

Beth A. Bliss, Psy.D.

Licensed Psychologist
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EDUCATION

Indiana University of Pennsylvania, APA Accredited

Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology, Child Track	August 2013
Dissertation: <i>Is it still a sexual offense if society doesn't find it offensive?</i>	
<i>Cultural constructions and rape proclivity</i> ; Chair: Maureen McHugh, Ph.D.	
M.A. in Clinical Psychology	August 2010

Kent State University

B.A. in Psychology (Human Sexuality minor)	August 2007
<i>Summa Cum Laude with departmental honors; Distinguished Student Leadership Award</i>	

LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST

Bliss Psychological Services LLC

November 2014- current

- Conducting evaluations for individuals involved in the criminal and civil legal systems across Pennsylvania, including juvenile and adult competency to stand trial evaluations, juvenile and adult psychosexual risk assessments, mitigating factors evaluations, fitness for duty, de-certification assessments of juveniles, immigration assessments, evaluations for gun-rights restoration, parenting capacity, and custody evaluations
- Conducted contract work for Coufal Associates, including psychosexual risk assessments and psychological evaluations for individuals released on US Adult Probation and Parole, as well as conducted sex offender specific therapy in both group and individual settings
- Conducting court-involved counseling, such as coparenting counseling and non-offenders treatment
- Completing assessments as a member of the PA Sex Offender Assessment Board, including risk assessments for parole and assessments for Act 21 civil commitment
- Collaborating with CYF, attorneys, and other treatment providers, as well as providing expert testimony
- Supervising master's level practicum students

POST-DOCTORAL RESIDENCIES

Allegheny Forensic Associates

July 2013-November 2014

- Completed forensic evaluations of individuals involved in the legal system, including parenting fitness, custody, and psychosexual risk assessments (juvenile and adult)
- Collaborated with CYF caseworkers and attorneys, as well as provided expert testimony

SUPERVISORS: Dr. Neil Rosenblum, Dr. Patricia Pepe, and Dr. Anthony McGroarty

Coufal Associates

July 2013-November 2014

- Conducted sex offender specific therapy, including group and individual counseling
- Completed forensic evaluations of individuals involved in the legal system, including psychosexual risk assessments and psychological evaluations for individuals released on US Adult Probation and Parole

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Robert Coufal

PRE-DOCTORAL INTERNSHIP

Summit Psychological Associates, Inc.

2012- 2013

Ohio Psychology Internship (APA Accredited)

Forensic Psychology Intern, Chief Intern

- Completed forensic evaluations of individuals involved in the legal system, including parenting fitness, pre-sentence investigations, custody, competency to stand trial (juvenile and adult), insanity, pre-employment, fitness for duty, and psychosexual risk assessments (juvenile and adult), including preparation for expert testimony when needed
- Conducted group counseling, including two sex offender groups, six domestic violence groups, and three groups for women in a community-based correctional facility who were arrested for solicitation and substance-related offenses
- Conducted individual therapy with males and females, aged 14 to 60 years old
- Assisted in training committee duties for the internship program and attended monthly meetings at the Summit County Courthouse for the Batterer Intervention Program

SUPERVISORS: Dr. Deborah Walsh and Dr. James Orlando

SUPERVISED GRADUATE CLINICAL TRAINING

Torrance State Hospital Regional Forensic Psychiatric Center

2011

External Practicum Student

- Conducted psychodiagnostic, competency to stand trial, and malingering evaluations
- Led a competency restoration/legal issues group
- Co-conducted individual therapy utilizing sex offender specific treatment

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Danielle Adamsky

Allegheny General Hospital Center for Traumatic Stress in Children and Adolescents

2010-2011

External Practicum Student

- Conducted individual therapy with children ages 3-18 years old who had experienced a trauma, such as abuse or death of a parent, using Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)
- Conducted intake evaluations for potential clients, including PTSD assessments, and collaborated with CYF caseworkers

SUPERVISORS: Dr. Meghan Eberle

IUP Center for Applied Psychology

2008-2011

Graduate Assistant, Internal Practicum Student

- Conducted pre-employment evaluations for police academy applicants
- Conducted court-ordered child custody evaluations, including preparation for expert testimony
- Completed neuropsychological evaluations of brain-injured patients at the Defense and Veteran's Brain Injury Center (DVBIC)
- Administered psychodiagnostic, psychoeducational, and neuropsychological tests to individuals of all ages
- Conducted strength-based evaluations, including semi-structured interviews and administration of psychodiagnostic measures, for children ages 3-18 to determine wrap-around treatment needs and medical necessity

SUPERVISORS: Dr. Donald Robertson and Dr. David LaPorte

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Guest Lecturer for Forensic Psychology Courses at Robert Morris University

February 2022, February 2023

Guest Lecturer for Psychiatric Residents at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic

Sex Offender Assessment and Treatment

October 2013

Guest Lecturer for Undergraduate Students in a Criminology course at University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg
Forensic Psychology Issues Fall 2011, Spring 2012

Teaching Associate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Two sections of General Psychology per semester Fall 2011, Spring 2012

Adjunct Faculty at Westmoreland County Community College
General Psychology Fall 2011, Spring 2012
Abnormal Psychology Spring 2011

PUBLICATIONS*

Bliss, B.A. (2021). *Writing good referral questions*. ACBA's Lawyer's Journal.

