

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

Psychology Day



FALL 2012 PROGRAM

December 4, 2012

NOTES

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

COMMON HOUR—POSTER SESSION

12:30—1:45 p.m.
Seegers Union 111-113

WELCOMING REMARKS

5:00 p.m.
Miller Forum—Moyer Hall

KEYNOTE PANEL

5:00 p.m.
Miller Forum—Moyer Hall

5:30—5:40—BREAK

CONCURRENT PRESENTATION SESSIONS

5:40—7:15 Paper Session A— Moyer 109
5:40—6:55 Paper Session B— Moyer 209
5:40—6:55 Paper Session C— Moyer 106

COMMON HOUR—POSTER SESSION

Seegers 111-113

RISKY BUSINESS: PERCEPTIONS OF CAREER COMPETENCE BASED ON FEMALE APPEARANCE

Nikki Carusone, Holly Hammer, Rebecca Noyovitz, Alexandra Rosenberg, Caitlin Silk

The main goal of this study is to determine whether appearance and age affects an individual's perception of a woman or pre-teen's future career competence. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four images: a promiscuously dressed woman or girl or a neutrally dressed woman or girl. Results approached significance such that the women and girls who were dressed promiscuously were viewed as less competent than the neutrally dressed women and girls.

RELATIONSHIPS AND MOOD

Molly Cohen, Ariel Longman, Emily Praver, Leah Ryan

Research has shown that relationship scripts portrayed in the media can influence an individual's mood. The goal of our study is to study the effect of relationship status on mood after being exposed to either a neutral media clip or a romantic media clip. We hypothesized that single individuals would report a more negative mood after viewing a romantic clip than those who were in a relationship.

ADHD, PERSONALITY TYPE AND MUSIC PREFERENCE

Jake Cohen, Amber Elchert, Lauren Fischer, Simone C. Phillips

Our study will examine music preference and personality type (extraversion, neuroticism) of individuals diagnosed with ADHD. We are curious to see if having high levels of neuroticism and extraversion as well as having ADHD substantially influenced and/or determined an individual's preference in music. We hypothesized that individuals with all types of ADHD will score higher in neuroticism and have a higher preference for classical music than individuals without ADHD. We also predicted that individuals with ADHD who are extraverts would prefer pop music.

GENDER EFFECT TOWARD DRUG STIGMATIZATION

Taylor Bausch, Benjamin Kornbluth, Daniel Langenbacher, Samantha Ramos

The main goal of the study was to analyze the difference in stigmatization of male and female college students who recreationally use drugs. We looked specifically at the stigmatization of recreational marijuana use.

SEXUAL ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCE

Eric Mercado, Mira Biller, Katharine St. Jules, Benjamin Haberman

Our study looked at the relationship between gender identity and sexual attitudes and experience. Twenty-nine participants completed a brief survey. We expect to see a positive correlation between sexual attitudes and sexual experience. We also predicted women to have more positive sexual attitudes than individual experience. These results can help promote further research and help shed light on sexual stereotypes in terms of gender.

THE EFFECT OF SEXUAL EXPERIENCE ON PERCEIVED ATTRACTION

Emily MacArthur, Kathryn Harple, Alexandra Legregin, Kelsey Henry

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not sexual experience affects perceived attractiveness. Participants (N=58) read five vignettes about individuals with differing levels of sexual experience. After reading each vignette, participants rated their personal attraction towards each hypothetical person presented. We utilized the Sexual Attitudes Scale to measure participants' own sexual experience. Based on previous research, we hypothesized that participants would be most attracted to individuals with similar levels of sexual experience. The findings are intended to increase the existing knowledge about the interaction between sexual experience and attraction in college students.

HOOKED ON FACEBOOK

Alyssa Brief, Betul Cezik, Zach Grewell, and Nicole Pisani

The goal of this study is to see if there is a relationship between Facebook usage and self-esteem. 43 participants completed an online survey that included a self-esteem measure and a Facebook intensity scale. Based on past research, we hypothesized that more time spent on Facebook would be correlated with lower self-esteem. We also expected that specific activities on Facebook would correlate with high self-esteem, such as frequently updating statuses. Given that Facebook is a popular social networking site used in the college population, our objective was to investigate how Facebook usage could potentially influence the overall well-being of students.

