

Hail to the Chief!

A Tribute to Dr. Paul Muchinsky



1947-2015

11th Annual River Cities Industrial Organizational Conference

I made the following presentation at the 11th Annual River Cities Industrial-Organizational Psychology Conference (RCIO) on October 20th, 2015 at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. It seemed only appropriate that we hold it at lunchtime when Paul did his spiel about IO. All Hail the Chief!

Back in early June, I emailed Dr. Paul Muchinsky, or “The Chief” as we affectionately referred to him, to once again attend RCIO and provide his now legendary lunchtime discussion of all things I-O. Dr. Muchinsky had been one of the strongest advocates of RCIO, going so far as to write a glowing review of RCIO for *The Industrial Psychologist* (TIP: <http://www.utc.edu/psychology/pdfs/i-o/lettersofsupportjan2014.pdf>). And while we always appreciated his perspective, his participation wasn’t always necessarily smooth. A few years ago, for example, Paul was scheduled to be our keynote speaker – and he didn’t show! I emailed him the next day inquiring about his absence, concerned that something was terribly wrong, and received what may be my all-time favorite email: “*Holy Shit! Was that this weekend?*” We continued to invite him back anyway....

So, you can imagine my dismay when I received his response back that he had a terminal lung disease and would be unable to attend. Now, terminal could be a few days, weeks, months or even years. We all are, after all, terminal to a certain extent, so I held out hope that maybe there was some hope and we could have him at the very least video a short address that we could show at lunch. Unfortunately, that was not to be as Dr. Muchinsky passed away on September 8th, 2015, at the young age of 68. We will miss his dry wit and encyclopedic knowledge of the history of I-O psychology.

It seemed only fitting, then, that we honor Paul at this year’s RCIO, lovingly entitled “Hail to the Chief!” Why “the Chief?” Well, Dr. Muchinsky was a great story teller and could be, well, less than politically correct, particularly with some of his comments in his TIP column, *The High Society*, which may have ruffled a few I-O feathers over the years. The following is the story of the origins of his nickname from one such article:

9. Stereotypes are often inaccurate assumptions about behavior

I made a reservation to rent a car at the Miami International Airport. I approached the rental car counter. The agent on duty is an attractive young lady. I will not mention the color of her hair. The conversation between us went like this:

Agent: "Do you have a reservation?"

Me: "Yes, I do. My name is Muchinsky."

Agent: "What?"

Me: "Muchinsky."

Agent: "What?"

Me: "Muchinsky."

Agent: "What?"

Me: "It's like three words, Much-In-Sky, but it's pronounced Mew-Chin-Ski."

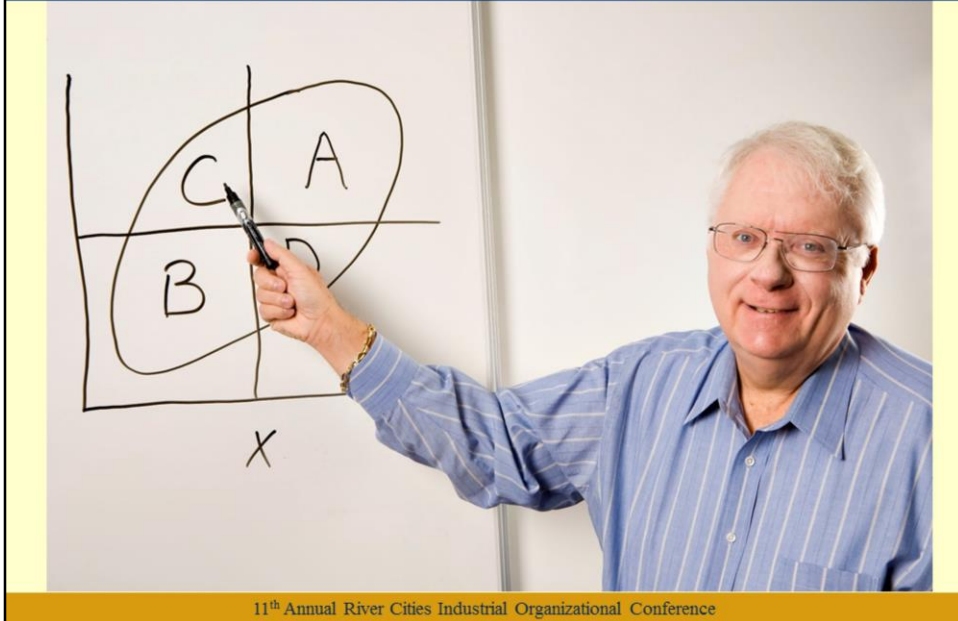
Agent: "Much-In-Sky! Are you Indian?!"

