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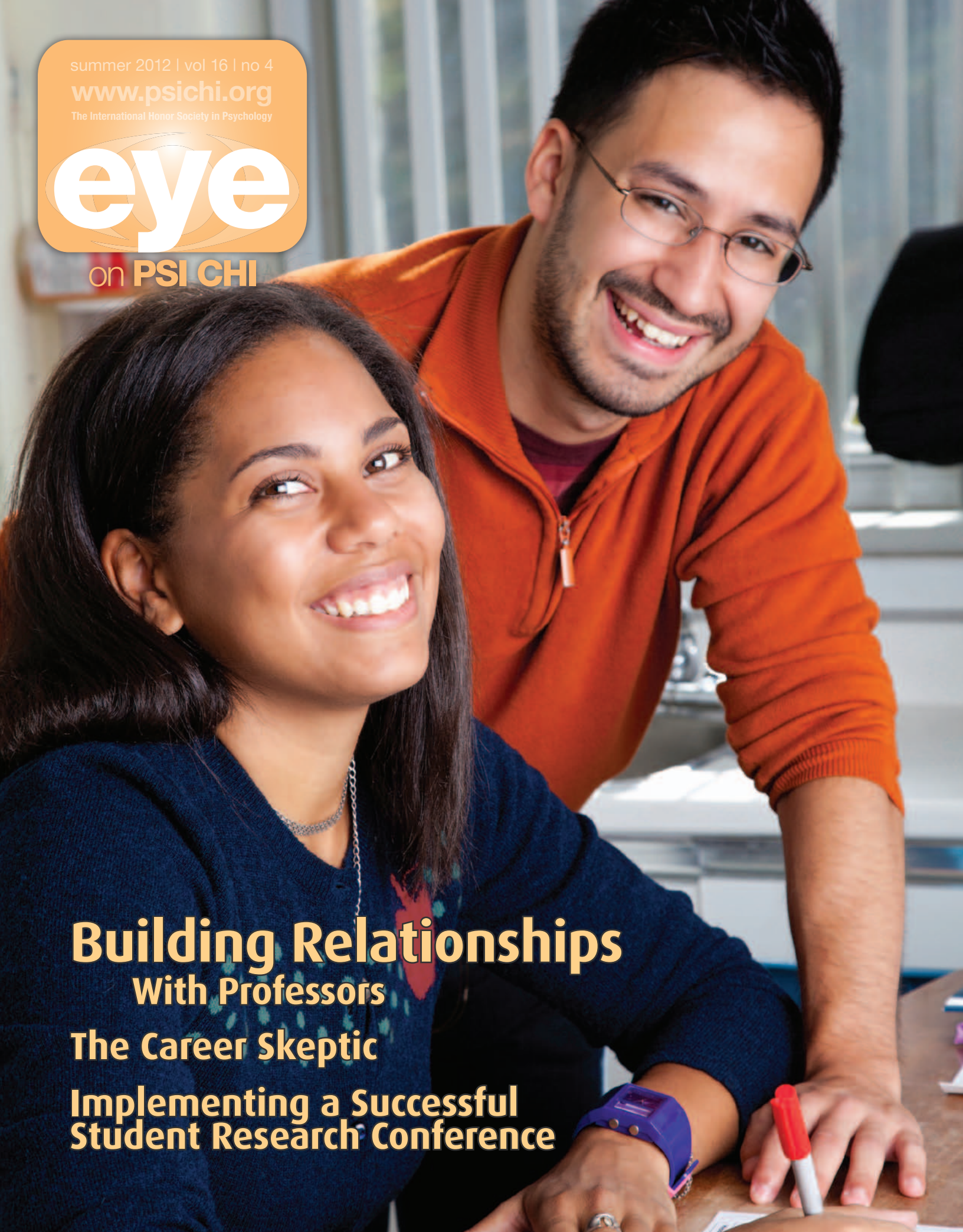

