

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

Psychology Day



SPRING 2010 PROGRAM

May 4, 2010 Moyer Hall

NOTES

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

4:20—4:40 Miller Forum, Moyer Hall

WELCOMING REMARKS

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Samantha Silverberg

Who Gets What? The Protestant Work Ethic and Adolescents' Distribution of Resources

My research, conducted with support from the Rosenberg Research Award, examined the effect of Protestant Work Ethic and community connectedness on high school students' reasoning about distributive justice. In an interview, participants answered questions about how and why they would distribute resources to needy vs. non-needy schools. Findings suggested that adolescents are more likely to distribute resources to the poor when the resources are viewed as additional, something that is not necessary to have, and more likely to distribute resources equally amongst all groups when the resources are seen as materials that can be used by anyone. In addition, responses revealed that when individuals felt connected to their community through relationships developed in that community, they were more willing to donate resources to the poor. I will talk about my study in more detail, and I will discuss my experiences doing a year-long, independent research study.

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 104

5:00—6:35 Paper Session B—Moyer 109

From 5:50 - 6:35, Paper Session A
will be held in Moyer 209

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session A Moyer 104

5:00—5:15

COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

Rachel Ammerman, Laura Sukonick, Emily Turpin, Brittany Trenker

Securely attached adults in romantic relationships are more likely to report higher levels of relationship satisfaction, even when physically apart. We assessed whether or not the best predictors for relationship satisfaction are proximity and time spent together, or attachment security and positive communication. We examined attachment security, positive communication, time spent together, time spent communicating while apart, relationship satisfaction and use of different modes of communication. These findings are important for those adults in both long distance and proximal romantic relationships because it may be that positive communication and attachment security are important factors in predicting satisfaction in a relationship, regardless of physical distance and time spent apart.

5:15—5:30

PERCEPTIONS OF HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOR

Patrick Carr, Jonathan Farber, Joslyn Kenowitz, Nora Stark

This study examined college student's perceptions of the acceptableness and effectiveness of psychotherapy and prescribed medication for anxiety. The participants were Muhlenberg College students. The majority were female, ranging from 18-23 years old. The researchers created a twenty three question survey to assess the perceptions of these two forms of treatments. We measured whether males were more willing to accept prescribed medication than females. We evaluated whether a student's major influenced their perceptions of medication and talk therapy for treating anxiety. We also analyzed the data to indicate if Muhlenberg College students perceived therapy as more effective and a more acceptable form of treatment for anxiety than prescribed medication.

5:30—5:45

THE ROLE OF MUSIC ON A COLLEGE STUDENT'S MOOD

Stephanie Cram, Jill Feldman, Jennifer Friedman, Emily Strode

Research has shown music to play an effective role in therapy for cancer patients by improving mood and ability to cope. Most research on music and mood often focuses on hospitalized children or elderly adults. This study investigated the role of music in the life of a healthy college student. Participants were randomly assigned to listen to one of five possible genres of music. They completed a frustrating word search while listening to music. Pre and post mood scales, personality inventory and background questionnaire were administered. We expect that the music has a more positive impact on those with personality traits such as extraversion, ability to control impulses, and high neuroticism; allowing them to complete the word search effectively and faster, and report a better mood afterward.

(Break) **After the break, Paper Session A will
resume in Moyer 209**

MOYER 209

5:50—6:05

PERSONALITIES OF COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYERS*Tom Gambuzza*

The purpose of the study was to explore personality differences in Division III college football players by position. Participants were 53 Division III college football players who completed an adapted 27-item scale which consisted of the 9-item Neuroticism subscale of the International Personality Item Pool-Five Factor Model to assess emotional stability, the 6-item Confidence subscale of the Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire, a 9-item adapted Leadership scale from the Leadership Scale for Sports, and a brief demographic questionnaire. I hypothesized that offensive players would score higher on leadership than defensive players, defensive players would score higher on emotional stability than offensive players, and quarterbacks would score highest on leadership compared to the other positions. I will report and analyze the findings that test these hypotheses, and discuss relevant implications.