Me: "Lady, if it helps me get my car, yes, I am an Indian."

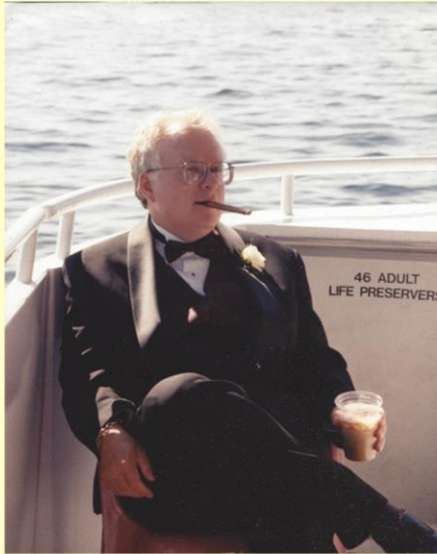
Agent: "What tribe?"

Upon telling this story to my students, I acquired the nickname "Chief Much-In-Sky." Stereotypes are often inaccurate assumptions about behavior. But not always.

The following tribute includes a few pictures, a couple stories, and a whole bunch of friendship and respect. The first picture is his favorite picture, wearing the letter jacket of his beloved New York Yankees. Now, as a fan of the Pittsburgh Pirates, I felt obliged to remind Paul at every opportunity of our 1960 conquest of the Yankees, which led to some interesting comments....but I digress.



Here is Dr. Muchinsky explaining the theory of C as the most correct answer on an multiple choice test. “I could explain it further, but then I’d have to kill you....”



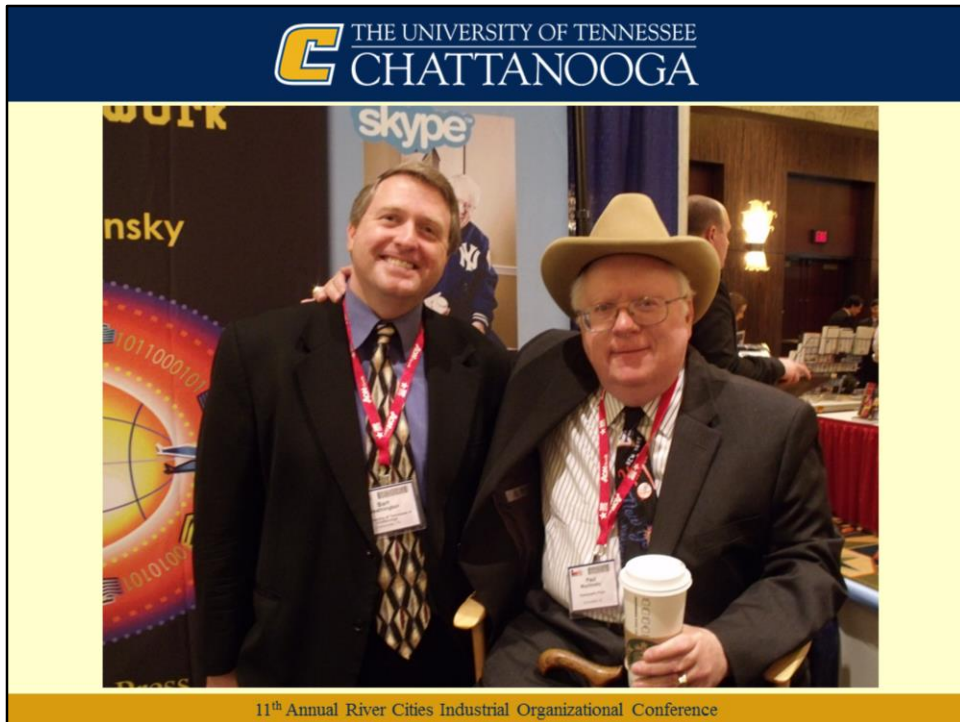
11th Annual River Cities Industrial Organizational Conference

Dapper Paul – His wife Kay’s favorite picture. Who knew he could look so good?