Building Relationships With Professors

The Career Skeptic

Implementing a Successful Student Research Conference

CONGRATULATIONS to 2012 Graduates

—Psi Chi Central Office

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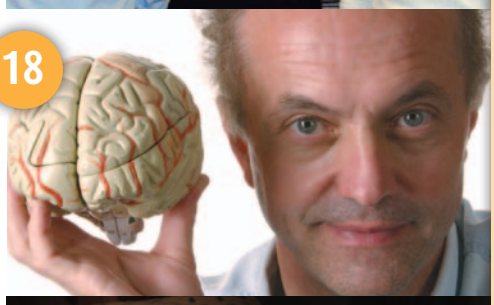

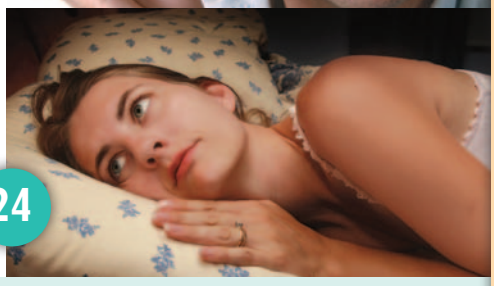

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Summer To-Do List:
Discover Career Specialty Areas That Are Right for You!

Susan Amato-Henderson, PhD
Psi Chi Society President
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Some of you may be taking classes this summer. Summer is a good time to take classes in an effort to lighten your load during the traditional school year. Class sizes are typically smaller, so you have a better opportunity to get to know the professor. Take advantage of this if you need to secure another potential reference for your graduate school or job applications. If you are on the brink of burnout and need a break, consider taking a nontraditional class during the summer instead. There may be opportunities for an internship or teaching/research assistantships. Many students have to earn money during the summer, or simply chose not to take classes. Regardless of what your summer holds for you, this column will contain tips for devoting some of your summer time to making progress on self-discovery regarding career decisions.

Are you still unsure of the many subspecialty areas that the field has to offer? If so, there are a multitude of resources that can assist in finding a career area that is right for you. Many excellent articles have been written in previous publications of the *Eye*. For example, Dr. Amira Wegenek had an excellent article in the last edition of the *Eye* (www.ourdigitalmags.com/publication/?i=103371) that should assist you in determining whether a career in academia, research, or practice is right for you. Many other helpful articles have been published over the years in the *Eye*—to find them simply go to www.psichi.org/pubs/search.aspx?category1=8 and select the "Fields of Psychology" category to search previous editions.

The Psi Chi website also provides numerous links that you will find helpful (www.psichi.org/links/default.aspx). Peruse the various organizational, career, and graduate school links. A visit to APA's website (www.apa.org) will provide access to each of the associations 54 divisions (www.apa.org/about/division/index.aspx)—which are organized by subspecialty or topical areas in the field. Each division has its own website, within which you will find career information and many other resources that are helpful in learning about the area. Many divisions also provide a list of graduate programs providing degrees within the area.

Once you find a specialty area of interest to you, spend some time reading some of the literature within the area. Many of APA's divisions have their own journals—browse the recent titles to get a better feeling for the research within the area. Consider joining the division as a student affiliate to have access to their publications, newsletters, and opportunities for students.

Many theorists have models that explain the development of careers. While these theories differ in details, they almost universally address stages in which one must assess their options in consideration of their interests, values, strengths, and weaknesses. Once options are identified, an investigation stage follows in which you try to learn more about potential careers. It is common to feel confused and overwhelmed at this stage, so stay focused. Once you have identified strong possibilities for specialty areas that are a good match for you, the next stage is preparation. Your course work and extracurricular involvements will be so much more meaningful if you are able to see the connection to your career goals.

Good luck, and don't let the summer pass without discovering the breadth of the field and finding a good match for your future in the field of psychology!

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Step Into Fall With a Plan for Chapter Success

Martha S. Zlokovich, PhD
Psi Chi Executive Director
Associate Editor

Most Psi Chi members return to campus for the start of a new academic year in August or September (even though New Zealand's winter season is during summer in the US, and many members have taken summer courses with little to no break). In any case, end of summer or beginning of fall is a good time of year to lay the groundwork for a successful academic year for your chapter.

