Remembering André Weitzenhoffer, Ph.D.

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André M. Weitzenhoffer, Ph.D., died peacefully at his Reno home on February 24, 2005, with his wife Mildred by his side. He was 84 years old...

André was preceded in death by his first wife, Geneva and his younger sister Roselyn. His legacy lives on through his wife Mildred, son Mark (Beverly), daughter Janet Laxalt (Paul), stepson Tom Childers (Jane), stepdaughter Ann Nealson (Dennis), sister Jackie (John) and numerous grandchildren, cousins, nieces, nephews and friends (obituary written by Mildred Hinson Weitzenhoffer and published in the Reno Journal Gazette, Reno, NV, March 6, 2005).

Dr. Weitzenhoffer was one of the most eminent scholars on the study of hypnosis in the twentieth and twenty-first century. His first paper, “The Production of Anti-Social Acts Under Hypnosis” (Weitzenhoffer, 1949), published in the Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, was the beginning of over 100 eventual journal publications, books, and papers on the topic of hypnosis. However, André’s early work also focused on applied biological and mathematical topics (Gerheim, Floyd, Weitzenhoffer & Okubo, 1953; Gerheim, Floyd, Weitzenhoffer, Okubo & Spring, 1953; Gerheim, Logwood, Andrews & Weitzenhoffer, 1951; Gerheim & Weitzenhoffer, 1950; Weitzenhoffer & Gerheim, 1950; Weitzenhoffer, 1951c) appearing in such prestigious journals as Science, Nature, the American Journal of Physiology, and Psychometrika.

Before receiving his Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Michigan in 1956, André had already been a first author or co-author on 14 scientific publications and his first book. In 1957, he moved to the Laboratory

Address correspondence and reprint requests to:
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for Human Development and Department of Psychology at Stanford University. During his tenure there, he collaborated with Ernest Hilgard in developing the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scales (Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1959, 1962) and the Stanford Profile Scales of Hypnotic Susceptibility, Forms I and II (Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1963) which have since become the most widely used measures of individual differences in hypnotic responsivity in the field. After leaving Stanford in 1962, André moved to the University of Oklahoma where he continued to do research and provide clinical services at the university affiliated Veterans Administration Medical Center. After retiring, André moved first to Colorado, and then to Reno, Nevada to be closer to family. He will be missed by all who knew him.

I first met André Weitzenhoffer at the 34th Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH) in Las Vegas in 1992. As scientific program chair, I had arranged for André to give an invited address during the scientific program. However, when it came time for me to supervise beginning students in the individual practice sessions during the basic clinical workshops, both André and Professor Nicholas Spanos also accepted an invitation to join me in providing such supervision. Although André and Nick had vastly different conceptions about the nature of hypnosis (e.g., Spanos & Barber, 1974; Weitzenhoffer, 1989; 1999), it was amazing how effectively the two worked together with me, supervising students who were learning induction skills and techniques. Nevertheless, it was clear to both Nick and me who was the master of the “General Techniques of Hypnotism” (Weitzenhoffer, 1957a). This experience was the beginning of a warm personal and professional

![Photo 1](image-url)

**Photo 1:** Bottom row, left to right, Annual Meeting Clinical Workshop Chair Frank Rogers-Witte, President Marlene Hunter, Annual Meeting Scientific Program Chair Ed Frischholz. Top row, left to right, André Weitzenhoffer, Nicholas Spanos, Thurman Mott, Bennett G. Braun. Taken at the 34th ASCH Annual Scientific Meeting and Workshops on Clinical Hypnosis, Las Vegas, Nevada (1992).
relationship between André, Nick and me (and I suspect an improved theoretical rapprochement between André and Nick).

Over the next few years, I had the opportunity to interview André about his career and his ideas about the nature of hypnosis. I had read most of his publications, and was surprised how much his views had evolved over the years. Furthermore, I had read other interviews he had given (e.g., Yapko, 2005) and was struck by both the common themes which consistently appeared and the variety of stories which I had never heard.

After his death, I contacted Mildred Hinson Weitzenhoffer who generously provided me with her obituary of André and a copy of his curriculum vitae. I discovered that André had been a seminal figure in the beginning of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis and was one of the first associate editors of the *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*. I decided to ask the Editor, Stephen Lankton, if he would consider publishing a summary of Weitzenhoffer’s views and career to appear as a tribute in the *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*. Steve agreed and what follows is the result of this endeavor.

**André M. Weitzenhoffer (1921-2005)**

André was born on January 16, 1921 in Paris, France to Henry and Germaine Weitzenhoffer who preceded him in death. He had two younger, twin sisters. His father was an American World War I veteran, and his mother was French, so André had dual citizenship in both countries. André’s father worked in the printing and publishing business. When André was about eight years old, he came to live with his paternal grandparents who were farmers in McAlester, Oklahoma. He stayed with them for two years and claimed that this was how he learned to speak English.

André told both Dr. Yapko (see the Yapko interview in this issue) and me that he first became interested in hypnosis when he was about age 12. He had seen a summer camp counselor demonstrating hypnosis using mesmeric passes and postural sway tests and was intrigued by what he saw. Later, he went to a stage show and observed a magician doing hypnosis with participants from the audience. While André did not think that anyone had been “hypnotized,” he was impressed that the subjects and other members of the audience thought that something special had happened. So André looked up hypnosis in the Encyclopedia and began reading books about it. He recalled contacting Edgard Berillon at this time in his life about hypnosis, but was disappointed that Berillon did not provide him with any information which offered any new insights about its nature. André was becoming fascinated with the occult, magic and the ability to cast spells on people to make them do things they would not ordinarily do. Also, he wondered whether he could use self-hypnosis to make himself into “some sort of superman” that would make him “more intelligent,” “more able to figure out how to make things happen, and [to] get super powers that way” (Yapko, 2005, p.32). Finally, André also became interested in yoga and saw it as a form of self-hypnosis. These three early but central themes would consistently appear throughout his future career in hypnosis: 1) Could hypnosis be used to compel a person to behave in a specified manner? 2) Could hypnosis be used to induce a person to significantly perform above his normal waking (i.e., nonhypnotic) capacity? and 3) Were hypnosis and other cognitive/behavioral practices like yoga the same phenomenon, but identified by different social labels?
André came to the United States in 1938 at the age of 17, initially to study engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He went back to France in the summer of 1939, but when World War II began he returned to the United States. He would not return to Paris until nearly 40 years later. André later changed his major to Physics and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1943.