PERSONALITY AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

Hallie Boviard, Samuel Goldman, Ariel Mankin

The goal of our study was to examine the relationship between participants' political ideologies and the big five personality traits. Sixty one participants were given a survey that included items about their political ideologies and brief assessment of their personalities. We hypothesize that individuals who score higher in openness and agreeableness will be more likely to exhibit liberal preferences. Furthermore, we anticipate that those who score higher in conscientiousness will be more likely to exhibit conservative preferences. The participants benefited by potentially establishing a political stance through exposure to decisive political issues.

EFFECTS OF HIGH SCHOOL SIZE ON COLLEGE PREPARATION

Jocelyn Bibi, Kaitlyn Doran, Alexandra Fillis

The main goal of our study was to find correlations between high school size and college level preparedness. College level preparedness included two sections: academic success and social comfort. Fifty Muhlenberg students completed a self-report survey online, which consisted of explicit questions, such as "What was your freshman year GPA?", as well as scale-based questions focusing more on comfort levels and social anxiety. We hypothesized that those who attended smaller schools would have less anxiety meeting with professors and asking for extra help, and also would have better overall GPA's. Results of this study could be beneficial to colleges and universities by helping them better understand their incoming students' educational backgrounds.

NOTES

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

WELCOMING REMARKS

5:00 p.m.

Miller Forum—Moyer Hall

KEYNOTE PANEL

5:00 p.m.

Miller Forum—Moyer Hall

Student perspectives on gaining knowledge of psychology through research

An important aspect of the psychology curriculum is to intellectually challenge students and encourage their personal growth. The sequence of research courses that all majors take prepares students to think about, discuss, and analyze psychology research from multiple perspectives. There are also many opportunities for students to expand their knowledge of research beyond these core courses. Students can collaborate with faculty through research apprenticeships. Additionally, students can work on their own unique research ideas through independent research or the senior thesis program. Each of these experiences fosters personal growth and encourages life-long dedication to learning about behavior.

Jaclyn Durkin, Melanie Franklin, Jess Gonzalez, Allison Kovacs, Olivia Scotti, and Danielle Wagner will describe their unique and varied experiences in conducting research and provide their perspective on how research has allowed them to expand their knowledge of psychology. Although there won't be time for questions after the panel, each of these students would be happy to talk with you after the presentation and can be e-mailed for more information.

5:30—5:40—BREAK

CONCURRENT PRESENTATION SESSIONS

5:40—7:15 Paper Session A— Moyer 109

5:40—6:55 Paper Session B— Moyer 209

5:40—6:55 Paper Session C— Moyer 106

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session A Moyer 109

5:40—5:55

MUSIC AND MENUS ON MEAL SELECTION

Lindsey Cunningham, Jessica Epstein, and Allison Kovacs

This study investigates the extent to which genre of music and type of menu influences meal selection. Evidence exists that different genres of music have varying effects on people's dining behaviors in restaurants. Past research also shows that people tend to choose meals with fewer calories when they are presented with caloric information. In the current study, we hope to expand on this research by considering the effect of music and calorie labels on food selection. Participants selected items from a menu with or without music while smooth jazz music, popular music, and no music was playing and answered a questionnaire about their selections and overall eating habits. The results suggest that music and menu type impact healthful eating choices in some cases.

6:00—6:15

ATTITUDES TOWARD MEDICATION

Justina Dubinsky, Talia Robbins, Jennifer Seeba

A growing body of research supporting people's preference for natural suggests it stems from the belief that natural is safer and overall better (e.g. Rozin et al., 2004). This preference extends to medication as well; however, it does not necessarily represent a belief that natural is more effective. We hypothesized that participants would prefer artificial medication to natural in high dread situations, and natural medication to artificial in low dread situations. Participants were assigned to a rash or meningitis condition and given two options for treatment, equivalent aside from being natural or chemically synthesized. Meningitis-condition participants showed higher preference for and were significantly more comfortable with artificial medication than rash-condition participants.

6:20—6:35

ICEBREAKERS: PERSONALITY TRAITS TO ASSESS RISK TAKING FOR OTHERS

Jessica Costa, Alexandria Jobes, Marissa Kuperschmidt, Rebecca Massey

The purpose of this study was to measure how different ice breakers and personality traits affect peoples comfort and willingness to take risk for others. Participants were assigned to one of 3 ice breaker conditions (control, inclusive, and competitive). After completing the icebreaker exercise, participants played a game of Jenga then completed the Mini IPIP survey and the Jenga response questionnaire. We found that kind of ice-breaker, personality, or gender did not affect risk taking for others as inferred by Jenga playing. We did find that women playing for men scored higher than women playing for other women.