Organize chapter officers early. The Executive Committee (all officers and the faculty advisor) of each chapter should meet before the rush of fall classes begins so they can map out a tentative plan for the year. Meeting early allows officers to communicate about expectations and job duties and get to know one another better. If outgoing officers have the chance to meet with incoming officers at least once or twice before the turnover to new officers, the transition will be much smoother for the officers and the chapter. Being organized and having a plan will allow officers to step into the first chapter meeting and present the members with a meeting agenda and a tentative plan for the upcoming year's chapter activities. Member buy-in and participation will increase the likelihood of the chapter holding successful activities and events.

Review your chapter's Bylaws. Every chapter should have its own Bylaws, but they must be read and followed by the officers and chapter members in order to be relevant. Do you know what your Bylaws say about filling a vacant officer position? About what positions there are other than the four required by the Psi Chi Constitution (president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary)? About removing an officer who does not attend meetings or fulfill his or her duties? About academic requirements for membership? (Chapters may impose more stringent academic requirements than those in the Psi Chi Constitution, but not less stringent; however, nonacademic requirements such as participation may not be imposed.) In fact, chapter Bylaws may include anything that doesn't conflict with the Psi Chi Constitution. Example Bylaws are available at http://www.psichi.org/pdf/modbylaw.pdf, but note that officer removal is not included. See my summer 2009 column on why Bylaws are important http://www.psichi.org/Pubs/Articles/Article_754.aspx.

Recalculate GPA cutoffs—doing so is the first step to a successful membership drive. Each year chapter faculty advisors should recalculate the top 35 percent cumulative GPA cutoffs for the sophomore, junior, and senior classes. Class refers to all students on campus, so that means the cumulative GPAs of every sophomore, every junior, and every senior on campus should be included in the calculations—not just psychology majors or students in the college that houses the psychology department. Typically faculty advisors obtain the cutoffs from the university's registrar, honors dean or college, or institutional research department. Whether your chapter holds one or more induction ceremonies per year, students may become members through the chapter at any time during the year (however, chapters may set their own deadlines for prospective members to turn in their fees and forms). Remember that students are not eligible for Psi Chi awards or grants until their membership has been recorded in the Psi Chi Central Office so it benefits your chapter's newest members if your faculty advisor submits their information to the Central Office each semester.

Include graduate students during your membership drive. Graduate students are also eligible for Psi Chi and may participate in chapter activities. Graduate students who joined Psi Chi as undergraduates may participate in the chapter as soon as they start their graduate classes. Remember, Psi Chi membership is a lifetime membership! If they wish,,they may transfer their membership to their graduate school's Psi Chi chapter, but they are not required to do so. Graduate students who are not already members of Psi Chi may join after completing one full semester of graduate coursework with at least a B average in all graduate courses.

Explore what's new on Psi Chi's website. Members will notice big changes in Psi Chi's website by August or September. These changes have been designed to make it easier for members to find the information they need. Each region will have updated pages specifically for the region's Vice-President on Psi Chi's Board of Directors to communicate with all members in the region. Each region's VP plans the Psi Chi program at their regional meeting; these pages will tell you when the fall submission deadlines are, how to apply for regional conference travel grants, what sessions will be at the meetings, and what awards are available in the region. Furthermore, anyone planning to submit to or attend the conference in another region will be able to find out the details about it on that region's page.

Website revisions will eliminate students filling out paper forms for membership and advisors inputting that information online. The changes will allow faculty advisors to send a link to potential new members for them to enter their own names and personal information online. A list will then be generated for the advisor to verify which students meet the current criteria for membership by simply clicking next to each person who is eligible.

The Awards and Grants Webpage will be streamlined and feature some new awards such as travel grants to any conference, Faculty Advisor Leadership Training Grants, and Mamie Phipps Clark Research Grants. Applications will all be online and forms will be easier to fill out and return to Psi Chi.

Check out the revised Psi Chi research journal. All members may now submit research articles to the *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*, formerly the *Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research*. Be sure to check out current and past issues on the website. Members may view entire articles free by logging into the website first.