André then moved to Brown University during the beginning of the 1943-1944 academic year, where he began his studies toward a Master’s Degree in mathematics. During this time, he worked as a research physicist and mathematician on defense projects for the United States Navy where he acquired experience with early forms of computers. He received his Master of Science degree in mathematics in 1944, but stayed on at Brown to pursue another Master’s Degree in biology while he continued and broadened his areas of interest and research.

Although André’s curriculum vitae states that he received his Master’s degree in biology from Brown in 1949, this may be a typographical error and he probably earned it in either 1946 or 1947. For example, in André’s interview with Yapko in this issue, he noted that after the war was over he moved from Brown “to Philadelphia for one year, and…worked for and studied under Heilbrun in his physiology department at the University of Pennsylvania.” André further stated, “I ended up the next year in Iowa City in Kenneth Spence’s department.” (Yapko, 2005, p. 31). He also indicated that he was a “graduate student” at the University of Iowa during this period and that he was interested in becoming a psychologist. André’s curriculum vitae also notes that he started working as a research physiologist at Wayne University in Detroit in 1949, and other information suggests that he had already begun his formal research on hypnosis by that time. So it seems probable that André did receive his M.A. in biology from Brown in 1946 or 1947.

André personally told both Michael Yapko and me that his year at the University of Iowa was very unpleasant. Spence was an avid behaviorist and would not tolerate any discussion or even mention of the word “conscious.” André told me that he left Iowa after a one-year tenure. Although André had worked as a research assistant at Iowa, there is no mention of this employment or year spent at Iowa in his curriculum vitae.

But, André’s negative Iowa experience did have a positive impact on the field of scientific hypnosis. He noted in his Yapko interview that he had “dropped” his adolescent interest in hypnosis until he “went to Iowa” (Yapko, 2005, p. 32). “I got so darned unhappy with the department there I spent a lot of time in the library doing research and discovered Psych Abstracts.” Since there were no copy machines at the time, he started hand copying all the abstracts that had been published about hypnosis. One of his classmates, upon seeing all the material, suggested that André try to get some sort of article on hypnosis published. Weitzenhoffer responded to his classmate “Ah, rubbish!” (Yapko, 2005, p. 32).

The year following his tenure at Iowa, André returned to the University of Oklahoma as a graduate student. He noted that he wanted to do his Ph.D. there since he considered it his hometown and he was back with his family. But Oklahoma did not offer a Ph.D. in psychology at the time and André began doing a research study on hypnosis and writing up his first scientific publication on hypnosis. From his curriculum vitae and his later published study, this appears to have been in 1948.

Weitzenhoffer’s first scientific article addressed one of his three major questions
about hypnosis: Could a person be compelled by hypnosis to behave against his or her will (i.e., to commit antisocial acts)? It was a review article which was published in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* in 1949 (probably written while he was at Iowa or a graduate student at the University of Oklahoma). André noted that five empirical studies had been published as of 1949 on this topic: Brenman (1942), Erickson (1939), Rowland (1939), Watkins (1947), and Wells (1941). Erickson (1939) reported a case study where he had directly suggested that his subject take money from his roommate. He noted that his subject failed to do so. In contrast, the other four studies—instead of employing direct suggestions—utilized suggested hallucinations and paramnesias about both the perceived task and context and reported success with these approaches. For example, Watkins (1947) attempted to induce subjects to attack others with the intent to kill. However, his subjects were all enlisted in military service and were instructed that the victim was an enemy (“a dirty Jap”) who was about to kill the subject unless the subject killed him first. Watkins reported success with this type of approach. Interestingly, Weitzenhoffer (1949) interpreted the disparity of empirical findings on this topic as indicating a general, common result. “The results indicate the behavior of the subject was in every instance appropriate to the situation as defined by the hypnotist” (Weitzenhoffer, 1949, p. 421). This conclusion would be echoed years later by investigators such as M. Orne, T.X. Barber and N. Spanos.

André’s second published article on hypnosis was a case study on the “persistence of hypnotic suggestions,” published in 1950 (Weitzenhoffer, 1950), also in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. It identified his institutional affiliation as the University of Oklahoma and was reportedly received on March 21, 1949. In this article, André reported working with a subject with which “the standard hypnotic phenomena could be obtained readily, including deep local anesthesia. Spontaneous posthypnotic amnesia was found present from the start” (Weitzenhoffer, 1950, p. 160), although no formal testing of hypnotic responsivity was conducted. This suggests that his subject was highly hypnotizable. His findings, consistent with other earlier reports published on highly hypnotizable subjects, repeatedly (i.e., he used five different types of posthypnotic suggestions) indicated that “some posthypnotic suggestions can remain 100 percent effective for a period of at least three months” (Weitzenhoffer, 1950, p. 162). This investigation again addressed the issue of hypnotic compulsion and also noted that the subject apparently performed the posthypnotic suggestions often without “awareness of the cause of his behavior while carrying out the suggested task” (Weitzenhoffer, 1950, p. 162). It is noteworthy that this is the first time that Weitzenhoffer reported on the issue of using a subject with acknowledged high hypnotizability who demonstrated spontaneous posthypnotic amnesia for carrying out the posthypnotic suggestions. He would expand on these issues repeatedly over the years.

Another implication of his findings concerned the clinical implications of these early empirical studies. Years later, I personally asked André, “If hypnosis could be used with highly hypnotizable subjects to compel them to behave in a particular manner, why wasn’t high hypnotizability correlated with clinical responsiveness to direct hypnotic suggestions for therapeutic improvement?” André informed me that I had asked a good question to which he had no direct answer.

