MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

Psychology Day

FALL 2013 PROGRAM

DECEMBER 3, 2013

NOTES

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

COMMON HOUR—POSTER SESSION
12:30—1:45 p.m
Seegers Union 111-113

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WELCOMING REMARKS
5:00 p.m.
Miller Forum—Moyer Hall

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Dr. Erika Bagley

5:30—5:40—BREAK

CONCURRENT PRESENTATION SESSIONS

5:40—6:35 Paper Session A— Moyer 104
5:40—6:55 Paper Session B— Moyer 106
5:40—6:55 Paper Session C— Moyer 109

COMMON HOUR—POSTER SESSION
Seegers 111-113

PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF LYING
Dayna Kline, Gabby Rosen, Leah Boecker, Matt Stovall, Michelle Certosimo
Research has shown that people who are less physically attractive will be more likely to be perceived as having negative personality traits than people who are more physically attractive. Based on this information, we wanted to determine whether this would hold true for perceptions of lying. We conducted an online survey in which participants viewed either attractive or unattractive photographs of individuals and were asked to rank how likely they thought the individuals would be to lie based on given scenarios. We hypothesized that participants in the unattractive condition would rate the individuals in the photographs as more likely to lie than would participants in the attractive condition.

ME, MY SEXUAL SELF & I: A SEX EDUCATION PROPOSAL
Jennie Goldberg, Debra Miller, Jenna Spiwack & Katie St. Jules
When teaching sex education, it is important that identity is emphasized in all parts of the curriculum. Identity is changed along with the pubertal changes occurring in the body as well as the changes in sexual desires. These changes are influenced by social expectations of gender, sexual orientation, and sexual practice. The larger power structures involved with these social expectations can elicit violence as well as have other detrimental effects on the adolescent. Identity is therefore a significant part of a person's life, which is strongly informed by puberty and sexual development and the social perceptions surrounding these changes.

THE UBIQUITY OF BINARIES; TEACHING SEX IN A HETERONORMATIVE SOCIETY
Andrew Breitel, Michelle Certosimo, Amanda Gates, & Nicole Pisani
There is a complex interplay between bodies and social realities. The heteronormative script promotes masculine and feminine ideals, such as men being sex-driven, emotionally detached, and having multiple sex partners. In contrast, women are socially taught to remain passive, learning that they should not have sexual desires as they are objects for male satisfaction. Our sex education proposal will include the way in which Biology intersects with Development, Social Life, Human Behavior, and Power.

SEX PROPOSAL
Rachael Gallagher, Emily McDowell, Blythe Duckett, and Grant Kobayashi-Hinds
Our sex proposal will include social, developmental, behavioral, cognitive, and biological frameworks. As per the cognitive framework, students firstly need to understand what their sexuality means to them. Sex is not only an action but also an interpersonal act. This encompasses the social framework because it goes beyond the individual to include how the individuals and their personal understandings interact in their relationships. This connects to a behavioral framework, which includes how sexual identity, activity, attitudes, and relationships are manifested. Finally, it is important for students to understand how the body responds to sexual stimulation via the biological framework because it provides context for the other frameworks.

DEVELOPING A HEALTHY SEXUALITY: TACKLING TABOOS IN SEX EDUCATION
Rebecca Levin, Chelsey Provencher, Megan Reilly, and Ali Rosenberg
We propose a sex education plan that will focus on disrupting normative practices in sexuality and challenging sexual taboos and silences. The five main areas we will focus on include biological, social, psychological, behavioral, and identity issues. Ultimately by educating students on these topics, we hope to undermine the patriarchal structure and heteronormativity that often pervades secondary school sexual education programs and limits students' comprehensive understanding of sexuality in all of its forms. Teaching students in this way will allow them to develop a healthy sexuality, as well as a deeper understanding of their own bodies.

