

Psycho-Babble

Macalester College / February 2011

Important Dates

Last day to register/
validate a class and last
day to add/drop a class
February 4th

Study Abroad Panel
Tuesday, February 15th
11:30 - 12:30
#352 RSVP for lunch

Rebecca Bigler
Tuesday, February 15th
4:45 Olin Rice #350

REU
Applications due -
various dates

Last day to designate a
grading option
February 18

Careers in Psych (with
CDC)
Tuesday, March 1st 7:00
#352 Treats

Chair Talk from Jaine

Happy Spring Semester! We hope that you had a restful break and that you're excited for the new term. We want to extend a special welcome back to students who were abroad last term and to Joan Ostrove (returning after a two year leave of absence).

You may have noticed that the psychology department has a new website. We tried hard to provide easy access to key information (e.g., course syllabi; research opportunities), and we hope to keep improving and updating it. If you have any ideas for how to improve the site, please let any of us know.

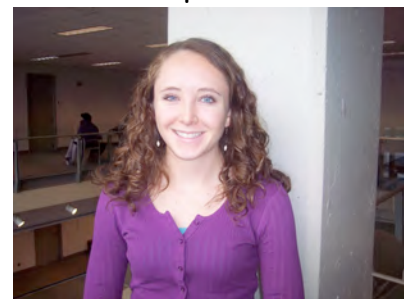
As you'll see in the information below, this semester is packed with exciting events, including presentations by three prominent visiting psychologists. If you have ideas for other events—whether academic, social, or community-based—please let Lee or me know—or talk with your psych leaders: Sylvia Ferguson, Ellen Fitzharris, Ruben Peña, and Colin Westcott.

Mollie Mayfield's winning paper

Marjorie Mayfield '11, Psychology, Environmental Studies, Community and Global Health, has written a paper that has been accepted for presentation by Division 34 of the American Psychological Association at the annual conference in Washington, D.C. in August 2011.

The paper also won the Annual Student Paper Competition for 2011!

Congratulation Mollie!



Study Abroad Lunch - Tuesday, Feb 15

- Each semester we welcome back our majors who studied abroad the previous semester at a lunch. This semester the lunch will be on Tuesday, February 15 in Olri 352, 11:30-12:30. Students who have been invited to to panel after they studied abroad fall semester are: **Emily Rutherford**, who studied in Wollangong, Australia, **Mitchell Glasser**, who studied in the HECUA program in Norway, **Patricia Wright**, who studied at the University of Otago, New Zealand, **Adam Freedman**, who studied at Oxford, England and **Maggie Wood** who studied at the University of Sydney, Australia.



This is a great time to learn about the study abroad experience as well as to enjoy the pleasures of being an "armchair traveler". Lunch will be Jimmy John Subs, chips, fruit and cookies. Paul Nelson from the Study Abroad office has been invited to join us to answer questions. We hope to see you there!

Rebecca Bigler - Tuesday, Feb 15 4:45



Facilitating a Meta-Cognitive Understanding of Intergroup Bias: When, Why, and How to Talk to Children about Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination

Olin Rice #350

Professor [Rebecca Bigler](#) is the Director of the [Gender and Racial Attitudes Lab, at the University of Texas at Austin](#). Professor Bigler has conducted numerous studies about how young children view race, and how attitudes and beliefs towards race and gender may be formed. Her research was recently featured in the Newsweek magazine cover story, "[Even Babies Discriminate](#)."

Important Dates for Spring Semester



Apostolos Georgopoulos
Thursday, April 12, 5:00
Johnson Memorial Lecture
Olin Rice 250

The Johnson Memorial Lecture is an annual lecture sponsored by psychology. This year our speaker is Dr. Apostolos Georgopoulos M.D., Ph.D., Regents Professor of Neuroscience and McKnight Presidential Chair in Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of Minnesota where he is Professor of Neuroscience, Neurology, and Psychiatry and Director of the Center for Cognitive Sciences. One of his discoveries powered the 2006 startup of Orasi Medical in St. Louis Park. Orasi, which has secured \$6 million in venture capital and angel financing, recently was recognized by Red Herring Magazine as one of the top 100 technology startups in North America, following in the footsteps of Google and Yahoo. Using the MEG technology Georgopoulos developed, Orasi is working to create the first [FDA-approved](#) noninvasive test for diagnosing Alzheimer's disease. Future applications could identify multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, and autism.