André’s next two journal publications on hypnosis both addressed his second central question about whether hypnosis could be used to induce people to perform
significantly better than their normal, waking (i.e., nonhypnotic) capacity (Weitzenhoffer, 1951a, 1951b). His paper on “The Discriminatory Recognition of Visual Patterns Under Hypnosis” (Weitzenhoffer, 1951b) published again in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* is noteworthy for several different reasons.

First, André continued to develop an ongoing relationship with members of the department of psychology at Harvard University. During the time of his first publication through this date, André’s articles on hypnosis were being accepted in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* whose Editor-in-Chief was Harvard psychologist Gordon Allport. The paper also contained a footnote expressing André’s “indebtedness to Dr. R.W. White for his friendly and constructive criticism of this paper” (Weitzenhoffer, 1951b, p. 397). Dr. White, also on the faculty at the Harvard psychology department, had published several empirical papers on hypnosis (e.g., White, 1940) and later served as Martin Orne’s Ph.D. dissertation advisor.

Second, for the first time, André had measured the hypnotic responsivity of his subjects in a formal manner using the methods developed by Davis and Husband (1931) and White (1940). He reported that, of his initial 23 subjects, “only 6 were capable of developing trance states of any sort” (Weitzenhoffer, 1951b, p. 391).

Third, only the six hypnotizable subjects were later repeatedly tested in both the waking and hypnotic states to determine if their performance was significantly better in the hypnotic state. Previous empirical studies (Eysenck, 1939; Young, 1925; 1926) had found no significant improvement in hypnosis over waking performance. Likewise, 5 out 6 of André’s hypnotizable subjects showed no significant improvement when hypnotized compared to their performance in the waking state. However, one subject did show highly significant improvement which was described in great detail. Parenthetically, this subject earned the highest possible score on the Davis-Husband hypnosis scale. André concluded that “hypnotic suggestions of improved differential recognition can bring about a level of performance superior to that of the waking state. This is, however, not true for all individuals. Presumably, only those individuals who are not functioning at their maximum capacity in the waking state are capable of exhibiting improvement under hypnosis.” (Weitzenhoffer, 1951b, p. 396). Thus, like his earlier studies on compulsion under hypnosis, hypnotic performance facilitation was also found only in subjects who proved to be extremely hypnotizable. It was not found in the majority of subjects.

Fourth, from a historical perspective, this study was conducted while André was still a graduate student at the University of Oklahoma. However, when finally published in 1951, André listed his institutional affiliation as the University of Detroit. André told Michael Yapko that he left Oklahoma for two major reasons. First, Oklahoma was not going to immediately develop a doctoral program, and André wanted to earn a Ph.D. in psychology. Second, he had met a woman, Geneva Ballenger, a music major at the University of Oklahoma, whom he wanted to marry. He reasoned “if we were to get married and probably have children, I had better have a job.” (Yapko, 2005, p. 32). They were married in August 1950 in Oklahoma. Their son Mark was born in 1954 in Michigan and their daughter Janet was born in Palo Alto in 1957.

André did get a job, first as a research physiologist at Wayne University (1949-1950) in Detroit, and the following year (1950) as an Instructor in physiology and pharmacology at the University of Detroit where he stayed until 1953. André admitted that he didn’t have any training in physiology or pharmacology, but that didn’t seem to
stop him from learning quickly. During his tenure at the University of Detroit, he authored or co-authored five scientific papers which appeared in the American Journal of Physiology, Science and Nature. During this time period he was also able to complete a paper on “Mathematical Structures and Psychological Measurement” (Weitzenhoffer, 1951c) which appeared in Psychometrika.

Most importantly for the field of scientific hypnosis, during his University of Detroit tenure, André began preparing papers for publication in the British Journal of Medical Hypnotism for Van Pelt (e.g., Weitzenhoffer, 1952). These papers were based on the abstracts of hypnosis articles he had copied while at the University of Iowa. He noted that it occurred to him that each of these “articles was like the summary of a chapter” (Yapko 2005, p. 33). This was where he got the idea for his first book. André had always been impressed by Clark Hull’s 1933 book entitled Hypnosis and Suggestibility (Hull, 1933), so he deliberately planned to call his book Hypnotism: An Objective Study in Suggestibility (Weitzenhoffer, 1953) and to publish it on the twentieth anniversary of the publication of Hull’s earlier book. It was published in 1953 and re-evaluated classic works published before Hull’s book appeared, summarized the research literature on hypnosis since the publication of Hull’s book, presented André’s emerging theoretical conceptualization of hypnosis based on his own work, and integrated the cumulative literature to date.

André was accepted into the doctoral program at the University of Michigan in 1952 and that same year presented his first paper, “Towards a Theory of Hypnosis” at the annual meeting of the Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (SCEH). He earned his M.A. in psychology in 1954 and that year also published his first paper in the SCEH journal on “The Influence of Hypnosis on the Learning Processes: Some Theoretical Considerations, I, Retroactive Inhibition” (Weitzenhoffer, 1954). He published a follow-up to this paper on the “Learning of Meaningful and Nonsense Material” in the 1955 SCEH journal (Weitzenhoffer, 1959). During this time period, he collaborated with his wife Geneva on his doctoral dissertation which examined gender differences in hypnotic susceptibility, and began work on his second book General Techniques of Hypnotism (Weitzenhoffer, 1957a) which was published the year after he received his doctorate in 1956.

While finishing his doctoral dissertation, André was visited by Ernest Hilgard (“Jack”), who invited him to come to Stanford University as a post-doctoral fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences for the 1956-1957 academic year. André accepted, and the following academic year (1957-1958) he became an assistant professor in the department of psychology at Stanford. He collaborated with Hilgard on developing a hypnosis laboratory and together they planned a program of research that would continue for the next five years. They both agreed that their first goal would be to develop a new measure of hypnotic susceptibility. It was standardized on Stanford students and the norms and issues concerning the scale’s development were published in 1958 and 1961 (Hilgard, Weitzenhoffer, & Gough, 1958; Hilgard, Weitzenhoffer, Landes, & Moore, 1961).

