

NOTES

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

4:25—4:50 Starting in the Great Room, Seegers Union

WELCOMING REMARKS

KEYNOTE PANEL

Service-Learning: Lessons in the Classroom & Community

An important aspect of the psychology curriculum is community-based learning, also known as service-learning. Service-learning courses engage students, faculty, and community in mutually beneficial relationships allowing for programs/projects that enhance community and provide students the opportunity for reflection on experiences. The goal is for the Muhlenberg and Allentown communities to connect in meaningful, reciprocal relationships in which each party learns from the other. There are a many classes across campus offering a service-learning component. In psychology, these courses include Health Psychology, Psychology of Adolescence, Psychology of Women, and Child Psychopathology.

Samara Roth ('13), Kim Hanson ('12), and Courtney Condit ('12) will describe their experiences in service-learning courses this semester. Dr. Sinno will moderate the discussion. Although there won't be time for questions after the panel, Samara, Kim, and Courtney invite you to seek them out during Psychology Day or e-mail them for more information.

4:50—5:00 Break

CONCURRENT PRESENTATION SESSIONS

4:50—6:30 Posters—Seegers Event Space

5:00—6:35 Paper Session A - SU 109-110

5:00—6:15 Paper Session B - GQ Annex

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session A Seegers 109-110

5:00—5:15

THE EFFECTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL NUMBING, TERROR MANAGEMENT THEORY, AND INDIVIDUALISM/COLECTIVISM ON CHARITABLE GIVING

Amy Teichmann, Emily Robbins, and Monica Shin

This research will determine if there are direct relationships between mortality salience (MS), group size, and charitable giving. Information acquired will help explain how biases towards individuals and in-groups can potentially interfere with allocation of charitable giving. We hypothesize participants presented with scenarios describing individuals will consider the situation more tragic, despite the location of the victim. In addition, we hypothesize participants primed with MS will express greater compassion towards American victims than those from another country, despite the amount of victims. We expect a significant interaction between mortality salience and number of victims.

5:20—5:35

COUNTERFACTUAL REASONING AND OPTIMISM/PESSIMISM

Jonathan Blau, Kimberly Hanson, Lorrae Bradbury

For this study we are investigating the possible relationship between optimism/pessimism and ones ability to develop counterfactual arguments regarding a negative situation. We are also investigating whether or not an ordinary situation or an extraordinary situation has an effect on ones ability to develop counterfactual arguments. We hypothesize that individuals who are optimistic will be able to develop more counterfactual arguments than those who are pessimistic. We also hypothesize that those who experience an ordinary event will develop more counterfactual arguments than those who experience an ordinary event.

5:40—5:55

PERCEIVED RISK OF PHARMACEUTICALS AND BEHAVIOR THERAPY FOR TREATMENT AND ENHANCEMENT PURPOSES

Samantha Merker, Kristen Wehrle, and Tennille Wilfur

Previous research has compared people's risk perceptions of prescription drugs to natural supplements, but not prescription drugs to behavior therapy. Also, while drugs and behavior therapy are typically used to treat disorders, the idea of "cosmetic psychopharmacology," or using drugs for enhancement, was recently introduced. Thus, the current study explored the risk associated with using prescription drugs and behavior therapy, and how it differs when the agent is being used for treatment versus enhancement. Participants were given hypothetical scenarios in which either a drug or behavior therapy could be used to either treat or enhance six different traits. We predicted that people would associate more risk with drugs than behavior therapy, and more risk with enhancement than treatment.

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6:00—6:15

EATING BEHAVIORS AND BODY IMAGE IN WOMEN

Melissa Bagley, Shira Kleinman, Alexa Peikon, Courtney Condit

Our study looked to determine how self-objectification affects perceptions of risky eating and other body-related behaviors as mediated by the concept of the affect heuristic, or the relationship between risk and benefit. Using an online study, we used different scales to examine the relationships of risk versus benefit in terms of body image. Expanding on prior research we created a condition in which participants were primed by indicating their weight, in addition having them look at health and social perspectives of risky body behavior. We hypothesized that when the weight prime was paired with the social attitudes towards thinness and then followed by the health scale, they would be more likely to down-play health risks to achieve social benefits. We also believe the reverse to be true.