Bill Iacono
Wednesday, April 27, 7:00
MPA Distinguished Scholar Lecture
Weyerhaeuser Board Room



William G. Iacono, Ph.D., is a Distinguished McKnight University Professor of psychology, psychiatry, neuroscience and law and adjunct professor of child development at the University of Minnesota. Iacono did his undergraduate work at Carnegie Mellon University and completed his Ph.D. in clinical psychology at the University of Minnesota in 1978. Professor Iacono is a pioneer in the neurobiological approach to the study of mental disorders and one of the world's leading experimental psychopathologists. He is considered to be one of the foremost research scientists in the areas of adolescent and adult developmental psychopathology, substance abuse, psychiatric epidemiology, behavior genetics, and lie detection. He is best known for the Minnesota Twin Family Study, a benchmark longitudinal investigation of approximately 2000 adolescent twin pairs and their parents. He has published more than 350 papers and ranks among North America's most cited and productive clinical psychologists.

Senior Majors: Major Plan!

Planning to graduate in May? Then now is the time to check your major plan to make sure you've taken care of all of your requirements. Please meet with your advisor and/or Jaine to get this important paperwork taken care of.

Spotlight on Research – Rachel Lucas-Thompson

"Whether mom works or not, the kids are OK" reads the headline in the Wall Street Journal. The article highlights a recent meta-analysis published in Psychological Bulletin by Rachel Lucas-Thompson and colleagues Wendy Goldberg and JoAnn Prause at the University of California, Irvine. The study found that early maternal employment was rarely associated with children's later achievement problems or behavior problems, and was sometimes associated with more positive outcomes for kids, especially for children from financially "at-risk" families (e.g., single-parent or welfare families). The findings were also compatible with calls for more generous parental leave policies, and arguments that children may benefit if mothers are allowed to postpone working: employment in the first year was associated with lower achievement and more behavior problems, whereas employment in years two and three was not. The study garnered much national and international attention, with mentions in newspapers like the Los Angeles Times, the Star Tribune, London's Telegraph, Chile's La Tercera, and Sweden's Tages-Anzeiger and in magazines like Time, Redbook, and Fit Pregnancy.

This line of research comprises only one aspect of Rachel's work, which broadly focuses on how family relationships are related to children's physiological stress responding, future relationships, and health. With the help of a fabulous and indispensable team of research assistants (including Ella Bandes, Julianna Carlson, Ellen Fitzharris, Faith Kwon, Kristina Vlahovicova and recent graduate Amanda Wenzel), last semester Rachel completed Wave 1 of a study aimed at investigating how the association between marital conflict exposure and physiological responses to stress changes across adolescence. The research team is currently working on making observational ratings of marital conflict discussions. The families who participated in Wave 1 will be followed over time, with data collection starting again over the summer.

MUPC is Saturday, April 16

The Minnesota Undergraduate Psychology Conference is Saturday, April 16, 8:30-4:30 at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. This one day annual conference promotes undergraduate research in the field of psychology and will feature oral and poster presentations of student research. We are also pleased to announce that the keynote speaker will be Dan Simons, Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Illinois, and author of The Invisible Gorilla: And Other Ways Our Intuitions Deceive Us. Registration is free and open to the psychology community.

Presenting at MUPC is a requirement of the psychology major at Macalester.

Mid-Brains Conference is April 30th

St. Olaf College will host MidBrains, the annual Regional conference for undergraduate neuroscience research, this year. This multi-state conference will feature a keynote speech, presentations from the faculty representing the different graduate neuroscience programs in the region and student presentations. The day concludes with a picnic for all.

Neuroscience Seminar in Germany

A new Neuroscience summer study abroad is being offered in Germany this summer, May 21 - June 18, 2011. The program is run out of the Neuroscience Program at the College of Charleston, and is part of a national program for neuroscience study abroad. Eric Wiertelak is involved in setting up the program. Application deadline is March 1, 2011. For more information: blogs.cofc.edu/germanneuro.

Mesmerizing Major - Steffanie Fisher

Favorite Movie: The Boondock Saints, Fight Club, Blue Crush, She's the Man, or any Warren Miller films.

Favorite Book: Go Ask Alice.

Favorite place to eat in the Twin Cities: I don't have one particular place. I love checking out small, neighborhood places or different ethnic restaurants.

What do you do when you are not studying? Listen to music, dance, spend time outdoors, go to EDM shows, play volleyball, explore the Cities or hang with friends.

Where did you grow up? Lindenhurst, IL (suburb North of Chicago).

