

**A Modest Proposal:
It's Time for a Paradigm Shift in How
we Treat Safety in the US**

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Acknowledgements

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 - From my UCM days – a few colleagues/supervisors who did questionable things & students who attempted to cheat in my classes
 - Wayne Schenk & Leigh Ann Blunt for reviewing this Power Point show

Presentation Topics

- **The Problem**
- **A bit of JN Zey History**
- **Examples of Questionable Actions**
- **Do we really need a paradigm shift in our thinking about OSH?**
- **Other Stuff**

The Problem

- Our Nation's leaders do not respect safety as much as other OSHE Disciplines
- How can Dr. Zey make such a bold statement?
 - He has 3 college degrees!
 - Because he pays attention to people and has for most of his 67+ years
 - He is smarter than he looks

Some Background on John N. Zey

- Born in 1952 on a farm in central Missouri
- 13 siblings but only 12 classmates in Senior class at Prairie Home School, Prairie Home, MO
- Poor – poorer than the Walton's
- Parents believed in some old sayings
 - “Spare the rod and spoil the child”



John & Carol Beth Zey, circa 1956

Some Background on John N. Zey

■ Personal characteristics:

- Not too bright
- Occasional bouts of halitosis
- Believes in the old adage, Truth, Justice & the American Way
- JNZ, assumed people not poor - on welfare - were
 - Smarter, more Honest, more Ethical

Some Background on John N. Zey

- Parents taught their 14 kids – you have to work for what you want
- John N. Zey left Prairie Home, MO & CMSU afraid that he would be not be considered a good employee due to his lack of skills
- My ethics at the time was and remains the “Golden Rule”

A Golden Rule Refresher

- What is the golden rule?
 - “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!”
- Some modified versions of the Golden Rule
 - Do unto others and then run like heck!
 - He/she who has the gold makes the rules

Little Johnnie Learns a Hard Lesson

- **Little Johnnie Gets A Rude Awakening**
 - Some people have never read the golden rule
 - Some people have read it, but assumed it was meant for others!
 - Some people cannot read

Questionable Action: A Bold Statement

- Guest speaker gave DSHEFS Seminar
- Topic was Bogus IH degrees
- Mentioned some “universities that would sell you an IH degree”
- Then he mentioned CMSU!
 - I bet some of the audience will be interested in this one!

Questionable Action: A Bold Statement

- He then stated,...
- While CMSU is not a diploma mill, if I had gone to that easy IH program (CMSU) instead of the difficult IH program I am in, I could have 2 MS degrees by now!
- I was shocked & looking for a place to hide
- The other 40 people in the audience knew I graduated from CMSU/UCM

Questionable Action: A Bold Statement

- After the speaker was finished I asked him on what he based his opinions about the CMSU MS-IH program?
 - I don't know anything myself but I have heard negative comments from other people!
 - I was shocked by bold statements made in public, that was based on hear-say

Questionable Action: A Bold Statement

- **At the time of the DSHEFS seminar and those x-rated statements**
 - **11 of 56 Certified Industrial Hygienists (CIH) in NIOSH were UCM Safety Science MS-IH alumni!**
 - **25-30% of the technical committees of AIHA and ACGIH has UCM alumni as members**
 - **My dissertation research revealed $\sim 1/2$ of the alumni who graduated with an MS-IH were certified as CIH**

Questionable Action: NIOSH TPG Review

NIOSH MS-IH Program Review

- Program submits training grant application
- My last 4 years of work in NIOSH was in the NIOSH's Training Grants Branch 1992 - 1996
- For first time TPG applications NIOSH team visited program for ~1.5 days
- NIOSH team stays together, did not visit any labs
- Starting about 2007, all TPGs for continuation reviews were done by a panel of paid external reviewers in Cincinnati or Atlanta with no site visits

Questionable Practices NIOSH Reviews

- Rather, the academic programs going through review for a continuation of their grant are reviewed by an external panel
- NIOSH would not tell the program faculty who reviewed their program's application
- There was no mechanism for feedback to NIOSH
- In one sense there was no accountability for the paid NIOSH panel members

Example of Questionable Action

- In 2002 - John Zey submits a NIOSH TPG application for the UCM MS-IH program,
- We had a TPG for both MS-IH & MS Safety in mid 1970s.
- After an initial NIOSH site visit on Campus, the TPG is approved
- The UCM MS-IH program TPG is reapproved 2 times
- 2009 NIOSH stops funding UCM's MS-IH TPG after a panel of unnamed external reviewers made some false comments in their review