6:20—6:35

PERCEIVED RISK OF SPORT CONCUSSIONS: PERSPECTIVES OF PLAYER, PARENT AND COACH

Daniel Greenfield, Michael Manocherian, Genna Wallerstein

This study aims to find a relationship between concussions and risk perception. By designing our study in a series of vignettes we hope to find that the willingness to take risks with concussions differs based on the perceptions of costs vs. benefits and the different perspectives of a player, parent and coach. This could be beneficial to concussion research that focuses on the dangers of playing with a concussion, as well as assessing the knowledge of the public about concussions. Previously studies about concussions have been done on a "hypothetical case" basis. We plan to use a hypothetical case but in an experimental design differing from the previous literature.

DETAILED SCHEDULE & ABSTRACTS

Paper Session B GQ Annex

5:00—5:15

AWARENESS OF RACISM AND WHITE PRIVILEGE IN SELF-IDENTIFIED WHITE EDUCATORS
Rachel Dickerson, Abby Gilmore, Marley Goldman, Angela Napoletano

The present study examined the potential predictors of exposure to the social sciences, multicultural education, and racial diversity of schools for awareness of blatant racial issues, institutional discrimination, and white privilege amongst educators. Participants completed a brief survey. We predicted that greater levels of the predictor variables would result in greater levels of awareness of the types of racial issues. We predicted that grade school teachers and professors in the social sciences would have more exposure to the social sciences and multicultural education than those in the natural sciences, and therefore have greater awareness. Results will be discussed in terms of the relationship between the predictor variables and awareness of the three types of racial issues.

5:20—5:35

VIEWS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Tracy Howard, David Kurtis, Rebecca Liben, Andalisa Lopez

Our research hopes to connect White's understandings of their privilege to how they understand community service. We hope to find a relationship between progression in the White Racial Identity Development Model (Helms, 1990), the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (Neville, et al., 2000), and participants' views on volunteerism. Our research is grounded within the idea that if community service is viewed as mutually beneficial, volunteers are able to deconstruct racial hierarchies within their service relationship. We hypothesize this research will support existing evidence as to the importance of a multicultural education for Whites. We anticipate that those with a greater understanding of privilege and institutional racism will view community service as mutually beneficial.

5:40—5:55

PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN

Nicole Romano, Danielle Seife, Heather Schloss, Jordan Shafer

Current literature does not sufficiently address the topics of weight and racism from the perspectives of others. There is, however, literature that suggests that White women perceive their own weight differently than Black women do. We are particularly interested to find whether the results from our study, specifically looking at the perceptions that women have of others, are consistent with the self-perceptions reported in the literature. This study evaluated the perceptions that Muhlenberg female students have on other women of differing weights and races.

6:00—6:15

WE LONG TO BELONG

Alyssa Langenthal, Andrea Ladr, Abbey Rabinovich, Emily Joyner

Tajfel (1982), described the social identity as the part of one's self concept that comes from the awareness of membership to a group as well as a particular emotional significance attached to the group. According to the social identity theory, group members internalize a salient group identity among an in-group. Emotionally meaningful groups make up the social identity. Leary (1999) proposes that one's self-esteem, or sociometer, acts as a psychological meter of social acceptance. It is a measure of one's need for belongingness, which is a natural human instinct we all experience. We are testing how far an individuals need for belongingness will go when rejected by a meaningful in-group and then either placed into a non-meaningful group or is alone.

POSTER SESSION

Seegers Event Space

THE EFFECT OF EMOTIONALLY AROUSING PICTURES ON COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE

Juliana Repice, Jessica Harris, Katie Finkelstein, Justina Dubinsky

A study was conducted to determine whether emotionally laden images would affect the types of words remembered by participants. Half of the participants viewed a slide show of negative images from the International Affective Picture System (IAPS), and the other half viewed positive images. All participants then viewed a Powerpoint slide of negative, positive and neutral words from the ANEW word list. After a distraction task, participants were asked to write down as many words as possible that they could recall from the slide of words. It was predicted that subjects who viewed negative images would remember more negative words and that subjects who viewed positive images would remember more positive words.

HOW DO INDIVIDUALS CHOOSE FRIENDS?