6:40—6:55

STUDENTS' SMOKING PERCEPTIONS AT MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

Matthew Brooks, Amanda Butto, Mackenzie Raub

This semester, Muhlenberg College revised its smoking policy restricting smoking within 20 feet of all building entrances. A person's adherence to a smoking policy may depend upon whether he/she is a smoker, a non-smoker, or friends with smokers. The goal of this study was to measure the perceptions of Muhlenberg students towards cigarette smoking and the new smoking policy. Through an observational study, followed by an online survey hosted on SurveyMonkey, our results concluded that smokers were less likely to be aware of the smoking policy than non-smokers. Smokers were also less likely to comply to the smoking policy while hanging out with non-smokers.

7:00—7:15

SEX BEHAVIORS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS: DISGUST FACTORS WITH CONDOMS AND THE INFLUENCE OF SAFE SEX BEHAVIORS

Breanne Biondi, Colette Faust, Emily Grasso

Our study looked at the factors that contribute to sexual choices of students and how disgust influences perceptions of risk about sexual choices. We looked at how condoms affect views on sexual choices concerning risk of STDs. Participants were in one of three conditions- control, handling a condom, or touching lubricant. Participants took a survey assessing sexual behaviors and attitudes, a modified Domain-Specific Risk-Taking Scale, and a Disgust Scale-Revised (DS-R) survey. Participants in the condom condition ($M=2.63$, $SD=1.61$) were less worried about contracting an STD than those in the control condition ($M=3.63$, $SD=1.57$), and the lubricant condition ($M=3.96$, $SD=1.98$), $F(2,79)=3.13$, $p=.049$. People who had high scores on the DS-R worried more about contracting a STD, $r=.257$, $p=.023$.

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session B

Moyer 209

5:40—5:55

ATTITUDES TOWARDS INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM

Rebecca Ratzenberger, Genna Soslow, Megan Cohn

For this study, we are investigating if there is more stigma towards adults with autism, or children with autism. To do so, we looked at pity, fear and social distancing as our focused measurements for stigmatization. Information that we receive will allow us to understand how stigma towards a certain group will cause someone to donate more to one charity over another. We hypothesize that individuals will have more stigma towards adults with autism, than children with autism. We also hypothesize that individuals with more experience will have less fear and be more willing to interact with those with autism. We expect that people with more experience will show no difference in stigma between adults and children with autism. Based on results, we will donate money towards one charity.

6:00—6:15

THE EFFECT OF GENDER AND CANCER TYPE ON STIGMA

Jessie Chapman, Juliana Repice, Mallory Smith, Danielle Wagner

The purpose of this study is to examine the differences in blame, pity and avoidance stigma based on the type of cancer the subject is labeled with. We also looked at the differences in stigma between participant and subject gender. We predict that women with breast cancer will be pitied the most while men with lung cancer will be blamed the most. Additionally, we measured discrimination by looking at participants' willingness to donate to specific areas of cancer research and funding. Stigma can have negative effects on those diagnosed with all kinds of cancer-- influencing society's willingness to donate, provide support for and the stigma that those with cancer internalize.

6:20—6:35

PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS

Mekenzie Kruger, Shana Judd, Erin Wilson, Kerianne Sharpe

An abundance of past research has demonstrated the negative effects stigma has on both children with a mental health disorder and their parents. This study concerns less discernable behaviors in individuals with high-functioning Autism. In order to obtain unbiased results, two conditions were formatted; one disclosing Autism and one without the disclosure of Autism. In this study we will examine the effects that labeling and the level of familiarity have on certain attributions when associated with individuals with Autism and their parents. We hypothesize that participants with lower levels of familiarity in the condition where Autism is not disclosed will have higher negative attributions than participants with higher levels of familiarity in the condition where Autism is disclosed.