Read current and past *Eye on Psi Chi* articles online. Although the *Eye* no longer arrives on campus as a paper magazine, current and past issues are available to the public online. Search for topics related to diversity, leadership, international issues, getting into graduate school, chapter vitality, officer functioning, fund-raising, areas of psychology, and many more.

Follow Psi Chi on Twitter, Facebook, and Linkedin. Keep up to date with the latest tips, ideas, deadlines, and Psi Chi news on social media. You can find Psi Chi on Twitter at PsiChiHonor, on Facebook at PsiChiCentralOffice, and on Linkedin by searching for Psi Chi–The International Honor Society in Psychology.

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Internships!

How important are internships for baccalaureate graduates entering the workplace? The exclamation point after the one-word title of this article is your clue. In a survey of 301 employers sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U, 2008), respondents were asked which methods of assessing student learning are most helpful in evaluating a job applicant's potential to succeed at their company. Topping the list was a "supervised/evaluated internship/community-based project where students apply college learning in real-world setting"; 83% of the employers regarded this form of assessment as fairly or very effective (multiple-choice tests were the least preferred assessment, receiving only a 32% effectiveness rating). In the National Association of Colleges and Employers' (NACE) *Job Outlook 2011*, 72% of the 172 employer respondents preferred candidates with "relevant" job experience; 53% of that group views internships and co-op experiences as the way for applicants to acquire relevant experience (NACE, 2011a).

I shared these findings with Jon Keil, director of operations for The Salem Group (a staff augmentation firm), whose responsibilities include staff training and development, project management, client relations, some HR functions, and oversight of the operations team at all of the company's staffing centers. In addition, he manages internship programs at the national headquarters of Fortune 500 companies in the pharmaceutical and financial industries, averaging 175 internships per year and reaching a peak of 700 interns in a single year. In college, Keil was a psychology/business: human resources major, and whose career is one example of how to use a joint psychology/business degree.

Here is my Q&A session with Jon Keil.

To what extent are internships important for graduates seeking entry to the workplace? Or, in other words, when an employer interviews two applicants with similar qualifications for an entry level job, why would the employer be generally inclined to favor the applicant with the internship?

Keil: Internships are extremely critical to a student preparing for a successful career. The internship experience provides crucial real-world experience and exposes the student to industry- specific or career-specific vernacular and preparedness they might otherwise miss out on by not taking internships. It allows students to expand their experiences and enhance their abilities. As an employer, I would lean toward the candidate with internship experience, especially if it was related to the job and industry I was hiring for. The experience, discipline, and exposure they receive often set them ahead of other candidates.

Besides academic credentials, what qualities do employers seek in internship applicants?

Keil: Academic credentials are always important in decision making for internships. However, as with any candidate, the applicants must possess excellent communication skills and convey eagerness, energy, and enthusiasm about the opportunity. Candidates must demonstrate that they have a solid understanding of the position and the expectations that go along with it. Previous work experience, part-time jobs, or elected positions at school are often excellent indicators of their future performance and will help in the selection process.

In general, what particular outcomes can students expect from a six-week (or longer) summer internship or a semester-long internship?

Keil: Internships are amazing opportunities to explore, expand, and enhance the student's knowledge and abilities. Often, the most desired internships are coveted and competitive and, as a result, are often highly regarded by future employers. The six-week internship can lead to more intense and longer-term internships. Most interns are closely evaluated as potential employees, and strong intern performance can lead to firm job offers. Beyond that, an internship is an excellent opportunity for the student to evaluate his/her chosen field. Shorter internships give you a quick glimpse at how organizations in that field operate, and often students will affirm their decision to pursue a career in a chosen field. Sometimes, however, they might choose to change course in their desired career aspirations; it is beneficial for students to come to this realization and decision through an internship rather than later in their careers.

I read a report from the Collegiate Employment Research Institute (CERI, 2011) that due to outsourcing of jobs and baby boomer retirements, internships in some businesses are replacing entry-level jobs in terms of skill levels and experiences needed and expected of new graduates when they enter the workplace. To what extent do you find this true?

