



# NOTES

# SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

4:20—4:40 Miller Forum, Moyer Hall

## WELCOMING REMARKS

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Kathleen Harring

### **Questions about Human Behavior: Using Psychological Science to Connect Disciplines**

As psychological scientists we ask questions about human behavior and use a myriad of research methodologies and quantitative tools to collect and interpret data that help us answer those questions. Many of our questions span sub-disciplines of psychology (e.g. social, cognitive, clinical) and involve the integration of other academic and professional disciplines (e.g., biology, economics, philosophy). Thus, psychology can be considered the “ultimate bridge discipline” connecting ideas and explanations from multiple perspectives to understand human cognition and behavior.

4:40—5:00 Break/Poster Viewing, Miller Forum

## CONCURRENT PRESENTATION SESSIONS

4:40—6:30 Posters—Miller Forum

5:00—6:35 Paper Session A—Moyer 106

5:00—6:05 Paper Session B—Moyer 109

## DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

### Paper Session A Moyer 106

5:00—5:15

#### RACE, DRUGS, AND WIKIPEDIA: IMPRESSIONS OF NATURALISTIC AGENTS

*Daniel Brennan, Amanda Nocera, and Danielle Zito*

Racism still exists. In this study we are examining how race affects how one perceives risk when looking at drug use. In the US, there are certain characteristics associated with the different races. Caucasians are stereotyped as 'clean', Mexicans are stereotyped as 'less clean,' and Native Americans are stereotyped as 'spiritual'. We want to see if these stereotypes affected one's decision to consume a newly discovered plant with physiological effects. We fabricated three Wikipedia articles with each race being represented as the discoverer of the same invented plant. We hypothesized that people associated higher risk with Mexican discoverers than with the Caucasians and Native Americans.

5:15—5:30

#### HOW SAFE IS SAFE ENOUGH? FACTORS THAT AFFECT MEDICATION ACCEPTABILITY

*Brodie Main, Samantha Blum, Jason Boulter*

We are interested in determining the factors that affect the acceptability of using medication as a treatment. Previous research has demonstrated that medication is the least acceptable form of treatment but no work has been done on elucidating the reasons that determine whether people will use a medication. Knowledge of these reasons is important because the acceptability of a treatment has been directly correlated to the level of adherence that people display. In this study we chose to focus on the role that side effects and information regarding drug action plays in acceptability.

5:30—5:45

#### MARKETING RESEARCH FOR NEW PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

*Jen Blair and Kate Franklin*

Our study was concerned with attitudes towards prescription drug advertisements. It was our attempt to determine how the source of the advertisements and the type of endorser affected risk perception of the specific prescription drug. Our study had six conditions. There were three possible endorsers including an everyday person, a doctor, and a celebrity. There were also two possible sources of the advertisements, either a "news" magazine or an "entertainment" magazine. We are expanding past research concerning direct-to-consumer advertising and its relationship to trust and risk perception.

*(Break)*

5:50—6:05

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF A STRANGER

*Kristin Kettig and Jennifer Starr*

Past research has shown that a double standard exists in perceptions of alcohol use by gender. Women who drink alcohol are perceived as more deviant than men. Previous findings have suggested that a similar double standard exists in the perception of marijuana users. The purpose of this study is to look at the different perceptions of marijuana use based on the gender of the user and their level of use. In addition, we are looking to see if marijuana use contributes to the perception of whether or not the user is fulfilling their gender roles.

6:05—6:20

ATTITUDES TOWARD CHARITABLE GIVING

*Nicole Baumgartner, Patrick Brodarick, Alana Lerer, David Rosenblatt*

We are interested in examining an individual's willingness to donate to charity organizations. Research has indicated that celebrity endorsement and the identifiable victim effect are factors that influence charitable giving. Specifically, people donate more to charities endorsed by a celebrity than an average person or no endorser. Furthermore, willingness to donate increases when an identified victim is provided instead of statistical information about victims. In the present study, we provided participants with information about either an identified victim or a statistic and paired it with either a celebrity, average person or no spokesperson endorsement of a charity. We anticipate that donations will be highest in the celebrity endorsed identified victim condition.