11th Annual River Cities Industrial Organizational Conference

Paul and his son, Brian Muchinsky,
at the SIOP Conference in
Philadelphia.

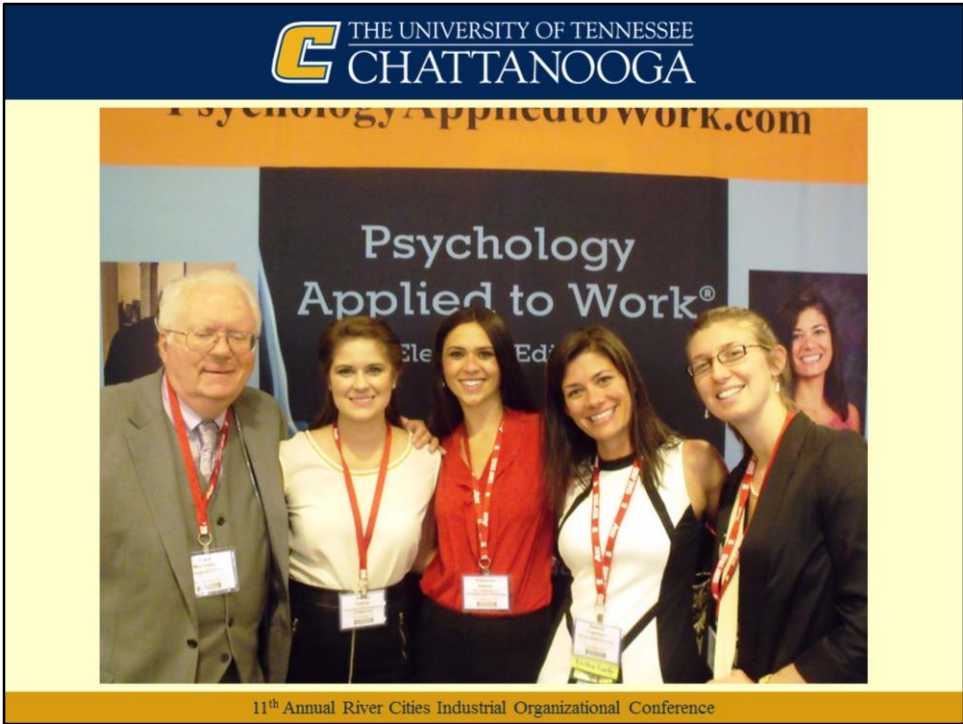


Paul would have his picture taken with anyone to sell his self-acknowledged, best-selling 11th edition of *Psychology Applied to Work*.... (pictured is Dr. Bart Weathington, one of our I-O faculty).

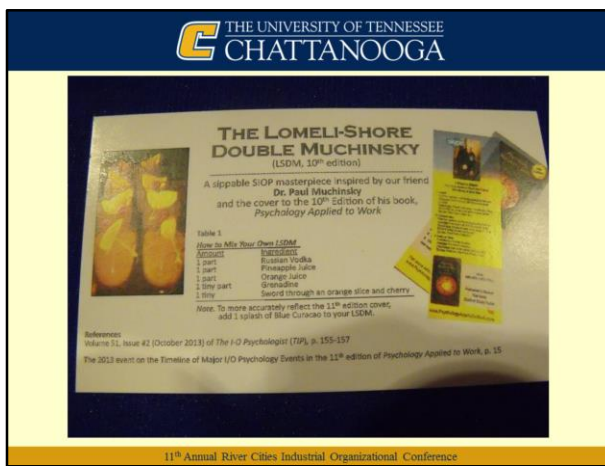


11th Annual River Cities Industrial Organizational Conference

Here's a picture of Paul at SIOP with Max Mannheimer – a proud UTC I-O MS Graduate!