OPENNESS TO EXPERIENCE AND STIGMA OF GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER
Chelsea Benjamin, Jessica Cook, Kaitlin Howley, Brianna Vinci
Generalized Anxiety Disorder can be damaging to diagnosed individuals and to those around them. One reason that an individual with GAD may not seek treatment is due to the negative attitudes associated with having GAD. It is important to examine possible predictors of stigma so that further research can be done to find ways to eliminate stigma. This study examines the relationship between the Big 5 personality traits and the tendency for individuals to stigmatize those diagnosed with GAD. Students from Muhlenberg College took anonymous online surveys containing measures of GAD stigma, Big 5 personality traits, and general demographics. We predicted a negative correlation between openness to experience and GAD stigma, such that higher levels of openness predict lower levels of GAD stigma.

COLORS: HOW PERCEPTION INFLUENCES EMOTIONS

Amanda German, Jason Leitmeyer, Rachel Brookland, Alexandra Grande, Lindsay Hardenberg

The goal of our study was to explore the association between colors and emotions. Past research has shown that warm colors tended to elicit positive emotions, while cool and achromatic colors tended to elicit negative emotions. We hypothesized that red and yellow (warm colors) will elicit emotions of happiness, interest, and surprise, and that blue and green (cool colors) will elicit emotions of sadness, fear, anger, and disgust. Also, we will be using black and white as controls because we are hypothesizing that participants will feel less extreme emotions because they do not fall in the warm or cool color categories. With knowledge of what colors elicit what emotions, interior designers and advertisers can design and sell products based on the needs of customers.

BRAND INCLINATIONS AND THEIR MOTIVES

Rachel Goldberg, McKenna Bast, Andrew Breitel, Ray Gallagher, Julia Elkin

We studied the relationships between brand loyalty, status-seeking, and openness. Previous studies found that brand prestige attracts consumers. We based the construct "status-seeking" on the Status Consumption Scale and measured how a brand's perceived status drives consumer behavior. Openness was used to determine a participant's flexibility concerning product choices. Participants also looked at images of different products to determine brand preference. We hypothesized that individuals who are more open will be less brand loyal and that higher status seeking individuals will have greater brand loyalty. Finally, we hypothesized that social status-seeking will have a greater effect on brand preference than openness. This study aims to provide insight into consumer choices.

DOES MODESTY MATTER? PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN'S CLOTHING

Amanda Barrish, Natalie Evans, Jennie Goldberg, Kelly Toner, Sara Van Eerde

We are interested in the effects of clothing modesty on perceived power and attractiveness of women. Participants were given a survey in which they were shown a business and a casual picture of women in one of three levels of modesty. We predicted that women in less modest clothing would be perceived as less powerful. We also hypothesized that female participants would perceive the women in less modest clothing as less attractive, while male participants would see them as more attractive. We hypothesized that women in business clothing would be perceived as less powerful in less modest clothing. A potential benefit of this study would be that individuals would be more aware of their perceptions of women.

PERCEPTIONS OF RESIDENTIAL ADVISORS: THE INFLUENCE OF AVERSIVE RACISM
Emily Blakeslee, Maria Lewis, Victoria Nicosia, Leah Messler, Kendra Ivy
Our research builds on the previous literature regarding aversive racism. Specifically, we were interested in the effects of aversive racism on the perceptions of residential advisors' (RAs) expertise, competency and likability. We used a two by two factorial design. Our independent variables were race of RA (Black or White) and whether or not the RA made a mistake in handing out a punishment. We hypothesized a main effect of race, such that Black RAs would be rated less favorable than White RAs. We also hypothesized a main effect of RA mistake, with RAs who made a mistake being rated less favorably than RAs who did not make a mistake. Finally, we hypothesized an interaction effect, where the Black RA who made the mistake would be rated least favorably out of all conditions.

