

Toward a Science of Clinical Psychology: Laboratory Evaluations and Interventions

Editors: Luciano L'Abate (Georgia State Univ., Atlanta, GA)

New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2008. 413 pp. ISBN 978-1-60456-062-6. \$79.00

Book Description:

The aim of this new and important book is to put together under one cover various types of laboratory practices that pair clinical practice with research using standard operating procedures (SOP'S) in evaluations and interventions.

The Internet has changed the way psychological evaluations and interventions are going to be delivered in the not too distant future. The chaotic nature of evaluations and interventions in face-to-face practices (thousands of tests and 400 different psychotherapies) will become even more chaotic when practiced online. It is important, therefore, to rely more and more on standardized, uniform practices, SOPs that will assure that those practices go hand in hand with research. Rather than research and practice going along two separate tracks, as it has happened in the past and is still happening in the present, the laboratory method will allow for both practice and research to go along the same track, hand in hand, rather than separately.

Table of Contents:

Preface

Foreword

1. What is the Laboratory Method in Clinical Psychology? (*Luciano L'Abate, Georgia State Univ., Atlanta, GA*)
2. Systematic Assessment and Intervention with Children and Youth (*Eleonora Maino, Via Don Luigi Monza, Bosiso Parini (Lecco, Italy)*)
3. Behavioral Skills Training for Depressed Mothers of Children with ADHD (*Andrea M. Chronis-Tuscano, Biology/Psychology Bldg., MD and Tana L. Clarke, Univ. of Maryland, MD*)
4. Social Skills are Vital for Academic Success, Effective Interpersonal (Luciano L'Abate)
5. Teaching Safety Skills to Children: Issues in Training and Generalization (*Raymond G. Miltenberger, Ph.D., Univ. of South Florida, FL*)
6. A Clinical Laboratory Approach to Reducing Bullying and Aggression In Schools and Families (*Arthur M. Horne; Katherine Raczynski; Pamela Orpinas, Univ. of Georgia, Athens, GA*)
7. Empirically Supported Interventions in School Settings: Fostering Social and Emotional Literacy (*Douglas C. Smith, Southern Oregon Univ., Oregon*)
8. Manualized Treatments in Psychotherapy (Katherine L. Muller and Simon A. Rego, (*Montefiore Med. Center and Albert Einstein College of Medicine, NY; William C. Sanderson, Hofstra Univ., Hempstead, NY*)
9. EVTs, EBPs, ESRs, and RIPs: Inspecting the Varieties of Research Based Practices (*T. Mark Harwood, Psychology Dept., Wheaton College, IL*)
10. Measuring and Improving Psychotherapy Outcome: Laboratory Methods in Routine Clinical Practice (*Michael J. Lambert, Dept. of Psychology, Brigham Young Univ., UT and Jason L. Whipple, Bassett Army Community Hosp., AK*)
11. Evaluating and Treating the Psychological Consequences of Chronic Pain (*T.M. McClanahan, Dept. of Psychiatry, San Rafael, CA*)
12. Manualized Treatments for People With Personality Difficulties (*Mary McMurran, Univ. of Nottingham, Duncan Macmillan House, Nottingham*)
13. Integrative Evidence-Based Clinical Psychology: A Field-Tested Protocol (*Roland A. Carlstedt, Integrative Psychological Services of NYC, NY*)
14. Common and Unique Factors in Assessing African American Couples Anthony L. Chambers and Jay Lebow (*The Family Institute and Center for Applied Psychological & Family Studies, Evanston, IL*)
15. An Evidence-Based Approach to Psychiatric Rehabilitation (*Patrick W. Corrigan; Abigail Wassel; Jennifer Rafacz, Illinois Inst. of Technology, Chicago, IL*)
16. Virtual Reality Therapy: A Vision for a New Paradigm (Luciano L'Abate)
17. Methodological Psychotherapy (*Piero De Giacomo, Andrea De Giacomo, Francesco Margari; et al., Università di Bari. Bari, Italy*)

