



The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist

A Bulletin of the Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

Strengthening Relationships: Assumptions, Challenges & Techniques

by Matthew Burch, Ph.D.

This will be the title for our IAMFT Spring 2003 conference. William (Bill) Dougherty PhD. and Scott Stuart M.D. will be our plenary speakers presenting on their models of couples therapy. Bill will be presenting on "Bad Couples Therapy" and Scott will present on "Interpersonal Therapy with Relationships."

William J. Dougherty is a practicing therapist, Professor of Family Social Science, and the director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at the University of Minnesota. He has published numerous books and articles and has presented countless times in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy.

His workshop will identify the most common screw-ups therapists make in couples therapy, and demonstrate ways to avoid them. Since therapists destroy their most self-incriminating tapes, the best examples of bad couples therapy, some of them hilarious, are from films. Several clips will be shown and analyzed in the workshop. The workshop will also describe how therapists' values about commitment influence our work with couples, for better or for worse, and how we mess up so frequently--and can do better--with remarried couples. This highly practical (and at times humorous) workshop will make your couples therapy more effective, whatever your model.

Scott Stuart, M.D., is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Psychology at the University of Iowa. He completed his undergraduate and medical degree at the University of Kansas, and completed his psychiatric residency at the University of Pittsburgh. He has been on the faculty of the University of Iowa since 1993, following the completion of a Master's Degree in Preventive Medicine.

Dr. Stuart's primary research interests are in the areas of psychotherapy outcome and women's health. Dr. Stuart has conducted numerous training seminars in IPT both across the US and abroad. He also recently published an updated text on IPT entitled, "Interpersonal Psychotherapy: A Clinician's Guide," which has served as the basis for many of the research projects described above. Dr. Stuart will present on Interpersonal Therapy as it relates to relationships.

We know that you will be pleased with our speakers this year. Please tell another colleague, helping professional, nurse etc. We want to make this conference one of our best. See you all there.

The Last Hard Copy

During these economically challenging times, your board made a decision to no longer publish and print a hard copy of the IAMFT Newsletter. Now that we have our website up and running, a copy of the newsletter can be posted there. This will save printing and mailing costs for the organization and provide more income for operational costs related to running our annual conference. Because our conference generates a primary portion of our organization's income, we thought it would be beneficial to continue to increase the quality and content of our conferences by diverting the costs of printing and mailing a newsletter into better conference speakers, etc. If you have any thoughts or reactions to this please email a board member to have your question or concern addressed.



Volume 31, Number 1
March 2003

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The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist

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The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist is a newsletter of the Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. IAMFT is a division of the American Association for marriage and Family Therapy, Suite 300, 1133 15th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20005-2710, (202) 452-0109. Subscription to the *The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist* is included with IAMFT membership. Subscription for non-members is available through the Editor. *The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist* is published three times a year in February, June, and October. Deadline for submissions and/or advertisements is the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Display advertising must be submitted camera-ready (unless exclusively text, then it must be typed and double spaced) and pre-paid at the following rates:

Price	Type	Size
\$25 (\$20 members)	Classified listing	5 lines
\$50 (\$40 members)	Business card size	2x3 1/2
\$90 (\$72 members)	Quarter page	3 9/16 x 4 3/4
\$150 (\$125 members)	Half page	7 1/2 x 4 3/4
\$300 (\$200 members)	Full page	7 1/2 x 9 1/2
FREE for IAMFT members	Job Postings	—

Submissions are to be sent directly to the Editor. Please make checks for advertising payable to IAMFT and send to Neal Sheeley, IAMFT Treasurer, P.O. Box 283, Postville, IA 52162

The editor reserves the right to reject, abridge or modify any advertising or other submitted material as deemed appropriate. Opinions expressed by the editorial staff of *The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist* by articles published, advertisements, and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of AAMFT, the IAMFT officers and Board of Directors, or the IAMFT membership.

Student Spotlight Angela Thiesen



Hello! My name is Angela Thiesen and I am currently enrolled as a second year masters student in the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Iowa State University. I will be completing my course-work in May of 2003. My decision to return to the academic setting and obtain a higher education came from my experience as the program coordinator/social worker for an after school program for at risk youth and their families. My goal was to obtain the additional skills and knowledge I felt was needed to provide the utmost quality of services to clients. Not only did my position as a program coordinator inspire me to obtain a higher education but it also intensified my passion for working with families and programming.

I have been blessed with a wide variety of opportunities and learning experiences, all of which have confirmed my passion for this field! In addition to my position as a program coordinator/social worker I have worked as an in-home caseworker, facilitated training and licensor to Foster-Care families, and have implemented adoption studies to insure the best possible placement for the child and the family. In addition, I have received practicums both within a private psychiatric practice and within a residential treatment facility. I have also had the wonderful opportunity to volunteer my time in a variety of settings; some of which include a domestic abuse shelter, middle school, and a program for mentally and physically handicapped children.