A FIRST LOOK AT DESIRABILITY: PERSONALITY, ATTRACTIVENESS, AND ORDER EFFECTS
Andrea Willard, Dominic Mangino, Clara Hinchcliffe, Hailey Marcus, and Ariana Small
This study investigated whether order effects and different modes of presentation would affect desirability ratings of men. We manipulated the valence of photos and personality descriptions and their order of presentation. Students viewed either a picture or description, followed by the corresponding photo or description before responding to an 18-question desirability scale. We anticipate that regardless of information type, what participants are presented with first will carry more weight in overall perceptions of attraction. Also, we anticipate that pictures will have more of an effect in forming impressions of desirability. Seeing an attractive photo first would result in the highest desirability rating, while seeing an unattractive photo first would result in the lowest rating.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO LOW SELF-ESTEEM IN ADOLESCENTS:
A PROPOSED STUDY
Leah Boecker
Low self-esteem has been linked to numerous negative impacts on the lives of adolescents, including lower life satisfaction and academic motivation, as well as an increase in the prevalence of risk behaviors such as smoking and drug/alcohol use. Bullying, minority status, and family conflict are all significant factors that contribute to levels self-esteem during adolescence. The purpose of the proposed study is to determine the relative impact of each of these predictors in order to better tailor interventions in schools addressing the issue of low self-esteem in adolescents.

EFFECTS OF FACIAL YOUTHFULNESS AND GENDER ON PERSUASION
Nicole Del Cioppio, Sara Giddings, Laura Glogovsky, Hannah Goldberg, and Rebecca Levin
The goal of our study is to examine how youthful facial features and gender have an impact on an individual's likelihood of being persuaded. Forty seven participants completed online survey questions after reading a vignette about a court trial case. Participants read the same vignette and were randomly assigned to view one of four pictures of the defendant described in the vignette. Based on past research we hypothesize that the image depicting a woman with youthful facial features will be the most persuasive image of the ones presented. Results of this study could be beneficial in identifying if a bias towards youthfulness or gender exists in court trial verdicts.

THE ALL-ENCOMPASSING SEX EDUCATION PLAN
Jocelyn Bibi, Laura Glogovsky, Lauren Fischer and Kimberly Atkins
Our sex education proposal teaches women to understand their own sexuality, thus empowering them to overcome patriarchal social constructs. By tying together biology, identity and social aspects of sex, a seamless, comprehensive and well-rounded sexual education plan can emerge.

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

WELCOMING REMARKS
5:00 p.m.
Miller Forum—Moyer Hall

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Dr. Erika Bagley

5:00 p.m.
Miller Forum—Moyer Hall

The Art of Following Questions

Doing psychological research can often seem a daunting task for a number of reasons. First, human behavior is incredibly complex; it is multiply-influenced and its meaning changes depending upon social, environmental, and historical context. Adding to this, many of the phenomena we are interested in knowing more about exist in a "black box." Despite increasingly sophisticated methods for viewing the brain, we know little about what goes on in there or why it happens as it does. As a consequence of these challenges, psychologists find themselves asking many smaller questions, necessarily limited in scope. Asking questions of how human development is affected by exposure to poverty, for example, has lead researchers to ask many other questions about how those experiences "get under the skin", affect mental and physical health across the lifespan. Answering each small question adds to a cumulative knowledge, but maybe more importantly, also leads to the next set of questions, sometimes even in unpredictable ways.

5:30—5:40—BREAK

CONCURRENT PRESENTATION SESSIONS

5:40—6:35 Paper Session A— Moyer 104
5:40—6:55 Paper Session B— Moyer 106
5:40—6:55 Paper Session C— Moyer 109

NOTES

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session A
Moyer 104

5:40—5:55
TMT: THE EFFECTS OF THE NEED TO BELONG ON HAZING ATTITUDES
Alexandra Fillis, Ilana Blumsohn, Samantha Ramos
The purpose of our research is to examine the relationship between one's need to belong, self-esteem, and hazing attitudes through a terror management theory perspective. Previous research has found that the awareness of one's own death leads individuals to strongly identify with those who hold the same cultural worldview. When one is reminded of their own death, increases of self-esteem and reinforcement of one's cultural worldview serve as anxiety buffers. One way to strengthen one's cultural worldview through a social group is by using hazing practices. Our research has supported our hypothesis in that one's need to belong and the awareness of one's own death produce more positive attitudes towards hazing.

