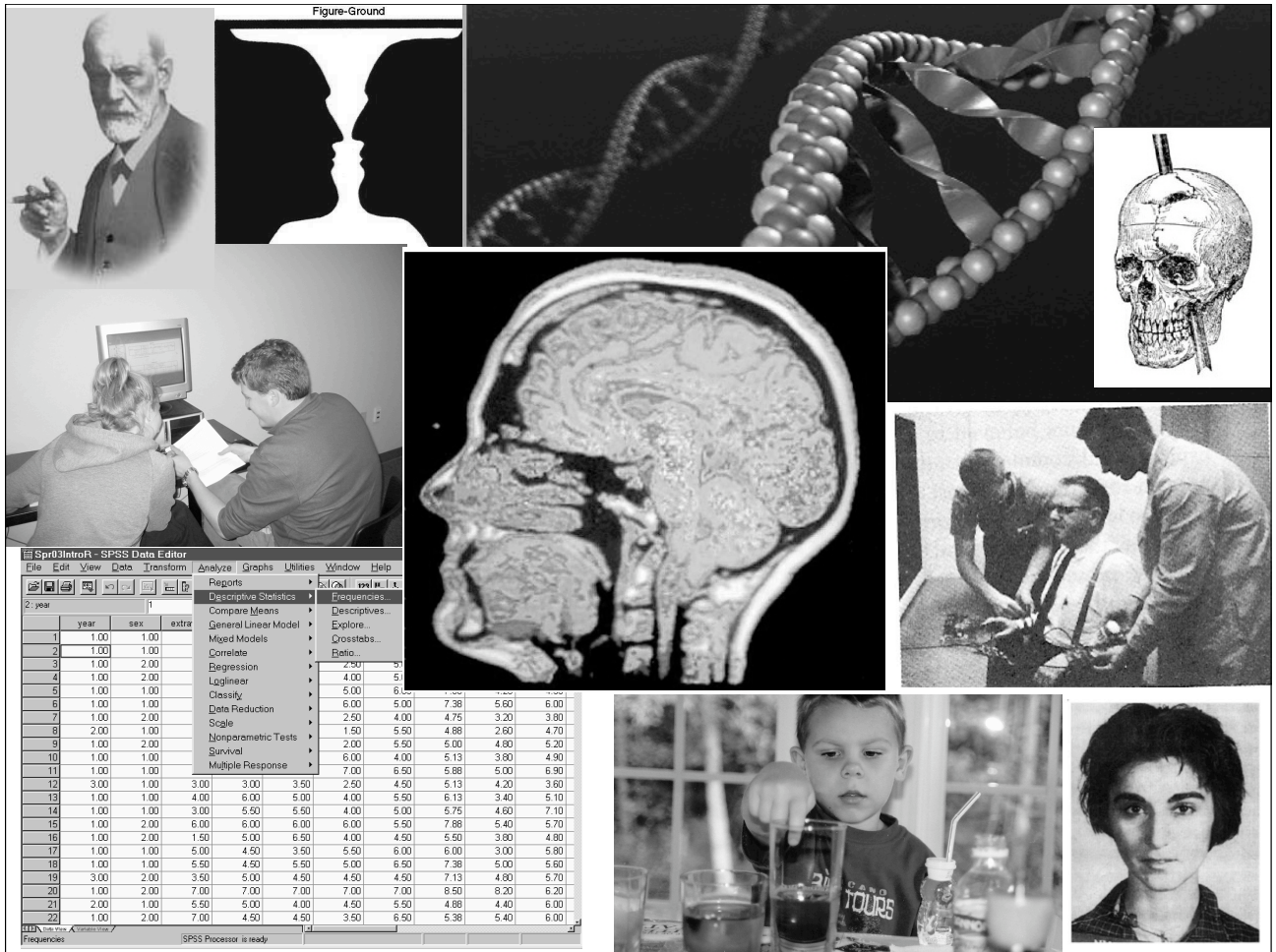


MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

Psychology Research Day



SPRING 2008 PROGRAM

April 29, 2008 Moyer Hall

NOTES

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

4:20 - 4:45 Miller Forum, Moyer Hall
Welcoming Remarks
Keynote Speaker, Julianne Roscioli ('08)

Narrative Medicine: Using Qualitative Research to Honor the Stories of the Ill and Dying