Weitzenhoffer also published a paper in the SCEH journal in 1957 (Weitzenhoffer, 1957b) on “Posthypnotic Behavior and the Recall of Hypnotic Suggestion” where he followed up on his earlier work on spontaneous amnesia and the persistence of hypnotic suggestions (i.e., hypnotic compulsions: Weitzenhoffer, 1950). He would continue to develop his theory about the mechanisms underlying posthypnotic
behavior for the rest of his life (Weitzenhoffer, 2000). Interestingly, the new hypnosis scale he was constructing with Hilgard contained an item on instructed posthypnotic amnesia and not spontaneous posthypnotic amnesia.

In 1957-1958, Milton Erickson invited Weitzenhoffer to be an Associate Editor for the journal of the newly formed American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH): The American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis (AJCH). Erickson was both the founding president of ASCH and the founding editor of its journal. André accepted and published the results of his doctoral dissertation on gender differences and hypnotic susceptibility in the first issue of the ASCH journal with his wife as a co-author (Weitzenhoffer & Weitzenhoffer, 1958). The authors noted that Freud (Freud, 1922) “believed that becoming hypnotized should be equated to ‘falling in love’.” (Weitzenhoffer & Weitzenhoffer, 1958, p. 20). In addition, it was felt that women should be more hypnotizable because of their hysterical tendencies. Hence, women were expected to be significantly more hypnotizable than men, especially if hypnotized by a male hypnotist. Two hundred University of Michigan students (100 males and 100 females) served as subjects. André and wife, Geneva, administered the Friedlander-Sarbin (1938) scale, each to 50 males and 50 females. No significant main or interaction effects were found for either the subject’s sex or the sex of the hypnotist. Thus, the Freudian hypothesis was not empirically confirmed although André later published further on this issue (Weitzenhoffer, 1961a).

Also in 1958, André published two other papers, one in the ASCH journal and one in the SCEH journal on personality, maladjustment, and hypnotic susceptibility (Weitzenhoffer, 1958a; 1958b). These works were part of the foundation for Josephine Hilgard’s book Personality and Hypnosis, which was published in 1970 (Hilgard, 1970).

No record exists to demonstrate that Weitzenhoffer was a charter member of ASCH, but he did present a paper on “Subjects’ Perception and Reaction to Hypnosis” with his graduate student, Rosemary K. Moore, at the 1959 Annual Scientific Meeting of ASCH in Chicago. In addition, André continued to develop a warm personal and professional relationship with Milton Erickson. A recent collection of the letters of Milton H. Erickson (Zeig & Geary, 2001) clearly indicated that Erickson had high regard for Weitzenhoffer. For example, in a 2002 review of this letter collection, Hammond (2002) noted that Erickson “held Weitzenhoffer in very high esteem, telling him ‘I know of nobody else with your clarity of understanding (of hypnosis)’” (Zeig & Geary, 2001, p. 186). In addition, Hammond also stated that “Erickson fondly counseled André Weitzenhoffer to avoid seeking political office in the Society and to continue being a scientist.” (2002, p. 145). André appeared to have followed Erickson’s advice and never ran for political office in ASCH. Nevertheless, André continued to be part of the ASCH journal’s editorial board for years and to actively publish in it for the remainder of his life.

In 1959, the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scales, Forms A and B were published (Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1959). These parallel forms were adapted after the earlier Friedlander-Sarbin (1938) scale and quickly became the most widely used measure of hypnotic responsivity in the field. They contained 11 suggestion items about motor behavior (e.g., arm lowering, arm rigidity, arms apart) followed by a final item for instructed posthypnotic amnesia about the subject’s performance during the scale administration. In 1962, the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility, Form A was developed by Ronald Shor and Emily Orne and was adapted after the Stanford
Form A scale for measuring individual differences in hypnotic susceptibility in groups (Shor & Orne, 1962). Weitzenhoffer commented on the differences between the individual administration of the Stanford Form A scale and administration of any scale in a group setting (Weitzenhoffer, 1962b). Nevertheless, the Harvard Group scale caught on and became the most widely used group measure of hypnotic susceptibility for years.

In 1960, André designed an experiment with one of his graduate students which became a classic in the field of scientific hypnosis for several reasons (Weitzenhoffer & Sjoberg, 1961). First, Weitzenhoffer was always interested in theories of hypnosis that attempted to explain it as a physical or psychological phenomenon, and was especially interested in dissociation (physical) versus suggestion (psychological) theories as explanatory mechanisms for hypnotic phenomena (Weitzenhoffer, 1953; 1957a; 1957b; 1960; 1961b). He had accepted Hull’s earlier proposition that hypnosis resulted in a significant increase in waking suggestibility. But were waking and hypnotic suggestibility the same thing, and did significant increases in suggestibility take place as a result of exposure to a hypnotic induction? (Related to his third central question) André designed a new 17-item scale which was used to measure subjects’ baseline waking suggestibility in a repeated measures design. The subjects were exposed to a hypnotic induction ceremony followed by another administration of the 17-item scale. The results indicated that exposure to a hypnotic induction did, in fact, produce a significant increase in suggestibility. However, even more interesting was the fact that waking suggestibility scores correlated on the order of .50 with hypnotic suggestibility scores. In other words, suggestibility measured in one context (waking baseline condition) significantly predicted suggestibility in a hypnotic context.

Barber (1969) and Katz (1979) were later showed that other types of instructions could be used to produce increases in suggestibility similar in magnitude to that produced by exposure to a traditional sleep/trance hypnotic induction ceremony. For example, Katz (1979) randomly assigned groups of 15 subjects to three different experimental groups. All subjects were first administered the Stanford scale under an imagination condition, and an analysis of variance confirmed the effectiveness of the randomization procedure by demonstrating no significant between groups mean differences. Next, one group was administered a sleep/trance hypnotic induction, while the other two groups were administered a social learning induction (where the experimenter modeled how to respond to hypnotic test suggestions) or a social learning induction plus progressive relaxation. Then, all groups of subjects were re-administered the Stanford scale. An analysis of variance on posttest mean scores demonstrated that social learning inductions produced significant increases in suggestibility scores (about one standard deviation higher than pretest scores) while the sleep-trance induction did not.