6:00—6:15
DEATH AND DRUGS: THE ROLE OF SELF-ESTEEM, INCLUSION, AND MORTALITY ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE
Alyssa Brief, Gabriela Brennet, Kaity Doran, Jon Helfaer
This study explores the relationship between the need to belong, self-esteem, and substance abuse in college students. Past research suggests when individuals are reminded of death, they will try to engage in defenses in order to boost their self-esteem and need to belong (Goldenberg et al., 2005). Participants took a self-esteem measure, need to belong measure, were either exposed to a reminder of death or a control, and took an IAT. We hypothesized that participants exposed to the death reminder and have both low self-esteem and high need to belong will have the greatest willingness to engage in substance abuse. Participants with a higher need to belong were significantly more likely to express implicit attitudes towards engaging in substance abuse than those with a lower need to belong.

6:20—6:35
LOOKING BACK ON 9/11: A DIFFERENCE IN PERSPECTIVE
Lauren Berman, Benjamin Haberman, Rebecca Noyovitz
September 11, 2001 was a day in American history that served as a national prime of mortality salience. Since then social psychologists have been making connections between Terror Management Theory and 9/11 to better understand how people cope with terrorism and the fear of death that accompanies it. In this study we looked at whether differences in perspective affects mortality salience levels. We expect to find that participants who read a personal account of 9/11 will have a higher mortality salience than those who read a global perspective. In line with previous research we anticipate that participants with lower self-esteem will have a higher mortality salience. Additionally participants who read the personal account and have lower self-esteem will have the highest mortality salience.

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session B
Moyer 106

5:40—5:55
THE EFFECTS OF SCENT ON MEMORY
Karen Trakhtenberg, Jamie Adges, Josh Weiss, Grant Kobayashi-Hinds
Propranolol is a drug used in the disruption of the reconsolidation of memories, but also contains negative side effects. The current study aimed to find a natural therapy to be used as a memory inhibitor. The effects of scent on memory were examined in this study. Peppermint, a scent believed to promote memory was used in contrast to ylang-ylang, a scent believed weaken memory. Participants watched a traumatic video and were then exposed to a scent or no scent. They were then asked to complete a recall and recognition test. Results found that peppermint helped participants recall more information compared to ylang-lang and no scent. These findings may help future studies understand better uses of scents as alternatives and complimentary medications to more conventional medicines.

6:00—6:15
FACTORS AFFECTING MEMORY CONSOLIDATION AFTER AN EMOTIONAL EVENT
Nicole Brown, Caitlin Silk, Maddie Virga
The present study examined the effects of a visuospatial task and highly sensitive personalities on the consolidation of an emotional memory. To test this, participants viewed a traumatic video and were then asked to complete one of three word searches (negative, positive, neutral) or no task. There were no significant differences found in recognition or free recall scores based on the type of word search performed. However, there were significant differences found on free recall for those who scored higher on the Highly Sensitive Person Scale (Aron & Aron, 1997). These findings show the importance of individual personality and how it may affect the treatment of an emotional event.

6:20—6:35
FAMILIARITY'S EFFECT ON ATTITUDE CHANGE WHEN PRESENTED WITH POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE INFORMATION
Katie St. Jules, Marisa Levy, Adina Jiji
Familiarity and information type have been shown to influence attitude. This study used celebrities to observe how familiarity can elicit attitude change when presented with positive or negative information. We hypothesized that familiarity relates to less of an attitude change and that a negative attitude would be less likely to change from positive information and vice versa. Muhlenberg College students (N=77) were randomly assigned to either a celebrity or non-celebrity condition with either positive or negative information and filled out prompts rating their attitudes toward that person. There was less of an attitude change for celebrity negative than for the non-celebrity negative condition. This implies how easily attitudes can change based on previous exposure.

