

I N V E S T I G A T O R I N S I G H T

In this section, we highlight the human side of biomedical investigation, putting a few questions to a researcher at DMS-DHMC.

Paul Holtzheimer, M.D.**Associate Professor of Psychiatry**

Holtzheimer studies the neural circuitry of depression—how different brain regions talk to each other—to identify new targets for treatment. He is a DMS '99 and was recruited back to join the faculty in 2011.

If you weren't a scientist, what would you like to be?

A mathematician, anthropologist, engineer, or linguist. Outside of science, I'd probably have been a professional musician or philosopher.

How did you become interested in psychiatry?

Originally, I was drawn to neurosurgery and neurology. Then I became fascinated by disorders of the mind, so I also thought about psychiatry. I



was still torn until DMS pediatrician Jim Filiano gave me a brilliant piece of advice: "Go to the library and look through the top journals for the fields you're thinking about; figure out which ones you want to keep reading for the rest of your career." It was clear that psychiatry was the most interesting for me.

What's the last book you read?

I just finished *Ubik* by Philip Dick and *The Chess Garden* by Brooks Hansen. Among my favorites are Faulkner's Snopes trilogy, Camus's *The Plague*, and anything by Douglas Adams.

What about you would surprise most people?

Many people don't know that I'm an amateur percussionist. I started out with a drum set but then downsized to bongos and congas when I went to college. In high school, I played drums in a Christian heavy metal band. We never made it big, and I still don't understand why.

What's one thing that you would like to change about yourself?

I should probably be more patient. Next question.

If you had a time machine, where's the first place you'd go?

Probably into the future, say 200 years from now. It would be fascinating to see where technology and the field of medicine have (hopefully) progressed. I often imagine how a scientist from the early 19th century would see the world now.

What three people would you like to have over for dinner?

Friedrich Nietzsche, William James, and Mark Twain: Three profound thinkers about the human condition. Plus, they all suffered from depression, so it would be fascinating to get their insights into the illness.

Are there any misconceptions people have about your field?

I think many people both underestimate and overestimate the effectiveness of depression treatments. Medications and psychotherapy *do* work (and are necessary) for millions of patients. However, a sizable minority of patients do not adequately respond to available treatments or they relapse despite adequate treatment. This is the gap we hope to bridge with our research.

Of what professional accomplishment are you most proud?

Completing a recent study of deep brain stimulation (DBS) for treatment-resistant depression at Emory, demonstrating that DBS could help a majority of patients who'd otherwise exhausted all other available treatments. By the end of the study, previously disabled patients were returning to school, work, and a relatively normal life.

What do you like most about your job?

The ability to do so many different things in a day—clinical work, research, writing, teaching. And I'm constantly surrounded by interesting and intelligent people.

What's the funniest thing that has ever happened to you?

Nothing. I have lived an extraordinarily serious and humor-free life. But, with two small boys, that probably won't last for long.

**Worthy of note:
Honors, awards,
appointments, etc.**

James Weinstein, D.O., the Peggy Y. Thomson Professor of the Evaluative Clinical Sciences, was elected a member of the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine, one



of the nation's highest honors in the field. At the time of his election, Weinstein was also copresident of Dartmouth-Hitchcock and director of the Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice (TDI). A few weeks later, in a consolidation of DH's leadership, he was named

CEO of the Dartmouth-Hitchcock health system. Concurrently, the Trustees of DH named **Wiley Souba** (left),



M.D., Sc.D., the dean of DMS, as the acting director of TDI.

John Wennberg, M.D., the Peggy Y. Thomson Professor Emeritus of the Evaluative Clinical Sci-



ences and the founding director of TDI, received from the University of Chicago the 2011 MacLean Center Prize in Clinical Ethics and Health Outcomes. The prize is the largest

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