Subsequently, my colleagues and I re-analyzed the Katz data (Frischholz, Blumstein & Spiegel, 1982), instead using an analysis of covariance model with pretest scores as the covariate. While the significant group differences in posttest mean scores was still found (accounting for about 17% of the variance), there was an even more highly significant covariate effect (accounting for almost 50% additional posttest score variance). Thus, the basic finding of the Weitzenhoffer and Sjoberg (1961) experiment—that suggestibility measured in one context (waking-imagination) was highly predictive of suggestibility measured in a hypnotic context—was supported. In
other words, conceptualizing suggestibility or hypnotizability as a trait seemed to account for 300% more of the dependent variable variance than context effects.

The other significant result of the Weitzenhoffer and Sjoberg (1961) experiment was that the 17-item scale was later refined to a 12-point scale which was published in 1962 as the *Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale, Form C* (Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1962). The Stanford Form C scale was a more desirable instrument for measuring individual differences in hypnotic responsivity because it contained both motor items (e.g., arm lowering, arms apart, arm rigidity, arm immobilization) and cognitive items (e.g., anosmia to ammonia, positive taste hallucination, negative visual hallucination, and age regression). Thus, three quantitative scales of hypnotic susceptibility were developed in the Stanford laboratory. Stanford Forms A and B were recommended for an initial screening of a subject’s level of hypnotic responsivity (low, medium, high) which could then be confirmed by administering the Stanford Form C scale (low, medium, high, very high). In recognition that he was the driving force behind the creation of these three scales, Weitzenhoffer was listed as the senior author.

André was also interested in how highly hypnotizable subjects experienced hypnotic test items that they passed, theorizing that different subjects may have qualitatively different hypnotic experiences even though they were of the same quantitative level of hypnotizability. He developed the Stanford Profile Scales of Hypnotic Susceptibility, Forms I and II for this purpose (Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1963). In contrast, Hilgard felt that the Stanford Profile scales could be scored quantitatively. As other theoretical differences began to emerge between Weitzenhoffer and Hilgard, André began to look for a position at another University.

Tragically, Weitzenhoffer’s wife, Geneva, died in November 1961 of Bulbar Polio and André took on the additional responsibility of raising their two children as a single father. He decided to move back to Oklahoma in the hope that his family would provide additional emotional support and help him care for his children.

At the beginning of the 1962-1963 academic year, André moved from Stanford back to Oklahoma where he took a job as Clinical Research Psychologist at the VA hospital in Oklahoma City, and he remained there through 1980. He became an Associate Professor of Medical Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center from 1962 to 1974, and was promoted to Professor in 1974—a position he held through 1981. In addition, André also worked as a clinical psychologist at the Alcohol Treatment Center Program at the VA Medical Center from 1980 through August of 1984.

In 1962, André published a paper in the SCEH journal on “The Significance of Hypnotic Depth and Therapy” (Weitzenhoffer, 1962a). Written while he was still at Stanford, this paper claimed that there was little or no relationship between trance depth and therapeutic outcome. André noted how some highly hypnotizable subjects did not seem to profit from treatment which used hypnosis while some low hypnotizable patients did. However, André did not attempt to relate the type of treatment utilized to his own theories of hypnosis or to specific types of clinical disorders. He also seemed to be using the word “depth” synonymously with the phrase “hypnotic susceptibility.” Later, the Spiegels would argue that such issues are very important in understanding the clinical significance of hypnotizability and its relation to therapeutic outcome (Spiegel & Spiegel, 1978). Yet, Weitzenhoffer remained convinced that empirical attempts to correlate hypnotic responsivity with treatment responsivity would not yield any
significant relationship between the two (Yapko, 2005).

In May 1963, André attended a singles class on a Sunday morning where he met Mildred Hinson Childers. He was immediately interested in her but made the mistake of not getting her phone number. Unfortunately, Mildred had an unpublished phone number at the time. André attempted to locate her unsuccessfully for the next four months by consulting all types of public records and other potential contact information. It was not until André discovered a registration card that Mildred had filled out the previous May that he was able to obtain her home phone number. He immediately called her in October 1963 and by January 1964 had proposed marriage to her. She accepted and they were married on March 16, 1964. Their relationship would last throughout the remainder of André’s life.

In 1963, André published a two-part piece in the *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis* titled “The Nature of Hypnosis,” which updated his theoretical thinking about the essence of hypnosis and how it differed from other psychological phenomena within various contexts, especially various waking conditions (Weitzenhoffer, 1963a; 1963b). Again, this goes back to André’s third central question; were waking suggestibility and hypnotic suggestibility the same phenomena with different social labels? These two papers were initially written while he was at Stanford and were completed after he moved to Oklahoma.

The title of these two 1963 *AJCH* contributions was probably a take-off on the title of an earlier classical paper entitled “The Nature of Hypnosis: Artifact and Essence” written by Dr. Martin T. Orne (Orne, 1959) based on his Harvard doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Roy White and published in *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* (the same journal which had published André’s first papers on hypnosis). In that 1959 paper, Orne elaborated upon his concept of social demand characteristics and the use of the real-simulator method in studying hypnosis. Likewise, André had always emphasized the importance of social context in understanding hypnotic behavior and the development of new methods for empirically studying it within various experimental contexts. The first of these two papers (Weitzenhoffer, 1963a), however, reviewed historical data on the nature of hypnosis and did not even cite the 1959 Orne paper. Nonetheless, several consistent themes again emerged: 1) Based on the works of Bernheim and Hull, André was “well on the path of associating, if not identifying, hypnosis with hyper-suggestibility” (Weitzenhoffer, 1963a p. 295); 2) While André, in his own words, may “have vacillated with regard to what the nature and characteristics of the state were, there was never any question … that hypnosis was a state to be distinguished from the normal or usual waking state of the individual” (Weitzenhoffer, 1963a p. 295); and 3) There is also acknowledgement of the early work of Braid stating, “spontaneous amnesia became the essential criterion for the presence of hypnosis” (Weitzenhoffer, 1963a p. 298).