Currently, I am working as a teaching assistant at the Iowa State University Laboratory School where I have had the opportunity to provide programming and work with children and their families on a daily basis. Recently I was able to present at the AAMFT conference in Cincinnati Ohio. The presentation focused on the influence of therapist behaviors on therapeutic alliance. I am also very interested in stepfamily issues, dynamics, and appropriate

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Student Spotlight

Meagan Ruhl



I am currently enrolled as a second year masters student in the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Iowa State University. My coursework for the program will be completed in May of 2003. Before coming to Iowa State University, I received a B.A. in psychology and in family services at the University of Northern Iowa.

Like many of my student peers, I have been working very hard on my thesis project this year. I am examining the relationship between maternal depression and children's social outcomes. I am particularly interested in the possible mediating effect of maternal parenting behaviors on that relationship.

I have also been busy working as a graduate assistant in the Child Development Laboratory School here at Iowa State. I have been a graduate assistant in the preschool program for nearly two years. The experience has been very challenging at times, but also extremely rewarding. I have absolutely loved interacting with the children and their families. I can say that I have learned a lot about child development through my assistantship.

In addition to my coursework, I am finishing up my work as a therapist in the university clinic. I came to Iowa State with no experience in the field of therapy, so the knowledge I have gained through my experience in the clinic has been invaluable. I have been fortunate enough to be able to work with individuals, couples, and families with a variety of presenting concerns. The supervision and therapy experience I have gained through my practicum have been the highpoints of my academic experience.

Outside of the academic setting, I spend my time socializing with friends and family. I am a very proud aunt and I love spending as much time as I can with my three-year-old nephew. I also recently became engaged so my fiancé and I have started to plan for our October 2003 wedding. I am still in the excitement phase of planning and I am hoping to skip the stressful phase, although I have heard that skipping the stressful phase is not likely. My fiance and I are also gearing up for the

golfing season. We are eagerly anticipating warmer weather so that we can hit the greens.

After graduation, we plan on settling down in the Des Moines area. I plan to work toward gaining licensure in a supervised setting. I would also like to gain more experience and training in working with children and their families in therapy.

Conference Update

In case you have not heard, our conference date has been changed from April 4-5 to April 25- 26. Why the change? One of our plenary speakers requested the change in order to accommodate some other speaking responsibilities that he had to keep. If we wanted this speaker, we had to adjust. Hence the notion, challenges and opportunities seem to run side-by-side. This year, we still have the opportunity of presenting a high caliber conference with top-notch speakers. The location remains the same: Historical Pella, Iowa. So if you liked the spread of food last year (in addition to the conference) come again this year. Central College will again privilege us with a satiating experience with their food. Be reminded that this is high season for conferences. I strongly encourage you to make your hotel reservations ASAP due to other conferences taking place within the community. Advanced notice: knowing that these past few years have presented some very challenging times for all of us personally, vocationally, and economically, you will notice that your board is trying to meet your needs as members by keeping costs to a bare minimum. The price of registration, cost of hotel rooms, etc. are all part of an effort to make it still possible to have you attend our annual conference at a reasonable rate. We are hoping to increase our attendees this year therefore increasing volume in order to recoup speaker costs. Typically we do not pay for our plenary speakers. Due to last year's successful conference, we are able this year to pay for two notable plenary speakers. Please come and support IAMFT by attending the conference or you may contribute a registration to a friend or colleague if you cannot come. Register as early as possible to insure your reduced rate. Please look for a conference brochure and registration in your mailbox soon. From your board, we look forward to seeing you April 25-26.

Executive Director's Perspective: See you in Pella...?

Jeff Kerber, PhD., LMFT

On April 25th and 26th the IAMFT will be holding its Annual Conference in beautiful Pella Iowa. The featured plenary is Dr. William Doherty of the University of Minnesota presenting on Marital Therapy and sharing his time tested and well researched insights regarding sound theory and practice. Will I see you there?

I ask the question because as I sit down to write this installment of the "Executive Director's Report (Perspective)" I'm struck with the harsh awareness that in 5 years of asking for feedback or comments at the end of my article I've not received even one call or email. Of course there is a part of me that is thankful for not having to respond to dozens of emails and/or voicemails that would add significant amounts of time to my frequent already too busy days. On the other hand, sometimes I'm discouraged and I wonder if anyone ever reads these things. I mean other than a few friends and colleagues or some of the IAMFT Board members perhaps nobody is even reading the newsletter. Realistically, I doubt my worst case scenario is true, when I talk with MFTs they often make reference to the newsletter and I know that busy professionals are budgeting their time very carefully. So as you read this installment please know that you are part of a very important voice in the chorus of mental health professionals in our state. We want and need you to be informed and involved. Chances are you are among 300 or so professionals that are either licensed as Marriage and Family Therapists and/or you are a Clinical Member of AAMFT. Therefore, due to our relatively small numbers please stay involved if you already are and if you're not involved and don't know how to get started, then read this article and come talk with me in Pella.