Questionable Action: NIOSH TPG Review

- In addition, our MS-IH program was viewed as so bad by the panel
 - The panel did not give Safety Sciences' application a score
- Lets look closer at some of the comments the panel of NIOSH secret reviewers made in the UCM MH-IH renewal application

Review Comments from NIOSH Panel

NIOSH Review of Safety Sciences MS-IH TPG

- Examples of comments written in NIOSH panel review reports
 - John Zey worked for OSHA for 20 years
 - My response – No, John Zey worked for NIOSH for 20 years
 - Aside: If your paid secret panel reviewers can't read a 2-page resume and remember the information – they should be fired

Review Comments From NIOSH Panel

Examples of comments from External Panel reviewers

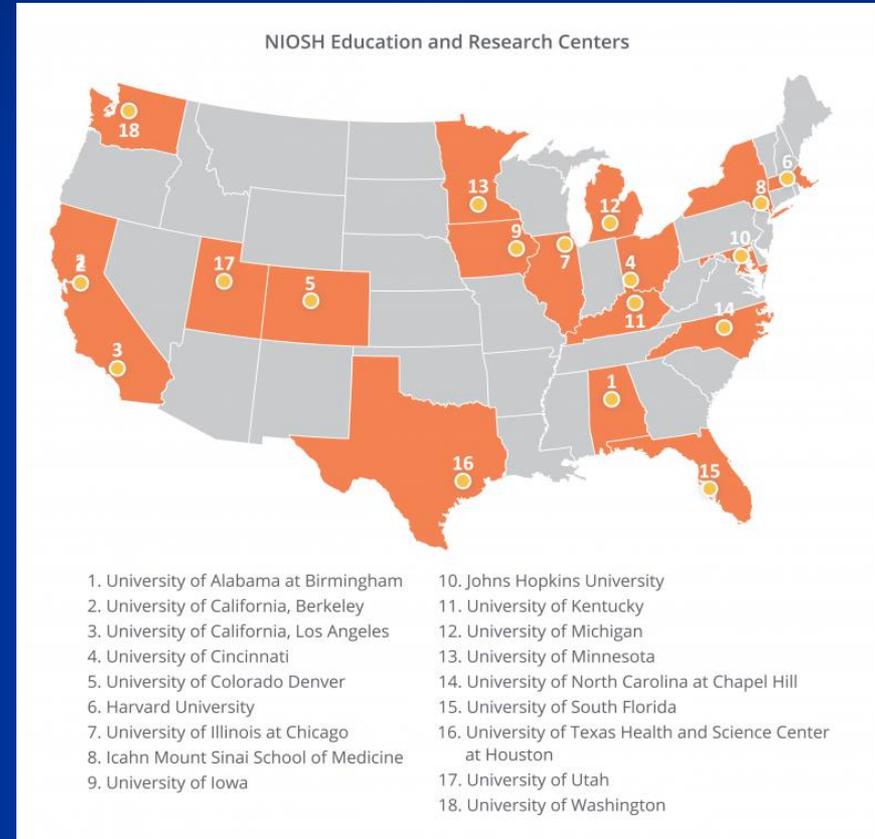
- This program reports that about 50% of their MS-IH alumni are certified, that is a low percentage
- My Response
 - We were one of the first IH programs to report this type of data
 - Is NIOSH acting ethically in this situation?
- NIOSH did not have a feedback mechanism for programs that are reviewed!

Review Comments From NIOSH Panel

- These Faculty (i.e., Safety Sciences) cannot be expected to teach research as they have minimal research experience
- My response;
 - Dr. Alice Greife's paper was selected for the NIOSH Alice Hamilton award, for the best published scientific paper produced by a NIOSH researcher in 1988
 - Greife, Zey & other UCM Alumni worked on many research studies NIOSH conducted
 - In 2008 I had about 80 pubs, in 2020 I have 100 pubs
 - Among NIOSH alumni (from UCM) Alice Greife, Wayne Sanderson, Paul Hewitt, Greg Kuhlman, Jeff Bryant, John Zey.

Problems: Little Known facts

- NIOSH has increased their ERC total from 12 to 18.
- Zey - they did not need any more than 12
- ~1977, NIOSH originally set up the ERC's with seed money to get them started



Where are the NIOSH Training Grant Funds Going?