Paul with the ladies....More UTC I-Os and Tori Culbertson, his co-editor.

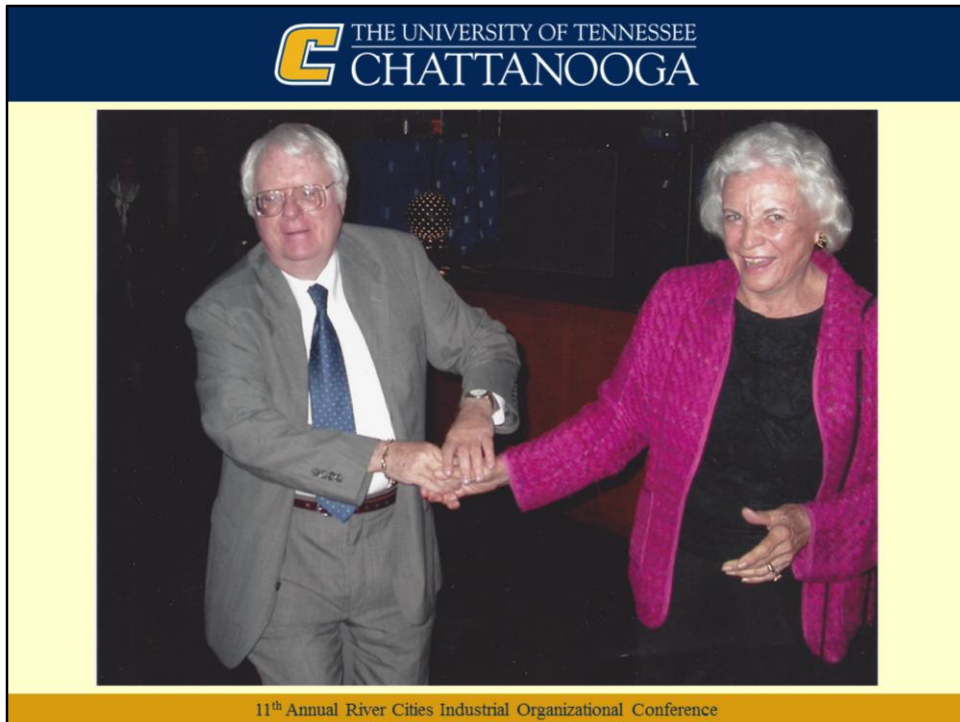


At the 2013 SIOP Conference in Houston, Tori Culbertson was working with graduate students (Laura Lomeli and Daniel Shore) stuffing SIOP bags with 10th edition ads on really thick cards. Daniel (I think) almost put two in one bag and announced, “I almost added a double-Muchinsky.” Then Laura said, “That sounds like a mixed drink.” By the end of that session, they had crafted their libation into the Double Muchinsky. They weren’t sure whether to even mention it to Paul, but Tori said he would DEFINITELY find the humor in the situation. Not only did he love the idea, a group of them and other students went down to the bar that evening (hence the picture of Tori in the get-up with the mustache) to have the bartender whip up a bunch of Double Muchinsky’s. By the end of the conference, the two graduate students were vying for first author, and Laura’s argument held more merit (in Paul’s opinion), so it officially became the Lomeli-Shore Double Muchinsky. Daniel had business cards printed prior to the Philadelphia conference since it is now cited in the 11th edition of *Psychology Applied to Work*[®] under the timeline of major events in the world and I/O Psychology (p. 15 of the 11th edition) as well as the October 2013 issue of *The I-O*

Psychologist (TIP).



Laura Lomeli and Daniel Shore – Inventors of the Lomeli Shore Double Muchinsky. Looks like Paul may already have tested a couple....