6:05—6:20

LYING BEHAVIOR AS A FUNCTION OF SOCIAL DESIRABILITY*Laura Brehm, Jake Freeman, Erin Futrovsky*

This study examined circumstances under which subjects were more likely to lie. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in which a confederate either asked participants to lie for them or did not, and either left the room or stayed present. Subjects were asked to explain what happened in a situation and who was involved. We hypothesized that the greatest number of individuals would lie to help the confederate when she was present and also asked her peers for help. We also hypothesized that participants with a higher social desirability score would be more likely to lie regardless of the condition.

6:20—6:35

ATTITUDES TOWARD CELEBRITIES*Dana Baboulis-Gyscek, Tom Gambuzza, Kristyn Gentile, Phylcia Lee*

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between attitudes toward celebrities and academic success in college. Past research has shown that celebrity worship is related to depression, low self-esteem, and poor psychological well-being. Participants completed the General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) to assess overall psychological well-being, the Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS) to evaluate participants' level of celebrity worship, and a brief demographic questionnaire. We hypothesized that lower scores on the GHQ-12 will be related to increased scores on the CAS, indicating a greater degree of celebrity worship. Findings that test this hypothesis will be analyzed, and relevant implications discussed.

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session B Moyer 109

5:00—5:15

PERCEPTIONS OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mairin Breault, Hanna Glidden, Melissa Martin, Laura Mayerson

Most studies on the criminal justice system show that Black defendants are more likely to receive harsher sentences. Additionally, women are shown to be less punitive than men, and Whites are shown to be more punitive than Blacks. In our study we are interested in how the social identity of the juror and the defendant affect punitive attitudes. Specifically we looked at White women and whether they identified more with their race or their gender. We wanted to see how their social identity affected their sentencing of defendants of different races and genders. We hypothesized that the Black male would receive the harshest sentence. We also hypothesized that the participants would give the lightest sentence to those they identified with the most.

5:15—5:30

MULTIPLE IDENTITIES AND DISCRIMINATION: THE INTERACTION BETWEEN RACE AND MENTAL ILLNESS

Samantha Busa, Cesar Mosquera, Andrew Rhodes, Alexa Rosenberg

The present study examined the negative effects of race and mental illness stigma on discrimination. Subjects read a vignette portraying a White or Black man, with or without Autism and then answered a series of questions examining perceptions of dangerousness, intelligence, and social distancing to measure discrimination. We expected main effects for both race and mental illness such that the two Black target characters as well as the two Autistic target characters would show higher levels of danger, lower levels of intelligence and be discriminated against the most. We also anticipated discovering an interaction between mental illness and race such that when the man in the vignette was depicted as Black with a mental illness, the highest levels of discrimination would appear.

5:30—5:45

ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHIZOPHRENIA

Mara Silverman, Laura Winger, Dan Abrams, Jen Rickel

We examined the effects of treatment status (receiving or not) and presentation of symptomatic behaviors toward individuals with schizophrenia. We predicted that those individuals not receiving treatment and displaying symptomatic behaviors would be perceived the most negatively than the other groups.

(Break)

5:50—6:05

PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH IN ALLENTOWN, PA

Sarah Illing

Among patients at Caring Place Family Health Program in Allentown, PA, there is a large prevalence of self-reported depression and anxiety; however, few patients find opportunities to have these needs addressed. In order to create an ecological understanding of community health for practitioners interested in designing group mental health visits, interviews were conducted in Spanish and English with Caring Place patients recruited from a communal waiting room. Particularly, this quality improvement project focuses on patients' perceptions of stress and sadness in the community, gender and mental health, preferred coping methods, interactions with physicians, and potential strategies for treatment.

6:05—6:20

OPINIONS OF FAMILY LEAVE

Kaitlyn Archibald, Christina Cho, Kaitlyn Ferris, Caryn Viverito

The concept of family leave is a relatively new phenomenon that forces fathers to negotiate the roles and responsibilities of financially providing for one's family as well as undertaking the nurturing and care-taking roles linked with fatherhood. There is very little research on men taking family leave, and we hope to gain more insight on how benevolent and hostile sexists view the masculinity of men taking family leave. We predict that hostile sexists will view men taking family leave as less masculine than benevolent sexists. We also predict that both benevolent and hostile sexists will view men taking family leave as less masculine than men who are remaining in the workforce. This study will help gain understanding of how sexist beliefs affect the perceptions of masculinity.

