

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

# Psychology Day



SPSS Data Editor

2. year	year	sex	extr
1	1.00	1.00	
2	1.00	1.00	
3	1.00	2.00	
4	1.00	2.00	
5	1.00	1.00	
6	1.00	1.00	
7	1.00	2.00	
8	2.00	1.00	
9	1.00	2.00	
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12	3.00	1.00	3.00
13	1.00	1.00	4.00
14	1.00	1.00	3.00
15	1.00	2.00	6.00
16	1.00	2.00	1.50
17	1.00	1.00	5.00
18	1.00	1.00	5.50
19	3.00	2.00	3.50
20	1.00	2.00	7.00
21	2.00	1.00	5.50
22	1.00	2.00	7.00

FALL 2008 PROGRAM  
December 2, 2008 Moyer Hall

# NOTES

# SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

4:25 - 4:50 Miller Forum, Moyer Hall  
Welcoming Remarks  
Keynote Speaker, Dr. Gretchen Gotthard

## **Here Today, Gone Tomorrow: Using Basic Memory Research to Understand Memory Problems in the “Real World”**

What can basic memory research with rats tell us about how people learn and remember? A lot! Basic scientific research is often viewed as less important than more applied forms of research. In fact, you might recall from the recent election that comments were made by one candidate that basic research on bears' DNA was frivolous and a waste of taxpayers' money. Basic science provides a critical foundation for applied research. One question being asked in behavioral neuroscience research today is “Can memories be erased?”. This basic question has far-reaching implications for applied areas such as potential treatments for individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Given the large numbers of military personnel who are and will be returning from the war with this debilitating condition, providing an answer to this question is critical. Piecing together basic scientific findings from various labs, including my own, the answer to this question is becoming clearer. It appears that memories can indeed be erased. But now that we know this, the question becomes “Should memories be erased?”. Basic scientific research provides an important foundation for these applications and is an essential step in the research process.

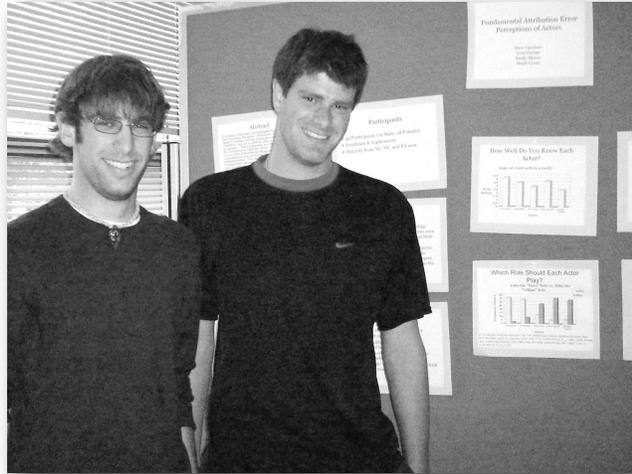
4:50 - 5:10 *Break/Poster Viewing*

## **CONCURRENT PRESENTATION SESSIONS**

4:50-6:30 Posters - Miller Forum  
5:10-6:30 Paper Session A - Moyer 104  
5:10-6:15 Paper Session B - Moyer 109  
*(break at 5:40)*

(SNACKS & BEVERAGES AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE EVENT)

# Pictures from Spring 2008



## DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

### Paper Session A

#### Moyer 104

5:10-5:25

COLONEL MUSTARD, IN THE LIBRARY, WITH A CANDLESTICK

*Dorothy Martin. Angelica Pavone. Katelyn White. Kristin Garbutt.*

Our study examined the accuracy and reliability of eyewitness reports. Participants viewed a 5 minutes Simpson video clip and responded to a survey in two conditions, passively and actively viewing. In the passive condition participants were not instructed to view the clip, whereas the active condition was. The reason for this passive manipulation was to ensure that we were emulating a true to life eyewitness experience. Within the survey, both conditions were given questions based on factual information within the clip and misleading questions with fictitious information. We hypothesized that the passively viewing condition would answer the most questions incorrectly, while the active condition would answer the most correctly. This study will display the inaccuracy of eyewitness testimony.