18. Validation at of the Continuum of Likeness in Intimate Relationships (*Mario Cusinato and Walter Colesso, Univ. of Padua, Padova, Italy*)
19. Working at a Distance from Participants: Writing and Nonverbal Media (*Luciano L'Abate*)

"Clinical Psychology and Research Finally Wed"

PsycCRITIQUES

1554-0138

April 8, 2009, Vol. 54, Release 14, Article 8

(c) 2009, American Psychological Association

Reviewed by Richard H. Cox

This edited volume of 37 writers will be a most welcome addition to teaching institutions and practitioners alike, evidencing that the practices of psychology and laboratory documentation are clearly and finally making their way into literature. Academically strong clinicians have always sought research to shore up, or to revise, their clinical practices; however, most texts have kept the two separated as disparate disciplines, in spite of the fact that each recognizes the relevance of the other.

Proof of such separation is readily noted in that few clinicians will recognize most of the researchers' names in this text. Yet, convincingly, the array of experts assembled in this volume brings great value to clinical practice by relating positive research to standard psychological practice. The emphasis upon outcome-based treatment and evidence-based psychotherapy makes this volume essential reading for every serious provider of psychological services.

The editor, Luciano L'Abate, is very clear: "The aim of this book is to put under one cover various types of laboratory practices that pair clinical practice with research using standard operating procedures (SOPs) in evaluations and interventions" (xvii). He credits the Internet, "the chaotic nature of evaluations and interventions in face-to-face practices" (xvii), the myriad tests and models of psychotherapy, and the burgeoning need for mental health services for the need for a more standardized approach. The laboratory method, as well as new training models and degree programs for establishing this method as standard practice, is proposed.

The laboratory method is defined as a systematic, replicable, progressive approach utilizing a hierarchy of personnel or instruments that bridges "the considerably wide gap that exists between clinicians/practitioners versus academic researches... especially in psychotherapy" (p. xxi). The laboratory method is seen as an equal partner with clinical psychological services, whether provided in a private setting, hospital, clinic, prison, or other venue. While most studies included are from the United States, some are from Italy, which may be seen by some as unfortunate in that both clinical and research variables may be different. However, the authors have taken great care to generalize their findings and thus make the lessons obtained from them valuable regardless of geography.

Although certainly not claiming to be encyclopaedic, the text covers an admirable range of topics applicable to the clinician, including attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, family therapy, rehabilitation psychology, clinical depression, adjuvant psychopharmacology, African American/Caucasian cultural factors, phobias, anxieties, and several other diagnostic categories by association. Each chapter is written with careful attention to relating statistical and other research-based information to clinically encountered psychopathology.

This volume does not claim to include all, or even most, of the more recent clinical research. However, since there is an entire chapter devoted to "Evaluating and Treating The Psychological

Consequences of Chronic Pain" (Chapter 11), with considerable attention paid to back pain, the plethora of clinically based research on this subject ought to have been noted. Such studies (functional magnetic resonance imaging) are extremely relevant both to further research and to clinical practice in that they show not only the legitimacy of chronic pain (as pointed out in this chapter) but also the comorbidity of hormonal, neurochemical, and neuroelectrical changes, and even permanent changes in gray and white matter that thus impact all human behavior, from nociceptive to emotive.

Very important to the thesis of this chapter are the changes in the gray and white matter of the brain resulting from neuropathic pain. In turn, these changes produce profound dysfunction in the thalamus and cortex, which in turn produces changes in executive function and emotional states, thus affecting the ability and willingness to comply with treatment. The importance of this research is so far-reaching for clinical practice that one could see this omission as significant. These studies invalidate some of the findings and conclusions of this chapter to some degree; yet, in other ways, they substantiate the assertion that pain is real as opposed to malingering. It is interesting that identifying this omission proves the point of the book, that is, that concurrent laboratory methods and research are imperative to the advancement of clinical psychology as a science!

While religion and spirituality are mentioned in several places, the topic might have been more exhaustively considered since cultural factors, individual differences, thought patterns, and value orientations play such a significant role in clinical practice. Further, there has been a significant increase in recognizing a growing body of clinical research available on this subject.