Most of the money goes to ERC's

Total NIOSH Training Grant Funds; FY-18

Type	Amount	% of Total
Research & Career Development Grants	\$16,575,147	18%
Small Business Innovation Research	\$1,841,700	2%
Multidisciplinary Centers	59,107,157	64%
Specialty Training Programs	5,470,466	6%
Cooperative Research Agreements	9,157,411	10%
Total	92,151,511	\$100

Little Known facts

- While NIOSH has increased funding of ERCs, and cut some TPG's the nation's on-the-job fatality rate has leveled off and then started to rise (Manuele 2014 & 2020)
- NIOSH has reduced the # of funded safety practitioner programs while increasing the # of ERC and other programs to ERC's
 - **Dr. Zey believes there is a connection!**

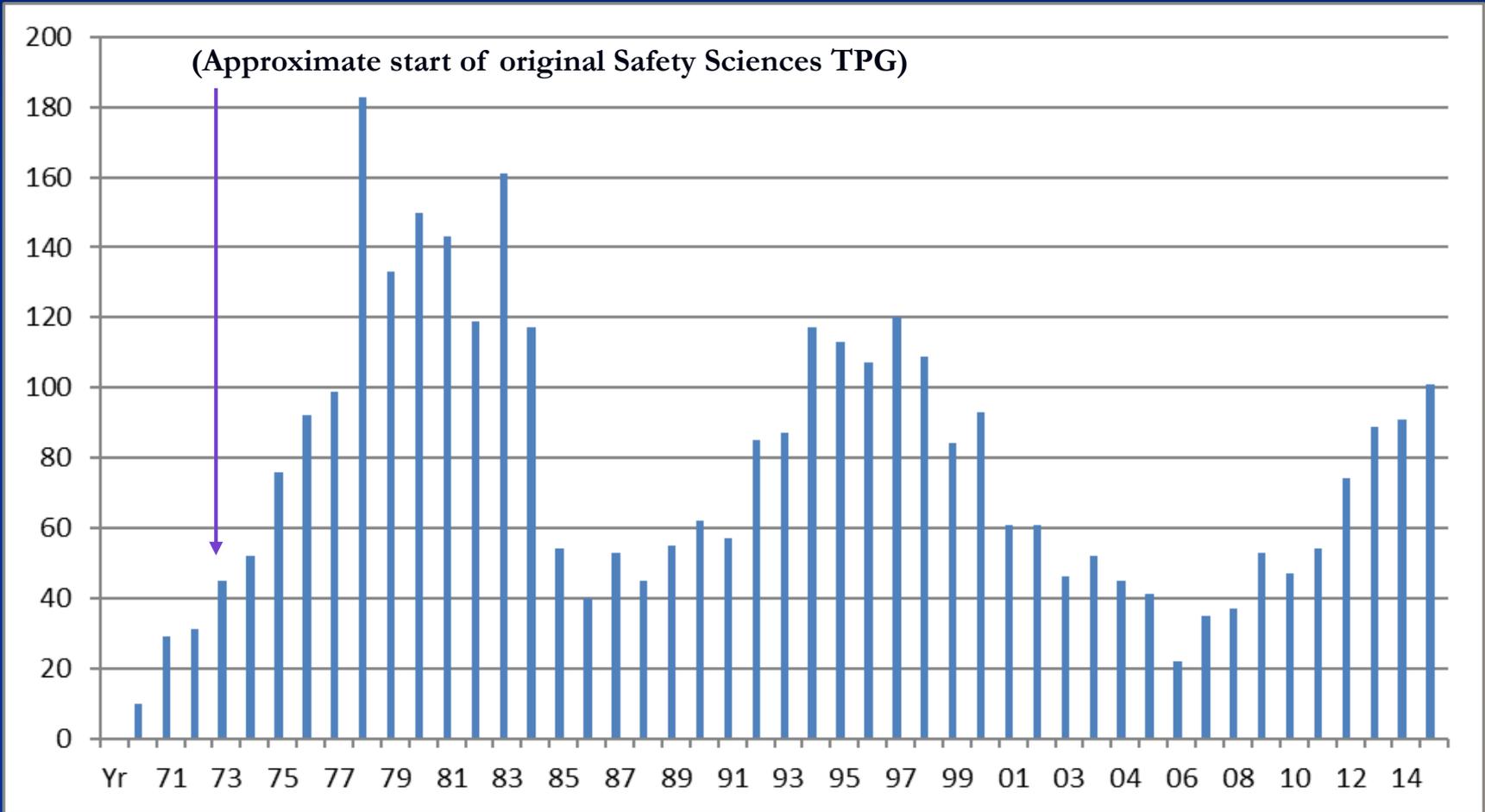
Little Known facts

- Under the OSH Act, NIOSH is responsible for ensuring an adequate supply of OSH professionals
- NIOSH reported about 15 years ago that the nation will have a significant shortage of OSH professionals
- How did this shortage occur?
 - **NIOSH has not done their job in this regard**
 - **NIOSH rarely hires practitioners to help them plan their studies**
 - **Zey – This suggests NIOSH views researchers, and health Professionals as more important than safety professionals**

Little Known facts

- In April 1971 after NIOSH was created from BOSH, the training division funded small grants (called TPGs) to various OSH programs
- Lots of programs were funded
 - UCM was funded for both IH and Safety
 - Let's see what happened to Safety Sciences' graduation numbers after getting NIOSH funding!