5:25-5:40

RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM: THE EFFECT OF PERCEIVED STATE OF THE WORLD ON RELIGIOSITY

*Marissa Beidler, Sarah Golden, Mallory Russo*

Religious theory has suggested that when people feel threatened, they turn to the fundamentals of their religion, indicated at times by increased religiosity. Terror Management Theory posits that when death is made salient one will defend cultural worldview, a component of which is religion. The present study was designed to examine the relationship between religiosity and perceived state of the world. Dependent on condition, positive, negative or neutral images were presented subliminally. Subsequently, religious affiliation was measured using a variety of scales. We hypothesize that participants in the negative condition will rate themselves as more religious than those in the neutral and positive conditions.

(Break)

5:45-6:00

PERCEPTION OF DOGS

*Ruth Morrongiello, Rebecca Bednar, Joy Mitchell, David Schreiber*

This study was designed to look at the effects of positive and negative images of pit bulls on overall attitudes towards pit bulls. We also wanted to see whether these effects would be strengthened when a pit bull was present during the presentation of the image. There were four different groups in this study: participants either saw a video of a "nice" pit bull with or without a pit bull in the room or they saw a video of a "mean" pit bull with or without a pit bull. Participants drew themselves in relation to a pit bull both before and after viewing the video. They also completed a the PANAS scale after viewing the video. We anticipate finding an interaction between the type of video viewed and whether or not a pit bull was in the room on the change in attitude toward pit bulls.

6:00-6:15

## THE EFFECTS OF RHYTHMIC COMPLEXITY AND TEMPO OF MUSIC ON REACTION TIMES

*Ben Katz & Jason Tenenbaum*

Prior research in the field of musical perception has focused on music's effect on reaction times. Research has looked at the musical variables of amplitude and tempo. Music has been shown to improve reaction time when compared to no music groups when at moderate volume. Faster tempos caused faster reaction time to stimuli. Little research has explored the effect of the musical variables of time signature on reaction time. We plan to address this issue by varying the tempo and time signature of stimuli in our research. We hypothesize that slower tempos will cause slower reaction times, which will be modified by 5/4 time signatures, to further slow reaction times. Further, we hypothesize that personality factors and musical training will moderate the effects of the variables manipulated.

6:15-6:30

## HOT OR NOT: DESIRED ATTRACTIVENESS OF PARTNER IN DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIP TYPES

*Amelia Adler; Jillian Seeley; Sarah Schrader*

This research investigated different types of human relationships with a focus on the emergent relationship type of "friends with benefits" (FWB), especially among college students. A survey was made available online that assessed participants' desires in a theoretical partner. The different relationship types studied were FWB, friendship, marriage, one-night stand (ONS), hook up, and dating. For each relationship type participants were asked to rate pictures of body types and facial images in the context of a specific relationship type. We hypothesize that women will be more choosy than men at all relationship levels and that both men and women will be more choosy in characteristics when considering long term relationships than those that are short term. We believe that selectivity in FWB relationships will be higher in short term relationships and lower in long term relationships.

## Paper Session B

### Moyer 109

5:10-5:25

## EFFECT OF GENDER AND EXPERIENCE ON PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERS

*Jessica Apicella, Caitlin Bassett, Michael Fau, Melissa Krisa, Justin Laplante*

We investigated students' perceptions of male and female leaders and why they are different in leadership experience. Participants read about a male or female Student Council candidate with little or a great deal of relevant experience. Then they completed a questionnaire to assess perceptions of the candidate. We predicted that an experienced male candidate will be rated as more effective and successful as a leader than an inexperienced candidate or a female candidate.

5:25-5:40

## DO JUST WORLD BELIEFS INFLUENCE PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN WITH DIFFERENT BODY TYPES?

*Marguerite Farrell, Suzi Moczydlowski, Leann Rampulla, Karly Rodriguez, & Carly Rotfeld*

There is sufficient research to support the claim that negative stereotypes towards overweight individuals are frequently made and are extremely damaging. The main goal of this study is to explore the impact of believing in a just world on perceptions of overweight and underweight women. People

who believe in a just world feel that everything happens for a particular reason and that an individual is deserving of everything that happens to them. Participants were shown a picture of either an overweight or an underweight woman and asked to fill out a likeability scale and a just world scale. We predict that individuals will view the overweight picture more negatively than the underweight picture, and that these perceptions will be intensified by a high score on the Just World Scale.

(Break)

5:45 -6:00

#### THE EFFECTS OF CLASS YEAR, GENDER, AND TYPE OF STRESSOR ON COLLEGE STUDENT STRESS APPRAISAL AND COPING STRATEGIES

*Erica Gross, Rachel Leavitt, Jaclyn MacFarlane, Nora Springstubb*

This study examined the effect of type of stressor, class year, and gender on stress and coping in college students. First year students and seniors were given a vignette that depicted either a social or academic stressor and then answered questions indicating how they would appraise and cope with the hypothetical stressor. In general, we predicted that there would be a difference in how freshmen and seniors cope with stress since seniors will have had more time to transition into college life. In addition, women would report experiencing more stress than men, and would therefore cope differently. We hope to be able to provide suggestions for school administrators and counselors based on our results.

