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Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Section Award-Winning Papers of 1997

The Award for the best paper by a forensic psychiatrist or forensic psychologist for 1997 was bestowed on Catherine F. Lewis, M.D. for her paper, *Factors associated with weapon use in filicidal women*. Honorable Mention was bestowed on Philip J. Candilis, M.D. for his paper, *Ethics, malingering and a lie-detector at the bedside*.

The present year, 1998, is notable in forensic psychiatry because it is the tenth anniversary of the creation of the Accreditation Council on Fellowships in Forensic Psychiatry (ACFFP) as a semi-autonomous Council of The American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (AAPL). The idea behind the ACFFP was first proposed in 1979 at an AAPL convention in Baltimore, Maryland. It was noted that the newly formed American Board of Forensic Psychiatry, Inc. (ABFP) granted two years credit towards its five years experience requirement to persons who were graduates of fellowships programs in forensic psychiatry. However, at that time, there was no core content to such forensic psychiatry training programs; persons from training programs that varied widely in duration, clinical experiences, didactic core curriculum, training in research, teaching experiences, library resources and faculty qualifications were all regarded as equal by the Credentials Committee of the ABFP. It was proposed that AAPL establish a Task Force or Committee to develop uniform Standards for Fellowship Programs in Forensic Psychiatry, to disseminate information about those Standards to all existing and proposed training programs in forensic psychiatry, to develop and implement a mechanism to ascertain if a specific training program was in compliance with those Standards, and to offer formal accreditation to those training programs that were in substantial compliance with the Standards for Fellowship Programs in Forensic Psychiatry.

The following year, at the San Francisco Sheraton Palace Hotel, a meeting of all known Directors of Forensic Psychiatry Fellowship Programs was convened to develop the Standards. Each of the

Directors was assigned to draft contents for one of the many components of a model training program, the draft model components subsequently were reviewed, edited and collated to produce the Standards.

The American Academy of Forensic Sciences, primarily through its Psychiatry and Behavioral Science Section, cooperated with AAPL in sponsoring the development of the Standards and in planning for the implementation of an accreditation process. A joint AAFS-AAPL Committee on Accreditation of Fellowship Programs in Forensic Psychiatry was the immediate precursor of the Accreditation Council on Fellowships in Forensic Psychiatry.

With the recognition by the American Psychiatric Association in the early 1990s that forensic psychiatry is an official psychiatric specialty, the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education agreed to develop and implement a process to review and credential forensic psychiatry training programs. The Accreditation Council on Fellowships in Forensic Psychiatry determined that its mission had been accomplished, that the ACGME would be responsible for evaluation and certification of forensic training programs in the future. The Accreditation Council on Fellowships in Forensic Psychiatry issued its last certificates of accreditation in 1997. In 1997 the ACGME accredited its first group of forensic psychiatry training programs.

In October 1997, the Accreditation Council on Fellowships in Forensic Psychiatry recommended that its residual funds be divided between The American Academy of Forensic Science's Psychiatry & Behavioral Science Section and The American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, with the recommendation that the fund be used to advance the interests of trainees in forensic psychiatry. It has been suggested that one use to which AAFS's share of the ACFFP's funds might be devoted is to support the annual Award for the Best Paper by a Fellow in Forensic Psychiatry or Forensic Psychology.

The Psychiatry and Behavioral Science Section is pleased to share the 1997 award-winning papers with the readers of the *Journal of Forensic Sciences*.

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