Alexis Clarke, Alex Caporusso, Zach Turner, Jessica Costa

The main goal of our study is to explore what clothing colors are perceived as most attractive. Past research has shown that the colors red and black enhances attraction to females, where as the colors green and white are perceived as less attractive. It has also shown that clothing color has a psychological influence on wearers at least as much as on raters, and that this ultimately influences attractiveness judgments by others. Because of this past research we anticipate the following: 1) women will be perceived as more attractive when wearing red and black, 2) women will be perceived as less attractive when wearing white and green, and 3) male participants will view women as more attractive overall compared to females.

EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO MUSIC

Amanda Butto, Jessica Krauss, Jaclyn Todisco, Hannah Watson

The goal of our study is to evaluate whether audio music or music videos elicit a stronger emotional reaction; this is important because video stimulation may cause different emotions than simply listening to a song. One benefit to the participant is greater awareness of one's emotional reaction when listening to a song or watching a music video. Our hypothesis is that participants will elicit a stronger emotional response while watching music videos. Participants will be given a survey before listening to a song, answering questions regarding their current emotion. After each song participants will answer a short survey regarding their emotional response and how they believe others' emotional response will be.

SELF-PERCEPTION EVALUATION

Chelsea Torrance, Allisyn Weinshank, Caroline Zuckerman, Brandi Stovall

Our goal is to see if there is a relationship between the constructs of body satisfaction and academic motivation. We propose that this relationship will be mediated by the variable of self-esteem. Although literature is limited about the relationship between body satisfaction and academic motivation, previous studies have shown that self-esteem has a relationship with both of these variables individually. We administered an online survey with some questions taken from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale, the Body Shape Questionnaire (BSQ) and Self-Efficacy Scale. We expect to find a positive correlation between the variables of body satisfaction and academic motivation through the mediating variable of self-esteem.

EFFECTS OF MAGAZINES ON SEXUAL ATTITUDES

Megan Cohn, Michela Gaffney, Patricia Affriol, Taylor Gaines

The goal of this study is to examine how the priming of magazines affects sexual attitudes in women, specifically if sex is seen as a communal or exchange engagement. We aim to provide additional research on the types of relationships women have on the attitudes about the dynamic that is formed in sexual relationships. Participants were assigned to one of three priming conditions: a cosmopolitan article consistent with an exchange approach, a Time article consistent with communal approach, or no article for a control group. We expect that women primed with the cosmopolitan article will respond to the survey consistent with an exchange approach. In contrast, we expect that women primed with the Time article will respond to the survey consistent with a communal approach.

EFFECT OF NAME BRAND CLOTHING ON PERCEIVED ATTRACTIVENESS

Rachel Massar, Justin Casale, Alyssa Nolte, Victoria Wenhold, and Shane O'Connor

In order to explore the hypothesis that people wearing sophisticated brands are perceived as more attractive than people wearing unsophisticated brands, twenty-three college students were given a survey and a questionnaire to fill out. The survey asked participants to rate the attractiveness of individuals wearing various brand named clothing. The questionnaire assessed participants' familiarity with brands, and their perception of how expensive each brand was. We anticipate that participants will perceive models wearing sophisticated brands as more attractive than models wearing unsophisticated. We also hypothesize that participants will perceive brands they are familiar with, and perceive as expensive, as more attractive.

COLOR AND EMOTION

Halli Lieberman & Becca Ratzenberger

Previous research has shown that color has an impact on perception of emotion and elicits specific emotions (Kaya & Epps, 2004). Our study looks at how an ambiguous stick figure wearing a specific color shirt affects the emotion elicited by a person and how they perceive people wearing a specific color feel. We used the colors of red, green, and blue; and the emotions of happy, sad, angry, attractive, and scared. We found that color has more of an impact on how strongly people feel others are feeling.