6:00-6:15

#### MOOD PRIMING AND RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT

*Wendy Hartmann, Alicia Monts, Timothy Ness, Rebecca Unger*

The current study investigated the effect of mood priming on men and women's perceptions of rewards and costs in relationships. Participants completed a Sentence Scramble emphasizing either positive or negative priming words. Next, participants watched a video clip containing equal amounts of positive and negative interactions between a fictional couple. After watching the clip, participants completed a relationship questionnaire that rated the rewards and costs perceived in the relationship from the movie. We predict that individuals who experienced negative mood while watching the clip will perceive more costs in the target relationship; however men will be more influenced by the negative priming manipulation than women. Overall, women will perceive more rewards than men.

## Poster Session Miller Forum

#### ASPERGER'S AND EDUCATION

*Janelle Mentrikoski, Kathryn Niedzwiecki*

This study investigated the experiences of individuals with Asperger's Syndrome (AS) in the education system. Eighty-four participants were recruited from websites dedicated to Asperger's Syndrome. Individuals with AS and parents of children with AS responded to an online questionnaire about the educational challenges they experienced. We coded and organized open-ended responses into common domains and relevant themes. This presentation will highlight qualitative information for educators on the greatest challenges faced by individuals with Asperger's Syndrome and implications for the classroom.

#### THE EFFECT OF PRIMING ON PERCEPTIONS OF GREEK LIFE AT MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

*Jonathan LcComte, Rebecca Stein, Dahlia Walton*

The purpose of this study is to examine if priming with positive, negative and neutral stereotypes of Greek life has an effect on the opinions of individuals concerning Greek life at Muhlenberg College. Participants randomly received a situation and then completed a survey regarding the behavior of greek students on campus. We project that individuals who received negative priming will score negative items as more likely to occur and those who received positive priming will score positive items as more likely to occur. Furthermore, we project that priming will have more of an effect on those who have no association with greek organizations. Results may have implications for reducing stereotypes of not only greek organizations, but other groups on college campuses, through positive priming.

#### COMPETITIVE DRINKING AMONG ATHLETES AND NON-ATHLETES

*Thomas Gambuzza, William Osei, Collin J. Wolfer*

We investigated factors that influence competitive drinking among college students. Participants completed a brief questionnaire that assessed competitive drinking. Competitive drinking was defined as engaging in drinking games. We expect that results will show a difference in the amount of competitive drinking between athletes and non-athletes, and also between men and women.

#### LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS

*Arielle Rogers, Michelle Murphy, Jennifer Friedman, Helena Manzella, Danielle Zito*

The goal of the study is to assess the effect of personality type on satisfaction in a long distance relationship. To do this, we used the Big Five Personality Inventory and the Relationship Assessment Scale. We combined both assessments into one survey and distributed it to students who considered themselves as being in a long distance relationship. We hypothesize that those students who score higher on extraversion and agreeableness will also score higher on satisfaction in their long distance relationship.

#### SEX AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

*Rachel Ammerman, Katie Bemis, Avrit Rubin, Amanda Tompkins*

The purpose of our study is to determine whether the sex make-up of a class affects students' willingness to participate in class discussion. We observed current first year seminars with different ratios of men to women and coded for participation behaviors. Upon the analysis of our data, we expect to see differences in women's participation behaviors based on the sex-makeup of the classroom. We hypothesize that women will participate less in classes that are dominated by men.

#### THE EFFECTS OF RELEVANT AND IRRELEVANT DISTRACTIONS ON COGNITIVE TASKS

*Kristyn Gentile, Nicole Gallub, Jennifer Rickel, Laysa de la Parra, & Katherine DiPierro*

We investigated the effects of environmental distracters on the performance of a cognitive memory task. We used a two by two mixed factor design in which we measured distraction versus non distraction between groups and the relevance versus irrelevance of the words recalled within the groups. We hypothesized that participants in the distraction group would recall fewer words than those in the non distraction group. We also hypothesized that those in the distraction group would be more likely to remember words relevant to the distracters than the non distraction group.