For those clinicians willing to entertain the laboratory method, Chapter 13, "Integrative Evidence-Based Clinical Psychology: A Field-Tested Protocol," will prove to be particularly valuable. Case studies carefully outline how to put the laboratory method into practice in both diagnosis and treatment. The chapter draws heavily on models from the practice of neuropsychology that have been used for many years. Credit is given to neuropsychologist Ralph Reitan as the initiator of a laboratory model. Neuropsychology has, from its inception, been a more "medically," and therefore a more laboratory-based, model. In actuality neuropsychological practice has had to be more accountable to the medical world than to the strictly psychological; therefore, its basic assumptions, philosophy, and practice have been based largely on the diagnostic medical model.

Those wishing to show a more evidence-driven and outcome-based psychotherapy will find Chapter 17 helpful. It is built around the belief that the future of psychotherapy will depend on different cognitive tools, artificial intelligence, and contributions from other disciplines. This chapter is thought provoking since psychotherapy has traditionally seen "contributing disciplines" as primarily being the medical sciences rather than ones suggested herein, such as algebra, logic, and online data. The chapter challenges practitioners to entertain a much broader base of information and technology than most clinicians utilize currently. The references for this chapter draw heavily on cross-cultural data and internationally accumulated information, thus adding considerable weight to the position.

While this volume is devoted to linking research and practice, and successfully demonstrates the ability to accomplish both at the same time, there is, nonetheless, an obvious additional agenda that is presented as a program to assist in promoting and successfully executing the laboratory method in today's rapidly changing world. This agenda is intended to encourage the profession of clinical psychology to adopt new and novel ways of education, training, and practice. This thesis alone could have made a volume (or perhaps journal article) in and of itself and is noted by the author as similar to the debate of earlier years with the initiation of the PsyD degree.

A section is devoted to a proposal for utilizing the laboratory method while using distance-learning techniques such as writing, the results of test batteries or interventions, and assistance from middle-level semiprofessionals, or paraprofessionals. The Internet, computers, and mechanical devices are integral to this model. While elements of this approach have been in place for many years in some clinical settings, by and large the "professional" clinical world has shied away from such approaches. Some elements of this kind of utilization have actually been seen as unethical and in some instances illegal. Therefore, in a very real sense, this proposal ventures to an even further edge of the clinical precipice in promoting a more distant, mechanical approach, utilizing less-than-fully-trained professionals.

Clinical psychology as a profession is differentiated by L'Abate from clinical psychology as a science; he views the practitioner psychologist as a clinical professional and the academic psychologist as a scientist. This differentiation is appreciated for its editorial emphasis on the distinctions; however, L'Abate's voluminous writings indicate that he recognizes that many persons, like himself, are attempting to practice and promote a wedding of the two points of view.

The most bold and potentially debatable aspect of this volume is found in Appendix A, which outlines a proposal for an entirely new graduate "Structured Online Mental Health Interventions" certificate or degree. This proposal will no doubt be highly controversial; it introduces a profession-changing discussion into the field of clinical psychology and forces new ethical practice considerations and guidelines into focus. While the master's-degree-level psychologist has been an item of debate for decades, the new concept of a paraprofessional working with the clinician is novel.

The concept assumes the shortage of professionally trained psychologists, the necessity of treating patients at greater distance, the inability of consumers to access services, and the wide-range availability of the Internet. These assumptions are doubtless true for many, particularly those in rural areas, those who are less financially able, those who are under- or non-insured, and perhaps those who wish a less intimate model for dealing with their angst. These assumptions are rather broad and may not in fact occur as predicted. Also, no doubt there will be many who will reject the model totally or in part due to the gravity of its departure from the sacrosanct practice form, most of which (although with great deviation) has its roots in the very intimate practice of psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

The authors do not venture into the economic aspects of such a departure in clinical care. However, the clinician will be faced with not only myriad new ethical dilemmas but also administrative and financial concerns. In all fairness, it must be noted that the authors have taken great pains to address all of these and many other unasked questions. And, of course, their arguments are convincing within the context of their perception.

