

FREQUENCY AND TYPE OF EXPOSURE TO
SECONDARY TRAUMA AND INCIDENCE OF
POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS IN MEDICAL EXAMINER
PERSONNEL

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There are a variety of occupations in which employees may be exposed to secondary traumatization (ST) because they are required to assist individuals exposed to traumatic events and who are experiencing high levels of distress. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between type and level of exposure to ST and symptoms of PTSD and depression in employees of medical examiner (ME) offices. ME offices are responsible for the determination of the cause and manner of death and the identification of victims. Employees working in ME offices vary in the types and frequency of exposure to potentially traumatic events (Brondolo, Wellington, Brondolo, Brondolo, & Delahanty, 2012).

Participants included 236 employees of ME offices in 6 states (151 women). The sample included 35 pathologists, 61 medico-legal death investigators, 40 autopsy technicians, 15 managers, 39 clerical workers, and 29 laboratory or research workers and 17 other employees. We examined rates of exposure to 9 categories of events: infant accidental death, infant homicide, child homicide, multiple fatality events affecting the same family, other multiple fatality events, death of an individual known to the participant, death of an individual in custody, deaths in which the remains reveal the victim was suffering, dismembered remains, and fire-damaged remains. Controlling for age, gender and education level, the frequency of encountering 7 of the 9 types of incidents were significantly associated with scores on the Post-traumatic Stress Disorders Diagnostic (PSD) scale (r s range from .16 (child homicide) to .27 (accidental dismemberment), all p s < .05). There were significant relationships between the frequency of exposure to ST and PSD scores for most personnel categories, but the type of incident varied. The results suggest that the frequency of exposure is a significant risk factor for the development of PSD symptoms in employees exposed to secondary trauma. Additional training and workload analyses may be needed to reduce the risks.

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- Paper 2** Unmet Research Needs of Women Hotel Housekeepers
- Pamela Vossen, UNITE HERE
- Paper 3** Occupational Health Issues Among Warehouse Workers
- Andrea Nicholls, MPH, Los Angeles Federation of Labor, Los Angeles, CA
- Paper 4** A Labor Viewpoint: The Canadian Psychological Health Standard
- Sari Sairanen, BA, Canadian Auto Workers
- Paper 5** Organizational Change and Total Worker Health™: A Commentary
- Peter Schnall, MD, MPH, University of California–Irvine, UCLA, and Center for Social Epidemiology, Santa Monica, CA; Paul Landsbergis, PhD; Marnie Dobson, PhD

Promoting Resilience and Preventing Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (Paper Panel Session)

Santa Barbara A/B

Chair: Bengt Arnetz, MD, PhD, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

- Paper 1** Primary and Secondary Traumatization Among Israeli Firefighters: Prevalence Rates and Resilience Factors
- Talma Kushnir, PhD, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel; Lugassi Marc, PhD; Zeev Kaplan, MD
- Paper 2** First Responder Stress, Resilience, and Performance: A National Study Across First Responder Groups
- Bengt Arnetz, MD, PhD, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI; Eamonn Arble, MS
- Paper 3** Frequency and Type of Exposure to Secondary Trauma and Incidence of Posttraumatic Stress in Medical Examiner Personnel
- Elizabeth Brondolo, PhD, St. John's University, Jamaica, NY; Kristina Murani, BA; Pegah Eftekhazadeh; Douglas Delahanty, PhD

Preparing for Life After Graduate School: Careers in Occupational Health Psychology (Symposium)

San Gabriel A/B

Chair: Tori L. Crain, MS, Portland State University, Portland, OR; Madlen Gohlke, BA, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY

Discussants: Christopher J.L. Cunningham, PhD, The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, TN; Russell Matthews, PhD, Bowling Green State University, OH; Autumn D. Krauss, PhD, Sentis, Brisbane, Australia; Yueng-hsiang (Emily) Huang, PhD, Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety, Hopkinton, MA

6:00 p.m.

**Student Social
Networking Event**

SATURDAY, MAY 18

8:00–9:30 a.m.

**Poster Session/
Breakfast Reception**

California Ballroom/Sacramento

Healthy Workplaces

- A1** A Primary Intervention Concept for Preventing Work Related Stress in SMEs Using In-House Resources and Competences
- Liv Gish, PhD, DTU Management Engineering, Kgs. Lyngby, Denmark; Christine Ipsen, PhD
- A2** Mental Health Awareness Training (MHAT): An Intervention for Leaders
- Jennifer K. Dimoff, HBS, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, NS, Canada; E. Kevin Kelloway, PhD
- A3** The Impact of Psychologically Healthy Workplace and Practice Resource Appraisals on Worker Outcomes
- Elizabeth A. Rupperecht, MS, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, MO; Matthew J. Grawitch, PhD; Larissa K. Barber, PhD
- A4** The Importance of Shared Perceptions on Organizational Learning Between Leaders and Their Teams
- Susanne Tafvelin, MSc, Umea University, Sweden; Henna Hasson, PhD; Ulrica von Thiele Schwarz, PhD
- A5** Workplace Well-Being: Building Positive and Psychologically Healthy Workplaces
- Danielle Mercer, PhD student, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, NS, Canada; Catherine Loughlin, PhD
- A6** Analyzing the Relationship Between Employers' External Image and OSH Initiatives in Europe
- Daniel Mari Ripa MSc, University of Oviedo, Asturias, Spain; Aditya Jain, PhD; Stavroula Leka, PhD; Juan Herrero Olaizola, PhD

Workplace Diversity, Minority and Immigrant Workers, Health Disparities

- B1** Characterizing Stress in Hispanic Agricultural Workers
- Diane S. Rohlman, PhD, Oregon Health and Science University, Portland, OR; Meagan C. Shaw, BA; Huszar Silvia, BA; Khalid Khan, PhD
- B2** Self-Aspect Overlap and Culture Impact on Employee Health Outcomes
- Jessica S. Waldrop, MS, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, MO; Elizabeth A. Rupperecht, MS; Amy M. Garczynski, MS; Matthew J. Grawitch, PhD
- B3** Sex and Racial Inequality in Distribution of Workplace Social Factors: Intermediary Determinants of Health
- Toni Alterman, PhD, NIOSH, Cincinnati, OH; Sara E. Luckhaupt, MPH, MD; Rui Shen, PhD; Jia Li, MS