#### GENDER DIFFERENCES IN OVERWEIGHT PERSON PERCEPTION

*Melissa Katz, Andrea Rosenfield, Kaitlyn Archibald, Elizabeth Gaffney, Dan Abrams*

We investigated college students' impressions of overweight individuals. Subjects evaluated two photographs of an overweight man and an overweight woman and indicated their perceptions and predicted behaviors towards these individuals. Participants were then asked questions about the people in the photographs, focusing on friendship choice, attractiveness, social interaction, and success. We hypothesized that male participants would assign more unfavorable perspectives to the pictures. In addition, we hypothesized that overall, women would be judged more negatively than men.

#### HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH? A STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ON ACADEMIC SUCCESS

*Olivia Alvarez, Kiera Bianchini, Erin Mills, Samantha Jonson*

The modern college student is no longer isolated in the classroom, but participates in a myriad of extracurricular activities, including but not limited to sports, academic clubs, community service clubs, part-time jobs, performances, and Greek life. We were interested in determining the average academic success of students heavily involved in extracurricular activities. We hypothesized that students that are more involved would have better time management skills and therefore have better GPAs. Using a survey design, we assessed GPAs, activity participation, perceived influence of activities on daily life, and perceived time management skills.

#### THE EFFECTS OF PRIMARY COLORS ON EMOTIONS

*Laura Pitoniak*

The purpose of this experiment was to determine the effects of primary colors on emotions. Male and female adults were instructed to complete a questionnaire after viewing a neutral black & white photograph copied onto either red, yellow, or blue paper. The questionnaire consisted of three pairs of words that described opposite emotions. Participants ranked the words based upon what they thought the person in the picture felt. It was hypothesized that the participants who received the yellow and the blue paper would rate the picture more positively regarding emotions. It was believed that the red paper used would elicit a negative response. Results showed no significant interaction between color of paper used and emotions elicited; however, there was a main effect for emotion.

#### THE EFFECT OF INTERNET SEARCH RESULTS ON HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIORS IN ADHD

*Samantha Busa*

Research on help-seeking behavior has consistently shown that African American families are less likely to seek mental health services for their children. Lack of information and misconceptions about ADHD may be one factor that deters families from getting treatment. In this research, we used two different search engines to examine the types of information on ADHD treatment available on the internet. The two search engines were Google, the most frequently used search engine, and Rushmore Drive, a search engine tailored towards the African American community. We compared the types of information returned by each search engine (e.g., medication options, alternative treatments) and discuss how these differences might affect the help seeking process.



**WANT TO PRESENT YOUR RESEARCH OR INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE?**

Spring 2009 Psychology Day is tentatively scheduled for April 28. If you would like to present your research or internship, speak with a professor and/or visit the Psychology Department website for more information!

**ABOUT PSYCHOLOGY DAY**

Psychology Day is an opportunity for students from all class years to present and discuss findings from the research or internship projects they have conducted that semester or year. New majors can look ahead to the types of research conducted in Research Methods, Advanced Lab, Research Apprenticeships and Independent Studies. More senior majors can look back, note their own intellectual development, and mentor younger students. The student presenters are practicing valuable communication skills. Most of all, students (from any major) and faculty join together as colleagues to celebrate student research.

**CONDUCTING RESEARCH**

Learning how to conduct empirical research is central to the education of the psychology major. Through research experiences, psychology students strengthen their critical

thinking skills and develop systematic, rigorous ways of thinking about people.

***Research in Courses***

Students are introduced to research in Introductory Psychology. This foundation continues through the rest of the major, including Research Methods and Advanced Lab. In these courses students develop a unique hypothesis and design a research study to test it. They then follow-through by running, analyzing and presenting the study.

***Research Apprenticeships***

Many students (freshmen through seniors) work with faculty members as research assistants and collaborators. After an apprenticeship, students also often develop their own research ideas and go on to Independent Research or Senior Theses.

***Independent Research***

We encourage juniors and seniors in particular to consider Independent

Research. Students work closely one-on-one with a faculty mentor in developing and implementing their ideas. Seniors looking for a year-long, intensive experience are encouraged to pursue a senior thesis. Any type of research, but especially independent theses such as these are very positive additions to a graduate school application.

**INTERNSHIPS**

An internship is a work experience characterized by intentional learning. During this experience, the student assumes a responsible role in an organization and actively reflects on what he or she is observing and learning. Psychology students have held internships in many different settings.

**MORE INFORMATION**

Visit the Psychology Department website and follow the link for "Resources for Current Students."