6:20—6:35

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENDORSEMENT OF TRADITIONAL FEMININE GENDER ROLES AND INTERNALIZATION OF MEDIA BEAUTY IDEALS AS MEDIATED BY APPEARANCE-BASED CONTINGENCIES OF SELF-WORTH

Laura Cole, Dahlia Walton, Rebecca Scarborough

Traditional feminine gender roles (TFGR) portray women as passive sexual objects, encouraged to focus on their appearance and depend on others for self-validation. Exposure to the media increases awareness of beauty ideals and may increase the likelihood that an individual adopts them as their own. Those who have an appearance contingency of worth place self-worth in how attractive they are: this is contingent upon external factors so validation must come from other people. Women who have a greater endorsement of TFGR are likely to have appearance contingencies of worth and would also be likely to adopt the media beauty ideal as their own. We hypothesized that women who endorse TFGR are more likely to internalize the media ideal beauty standard, mediated by appearance contingency of worth.

POSTER SESSION

Miller Forum

REDUCING THE STIGMATIZATION OF CANNIBIS ADDICTION: IS A BIOLOGICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, OR SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE MORE CONDUCTIVE?

Peter Fiascone, Eric Hamilton, Randall Katz

Our hypothesis is that an education of cannabis addiction aimed at reducing social distancing by peers would be most effectively conducted within a social frame, as opposed to a biological or psychological frame. We believe that this would prime the least amount of stigmatization by dispelling stereotypes. To test this, three surveys were given to college students which were identical other than the addiction risk factors given in one of the three frames. A case study of an addict named Jamie (for sex ambiguity) was given following. The surveys asked questions involving Jamie that were designed to reveal social distancing tendencies. If the lowest scores of social distancing are revealed from the social frame we will have confirmed our hypothesis.

PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

Sarah Rutstein, Ariel Unger

The purpose of this study is to examine the way in which parental divorce, as well as the age at which the divorce occurred, affects the expression and development of emotions. We hypothesize that divorce will impact emotional expression; in particular we expect an increase in anger and a decrease in empathetic expression. Participants filled out a 55-question survey that assessed their attachment, forgiveness, empathy and anger levels. Upon completion participants were asked a variety of demographic questions, specifically whether or not their parents were married or divorced. Additionally, if their parents were divorced we inquired about the age at which this parental divorce occurred.

THE EFFECTS OF SLEEP AND STRESS ON SEXUAL DESIRE

Rebecca Liben, Alexandria Jo Natale

The goal of our study was to see if there was any correlation between amount of sleep and levels of stress to general views on sexual behaviors. The way we measured this was by constructing a survey, with three combined parts; one on amount of sleep, another on stress levels, and the third on general perception of sexual behavior and desire. It was taken online anonymously by only college men and women in the Research Methods and Advanced Lab courses. We predicted that lower amounts of sleep, will cause higher levels of stress and in turn it would lower general sexual behavior.

PERCEPTIONS OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Breanne Klinger, Margaret Sullivan, Julie Mosgowsky, David Kurtis

Research suggests that college students misperceive the amount of alcohol their peers drink. We conducted a study to investigate students' perceptions of the amount of alcohol their peers consume. Students took an online survey about their perceptions of the amount of alcohol they believe students in each class year drink and the how they perceive their own drinking habits in relation to students in every other class year. We hypothesized that college students would overestimate the amount of alcohol students in each class year consume. Furthermore, we predicted that males will overestimate the amount their peers drink more than females. Informing college students of their misperceptions of drinking habits could potentially lower the amount of drinks students consume.

ARE YOU A MAC OR A PC?

Melissa Bagley, Stephanie Moulton, Evan Rubin, Deborah Ward

The goal of this study was to determine if there is any truth behind popular media stereotypes of Mac and PC users. Participants were given two surveys, a short form of a Five Factor personality test and a questionnaire about computer use and habits. It was hypothesized that 1) there would be positive correlations between use of Mac computers and the "Big Five" traits of extraversion and openness and 2) there would be positive correlations between use of PC computers and the "Big Five" traits of conscientiousness and neuroticism. In addition, these same correlations were expected to be found depending on the participants' self-classification as either a "Mac person" or "PC person," even if the participant owned a different operating system.