What makes a good story? Stories can entertain us, teach us, motivate us, or even change us. In medicine, storytelling is being used in chronically ill populations to enhance patients' quality of life and promote physical healing. Narrative medicine gives patients the opportunity to contribute their ideas, values, and experiences to their own treatment. Telling stories also helps validate people and their experiences, and may even improve physical health. Narratives are enjoyable for listeners, and they create a unique connection between people. The stories also teach researchers and healthcare workers about the experience of living with a chronic illness. They reveal a need for patients to be seen as humans with rich layers of personality, wisdom, and experiences. Patients' stories may motivate doctors to change the way they listen to their patients, and perhaps even the way they treat them. The stories may also uncover the truth that everyone, including those who are ill or dying, has something valuable to offer.

4:45 - 4:55 Break

CONCURRENT PRESENTATION SESSIONS

4:55-6:30 Posters - Miller Forum
4:55-6:15 Paper Session A - Moyer 104
4:55-6:15 Paper Ssession B - Moyer 109
(break at 5:25)

(SNACKS & BEVERAGES AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE EVENT)

NOTES



DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session A

Moyer 104

4:55-5:10

WOMEN'S MATH PERFORMANCE: THE ROLE OF PHYSIOLOGICAL AROUSAL IN STEREOTYPE THREAT

Matt Eadline

This study looked into the effects of stereotype threat, and more specifically how physiological arousal can mediate these effects. It has been theorized that if one is placed under a situation in which stereotype threat is present that their performance will decrease in a given task. By manipulating how participants label their arousal when under stereotype threat, the study hopes to determine if and how the physiological effects of arousal can effects ones performance. The results failed to reveal a stereotype threat performance effect, but the manipulations did influence the number of items completed on the math test. (*PSY 270 Research Apprenticeship)

5:10-5:25

PERCEPTIONS OF IDEAL FRIENDSHIPS

Ashley Viviani, Jared Mazzei, Alissa Constantinople, Xiomara Fernandez

The main objective of this study is to examine the differences between how each gender perceives an ideal friendship, both same- sex and cross-sex. According to past research conducted by Kaplan & Keys (1997) men tended to be more sexually attracted to their cross-sex platonic friend than women were in their cross-sex friendships. In this study we hope to further investigate differences between cross-sex and same-sex friendships-- specifically exploring the divergences between what one gender actually wants in their cross-sex friendship and what the opposite gender predicts they want. While also examining same-sex friendships and the possible unspoken societal challenges.

(Break)

5:30-5:45

SEX AND COGNITIVE TASKS

Nicki Sompolski, Stephanie Morffi, Amy Wortzel, Sarah Manning, Douglas Kupferman

The goal of our study is to examine if manipulating the gender composition of a group can affect one's ability to perform mental rotation tests. This research question is based on previous studies which suggested that participants with a more masculine score (M-score) on the Bem Sex Role Inventory perform better on mental rotation activities. Further research has also shown that an individual's gender self-concept can be manipulated, based on social context.

Therefore, our study will fuse these ideas into one comprehensive study. It is beneficial to understand how our self-identity can change in different environments. We are, therefore, questioning.

PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH DAY

5:45-6:00

SYMBOLIC RACISM: THE EFFECT OF NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE AND RACE ON WHITE PERCEPTIONS

Megan Young, Miles Davison, Sandy Crawford, Damara González

Symbolic racism may be defined as the merging of racist attitudes with traditional values and norms as a way to justify racist beliefs. Using the concept of symbolic racism, we investigated how neighborhood type and race affected the perceptions of white Americans. We designed an online survey with a 2 (neighborhood type) x 3 (race prime) picture manipulation. Our main hypothesis is that participants will judge urban neighborhoods poorly when black people or no people are pictured, but favorably when white people are pictured.

6:00-6:15

EFFECT OF THEORIES OF INTELLIGENCE AND FEEDBACK ON MOTIVATION

Rachel Eisenberg, Elyse Ettin, Abigail Klein, Jenna Zorn

There are two theories of intelligence; entity theorists believe that intelligence is fixed whereas incremental theorists believe that intelligence is malleable. We are looking to explore how these theories of intelligence influence interpretations of positive or negative feedback about a task. Research indicates that theories of intelligence and feedback influence motivation to complete a task. Participants completed a maze in a mirror and were given scripted positive or negative feedback. We gave participants a practice maze and measured their practice time as motivation. We predicted that entity theorists will have less motivation, especially when they receive negative feedback.