Interesting fact about your hometown: Less than a mile from my house, there is a town Millburn (Old Mill Creek), composed now, of only a couple houses and a church, but it was once a stop on the Underground Railroad.

Tell us something about your family: Because of my Mom being born and raised in Germany, we still celebrate a lot of holidays as she did back home in Europe.

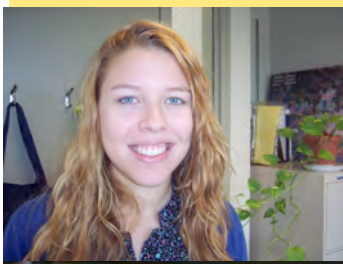
Tell us something that you are pleased with or proud of about yourself: I really do dance like no one's watching :)

"Mesmerizing majors are randomly selected from the list of psychology and NS majors."

Steffanie Fisher



Julianna Carlson - Allen Parchem Fellowship Winner



Julianna Carlson

Dr. Allen L. Parchem '57 has established an endowed fund to support student-faculty research in Psychology at Macalester. Each year, one Psychology major will be awarded this Research Fellowship to engage in collaborative research with a faculty member. The student is selected by the Psych faculty on the basis of their academic performance in Psych courses and their research potential.

This year's winner is Julianna Carlson. She will be working with Rachel Lucas-Thompson in her study to investigating how the association between marital conflict exposure and physiological responses to stress changes across adolescence. Congratulations, Julianna!

2010-2011 Psych T-shirt contest!

Submit your design by March 1st to Lee. Winner will receive Adobe Photoshop CS4 Extended Student Edition or \$25, and a free T-shirt. **Good Luck!**

*Designs that reinforce stereotypes about mental illness are not acceptable. Designs that reinforce stereotypes about psychology (e.g., rats, brains, Freud) are acceptable... but unlikely to be selected. The winning design will be selected by psych faculty in consultation with psych leaders.

Psych in the News

Making the most of it: Study reveals motivating factor for enjoying the present

It is common knowledge that when something becomes scarce, its value goes up. This concept does not just apply to material goods--time can be an extremely valuable commodity, especially when it is in short supply. According to a new study, thinking that we have a limited amount of time remaining to participate in an activity makes us appreciate the activity that much more and motivates us to make the most of it.

Psychologist Jaime L. Kurtz from Pomona College investigated how our behavior and attitude towards an activity change when there is a limited amount of time remaining to engage in it. A group of college seniors participated in this study, which occurred 6 weeks prior to graduation. Every day for two weeks, the students were to write about their college experiences, including the activities they participated in. The experiment was designed so that some of the students were to think about graduation as a far-off event and some students were told to think about graduation as occurring very soon.

The results, reported in *Psychological Science*, a journal of the Association for Psychological Science, reveal that the students' behavior was influenced by how the graduation deadline was framed (that is, whether graduation was occurring shortly or in the future). It turns out, the students who thought of graduation as occurring very soon reported participating in more college-related activities compared to the students who thought of graduation as a far-off event. Kurtz surmises that when faced with the imminent end of college, students were more motivated to take advantage of the time they had left in school and participate in as many events as possible--the students realized it would be their last chance to engage in college-related activities. Kurtz notes that although it may seem counterintuitive, these findings support the idea that "thinking about an experience's future ending can enhance one's present experience of it". In addition, Kurtz suggests that "focusing on the fact the experiences like these are fleeting enhances enjoyment by creating a 'now or never' type of motivation".

###

For more information, please contact: Jaime L. Kurtz (Jaime.kurtz@pomona.edu)

Psychological Science is ranked among the top 10 general psychology journals for impact by the Institute Scientific Information. For a copy of the article "Looking to the Future to Appreciate the Present: The Benefits of Perceived Temporal Scarcity" and access to other *Psychological Science* research findings, please contact Barbara Isanski at 202-293-9300 or bisanski@psychologicalscience.org.

Macalester
College

1600 Grand Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105-
1899

Phone:
651-696-6223

Fax:
651-696-6348

E-Mail:
lolson4@macalester.edu

*Be sure to check out
our website.*

Welcome new Psych & NS majors!

Brent Campbell '13
Jasmine Ball '13
Hannah Van Den Brandt '13
Stephen Anderson '14 NS
Melanie Rivera '13

About Psycho-Babble...

Psycho-Babble is a monthly newsletter for Psychology and Cognitive and Neuroscience majors and other interested students. We welcome contributions from students and faculty. The goal of the newsletter is to inform the community of events, people and issues at Macalester and beyond.