6:20—6:35

RISK PERCEPTION AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

*Eric Hamilton, Maggie Sullivan, Randall Katz*

The goal of our study is to determine the risks people associate with cheating, and their willingness to do so. Additionally, we would like to determine what people think to be cheating, which acts they will be more willing to commit and how the professor plays a role in cheating. We believe that this study can be helpful to the entire academic community. The understanding of differing perceptions of cheating can help professors and administrators become more aware of the students' perception of both academic honesty and the effectiveness of Muhlenberg's Academic Behavior Code.

## DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

### Paper Session B Moyer 109

5:00—5:15

#### THE IMPORTANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN MIDDLE SCHOOL: AN ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE

*Chris Lewis, Rebecca Patterson, David Porrino, and Michelle Wallace*

The purpose of the current study is to look at family engagement at the middle school level. Prior research has been conducted to show that teacher-parent alliances foster students' personal and academic growth (Davis & Lambie, 2005). Administrators play a large role in decision-making concerning school involvement opportunities for families. We hypothesized that administrators would value parent-teacher alliances and increased communication. We also hypothesized that they would consider communication vital for successful engagement. This research can help better understand how administrators perceive family engagement and what can be done to strengthen connections between families and schools.

5:15—5:30

#### FAMILY ENGAGEMENT: THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY AND CHILD

*Sydney Miller, Julie Mosgowsky, Danielle Winston, Deena Wolloch*

Previous research has shown that active and engaged families are more likely to be influential in their child's academic success. The participants were either biological relatives or guardians of children from South Mountain Middle School, in Allentown. We were interested in family engagement or the degree to which families are involved with their child and connected to the school. Researchers created a forty item survey to evaluate how much of a role each family plays in their child's academic life both in school and at home. We expect that families who are more aware of their child's academic and personal well-being will be more likely to have children who succeed.

*(Break)*

5:35—5:50

TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AT SOUTH MOUNTAIN MIDDLE SCHOOL

*Elizabeth Martini, Katherine Mullin, Laura Nelson, Andrea Rosenfield*

Family engagement is the inclusion of family members in students' educational pursuits. Past research suggests that when parents/guardians are involved with their child's education, the child will have greater academic achievement. Teachers can contribute to parental involvement by either deterring or encouraging school participation from families. This study examines teachers' perceptions of factors involved in family engagement as well as the importance of family engagement. Participants included sixth and eighth grade teachers at South Mountain Middle School. We expected to find that teachers who hold positive beliefs about the role of families in students' education would be more likely to invite parents/guardians to participate in school happenings.

5:50—6:05

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

*Caitlin Dombkowski, Aliya Heller, Lauren O'Donnell, Heather Kaufman*

Research has shown that the engagement of families in their children's school leads to improved student outcomes. This study examined middle school students' perceptions of family engagement and possible barriers to its occurrence. Participants were students attending South Mountain Middle School, a community school in the Lehigh Valley. Researchers created and distributed a survey that measured student's perceptions of parental involvement, their family's values, their community, their teachers, and their friends. Questions were also asked to further understand the life of the students outside of school. The results from this study will provide insight into student perceptions of family engagement that will aid the implementation of programs to encourage families to be more engaged.

## POSTER SESSION

### Miller Forum

#### MISOGYNISTIC RAP MUSIC AND SELF-ESTEEM

*Dori Lewis, Matt Brooks, Jordan Shafer, Alexis Peikon*

Our main goals for this experiment are to identify whether misogynistic rap music has any effect on women's self-esteem. A benefit of this study is that if we find that women's self-esteem is negatively affected by the misogynistic rap music, we can make the issue known that this kind of music is detrimental to a woman's feeling of self worth. This would help raise awareness of the negative effects of this kind of music.

#### SELF-MONITORING AND FACEBOOK

*Allison Giordano, Melissa Miller, Victoria Piccone*

Self-monitoring involves the process of regulating one's own behavior in order to appear favorably to others. High self-monitors tend to modify their actions in accordance with what's currently socially fitting and aim to produce a positive reaction from others. Low self-monitors' adjust their behavior according to what their inner feelings are and tend to be less likely to adjust according to social standards. We administered a self-monitoring survey as well as two surveys about attitudes and behavior toward Facebook and how careful people are when maintaining their page in order to assess the relationship between the two. We hypothesized that people who are high self-monitors are more concerned with self-presentation on Facebook and are more selective with what they share on Facebook.