Paper Session B

Moyer 109

4:55-5:10

FEMINIST IDENTITY

Samantha Greenberg

The present investigation focuses on feminist identity, gender roles stress, and the endorsement of feminine norms. One-hundred and nine female participants were solicited online to complete the Feminine Gender Role Stress Scale, Femininity Ideology Scale, and the Feminist Perspectives Scale 3. Results will be discussed within the context of challenges associated with measuring feminist identity, particularly when previous assessments rely on a binary notion of gender. (**Honors Thesis*)

5:10-5:25

A STUDY ON POST-GRADUATION PLANS ABILITY TO REDUCE LEVELS OF FINAL YEAR ANXIETY

Karim Assous, Danielle Tadros, Rachel Kauffman, Erica Rosenbaum

This study examined final-year undergraduates' anxiety based on plans upon graduation. Participants were classified based on their indication of post graduation plans (definitive plans after graduation, interview/application process, and no set plans upon graduation). Thirty-one Muhlenberg College students were administered the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) as well as fictionalized vignettes of Muhlenberg Alumni with lower salaries. The goal of this manipulation was to unconsciously remind participants of post graduation plans. We also

PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH DAY

examined whether individuals with no set plans upon graduation will have higher levels of anxiety once presented with the negative salary manipulation. There were no significant results.

(Break)

5:30-5:45

PERFORMANCE IN COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE TRAITS

Justin Rudolph, Michael Capawana, Diana DaSilva, Amanda Shaffer

For years, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) has plagued an array of young adults. There has been increasing evidence, however, that people suffering from only some aspects of this disorder actually perform better on certain tasks (Van Der Wee, Ramsey, Van Megan, Denys, Westenberg & Kahn, 2007); they are classified as having sub-clinical OCD. We hypothesized that participants with moderate obsessive-compulsive traits would exhibit the best performances on three cognitive tasks, compared with "normal" participants and those with clinical OCD.

5:45-6:00

AN INVESTIGATION OF STIGMA TOWARDS ONLINE DATING AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Lynn Boyle, Lauren Gurwicz, Julianne Roscioli, Carli Segal

With the rising popularity of online dating networks, why do some participate while others do not? This study examined and established the stigma of online dating among college students. An online survey using both quantitative and qualitative measures was taken by 150 college students and consisted of questions regarding stigma, anxiety, dating styles, depression, and body image. Results indicated a significant relationship between online dating and stigma and non-significant relationships between the other variables. Qualifications were discussed such as a more diverse sample size and length of the survey.

6:00-6:15

PERCEPTIONS OF MENTAL ILLNESS ACCORDING TO THE GENDER OF THE CLIENT

Christina Lindsay, Megan Francis, Stephanie Scrofani, Pam Rubin

The goal of this study was to determine if gender has an effect on perceptions of mental illness. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions (male, female or unspecified person). The description was a case study of someone with Body Dysmorphic Disorder. Participants answered questions about whether or not this person showed symptoms of a mental illness. Afterwards, we administered the BEM Sex Role Inventory. We hypothesize that participants in the male condition would be more likely to diagnose the subject with a mental illness because in today's society it is generally more accepted that women have a.

Poster Session

Miller Forum

THERAPUETIC FOSTER CARE AS A MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION

Leslie Jordan

This semester I interned at a human services organization in Bethlehem, PA called Northwestern Human Services. I worked with children in the therapeutic foster care program, managed case work and funding, and organized a Girls Self-Esteem group for adolescent girls in the program. This experience has shown me some the problems in mental health work, such as lack of

PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH DAY

funding, staff, and adequate resources, as well as the positive effect that human services organizations can have on a community. (**Internship*)

WHITE RACIAL AWARENESS AS IT RELATES TO UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

Laura Mayerson, Olivia Alvarez, David Schreiber

Sparked by an interest in understanding how Muhlenberg College defines diversity, extensive research was conducted regarding White racial identity and views of diversity in the community. As the dominant population, Whites are able to ignore race as it relates to their own definition of themselves. This theoretical poster aims to examine Whites' understanding of their own race, and how this affects their views of "others." Specifically, we will address the Helms and Rowe models of white racial identity, different levels of racial awareness, and why these are important in a multicultural society. (**PSY 270 Research Apprenticeship*)

CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION OF SEX ROLES BASED ON HOUSE TASKS

Erica Rosenbaum

This study examined children's perceptions of sex roles based on household tasks. Participants were 300 students in 5th grade, eighth grade and college who completed a survey regarding division of household labor. Participants were asked about tasks their parents did when they were younger and tasks they expect to do when they run a household. The results show that mothers are more active in household tasks than fathers and that children tend to want to continue the tasks that the same gendered parent did while they were growing up. (**PSY 970 Independent Research*)

RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM

Julianne Roscioli

In the summer, Julianne participated in the Research Scholar program with the Lehigh Valley Hospital. She assisted with research that investigates the experiences of elderly patients who have suffered traumatic injuries. She also conducted a literature review of child passenger safety research to aid in the promotion of public and government action to reduce deaths in automobile accidents. Julianne worked under the direction of a trauma surgeon, and also observed other professionals, including palliative care nurses, neurosurgeons, geriatric specialists, community health directors, and chaplains. Along with other valuable knowledge, she learned about the integral role psychology plays in medical care. (**Internship*)

COLLEGE ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION HABIT

Kristen Sabia, Christine de Benedictis, and Amanda Bernecker

The purpose of this study is to examine college student's drinking habits and frequencies and its relationship with self-esteem. Participants were recruited from a small liberal arts college in northeastern Pennsylvania. The participant's habits were assessed through a survey on alcohol consumption, which contained eight questions involving their drinking habits. The participants completed the Rosenberg self-esteem scale as well as demographic question. The goal of the study was to find a relationship between self-esteem and alcohol consumption. If this relationship is found, programs and treatment related to self-esteem can be used and implemented to treat alcohol problems in college students.

PERCEPTIONS OF CELEBRITIES

Emily Morse, Jonathan Farber, David Gardner, Stephanie Cram

Our study examines the occurrence of the Fundamental Attribution Error committed on actors by viewers of movies. As people become more acquainted with each other, they have a better

PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH DAY

understanding of one another's disposition and recognize when behaviors are out of character, which influences their committal of the FAE.

PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION IN COUPLES

Savyon Lang, Denise Whiteman, Hannah Wilkowski

The purpose of this experiment was to examine whether there was a difference in the way that males and females perceive public displays of affection between couples based on gender. Research participants looked at pictures of same-sex and opposite-sex pairs displaying public displays of affection. Participants rated these pictures on a survey based on Sternberg's Triangle of Love Theory (intimacy, commitment & passion). We found that males in public displays of affection were perceived as more passionate/sexual than either male-female or female-female pairs.

"CHILD OF DIVORCE" STEREOTYPES AND PERCEPTIONS OF ADULT RELATIONSHIPS

Kristina Ciarlo, Rebecca Unger, Erica Cohen, Patrick Carr

The purpose of this study is to investigate if there is an overall negative stereotype about children of divorce, specifically concerning their romantic relationships. Also, we are looking at whether people take into account the level of parental conflict in regards to these relationships. Undergraduates read a vignette about a child and his/her family and rated the child's future romantic relationships. We expect that participants will rate the future relationships of children from divorced families more negatively than those from married parents. Additionally, when rating the child from the vignette, participants will not take into consideration variation in conflict levels.

THE EFFECT OF CONTINGENT SELF ESTEEM ON THE MATCHING HYPOTHESIS

David Schreiber, Marguerite Farrell, Christine Schaefer, Melisa Krisa

The purpose of this study is to look at the relationship between contingent self esteem and the matching hypothesis. Participants will be female college students ranging from ages 18 to 22. They will be administered surveys measuring contingent self esteem and introversion/extroversion. Additionally another survey will contain one of two pictures followed by one of two vignettes and a response survey in order to determine engagement with the matching hypothesis. We anticipate those in high contingent self esteem to engage in matching hypothesis more often than those with low contingent self esteem.

MEMORY & FINANCIAL DISTRIBUTION

Samantha Silverberg, Brittany Trenker, Matthew Blank

Implicit biases are attitudes held by individuals without their explicit awareness (McGlothlin, Killen & Edmonds, 2005). This study aims to explore implicit biases of students on a college campus. The study will have three conditions; participants will be primed with neutral, white-affirming, or race-bias statements. Participants will then complete a 10-item survey assessing financial distribution decisions. All participants will be given a consent form to ensure participant confidentiality. This study examines the question of whether students will show implicit biases toward stereotyping certain groups if primed with racial-bias statements.

PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH DAY

THE EFFECTS OF BIRTH ORDER AND SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS ON BODY IMAGE ESTEEM

Catherine Ruscitti, Sarah Goldberg, Jessica Ruane, Odelya Kadosh

Eating disorders are deadly diseases that affect numerous populations, specifically females (Miller et al., 2000). Research on effects of sibling relationships and birth order on body image esteem is inconclusive. Therefore, our goal is to explore the relationship between sibling status, birth order, and body esteem, which can benefit both personal and professional knowledge. Participants will be given a self-designed body image esteem scale and a demographics survey to assess the effects of sibling relationships and birth order on body image. The study will be completed by college-aged women from Research Methods classes at Muhlenberg College and a convenience sample.

INVOLVEMENT IN FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS AS IT RELATES TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND SATISFACTION

Laura Mayerson, Joslyn Kenowitz, Danielle Morrone

This study is aimed at finding a relationship between involvement in fine and performing arts and academic success and satisfaction. Students in a research methods class created a self designed survey assessing academic satisfaction and participation in the arts. Participants also completed the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale as well as demographic questions. If a strong correlation were to exist, educators may potentially use this information to encourage children that may be underachieving, as well as unsatisfied in school, to participate in programming in the arts. This may be accomplished by implementing arts programs as part of the regular curriculum or.

THE EFFECT OF MUSIC ON FILM CHARACTER PERCEPTION

Ari Jacobson, Danielle Coluccio, Julie deLaurentis

Music influences the way people view film. This study looks at people's emotional response to characters outside of a film in order to determine if music has bearing on the opinions held of the characters' heroism. We hypothesized that the happy music would make all of the characters more likeable, more trustworthy, and more heroic, while the sad would do the opposite. However, we found that music deemed as neutral showed the greatest effect by influencing characters to be perceived as less likeable, less trustworthy, and more villainous.

AROMATHERAPY AND ITS EFFECTS ON COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE

Kaitlyn Ferris, Katherine May, Laura Cole

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of aromatherapy (odorless condition, lavender, and peppermint oils) on cognitive performance. Fifteen Muhlenberg students first completed a demographics questionnaire and had three minutes to complete a word search puzzle. Both the survey and the word search were either scented with lavender or peppermint oils, or were left unscented. The results indicated that there was an effect of scent on performance in relation to reported stress level.

EFFECTS OF CAFFEINE ON COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE USING THE STROOP TEST

Kristen Peacock, Timothy Ness, Michael Fau, and Mara Silverman

In this study we looked at the effects of caffeine on cognitive processes using the stroop test. Half of the participants were given a caffeinated soda and the other half were given a placebo drink not containing caffeine. The participants then took the stroop test . We found that the participants who drank the placebo tended to perform better at the stroop test than those that drank the caffeinated beverage.

NOTES



WANT TO PRESENT YOUR RESEARCH OR INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE?

Fall 2008 Psychology Day is tentatively scheduled for December 2. If you would like to present your research, speak with a professor and/or visit the Psychology Department website for more information!

PSYCHOLOGY DAY

Psychology Day is an opportunity for students from all class years to present and discuss findings from the research projects they have conducted that semester or year. It is an opportunity for new majors to look ahead at the types of research conducted in Research Methods, Advanced Lab, Research Apprenticeships and Independent Studies. It is also an opportunity for more senior majors to look back, note their own intellectual development, and mentor younger students. Most of all, we hope that students (from any major) and faculty join together as colleagues to celebrate student research.

ABOUT CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Through research experiences, psychology students develop systematic, rigorous ways of thinking about people. Students also practice valuable communication skills by presenting their research at Psychology Day,

the LVAIC Undergraduate Psychology conference, and professional conferences.

Research in Courses

Students are introduced to research in Introductory Psychology. This foundation continues through other courses in the major including Psychological Statistics, Research Methods, 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. For more information about doing an independent research project, contact the faculty

member who has an area of expertise related to your interests.

Independent Research

We encourage juniors and seniors in particular to consider conducting an Independent Research (PSY970). Students work closely one-on-one with a faculty mentor in developing and implementing their ideas. Any type of research, but especially independent theses such as these are very positive additions to a graduate school application. For more information contact the [faculty member](#) who has an area of expertise related to your interests.