THE EFFECT OF ANXIETY ON EATING BEHAVIOR

Brittany DeAngelis, Courtney DeAngelis, JeanMarie DeLuca, Scott Gavin

The study examined the influence of anxiety on eating behavior. Participants were told that the researchers were interested in information retention from introductory psychology and were given a 10-item assessment to complete. Participants in the experimental condition were given only five minutes to respond to the scored exam, while participants in the control group were provided an indefinite amount of time, and assured that their scores would not be recorded. The purpose of this deception was to invoke anxiety in students. All participants were offered a Dixie cup of 50 M&Ms as an "appreciation for their participation" before beginning the exam. It was expected that participants in the experimental condition would consume more M&Ms than those in the control condition.

INFLUENCE OF ROMANTIC FILMS ON WOMEN'S RELATIONSHIP EXPECTATIONS

Allison Hourani, Brendan Joyce, Samantha Merker, Sioned Papparotto

Past research suggests that women who watch more relationship genre television tend to have altered views of romantic relationships compared to those who watch less of the same genre. The present study, however, examines whether a relationship exists between viewing romantic films, rather than television, and college women's expectations of their relationships. All participants will watch a clip from the movie, *A Walk to Remember*, and complete two surveys; one measuring women's desirability of behaviors in romantic partners, and the other measuring their perception of realism in films. We hypothesized that women who watch more romantic movies and enjoyed the clips more, would be more demanding of their romantic partners and be more likely to believe that movies accurately reflect reality.

TEXTING VS. CALLING IN RELATION TO SOCIAL ANXIETY AND SELF-ESTEEM

Stacey Engoron, Danielle Winston, Jacquelynn Matlack, Shira Kleinman

Cell phone use was examined through a revised version of Reid and Reid's Uses and Gratifications of SMS Items scale. Differences of self-esteem and social anxiety were looked at in relation to calling vs. texting through the use of both a self-esteem scale and a social anxiety scale. The experimenters expect to find that participants will call their family and friends more than text, whereas with acquaintances they are more likely to text than to call. The experimenters also believe that people with higher social-anxiety will be more likely to engage in texting, and people with higher self-esteem will be more likely to call.

PERCEPTIONS OF SEXUAL BEHAVIORS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Steph Morrel, Gabrielle Fassman, Rebecca Weinstein

In the article How do social norms impact HIV sexual risk behavior in HIV-positive men who have sex with men?: Multiple mediator effects (Michael H. Miner, John L. Peterson, Seth L. Welles, Scott M. Jacoby et. al) the results found that those men who "perceived stronger social norms for condom use were more likely to hold stronger beliefs in their ability to use condoms". Our study will be looking at a similar relationship between perceived social norms and sexual practices of females. Based upon their research, our group hypothesizes that when individuals perceive a risky sexual behavior (i.e. unprotected sex) to be a common practice on their campus, they are less likely to view it as high risk.

THE EFFECT OF MAKE-UP ON FACIAL ATTRACTIVENESS: WHAT DO MEN REALLY WANT?

Carolyn Blake, Rob Buesser, Louisa deButts, Julie Klein, Andrea Ladr

In a classic study Fallon and Rozin (1985) examined perceptions of body image by gender. They found that women thought that men preferred a skinnier body type than they actually rated. We believe similar patterns can be found in perceptions of facial attractiveness. The purpose of our study is to examine the effects of make-up on perceived facial attractiveness in women. Participants will view one male photo and one female photo where make-up is manipulated. They will then answer questions gauging perceived facial attractiveness as well as a few background questions. Similar to Fallon and Rozin's study, we hypothesize that women tend to wear more make-up to be more attractive when in fact men want less make-up.

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND?: A STUDY OF PREJUDICE AGAINST ATHEISTS

Florencia Allegretti, Patrick Brodarick, Evelina Eyzarovich, Andalisa Lopez

Atheists are one of the most discriminated-against groups in the United States, more so than other groups who are perceived as being heavily discriminated against (Edgell, Gerteis & Hartmann, 2006). Previous studies found that one's level of intrinsic or extrinsic religiosity is linked to one's level of prejudice. One explanation for this prejudice could be terror management theory, suggesting that religion protects one from the reminder of death in one's daily lives. Our study is designed to measure the variation in level of prejudice against atheists by intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation and by self esteem after exposure to a mortality salience. We expect that intrinsically religious individuals and those with high self esteem will be less likely to discriminate against.