Bliss, B.A. (2014). Rape Trauma Syndrome. In Robin Cautin & Scott Lilienfeld (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Clinical Psychology*. Wiley Blackwell.

McHugh, M., Sciarrillo, S. R., & **Watson, B.** (2012). Rape and Women's Sexuality. Included in Donna Castañeda & Michelle Paludi (Eds.), *An Essential Handbook of Women's Sexuality*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Watson, B.A., Kovack, K.A., & McHugh, M.C. (2012). Stranger and acquaintance rape: Cultural constructions, reactions, and victim experiences. In Lundberg-Love, P.K., Nadal, K.L., & Paludi, M.A. (Eds.), *Women and mental disorders, Vol. 2: Roots in abuse, crime, and sexual victimization* (1-21). Santa Barbara, California: Praeger.

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS*

Bliss, B.A. *Psychological testing used in family court evaluations* (March 2023). A one-hour training presented to the Allegheny County Bar Association (ACBA)'s FLS Children's Issues group.

Bliss, B.A. *How to write well-defined questions for psychologists to obtain the answers you want* (December 2021). A one-hour training presented to the Allegheny County Bar Association (ACBA)'s FLS Children's Issues group.

Coufal, R., **Bliss, B.A.**, & Dilmore, T. *Difficulties with Sexual Risk Assessments* (May 2019). A three-hour training presented to the Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Network (SAPEN) conference in State College, PA.

Bliss, B.A. *Child Custody and Parental Fitness Evaluations*. (2018, April; 2019, May). A two-hour training presented to the Taylor Hardin Secure Medical Facility in Montgomery, Alabama.

Bliss, B.A. & Hauth, V. (2016, April). *What's the Point of Megan's Law: Effects of Legislation on Sex Offender Risk*. A paper presented at IUP Psychology Day.

Bliss, B.A. (2014, March). *Clinical Work with Sex Offenders*. A training presentation at the IUP Conference for Violence and Victimization.

Watson, B.A. (2012, March). *Sexual Constructs and Rape Proclivity*. A paper presented at the Association for Women in Psychology (AWP) Annual Conference, Palm Springs, CA.

Berman, P., McHugh, M., Kasardo, A., **Watson, B.**, & Swiderski, C. (2011, September). *Pedagogy for Prevention: Integrating violence into the psychology curriculum*. A paper presented at the International Conference on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma (IVAT), San Diego, CA

Watson, B.A. (2008, March). *Parent-Adolescent Closeness and Antisocial Behavior: The Effects of Gender and Childhood Maltreatment*. A poster presented at the Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA) Biannual Conference, Chicago, IL.

*Watson is maiden name. Last name legally changed to Bliss in 2013.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Dissertation Researcher

2010-2013

Is it still a sexual offense if society doesn't find it offensive? The impact of cultural constructions on rape proclivity, which used established scales, as well as a newly developed scale, to assess the relationship between belief in the sexual double standard and rape myth acceptance and an individual's likelihood to rape or force sex.

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Maureen McHugh, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Independent Researcher

- *Parent-child relationship and gender as moderators of adolescent antisocial behavior*, which explored whether closeness to parents, or the gender of the parent-child dyad, acted as a moderator to the relationship between child abuse and adolescent antisocial behavior
SUPERVISOR: Dr. Manfred van Dulmen, Kent State University 2007-2008
- *More than Scars: The Relationship between Childhood Maltreatment and Antisocial Behavior*, which studied whether different types of maltreatment (i.e. physical abuse vs. neglect) led to different types of adolescent antisocial behavior (i.e. aggressive vs. non-aggressive)
SUPERVISOR: Dr. Manfred van Dulmen, Kent State University 2006-2007

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Forensic Psychology (AFPP)	2022- current
Pennsylvania Sex Offender Assessment Board (SOAB)	2016-current
American Psychology-Law Society, Division 41 of APA (APLS)	2011- current
Pennsylvania Psychological Association (PPA)	2009-current
National Partnership to End Interpersonal Violence (NPEIV)	2016-2018, 2023- current
Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC)	2015-2022
American Psychological Association (APA)	2009-2019
Mid-Atlantic Region Chapter of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (MARATSA)	2016-2019
International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN)	2009-2011
Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA)	2007-2008

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT*

Supporting Children and Families with Disabilities

April 2025

ADA Training provided virtually

- A virtual workshop focused on providing services to children and families with disabilities, including but not limited to drug and alcohol use disorders or individuals on medication-assistance treatment (MAT).

Using the Psychopathy Checklist Revised (PCL-R)

September 2024

Pennsylvania Sex Offender Assessment Board Training, Harrisburg, PA

- A two- 12-hour CE workshop focused on the research and correct administration of the PCL-R, as well as some understanding of the PCL-Y and PCL-SV.

Lecturer: Stephen Hart, Ph.D.