6:40—6:55

THE EFFECTS OF LANGUAGE AND MOTIVATION OF STIGMA ON OVERWEIGHT WOMEN

Alyssa Nolte, Katherine Finkelstein, Halli Lieberman, Patricia Affriol

Our study examined the stigmatizing effects of weight-based terms and perceived motivation of weight-loss on women. We divided participants (N=190) into four conditions featuring the dating profile an overweight woman. Each vignette displayed her picture, self-description, and eating and exercising habits. Two conditions used the term fat as a self-description and two used overweight with one in each representing no motivation to lose weight and the other representing motivation to lose weight. We measured structural discrimination, social distancing, blame through a context survey and a survey measuring explicit weight attitudes. We believe that the overweight, with motivation condition will produce the least stigmatization, and the fat, no motivation will produce the most stigmatization.

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session C

Moyer 106

5:40—5:55

EFFECTS OF MUHLENBERG COLLEGE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN DOWNTOWN ALLENTOWN ON THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

Melissa Getz, Jessica Krauss, Samara Roth, Allisyn Weinshank

Little is known about college students' perceptions of their surrounding communities. Stereotypes students have may influence their relationship with the community, and may change if students have more contact. This study focuses on the relationship between Muhlenberg College students and the surrounding community of Allentown, Pennsylvania. The goal is to evaluate whether students' experiences within the downtown Allentown community influence their perceptions and stereotypes of the residents. We hypothesize that Muhlenberg students are fearful of the surrounding community; demographic disparities exist between the students and Allentown population that perpetuate the distance; and students who have more interaction with the community are more likely to venture downtown.

6:00—6:15

STIGMA TOWARDS SCHIZOPHRENIA: WHAT IS TO BLAME?

Melanie Franklin, Jessica Gonzalez, Victoria Mansolillo, Ashley Ring

Schizophrenia oftentimes evokes negative stereotypes, creating associations with violence and dangerousness. Research shows that those with schizophrenia are stigmatized, we wish to further investigate causes of stigmatization. Participants watched video clips that portrayed a labeled or unlabelled person with schizophrenia as having an acute or mild episode. We found that the presentation of more acute symptoms lead to higher perceptions of dangerousness and less desire for behavioral interaction. We also found an interaction for symptoms and labels, such that those in the acute condition with no label desired the most social distance from individuals with schizophrenia.

6:20—6:35

THE EFFECTS OF VOTER POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND CANDIDATE RACE ON VOTING PREFERENCES

Michela Gaffney, Carly Reed, Hannah Watson, and Sarah Zussman

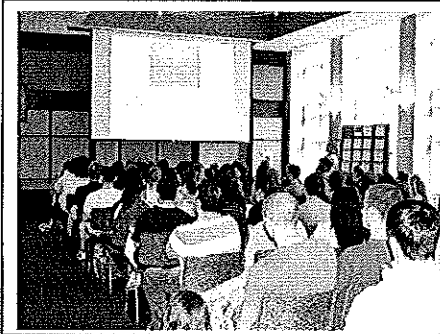
This study aims to study the effects of voter political ideology and candidate race on voting preferences in elections. We are interested to see if participants are more likely to vote for a candidate because of candidate race rather than the candidate's political ideology. Dovidio and Gaertner (1998) found that symbolic racism is linked with political conservatism and aversive racism is associated with political liberalism. We hypothesized that liberal participants would be more likely to vote for a Black candidate than a White candidate, regardless of the candidate's political ideology. However, we hypothesized the opposite would be true for conservative participants. Some significant results were found.

6:40—6:55

IMPLICIT RACISM IN SPORTS VIEWERS: THE EFFECT OF RACIALLY STEREOTYPED SPORTS COMMENTARY

Jenifer Arman, Justin Casale, Rachel Massar, and Shakira Soderstrom

This research sought to build on previous findings by further exploring the effect sports commentary has on viewers' implicit attitudes. An experiment was conducted to determine if hearing racial stereotypes from sports commentators increases viewers' implicit attitudes. Participants watched a video including football clips and sports commentary and took the Implicit Attitudes Test. The results of the study show that although implicit attitudes scores did not differ based on what stereotypes participants heard in the video, participants who reported watching football frequently displayed higher implicit attitudes scores than those who do not watch football frequently. These results suggest that football fans may hold more implicit racial attitudes than the general public.



WANT TO PRESENT YOUR RESEARCH OR INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE?

Spring 2013 Psychology Day is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, April 30. If you would like to present your research or internship, speak with a professor and/or visit the Psychology Department website .

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 "Students."