The second 1963 *AJCH* paper cited Orne’s (1959) paper and acknowledged Orne’s search for the “essence” of hypnosis. André went on to discuss some of his own work on the experiences of hypnotized and unhypnotized subjects, and concluded, “that hypnotized individuals essentially differ from non-hypnotized persons (including their waking selves) by the fact that they disregard or do not have a need for consistency between experiences from moment to moment” (Weitzenhoffer, 1963b, p. 44). This notion is strikingly similar to Orne’s (1959) concept of “trance logic,” although Weitzenhoffer did not directly cite Orne on this point. The fact that he did not note this
communality between his work and Orne’s is even more ironic given his overall conclusion at the end of his paper: “What we each define hypnosis to be is perhaps not so important as our recognition that it most probably is not what was originally called “hypnotism” by Braid, his contemporaries, and his immediate successors; and that even among ourselves, among us modern investigators, we may not always be talking about the same condition” (Weitzenhoffer, 1963b, p. 71). I believe this observation is still true today, again underscoring André’s talent for extracting a near universal truth from apparently disparate findings.

Also, in 1963-1964 André published another two-part piece in the *AJCH* (Weitzenhoffer, 1963c, 1964a) in response to two articles which had recently appeared by Australian psychologist J.P. Sutcliffe (Sutcliffe, 1960, 1961). Sutcliffe’s basic hypothesis was that two basic types of thinking about hypnosis had emerged over the last century: 1) The “credulous”; and 2) The “skeptical.” The “credulous” camp were characterized as those who believed in the almost magic-like qualities of hypnosis to produce irresistible compulsions and transcendence of normal capacities via production of a “trance” state different from the normal waking state. In contrast, the “skeptical” camp believed that so-called hypnotic behavior was a voluntary production, a methodological artifact of intentional low baseline, waking performance compared to performance when hypnotized, and did not involve any unique change in a subject’s state of consciousness. Sutcliffe’s first paper reviewed the historical literature while his second paper reported a series of experiments (often using unhypnotized hypnotic simulators) which led him to conclude that the “skeptical” view was the correct explanation of hypnotic phenomena.

Weitzenhoffer’s initial two responses to both of Sutcliffe’s (Sutcliffe, 1960, 1961) papers were initially written while he was still at Stanford. But both papers, once again, acknowledge his move to Oklahoma.

In his first response to Sutcliffe (Weitzenhoffer, 1963c), André reinterpreted and reevaluated the historical literature, especially several of the early reports by Frank Pattie (Pattie, 1933, 1937, 1950). Pattie, who Weitzenhoffer considered an early skeptic (as he also did Bernheim!) had conducted a number of studies apparently questioning whether hypnosis could be used to produce real blindness, deafness and anesthesia (i.e., compulsions to show disabled normal waking capacity [e.g., blindness or deafness] or transcendence of normal capacity [anesthesia for stimuli found painful in the waking state]). Pattie was also a mentor of the second Editor of *AJCH*, William Edmonston. André reanalyzed Pattie’s methods and those of other earlier studies and concluded that they did not support a “skeptical” view of hypnotic behavior.

In his second response (Weitzenhoffer, 1964a), André reanalyzed the experiments and data reported in Sutcliffe’s second paper (Sutcliffe, 1961). André noted that Sutcliffe had made use of non-hypnotized, simulating subjects as a form of methodological control for understanding hypnotic responses. However, Weitzenhoffer distinguished Sutcliffe’s method from the real-simulator procedure used by Orne (1959, 1977). Sutcliffe utilized subjects who were not preselected for level of hypnotizability to insure that they were not hypnotizable and could not possibly enter a spontaneous hypnotic trance state. In contrast, Orne (1959) utilized subjects who were preselected to be low hypnotizables. They were allowed to observe the response of high hypnotizables, and were then asked to simulate this type of response in a similar situation. Based on his reanalysis of the Sutcliffe (1961) data, Weitzenhoffer questioned
whether a strong case had been made for the “skeptical” view of hypnosis. He concluded, “After what, I believe, has been a careful evaluation of the facts and arguments I feel that the verdict has to be unequivocally ‘NO!’ In fact, by no stretch of the imagination is there even the beginning of a case favoring the skeptics. This is not to say that the evidence has always shown the credulous view to be correct, but it has certainly not shown it to be wrong” (Weitzenhoffer, 1964a, p. 256).

In a second 1964 paper (Weitzenhoffer, 1964b), André examined hypnotic time distortion and the “Acquisition of Temporal Reference Frames Under Conditions of Time Distortion.” This paper is important in that it obviously rejected the viewpoint of Kenneth Spence with whom Weitzenhoffer had such a negative experience at the University of Iowa years earlier. Spence would have rejected the use of verbal reports as valid empirical indicators of a subject’s internal conscious experience, but the nature of a subject’s experience when hypnotized and non-hypnotized was the essential comparison that Weitzenhoffer felt was necessary in order to better understand the nature of hypnosis.

André’s (1964) paper on hypnotic time distortion was the last paper he would publish for the next five years. However, this did not mean that he was professionally idle. He began to present more papers at professional conferences, not on the nature of hypnosis, but rather on measurement. For example, in 1964, he presented a paper at the annual meeting of the Southwestern Psychological Association (SPA; held in San Antonio) on “A New Look at Measurement.” The following year he presented two papers at SPA in Oklahoma City. The first was on “The Mathematical Validity of Hull’s Equation for Primary Stimulus Intensity Generalization Gradients.” The second 1965 SPA paper was entitled “Where, Oh Where, Did My Little ‘X’ Go?” The following year he presented a paper at the annual meeting of the Oklahoma State Psychological Association (also held in Oklahoma City) on “Which Statistic?” These paper presentations reconnected him with his earlier training in psychological measurement. They also kept him close to his family.