Yearly Number of Safety Sciences OSH Graduates



Comparing ABET & NIOSH Renewal Reviews

Program Review Characteristics	ABET	NIOSH
Programs reviewers are identified to the program	Yes, can recuse them	No
Reviewers are trained by Organization	Extensive	Minimal
Team Routine During Visit	Team splits up and looks at lots of stuff, including labs	Team stays together, does not look at labs
Reviewers sign conflict of interest forms	Yes	No
Organization Has a Formal Feedback Mechanism	Yes	No

Paradigm Shift?

- Does the nation Really Need a Paradigm Shift in how Safety is viewed?
- J Zey's 3 Responses
 - Yes!
 - Yes, Yes!!
 - & Oh My Yess!!!

How to Fix Problem: Nation

- Problem - the Nation does not realize the significance of Safety
- OSH needs to get more public awareness of the impact of safety
- Get OSH professionals to visit schools to present on safety & recruit, and/or
 - National Advertising
 - Perhaps a movie on Triangle Shirtwaist Disaster, Hawks Nest, Radium Girls, Bronchiolitis Obliterans (popcorn Lung)
 - Get some publicity – local newspaper, NPR, etc.

How to Fix Problem: Nation

- Teach Safety in all schools
 - **K – 12 & Higher Ed**
- Reason, in the US we teach science, math, history, and English at all levels of education
- Safety is rarely taught in schools
 - **A member of the HLC for UCM told Dr. Zey Safety was not a suitable general studies topic**
 - **Former UCM Dean told Dr. Blunt that Safety was not a suitable general studies topic**

How to Fix Problem: Nation

- Fatalities from accidents
 - Annual Deaths from accidents in US.
 - ~160,000
 - At work ~4,500
 - Thus, away from work ~155,000
- This data suggests safety is a suitable general studies (GS) topic for universities
- Let's replace one of the other GS required courses with a course like Safe2010

How to Fix Problem: Nation

- Convene national workshop on Safety
 - This was done in ~1964 (Lyndon Johnson)
 - It was an of the impetuses for the OSH Act
 - Workshop was held due to concerns over increasing rates of fatalities and serious injuries in the work place
 - Occupational diseases was not the primary impetus for the workshop
- Explain to NIOSH who Francis Perkins was and her impact to OSH

How to Fix Problem - NIOSH

- Establish an oversight committee of OSH practitioners with clout who can stand up to high level leaders
 - Members should not be getting money from NIOSH
- Replace some researchers with OSH practitioners &
 - Send some of their researchers into real world to work

How to Fix Problem – NIOSH

Restrict NIOSH Director to one 6-yr term

Both Dr Millar and Dr Howard got reappointed to 2nd 6-year terms

Leadership theory suggests leaders should move on after 6-7 years

Flush about 1/3 of NIOSH researchers, physicians, and epi personnel to the real world

Important Events

In closing I need to mention other important issues

- 1st Safety Sciences **Fund Raiser**
- Yes, **Fund Raiser!**
 - The bottom line is Safety Sciences has initiated a fund raiser as they need support and ...
 - ...if you want to see safety sciences remain among the nations best OSH academic practitioner programs – help us out.
 - If you graduated from another university help that OSH program out

2nd Important issue

MCASE Safety Olympics for OSH Students

- Idea originated at UCM – Safety Sciences
- MCASE picked it up and we will have out third annual Safety Olympics this April



Safety Science Safety Olympics Team 2018



Judges: both UCM Alumni - 2018 Safety Olympics

MCASE Safety Olympics

2018 & 2019 Olympics held at Pitt State U

2020 Safety Olympics will be held au U of Central Ok

2021 Safety Olympics will be held at UCM



Safety Science Student Team in Safety Poster Event
(2018)



Students & Faculty in Hazard Recognition Event
lab (2018)

Things You Need to Know

- Safety Sciences has re-invented its's self
 - Student numbers are good
 - 1/4 of faculty are international
 - Faculty publish regularly
 - 9 of 11 faculty are certified
 - Faculty are very active in OSP Professional organizations including Emeriti faculty
 - Dr Allen Iske, Dr. John N Zey
 - Safety Sciences faculty beginning to publish books

Questions?