6:40—6:55
UTILIZING IMAGES AND DESCRIPTIONS FOR MEMORY RECALL: THE EFFECT OF
STEREOTYPED INFORMATION
Debra Miller, Ali Rosenberg & Bayla Shepley
We investigated the effects of stereotypes on memory. We hypothesized that when viewing stereotypically consistent information, participants would utilize stereotypes more frequently in a free recall measure than when viewing stereotypically inconsistent information; further, participants would remember the least amount of information about Black women. Participants (N=60) were randomly assigned to one of four conditions, viewing three stereotypically consistent or inconsistent descriptions and photos of three White or Black women. We found that for one of the descriptions, information in the stereotypically inconsistent Black condition was better remembered than in the stereotypically inconsistent White condition. Implications and possible explanations for the results are discussed.

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session C
Moyer 109

5:40—5:55
MOVIE CLIPS AND DECISION-MAKING
Emily MacArthur, Judith Florio, Clare Mooney, Rachel Waldman
The present study examines different movie clips' effect on participants' risk perception, self-esteem, and mood. We hypothesized that exposure to movie clips that involve death would have an effect on how participants perceive risk because of the reminder of death, while movie clips that did not involve death would have less of an effect on risk perception. A total of 61 participants were randomly split into four conditions, one exposed to a glorious death, a sad death, no death sad clip, no death exciting clip. The design was between subjects, each participant only viewed a single movie clip. Results will be discussed in terms of terror management theory.

6:00—6:15
RISK PERCEPTION AND MEDICATION
Talia Ascher, Isobel Lewis, Lauren Natter, and Marlee Noah
This study examined differences in risk perception between over the counter and prescription drugs based on factors such as the number of, and severity of, side effects given. A sample of 170 participants completed an online survey, which included vignettes with six conditions, each with a different variation of over the counter or prescription drugs and no side effects, three side effects, or six side effects. Participants were asked questions pertaining to their level of trust of the drug, how risky they felt it was, and how severe they felt each of the side effects were. We hypothesized that participants would view drugs with fewer side effects as less risky, and that over the counter drugs will be viewed as less risky than prescription drugs.

6:20—6:35
SURFING FOR SEX: A STUDY OF ONLINE ENCOUNTERS
*Jocelyn Bibi, Chris Royer & Benji Kornbluth*
Today's dating and sex culture is rapidly changing with the evolution of online dating sites and mobile applications. Our participants viewed three different dating/hookup technological mediums (Tinder, OKCupid and Craigslist) and then reported their thoughts about each. Participants also answered questions about their past sexual history and risk aversion. We hypothesized that men would perceive the sites to be less risky than women, and those who have a more promiscious sexual history would find each site to be less risky. Results will be discussed in terms of these hypotheses.

6:40—6:55
SEXIST SCIENCE: WHAT IT TAKES TO PERPETUATE STEREOTYPES
Hallie Boviard, Emily Prawer, Jena Verlin
Some critics of science examining gender differences claim that many findings work to support currently existing stereotypes. In the present study, we examined how ambivalent, hostile, and benevolent sexism was related to how much evidence was needed to support different types of gender claims. We also examined whether framing those differences as being due to biological or social influences might affect needed evidence. We hypothesize that participants with higher sexism levels will require less evidence to support gender differences, and that biological framing would result in higher levels of evidence being needed. Results will be discussed in terms of gender theory and neurosexism.
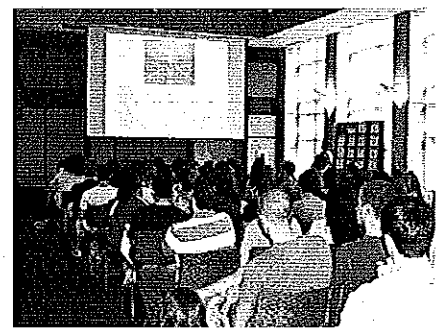
WANT TO PRESENT YOUR RESEARCH OR INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE?
Spring Psychology Day is tentatively scheduled for April 2014. If you would like to present your research or internship, speak with a professor and/or visit the Psychology Department website for more information!

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 *"Students."*