André’s next scientific publication appeared five years later in the AJCH (Weitzenhoffer, 1969) entitled “Hypnosis and Eye Movements, I: Preliminary Report on a Possible Slow Eye Movement Correlate of Hypnosis.” Another paper on “Attention and Eye Movements” appeared a year later (Weitzenhoffer & Brockmeier, 1970) followed by additional papers on this specific topic. During the 1970s, more and more papers, written by different investigators at various institutions, began to appear relating eye movements and hypnosis, including Herb Spiegel’s provocative paper “An Eye Roll Test for Hypnotizability” (Spiegel, 1972; also appearing in the AJCH). Thirty years later most of this research on eye movements and hypnosis now appears to be forgotten (with the exception of the controversial Spiegel Eye Roll Sign).

In 1972, André published two different kinds of papers. The first, which appeared in the SCEH journal, was a historical note on “the postural sway” test (Weitzenhoffer, 1972a). The second, published in the AJCH, was on “Behavior Therapeutic Techniques and Hypnotherapeutic Methods” (Weitzenhoffer, 1972b). In this paper, André explained that different types of therapy techniques could be used with hypnosis (although he still lumped them all together under the general label of “hypnotherapy”). A decade later, David Spiegel and I (Frischholz & Spiegel, 1983) argued that hypnosis is not a therapy in and of itself, but rather a modality that can be used with a wide variety of different clinical orientations and procedures. We further
argued the label of “hypnotherapy” was no longer useful because it implied that different clinical procedures, if used in conjunction with hypnosis, were spuriously similar. This is still a controversial issue, but it is congruent with Weitzenhoffer’s (1953) earlier notion that when hypnosis is used with different types of instructions and/or in different types of contexts, it activates different mechanisms and promotes different kinds of responses, or similar behavioral responses achieved by different methods.

In 1974-1975 Weitzenhoffer completed an APA-approved internship at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Afterward, he went on to complete his certification as a Diplomate in clinical psychology.

Also in 1974, André began to elaborate on an earlier theme in a paper published in the SCEH journal. The paper, entitled “When Is an ‘Instruction’ an ‘Instruction’?” addressed the issue of what distinguishes the response of a subject who has been simply instructed in the waking state to lower his or her arm from responding to a hypnotic instruction for arm lowering. Weitzenhoffer (1974) distinguished that waking instructions produced behavioral responses which were under the subject’s voluntary control. In contrast, when hypnotized, behavioral responses were perceived by the subject to be non-volitional. In other words, it was the involuntariness of a subject’s behavioral response which characterized it as being a hypnotic response.

In 1974, André also received, for the first time, the Milton H. Erickson Award for Outstanding Scientific Writing on Hypnotism from ASCH. It is unclear whether this honor was bestowed on him for his 1974 SCEH publication, or for his cumulative life work on hypnosis to date.

In 1978, André published two papers in which he summarized and clarified the work of Bernheim (Weitzenhoffer, 1978a) and how hypnosis was related to other altered states of consciousness (Weitzenhoffer, 1978b). Previously, Weitzenhoffer (1953, 1963c, 1964a) had noted how Bernheim did not consider hypnosis to be any type of altered psycho-physiological state of consciousness (contrary to Charcot). Instead, Bernheim related hypnosis to the psychological concept of suggestibility. But Weitzenhoffer (1953, 1963a) made clear that he disagreed with Bernheim on the state-non-state issue and related hypnosis to other altered states of consciousness (including waking suggestibility as a baseline state of consciousness).

In 1978, André gave a paper at the annual SCEH meeting which received a poor initial reception, but went on to be recognized as a modern day classic. The title of this paper was “Hypnotic Susceptibility Revisited.” Weitzenhoffer made two key points in this paper. First, he stated that the Stanford scales were lacking because they did not directly measure the involuntariness of a subject’s behavioral responses during the routine scale administration. Second, Weitzenhoffer argued that the field of hypnosis had become too preoccupied with instructed posthypnotic amnesia as a paradigm for studying changes in a subject’s state of consciousness during hypnosis. Instead, based on his earlier work and that of other seminal figures in the field (e.g., Marquis de Puységur & Braid) he concluded that spontaneous posthypnotic amnesia was the more valid indicator of high hypnotizability.

I did not attend the 1978 SCEH meeting, and the first time I learned about this paper was while I was working as a research associate for Herb Spiegel in the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University. Herb had been asked to review the manuscript for possible publication in the AJCH for Sheldon Cohen, who was the Editor at that
Remembering Weitzenhoffer

time. Herb read it and gave me a copy to solicit my opinion. We both thought it was brilliant. I pointed out to Herb how his measure of hypnotic responsivity, the Hypnotic Induction Profile (HIP [Spiegel & Spiegel, 1978]; not the Eye Roll Sign, which was only a part of the overall HIP) routinely assessed for the involuntariness of a posthypnotic arm levitation response (i.e., the control differential item) and for spontaneous amnesia for the cut off signal (i.e., the amnesia item) to terminate the arm levitation. Herb liked the paper for different reasons and suggested that we both collaborate on writing the review for Dr. Cohen. After our review was sent in, Dr. Cohen contacted Herb and said that he was amazed at the disparity among the different reviews. Herb suggested that he send it out for additional reviews and that disparity among experts was the sign of a great paper. Herb argued that when all reviewers agree that a paper should be published, then it probably wasn’t worth publishing because it contained nothing new that challenged existing theories. For whatever reason, Dr. Cohen did send out the paper for additional reviews.