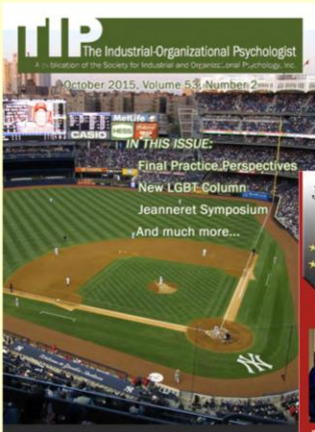


Dancing with Justice Sandra Day O'Connor (yes, that Sandra Day O'Connor!) when they received honorary doctorates from their alma mater, Gettysburg College. Doesn't she look happy ("who is this guy?")....

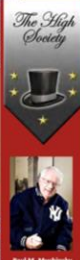


11th Annual River Cities Industrial Organizational Conference

This is Dr. Muchinsky with Joseph M. Bryan of the School of Business at UNCG. Mr. Bryan was the namesake of the Joseph M. Bryan Distinguished Professor endowment that was awarded to Paul as the first recipient of an endowed professorship at UNCG.



My Final Publication (Not Peer Reviewed)



My Final Publication (Not Peer Reviewed)

Yes, I am writing my own obituary. You know what they say, "If you want it done right, ..."

I was born and raised in Connecticut. For some unfortunate reason, I selected chemistry as my major at Gettysburg College. After my freshman year, my cumulative grade point was 3.2. I had a 2.6 in the fall and a 3.6 in the spring. I told you it was cumulative. It was at that point I cleverly deduced the world of academics and ketones was not for me.

In my sophomore year, I took an introductory psychology course. In truth, I did not know how to spell "psychology." I got there before the end of the semester. The course was taught by an industrial psychologist (the "O" had yet to be heard who received his PhD from Purdue. He changed my life. His name was Sam Mudd. Sam became one of the long mentors, heroes, and friends. I was determined to follow in his footsteps. That meant that I had to get a PhD in industrial psychology from Purdue. I first got my master's degree from Kansas State in 2010, then received my PhD from Purdue 3 years later.

After grad school, I joined the faculty of the Department of Psychology at Iowa State University. I was 25 years old, book smart and life smart. To make matters worse, I was the only I/O psychologist on the faculty. I inherited some doctoral students who were older than me. The family joke was, "I was the best I/O psychologist in the state of Iowa." True enough, as at that time I was the only one.

Without a doubt the highlight of my Iowa State years was my doctoral students. They were the brightest and the best. I came to regard them as much as colleagues as students. If my memory is correct, I turned out 28 doctoral students in my 28 years there. I was also director of an interdisciplinary program in industrial relations for 11 years that graduated about 18 students per year.

In 2003 I was offered an endowed chair position in the business school at The University of North Carolina Greensboro. It was the first such chaired professorship in the history of the

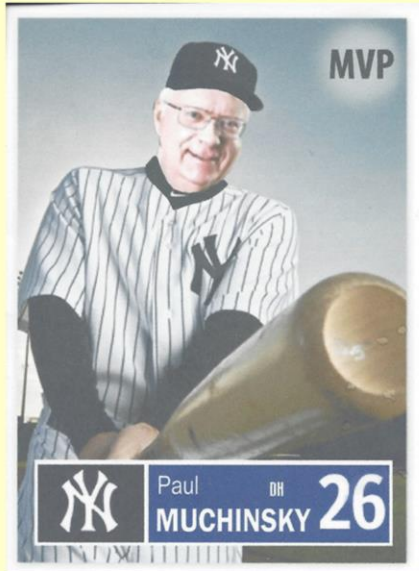
October 2015, Volume 53, Number 2

Leave it to the Chief to write his own obituary....appropriately titled *My Final Publication (Not Peer Reviewed)*. Ever the prepared academic....I don't know if he added it to his CV. Note the cover of TIP which shows Paul's version of heaven, Yankee Stadium.

The obituary is pure Chief. That we could all be so eloquent when faced with our own mortality. He closes with the following quote: (next slide).

Long ago I read an obituary where a man was described as, “Someone who gave back more to life than he took out.” I hope I will be so remembered as well.

I never have made it through reading this without choking up (and I didn't at RCIO either). My only utterance: “He will.”



11th Annual River Cities Industrial Organizational Conference

So, Hail to the Chief! We appreciate all you did and we will miss you!