ONE FEWER GOD: THE EFFECT OF MORTALITY REMINDERS ON EVALUATIONS OF ATHEISTS

Julie Brahen, Stacey Engoron, Evelina Eyzarovich, Melissa Katz, Melissa Martin, Lauren Summers, Morgan Waldinger, Alexandra Wells

In 2006, a survey by the University of Minnesota revealed that atheists represent the most widely distrusted & disliked social group in America today. Surprisingly, little research on attitudes toward atheists has been conducted in the social sciences. Literature on Terror Management Theory (TMT; Greenberg, Pyszczynski & Solomon, 1986) has demonstrated reminders of death powerfully influence negative attitudes toward members of perceived out-groups. To the extent that atheists represent a significant out-group for the majority of Americans, reminders of death should increase negative evaluations of target individuals who appear to hold atheist beliefs. Furthermore, this effect of death reminders on negative attitudes toward atheists should be particularly evident among the religious.

FACTORS ASSESSING STUDENT CHEATING IN AN ACADEMIC SETTING

Victoria Benyo, Hannah Mitchell, Nicole Romano, Heather Schloss

In the present study we were interested in assessing students' perceptions of cheating in an academic setting as well as the motivation and personality factors affecting them. We predicted that agreeableness and extroversion, of the Big Five personality traits would be the best predictors in determining what type of person is most likely to cheat. This was measured by the completion of the Ten Item Personality Inventory and the Achievement Motivation Inventory at the beginning of the study. Participants were then asked to complete a Reasoning Abilities Test within the span of five minutes to introduce them to a high anxiety-testing situation. After completing the test, two different conditions varying in either high or low incentives were used to examine the likelihood that the participants would cheat under each condition. Results will be discussed in terms of what type of person is more motivated to cheat with a particular incentive.

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Sherika Freckleton, Jennifer Starr, Dan Greenfield, Keith Pedrani

A major issue on almost every college campus is students' alcohol consumption. The main goal of this study is to examine whether alcohol consumption during college has an effect on students' GPA. Our study examines specific drinking habits of college students as well as campus involvement, class attendance, and study habits. We developed three hypotheses. First, higher frequencies of drinking and larger amounts of alcohol consumed will have a strong relationship with poor academic performance. Second, engaging in drinking only on weekends will not significantly impact academic performance. Third, the timing of alcohol consumption within the semester will have a significant impact on the relationship between alcohol consumption and GPA.

THE EFFECT OF CURRENT PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS ON COLLEGE STUDENTS: PERCEPTIONS OF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Julie Brahen, Alyssa Langenthal, Amanda Nocera

Past studies have found a positive relationship between attachment theory and adult romantic relationships. The parent-child relationship predicts the quality of future romantic relationships. Our study was conducted to see the effect of current parent-child relationships on college students and their perceptions of romantic relationships. Undergraduate students from various colleges and universities completed an online survey. This self-report questionnaire included background information about each participant and assessed their relationship with parents and their views about romantic relationships. We predicted that there will be a positive relationship between college students' relationships with their parents and how they view romantic relationships.

THE EFFECTS OF COLORED LENSES ON READING IN DYSLEXIC, ADHD, AND UNDIAGNOSED STUDENTS

Abby Gilmore, Johanna Block, Joseph Mulvihill

In the present study we examined the effects of colored lenses on reading in dyslexic, ADHD, and undiagnosed readers. Participants were categorized as either dyslexic, ADHD, or undiagnosed readers. They were asked to read two different passages and complete reading comprehension questions; they read one passage with the colored lens and one without. They were asked to complete a questionnaire to assess their perceptions of their reading ability with and without the colored lens. We predicted that reading speed and comprehension would improve and that participants would perceive their reading ability to improve with the use of colored lenses in all three conditions. We expected to see the most improvement in the dyslexic condition followed by the ADHD and undiagnosed condition.



WANT TO PRESENT YOUR RESEARCH OR INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE?

Fall 2010 Psychology Day is tentatively scheduled for December 7th. 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."