Differentiating Delusional Disorder from Extreme Political Beliefs

November 2022

- A 3 hour CE workshop which taught a seventeen factor model of analysis for differentiating between the two, which could be useful in cases of risk, trial competence, or mental state at the time of the offense.

Lecturer: Mark Cunningham, PhD, ABPP

Analytic Habits of the Master Forensic Thinker

November 2022

- A 3 hour CE workshop to examine the pathways of forensic analysis and specific habits of reasoning that are most likely to maximize objectivity and minimize bias.

Lecturer: Terry Kukor, PhD, ABPP

Evidence for Mental Health Professionals

November 2022

- A 2 hour CE workshop focusing on the evidence mental health professionals provide in criminal and civil proceedings, including providing a legal primer, describing the roles of experts, and examining the admissibility standards for expert evidence provided by governing case law and various rules of evidence.

Lecturer: David DeMatteo, JD, PhD, ABPP

Interviews of Children When There Are Allegations of Sexual Abuse

October 2019

- A 6-hour CE workshop focused on interviewing children when there are abuse allegations, as well as a review of research regarding abuse allegations and suggestibility of children's memories.

Lecturers: David Martindale, PhD, ABPP; Robin M. Deutsch, PhD, ABPP; and Hon. Denise McColley

Integrating Research into Practice and Policy: The Impact on Families and Children

October 2019

Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) Fall Conference, Pittsburgh, PA

- A two-day conference with workshops focused on issues pertinent to conducting custody evaluations, making appropriate recommendations for the courts, and ensuring that evaluations are grounded in research.

Current Best Practices in the Assessment, Treatment, and Management of Sex Offenders

May 2017

Pennsylvania Sex Offender Assessment Board Training, Harrisburg, PA

- A 6-hour CE workshop focused on assessment and treatment of sex offenders.

Lecturer: Anna Salter, Ph.D.

Static-99r Update Training

January 2017

Pennsylvania Sex Offender Assessment Board Training, Harrisburg, PA

- A 6-hour CE workshop focused on how to appropriately use the actuarial risk-assessment measure.

Lecturer: Amy Phenix, Ph.D.

Preventing Sexual Abuse: Learning Together/Working Together

May 2016

Mid-Atlantic Region Chapter of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers, Mount Pocono, PA

- A conference focused on sex addiction and hypersexuality in sex offenders, assessing and treating adolescents who have offended sexually, and risk assessment for offenders with intellectual deficits.

Lecturers: Liam Marshall, Ph.D.; James Worling, Ph.D.; Matthew Schaffer, Psy.D.

Child Custody Evaluations

January 2014

American Academy of Forensic Psychology, Charleston, SC

- A 7-hour CE workshop that focused on conducting child custody evaluations, including the evaluation, report writing, and testimony.

Lecturer: Jonathan Gould, Ph.D., ABPP

Parenting Capacity Evaluations

January 2014

American Academy of Forensic Psychology, Charleston, SC

- A 7-hour workshop that focused on conducting parenting capacity evaluations for child protective service agencies, including the evaluation, report writing, and testimony.

Lecturer: Anita Boss, PsyD, ABPP

The Defendant: Impact of Mental Disability in the Criminal Law Process

April 2011

American Academy of Forensic Psychology, Chicago, IL

- A 7-hour CE workshop that focused on the legal issue of competency and issues related to sentencing, the death penalty, and involuntary administration of antipsychotic medications to forensic patients

Lecturer: Michael Perlin, J.D.

Insanity Defense Evaluations

April 2011

American Academy of Forensic Psychology, Chicago, IL

- A 7 hour CE workshop that focused on the assessment of mental state at the time of the offense, including how to write reports about criminal responsibility, as well as a discussion on how to detect malingering

Lecturer: Philip Resnick, M.D., ABPP

Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) Seminar

2010- 2011

Center for Traumatic Stress in Children and Adolescents, Pittsburgh, PA

- Bi-monthly lectures on topics related to TF-CBT, such as recognizing signs of abuse, special issues related to traumatic grief, and how to conduct TF-CBT.

Lecturer: Meghan Eberle, Psy.D.

**I have attended numerous other trainings and presentations but selected only the most relevant to list here.*

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Board Member of the Chuckie Mahoney Memorial Foundation	2024-current
Volunteer Wish Granter for Make-A-Wish of Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia	2017-2020
Member of the Allegheny County Sex Offender Management and Containment (SOMAC) Task Force	2017-2020
Volunteer for the Guardian Angels Medical Service Dogs for Veterans Mutt Strut	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019
Member of the Reliance National Partnership Grant working to end campus sexual assault	2016-2018
Chair of the Mentorship Subcommittee of the National Partnership to End Interpersonal Violence (NPEIV)	2015-2017
Chief Intern at Ohio Psychology Internship	2012-2013
Peer Reviewer, <i>Sex Roles: A Journal of Research</i>	2009-2012
Secretary of the Psychology Graduate Student Organization (PGSO)	2010-2012
Campus Representative for the Pennsylvania Psychological Association (PPA)	2009-2012
Member of the Center for Applied Psychology (CAP) Steering Committee	2010-2011
Co-leader of planning committee for the 2 nd Annual Gender and Sexuality Symposium at IUP	2010-2011