Our web site <http://www.IAMFT.com> is up and running but of course still not as smooth or up to date as it will become in time. It is quite possible that future installments of our newsletter and any other means of communicating with you will be found only on the web site or via email. By now many, if not all of you fully recognize the necessity of greater coordination and communication among us if we are to be successful as an association of professionals. I am excited about the possibilities of electronic communication regarding our association issues partly because too often we are operating without fully understanding your views. It

will become more and more our job to provide you with "customer service" via information necessary for you to survive and thrive as professional Marriage and Family Therapists. I maintain that we have an excellent and important "product/service" that we offer to our communities and our service is unique in its theory and practice. Besides making frequent "hits" to our web site, please look for regular emails from Board members and myself as we move toward electronic communication and draw closer as association members.

This article may be the last that is sent to the editor for publication on paper. Therefore, as opposed to my typical "update" regarding several bills of interest to the association and then explaining the progress of each bill, I am going to provide the means for you to use your computers and monitor any bill currently introduced. At the time of this writing the following list of bills have been introduced which may be of interest to MFTs:

House File (HF):

HF 49: HAWK-I. Establishes review of HAWK-I applicants.

* HF 63: Mental Health Parity.

HF 74: Prison Mental Health.

HF 127: Decategorization Board.

* HF 128: Runaway Counseling.

HF 130: Psychiatric Treatment.

House Study Bill (HSB):

* HSB 48: Mental Health Parity.

* HSB 94: Child Endangerment Offenses.

* HSB 98: Exploitation of a Minor.

Senate File (SF):

SF 36: Supplemental Appropriations for FY '03.

* SF 58: Mental Health Parity.

Senate Study Bill (SSB):

* SSB 1056: Dissolution of Marriage.

* SSB 1057: Homosexual Adoption.

* Note that although IAMFT monitors all the bills listed above and more, the * indicates the particular bills of interest that we have lobbied either supporting or opposing. In order to view the individual bills listed follow the steps below:

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Executive Director's Perspective:

Jeff Kerber, PhD., LMFT

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Go to - <http://www2.legis.state.ia.us/>

- The screen should read "The Iowa Legislature General Assembly – Home Page"
- Scroll down and click on "Track Legislation" then click on "Legislative Database Information." Under "Information by Bill", click on "Display a Bill and Amendments".
- In the left hand column, select the desired House File or Senate File number under "Pick One" (note to scroll down under the House or Senate listings far enough to see the HSB or SSB numbers.)
- The full text of the bill will then come up. You may then choose to review the bill on screen or click on "Printer Friendly Version", which appears on the left-hand side of the screen.

I sincerely hope you have the time and opportunity to get involved by first getting the information regarding the bills that interest you and your practice. As you become informed and want to get involved you can use the same Iowa Gov. web site to locate and contact your area/district Representative or Senator. If you have problems or questions with the Iowa Gov. web site or want to offer your opinion please call or email me or other Board members listed on the IAMFT web site or on the back of this newsletter.

Finally, besides all the legislative and advocacy activity we continue to work with AAMFT and others to pursue greater practice opportunities for Iowa MFTs. I look forward to your calls at 515-988-0136 or email at kerberjs@ihs.org and I look forward even more to seeing you in Pella on April 25 and 26 with Bill Doherty and all your colleagues. Thank you.

The IAMFT Ethics Committee meets several times a year. Our mission statement is as follows: **The Ethics Committee is a resource for learning for ourselves and our members on ethical thinking and practice and provides ethics education.** With this as our mission, we invite all of you to send us any ethics question, so we might discuss them and possibly give feedback of suggestions for further research. Send questions to Keith Schrag at KeithGS@aol.com or call him at 515-232-3482. We will be providing another ethics workshop at IAMFT Conference April 25-26.

Student Spotlight

Angela Thiesen

(Continued from page 2)

interventions when working with this family form and thus is the subject of my thesis. In addition, I am interested in the areas of domestic violence, adolescent issues, substance abuse, and programming.

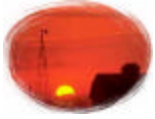
On a personal note, I currently live in Ames with my wonderful husband Jay and our cat Rizzo. My husband and I enjoy bicycling, roller-blading, camping, and musical events. I also enjoy reading, crafts, decorating, and volunteering.

My future interests include gaining employment that would allow me to utilize the knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm gained during my graduate training. I also have an interest in pursuing a doctoral degree, but do not foresee this in my immediate future.

A Word from Your Secretary

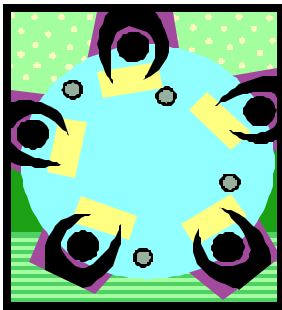
Louise Gisolfi

During these uneasy times in our world with the lack of willingness to understand other points of view and cultures; I would like to offer an invitation for anyone interested to attend IAMFT Board Meetings. At this time, the board needs and greatly appreciates your input and contribution. I know that we are all busy and involved in our complicated lives. In these troubled times there is a sense of powerlessness to change what we believe is an unjust world. As MFT'S our charge is to bring about a more harmonious family life thus touching the world in a small way. Please come and help us. You are all welcome. Please contact a board member and attend the next board meeting. The meetings are usually held in the Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Ames, Des Moines or Pella locations. We look forward to seeing you.



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