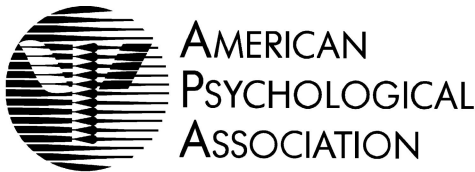
Not addressed is the question of whether such a development will serve only to undermine the doctoral-level professional practitioners, who, with the American Psychological Association, have worked so diligently for so many years to be seen as doctors of mental health. The reader of this text will have more questions than have been answered, without doubt.

A major criticism of the book is that a novel proposal is introduced, that is, the paraprofessional in the field of psychology, after 28 chapters. Then Appendix A augments this discussion by introducing a new degree program. While these inclusions are meant to further the laboratory method and assist with the burgeoning mental health needs of our country, the greater discussion of the book in both academic and clinical settings is apt to be the latter portions dealing with the innovations. These proposals perhaps should have been a separate document. Hopefully, the major

thesis of the book, that is, the laboratory method, will not be eclipsed. The discussion of both concepts within the same book leaves the reader assuming that the laboratory method is inseparable from a new professional training model and a new paraprofessional degree.

Withstanding all criticisms, this book is a benchmark for clinical practice and a bellwether of future literature. The primary portion of the book is chock-full of valuable information showing the validity of the laboratory method and will prove invaluable for clinical training programs in psychology. The latter portions, including Appendix A on the new training degree, will prove to be great debate material for academics and practitioners alike.

Award APA 2009 al prof. Luciano L'Abate



December 23, 2008

Luciano L'Abate, PhD
2079 Deborah Drive
Atlanta, GA 30345-3917

Dear Dr. L'Abate:

It is a pleasure to extend my congratulations to you as **the recipient of the 2009 American Psychological Association Award for Distinguished Contributions to Applied Research**. I am writing to inform you of several opportunities you will have as a Distinguished Contributions award recipient and the process and deadlines associated with each. Enclosed for your reference is the list of materials needed and dates by which they are due. Please note that failure to meet any of these deadlines may result in foregoing the associated opportunities. Most of the material requested can be sent to me by e-mail at abello@apa.org.

As noted in the letter you received from Dr. Resnick, the formal presentation of this award will take place during the APA/American Psychological Foundation (APF) Awards ceremony at the 2009 APA Convention to be held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, August 6-9. At that time you will have the opportunity to make an acceptance speech of one minute. At this ceremony you will be presented a citation highlighting your outstanding career contributions and an honorarium of \$1,000. You will also be reimbursed for up to \$1,500 of your travel expenses to attend the convention. Convention registration fees will be waived for yourself, your spouse and up to two dependents.

Award recipients also have the opportunity to deliver a 50-minute award address as part of the regular APA Convention program. Delivering the award address is optional, but virtually all previous award winners have taken advantage of this opportunity. Please note that I will need the title of your 50-minute award address and complete affiliation information by **January 18, 2009**.

Award recipients are also invited to submit a scholarly paper based upon their award address for publication in the November 2009 issue of the *American Psychologist*. Submission of a scholarly paper, which can be based upon, but is substantially different from, the award address that you present at the convention, is not an obligation. It is strictly optional. Each year a significant number of the award recipients decide not to prepare a manuscript for publication. Irrespective of that decision, your award citation, photo, biographical sketch, and your 20-item bibliography will appear in the November 2009 awards issue.

You can expect to receive a letter from Dr. Gary VandenBos, Managing Editor, *American Psychologist* with details of the submission within the next few days.

Congratulations once again and if you have any questions regarding the materials I have requested or any other aspect of the award process, please contact me at (202) 336-5911 or via e-mail at abello@apa.org. If you would be so kind to send me an email message to acknowledge receipt of this letter, I would appreciate it. Thank you and I look forward to being in touch with you over the coming months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ayo Bello". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

Ayo Bello

Senior Associate, Practice Research & Policy

Enclosures