by alerting wardens or the head of CDOC. It is always a hard decision, whether to try to talk to someone and hopefully spare you harm or keep quiet and hope that you can get to a safe place. It breaks my heart that I cannot do more to make things better more of the time.

Thanks for listening. I am trying to return phone calls I missed while at the ATSA Conference and get a couple pages written for the newsletter. Know that my heart is with all of you each and every day and I, along with faithful colleagues, am doing my best.

News Tidbits

1. The Colorado Supreme Court has ruled that it is unlawful to combine prison and probation sentences for criminal defendants in Colorado prisons, including some with a sexual offense. The Denver Post states: "The ruling applies to any defendant sentenced to prison followed by a probation term and gives each the right to force prosecutors to start over. Those already out of prison theoretically could request their plea deal be overturned...". The Colorado Attorney General was given until October 28 to appeal the ruling, which he did. We are hopeful that with a 7 – 0 ruling by the highest court in Colorado, the justices will maintain their ruling! If they do, there are still lots of unanswered questions as to how the process of undoing these cases will actually move forward.
2. The Sunset Review findings are now out and available. Here are the five suggestions made by the Sunset Reviewer, Bryan Jamieson. a) Continue the SOMB for 7 years until 2027. NOTE: This could be changed by legislators who want to continue the SOMB for less time and ask for specific changes to the SOMB's direction, perhaps 3 or 4 years into the 7-year period. We'll see what happens.

b) Clarify that supervising officers are required to follow SOMB-promulgated standards when working with the S.O. population. c) Repeal the limitations on the number of treatment providers given to clients and provide every available listed

treatment provider. d) Update the Act and remove inaccurate and outdated terminology. e) Direct the SOMB to keep a record of denials and de-listings due to criminal history.

While there is nothing earth-shattering in these recommendations, several of them are substantial in terms of making the SOMB's control and oversight over our population a bit more fair.

3. Governor Polis' budget submission includes the possibility of shutting down CMRC in Colorado Springs and moving the CMRC population to CSP II. We have no other details on this at present but will let you know as the legislative session moves forward and the legislature begins making decisions on all things criminal justice related.
4. The yearly required report is out on the Lifetime Supervision of persons who have committed a sexual offense. The report varies little from year to year, and includes submissions from The Colorado Department of Corrections, the Colorado Department of Public Safety and the State Judicial Department (Probation). I have checked and the report will not be available in the individual prison libraries. We will see what we can do to make a few copies available to each facility. Please share with others if you are one of the people who asks us to send the report!

ANTICIPATING RELEASE IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO???

Janet Hunsaker, CSOR Board

For men and women in the Department of Corrections who are eligible for release once housing is located, please help yourself and us at CSOR be prepared to find housing by doing the following;

- a. Alert CSOR if you have or don't have rental and deposit monies available for at least the first month of rent.
- b. The amount needed for the first month can vary from \$1000.00 to \$2000.00, depending on the quality of the apartment; whether you will have a roommate or not and whether a deposit is required.
- c. Determine what area you will likely parole to, whether it be Denver or Colorado Springs metro areas, or some other location in Colorado.
- d. If you do not have housing funds, please be pro-active and attempt to raise some or all of this money.
- e. Ask family members to help you.
- f. Write friends, even acquaintances and begin by telling them your story of parole eligibility, sentence completion and program compliance and how you need assistance to be released from DOC.
- g. Offer to pay back monies as you are able.
- h. Locate and contact churches, resource groups and other advocates in the area of your parole plan. If they have a letter from you up front, chances are they are more likely to assist when we contact them and when you are released.
- i. Communicate any and all this information to CSOR staff so we can assist you from this side.



AND THERE WERE IN THE SAME COUNTRY SHEPHERDS ABIDING IN THE FIELD, KEEPING WATCH OVER THEIR FLOCK BY NIGHT.

AND, LO, THE ANGEL OF THE LORD CAME UPON THEM, AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD SHONE ROUND ABOUT THEM AND THEY WERE SORE AFRAID.

AND THE ANGEL SAID UNTO THEM, FEAR NOT: FOR, BEHOLD, I BRING YOU GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY, WHICH SHALL BE TO ALL PEOPLE.

FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY IN THE CITY OF DAVID A SAVIOUR, WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD.

AND THIS SHALL BE A SIGN UNTO YOU, YE SHALL FIND THE BABE WRAPPED IN SWADDLING CLOTHES, LYING IN A MANGER.

AND SUDDENLY THERE WAS WITH THE ANGEL A MULTITUDE OF THE HEAVENLY HOST PRAISING GOD, AND SAYING,

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN.

LUKE 2:8-14

The Jewish Festival of Lights

Chanukah, or Hanukkah, lasts for eight days, beginning the 25th of the Hebrew month Kislev (November-December). It celebrates the victory of Judah the Maccabee over the Syrian tyrant Antiochus over 2100 years ago.

In 165BC, after three years of war, Judah won a decisive victory over the Syrians and returned with his followers to Jerusalem to reclaim the Temple. On their return, they could find only one small cruse of oil, enough to last one day. But when they lit the temple menorah with it, a miracle occurred and the menorah burned for eight days. Since then, the Jewish people celebrated the success of the Maccabees and the miracle of the oil.

Each night of the festival, the family gathers around the menorah, a special candelabrum that holds eight candles. On the first night the head of the family uses a helper candle – called a shamos – to light one candle. On the second night, two candles are lit, and so on, until all eight candles are lit on the eighth night. Each night, gifts are given. In some families, children play games with a small four-sided wooden top called a dreidel. On each side of the top is one letter of NGHS, or Nes Godol Hoyoh Shom, which means “A great miracle happened there.” Hanukkah means “dedication.”

Islam

Muslims around the world celebrate Ramadan, which marks the month the prophet Mohammed is believed to have had their holy book, the Koran, revealed to him by God. Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic lunar calendar, being 11 to 12 days shorter than the Gregorian calendar. The celebration starts at the first sighting of the moon in Ramadan. This year, Ramadan happens to fall over the Christmas period.

Muslims cannot eat and drink at all in the daytime during this period, breaking their fast only when the sun sets and again before the sun rises, sharing special Ramadan treats, such as Konafa, an Egyptian dessert made of shredded wheat and syrup, or Katayef, sweets stuffed with nuts. They also eat dates (iftar) which, according to Islamic teachings, were eaten by Mohammed at the end of each day of the fasting month. The days are spent in prayer and reflection.

The fast ends with the celebration of Eid al-Fitr, the festival of the breaking of the fast. Some Muslim governments grant amnesties to political and other prisoners on this day.

Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is a cultural festival during which African Americans celebrate and reflect upon their heritage as the products of two worlds. It begins 26th December and lasts for seven days.

Kwanzaa was founded in 1966 by Dr. Maulana “Ron” Karenga, a college professor and African American leader. He studied the festivals of many African groups of people and decided that the new holiday should be a harvest or “first fruits.” Kwanzaa is a Kiswahili word meaning “the first fruits of the harvest.”

Hindu

The 25th December also is considered to be the birthday of the Hindu god, Krishna, as well as Mithra, the Greek god of light.

Have a Blessed Holiday Season

Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in this newsletter are CSOR's. Any concerns about overall content may be sent to: Susancwalker1@gmail.com.