#### IDEAL RELATIONSHIPS AND THE MEDIA

*Alexis Clarke, Rachel Dickerson, Angelica Moore, Erin Ott*

The purpose of our study is to determine if viewing television as realistic effects the way men and women create standards for their ideal partners and relationships. Specifically looking at women, we assessed their ideal qualities of relationship partners, and then we surveyed their views on perceived realism in television that depicts romantic relationships. We anticipate finding a relationship between realistic views of television relationships and unrealistic relationship standards.

#### THE EFFECTS OF BECOMING A MEMBER OF AN EXCLUSIVE INGROUP

*Abbey Rabinovich, Emily Joyner, Michael Kellum*

Past research has shown that people form ingroups with those they feel they share personal characteristics with. When people separate into ingroups, feelings towards others outside of their group may change, especially if those people have their own ingroups. The goal of our study is to observe hostility that may rise between ingroups. The varying ingroups on our college campus are often selective and exclusive, causing tension and a seeming hostility among them. We feel that it is necessary to examine the reasoning for this hostility among Muhlenberg College students.



#### CONTACT AND STIGMA WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS

*Scott Kanner, Dr. Sciutto, Dr. Rudski*

Stigma has gained importance in the literature as it has been shown that stigmatizing attitudes affect the lifestyles of people with mental illness, subjecting them to discrimination. In this study, we investigated the experiences that people have had with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and how these experiences may contribute to decreased stigmatizing attitudes and misconceptions. A modified version of the Level of Familiarity scale was used to explore not only the quantity, but also the quality of social contact. Attribution and social distance scales were used as measures of stigmatizing attitudes. In addition, an ASD knowledge scale was used to measure misconceptions. Preliminary data show a weak negative correlation between more positive experiences and desired social distance.

#### PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AS DETERMINED BY PERSONALITY

*Andrew Brod, Danielle Wagner, Josh Silverman*

Physical activity is an important part in a living a healthy life. However, there are different types of physical activity and this preference varies between people. We predict that personality type will effect this preference. By determining whether the participant identified with the personality traits of extraversion or introversion and then comparing this to the type of physical activity prefer we expect to find that extroverts prefer physical activities in a social setting while introverts prefer physical activity in a more secluded setting.

#### DO ATHLETES SCORE MORE ON OR OFF THE FIELD? COMPARING THE SEXUAL ACTIVITY OF ATHLETES AND NON-ATHLETES

*Mary Ann Collins, Kristen Wehrle, Joana da Silva, Francesca Martinez*

We are doing an experiment and looking at the perception and actuality of athletes and non athletes sexual activities. Student athletes and non athletes filled out a survey about their sports involvement and sexual history. They were returned and analyzed. The results compare the sexual activity of athletes versus non athletes.

#### DO WHITER TEETH INCREASE ATTRACTIVENESS AND SOCIAL PERCEPTION?

*Genna Wallerstein, Candace Eaton, Kimberlee Yalango, Danielle Seife*

The main goal is to find if the whiteness of teeth will affect women's perception of attraction and social standards. Previous research has shown that cosmetics enhance facial symmetry which influences perceived attractiveness and we wanted to find another factor of attraction. Since there is a recent popular trend towards whitening teeth and there is limited previous research, we wanted to study its effects on attractiveness and social perception. This study will help us determine if teeth whitening products are actually beneficial. We expect to find that whiter teeth will enhance attractiveness and social perception. We also predict that yellow teeth will be perceived as less attractive and have lower social perceptions.

SEX ROLE FULFILLMENT, ATTACHMENT, AND DREAM RECALL

*Marley Goldman, Christian Mathers, Maya Spitalnik, Jennifer Verola*

Not everyone is capable of producing intense dreams nor is there a definite ability for all persons to accurately recall and describe even the most personally significant dreams. We look to investigate potential human attributes that increase one's ability to dream and also recall dreams. Sex role fulfillment and attachment style can affect one's capability to dream frequently and recall any dreams. Therefore we are interested in studying individual's dream recall frequency and comparing it to their individual attachment styles. We will do this by administering surveys and collecting dream journals from the participants.

# NOTES



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

Spring 2011 Psychology Day is tentatively scheduled for May 3rd. 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."