MEDIA INFLUENCE ON ATTITUDES OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Chelsea Sandler, Mike Esposito, Sam Greenfield

The goal of our study was to examine the effects that media framing has on stigma of people with mental illness. We created three vignettes of news stories. Participants were randomly assigned to one of these conditions. The first condition described the perpetrator of a murder as schizophrenic, the second condition described the victim of a murder as schizophrenic, and the third condition did not mention whether the perpetrator or victim had a mental illness. We predict that there will be more stigma toward the perpetrator when he is described as having schizophrenia than just the perpetrator without mental illness. We also predict less stigma toward the victim with schizophrenia. Lastly, we believe that familiarity with schizophrenia will reduce attitudes of stigma toward mental illness.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS AUTISM AND DSM-5 OPINIONS

Jessica Gonzalez, Chris Colby, Genna Soslow

In our study, we examined the influence of video exposure that only shows negative aspects of Autism Spectrum Disorders and prior experience (using a level of familiarity scale) and how it effects opinions on proposed changes in the DSM-5. We hypothesize (a) participants who are exposed to the video will show greater stigma towards Autism Spectrum Disorders and be more willing to put Asperger's and Autism under the same umbrella category than participants who are not exposed and (b) participants who have background experience will not show as much stigma towards Autism Spectrum Disorders and be less willing to put Asperger's and Autism under the same umbrella category as those who do not have background knowledge.

PARENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY

Emily Thomas, Emily Grasso, Zack Weiss, Jamie Divizio

This study tested the relationship between parenting styles, birth order and gender in 103 participants ranging from ages 18-64. Participants were placed into one of three conditions in which they read vignettes about either a male child, a female child, or a child with no specified gender. They were then asked questions about the vignette, their caregivers, and basic demographics. The study aims to measure how the parenting styles used by your caregivers, your birth order, and your gender will affect what parenting style you perceive you will use in the future.

RISK PERCEPTION OF DRUG USE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Bre Biondi, Annie Gofberg, Chelsea Stettler, Sarah Zussman

Our study aimed to analyze college students' risk perceptions of taking a fictional drug named Unistax. Specifically, we looked at how students view risks in relation to the source of the drug and the route of the administration. To analyze how risky students' viewed route of administration, we looked at how they perceived taking the drug either orally or intravenously. The risk associated with the source of the drug was determined by students' risk perception of obtaining it from a friend or by a doctor's prescription. It is important to find out what affects student's perceptions of risk in order to understand the prevalence of drug misuse on college campuses and in order to implement prevention strategies.

THE EFFECTS OF CONTROLLABILITY AND GENDER ON BIPOLAR DISORDER

Jessica Chapman, Jessica Epstein, Jeremy Fox, Emily Gup

This study investigates how gender and controllability of onset affects participants' stigma levels towards an individual with bipolar disorder. Participants read a vignette from one of four conditions and responded to a series of questions. The vignettes were manipulated for gender and controllability. We based this survey on the Attribution Questionnaire 27. Stigma has been shown to decrease the likelihood of seeking treatment for mental health disorders. The results from this study can be used to identify sources and causes of stigma in order to reduce them.

STUDENT-INITIATED NEED AND NON-NEED BASED COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Joe Sandor, Melissa Getz, Lauren Barnett, and Caitlin Sauter

Our study was conducted as a 19 question online survey to examine college students' type of communication with their parents and its potential relationship to secure and anxious attachment styles. We are interested in the specific content of the communication with parents initiated by the students, such as need and non-need based conversations. In addition, we would like to examine possible gender differences in the types of conversations students have with their parents and their relationship to differences in attachment styles among males and females. We hypothesize that females will have more non-need based communication with parents than males and students with an anxious attachment to their parents will communicate more frequently overall with them, regardless of content.

INTERNAL vs. EXTERNAL STIMULI ON MOOD

Ashley Ring, Alexandria Jobes, Amanda Moretz, Bilkis Hashim, Keri Sharpe

The participants assessed their mood by questionnaire after completing one of four tasks given to them on the day of the experiment by the research group. The first group was prompted to write about a personal experience only, the second group was asked to look at a positive painting and reflect, the third group looked at the same positive painting then reflected in writing and the fourth group was asked to just look at the painting. After each condition the participants rated their moods on a questionnaire. The researchers expect that the combination of looking at the positive painting and then completing a short essay will have the most effect on the individual's positive mood, indicating that the combination of external and internal reflections will have the greatest impact on positive mood. This could have implications for future therapy practices.

NOTES



WANT TO PRESENT YOUR RESEARCH OR INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE?

Spring 2012 Psychology Day is tentatively scheduled for May 1st. 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."