Herb and I then contacted Weitzenhoffer to tell him how impressed we were with the paper. André responded that we seemed to be the only ones who thought so because he had originally sent it in to the SCEH journal and had received five reviews recommending that the paper not be published. André told me that he had followed up by personally contacting SCEH journal Editor Martin Orne. According to Weitzenhoffer, Orne informed him that he agreed with both the reviewers’ comments and conclusions and personally told him that he found the paper “dangerous.” André had wanted the paper to appear in the SCEH journal because it had been originally presented at an SCEH meeting. But, André had become so discouraged that he decided to send it to the AJCH. Furthermore, his initial feedback from AJCH Editor, Sheldon Cohen, had not been encouraging and he was thinking of sending it to yet another journal for consideration for publication. We informed him that we had contacted Dr. Cohen and hoped that he would seek additional reviews.

Although they did not unanimously recommend publication, Dr. Cohen did decide to accept Weitzenhoffer’s paper, pending revision. Ironically, the major revision (suggested by both Herb Spiegel and me) was that the paper be shortened. The original manuscript was almost sixty pages in length! Weitzenhoffer did revise it, and it appeared in one of the 1980 issues of AJCH (Weitzenhoffer, 1980). The Editorial Board of AJCH voted to bestow the Milton H. Erickson Award for Outstanding Scientific Writing on Hypnotism to Weitzenhoffer later that same year for this article. This was the second time in six years that André received this award.

No sooner had Weitzenhoffer’s (1980) article appeared, when it was attacked by Bowers (1981). Bowers administered the Stanford Form A scale (SHSS:A; Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1959), which was essentially a motor item scale, to a group of 24 subjects and then had them subjectively rate their perceived degree of involuntariness in responding to each item. Afterward, all subjects were then administered the Stanford Form C scale (SHSS:C; Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1962) which was considered by most researchers to sample both motor and cognitive items. Bowers reported that the traditionally scored Stanford A behavioral score correlated ($r=.78$) with subject’s sum Form A involuntariness ratings and ($r=.78$) with subject’s later Form C scores. On the basis of these findings, Bowers concluded that Weitzenhoffer’s (1980) criticisms that the Stanford scales did not tap the “classic suggestion effect” (i.e., involuntariness
ratings) was unfounded because the Form A behavioral response was as good an index of perceived involuntariness as more subjective measures of volitional control.

In a separate paper (Frischholz, 1985), I statistically reanalyzed the Bowers (1981) data and found that it was Bowers, not Weitzenhoffer, who was incorrect. “First, Bowers made little of the fact that the sum of the involuntariness ratings correlated highest ($r = .85$) with SHSS:C scores. Second, analysis of the data using the technique of partial correlation yields a somewhat different picture. The partial correlation between the involuntariness ratings and SHSS:C scores, when one statistically removes the shared variance of SHSS:A behavioral scores, was highly significant ($r = .63$). This indicates that when the variation in behavioral response are partialed out of the analysis, there remains a highly significant association between involuntariness and subsequent SHSS:C scores” (Frischholz, 1985, p. 115). Hence, Weitzenhoffer’s criticisms of the Stanford scales were not only valid, but indicated that all future studies on individual differences in hypnotic responsivity should make some attempt to include an assessment of the subject’s perceived degree of involuntariness when responding behaviorally to hypnosis.

In 1986, Weitzenhoffer was given the Morton Prince Award by the American Board of Psychological Hypnosis for his distinguished contributions to the development of hypnosis in the science and profession of psychology. Years earlier, André had received his Diplomate (APBH) in hypnosis and had also served as an examiner for the Board.

Throughout the 1980s, André reworked and updated his earlier books (Weitzenhoffer, 1953, 1957a) into a revised, two-volume set which was published in 1989. In 1990, he received the Arthur Shapiro Award from SCEH for the best book on hypnosis published the previous year.

Photo 2: Bottom row, left to right, James Council, Donna Cipriani, Steven J. Lynn, Cynthia Wickless. Top row, left to right, unknown, Max Gwynn, André Weitzenhoffer, Chris Silva, Mildred Weitzenhoffer, Gene Levitt. Taken at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Toronto, Canada (1993).
Remembering Weitzenhoffer

I have already recounted my first personal meeting with André at the 1992 annual meeting of the ASCH. I again met Weitzenhoffer the following year at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association (APA) where I had the honor of presenting him the Distinguished Contributions to Scientific Hypnosis Award from Division 30 of the APA. He presented a paper entitled “Scientific Hypnotism: Forty Years Later” prior to receiving his award (along with the other award recipient, Theodore R. Sarbin). After the awards presentation, many of his colleagues gathered to greet and congratulate on him on his lifetime accomplishments.

Two years later, I again had the pleasure of meeting and socializing with André and his wife Mildred at the 1995 annual APA meeting in New York. Along with two other friends (Jim Council and Cynthia Wickless-both Past Presidents of Division 30 of the APA) we rented a limousine to take André and Mildred out for a night on the town. I asked André where he wanted to go and Mildred responded that she would like to get some Italian spumoni. I had the limo take us to a mid-town Manhattan Italian restaurant where we proceeded to get the spumoni. Weitzenhoffer tasted it and declared that it was “simulated” spumoni out of a machine and not the real thing. Having total environmental control of our transportation situation (B.F. Skinner would have been proud of me!), I instructed the limo driver to take us down to Little Italy where we got the real thing. André personally validated the integrity of our spumoni data and Mildred was delighted. It was a night I will never forget.

The last time I saw André was at the 2000 annual ASCH meeting in Reno. André had moved from Colorado to Reno in 2000 to be closer to family. He had completed another revision of his two-volume 1989 book which had just been published (Weitzenhoffer, 1999). I congratulated him on his continuing motivation to constantly update his thinking about hypnosis based on the accumulating scientific literature.
Although we did not get to talk for long, I will treasure our last moments together.

Weitzenhoffer lead a productive professional life as both a scientist and clinical practitioner. He was a fellow of APA, ASCH, SCEH, the International Society of Hypnosis
Remembering Weitzenhoffer

He produced over a hundred books, articles and papers throughout his career which advanced the science of hypnosis and improved clinical practice.

He will best be remembered as a warm human being, a loving husband and father and, in my opinion, one of the greatest scientists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We shall all miss him.

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Frischholz


Frischholz

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Remembering Weitzenhoffer