Keil: To some degree, this is true. It provides employers the chance to evaluate many potential candidates before committing to one. Internships provide an employer with a workforce pool that they do not have to commit to long-term and allow them to evaluate business needs before making staff changes.

What advice would you give to psychology students about seeking and preparing for internships?

Keil: First, research, research, research! Do not avoid the internship. There are many opportunities beyond the clinical for psychology majors. Determine what field interests you, such as human resources, marketing, or communications, and target certain companies with an excellent reputation in your area. Next, contact those organizations and ask to speak with the professional in charge of their internships and find out how to apply. The only disadvantage to an internship is not performing one.

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Paul Hettich, PhD, Professor Emeritus at DePaul University (IL), was an Army personnel psychologist, program evaluator in an education R&D lab, and a corporate applied scientist—positions that created a "real world" foundation for his career in college teaching and administration. He was inspired to write about college-to-workplace readiness issues by graduates and employers who revealed a major disconnect between university and workplace expectations, cultures, and practices.

You can contact Paul at phettich@depaul.edu

What additional insights can you add?

Keil: Internships are extremely valuable to the student, but as you can see, they are equally valuable to an employer. For graduates having a difficult time securing a regular hire opportunity, I recommend contacting employers and offering your experience to them on an intern basis. It's out of the box, and it just might be the foot in the door you need.

Internships vary in several ways. They can be credit or noncredit based, paid or unpaid,offered through an academic department, career counseling center, university-wide course, or directly by an organization. Expect all internships to be competitive, especially those that are paid or offer a small stipend. If seeking an internship in a social service agency, do not expect financial compensation, but you can obtain good experience, especially if you plan on attending graduate school with a mental health specialty. In contrast, you can expect to pay for an internship in highly competitive positions in some fields.

Some employers are being criticized during our national labor crisis for offering unpaid internships to save company compensation, when they would otherwise have to pay employees. And some students are accused of taking jobs away from the unemployed through internships. However, unpaid internships have been the norm for many business organizations long before the recent job crisis.

It is important to perform serious self-reflection about your long-term career interests and goals prior to seeking an internship. As a psychology student in a field that reaches deeply into diverse aspects of society and behavior, you may be interested in mental health, research, marketing, human resources, science, technology, public service, social media, law enforcement, animal welfare, or other areas Whatever your interests, discuss them with your advisor and a career counselor; visit the alumni office and investigate the possibility of contacting alumni working in your field of choice. Be persistent. If there are no opportunities available through your school, then contact organizations directly (as Keil advises) or online. Search wisely, plan your efforts, and prepare your questions. Application procedures may vary widely but expect to complete a process that requires an interview, current resume, letters of reference, a transcript, and a statement of your goals and skills.

Become familiar with an organization's mission, services, products, and expectations of interns. Similarly, learn what you can expect from the organization, such as the kinds of tasks you will perform, if possible. Most internships involve some dull assignments (e.g., filing, photo copying, data input), but you should be able to perform at least some tasks equivalent to an entry-level job for a college graduate. In return for your work, you should receive some training, regular supervision, and feedback (though it may be infrequent and general). Consult the NACE (2011b) position statement regarding criteria that define an internship experience and criteria for unpaid internships. It is likely, however, that some internships will not match each criterion in the NACE statement.

Some post-college entry-level jobs require a solid internship experience and established skills. You might not meet those requirements in one experience, and chances are you will have made some mistakes along the way. So plan your schedule for a second, more challenging, and more career-related internship. View it as a second real-world component of your academic program that can simultaneously guide your career decision process and inform an employer or graduate school about your serious desire for practical experience (Landrum & Hettich, 2011).

But do internships lead to jobs? The statistics may change from year to year, but according to NACE (2010), 42.3% of the college senior job applicants who had internship experiences received at least one job offer, compared to 30.7% of those without an internship experience. This data is from a sample of students from wide number of disciplines, including liberal arts and applied majors. Consequently, do not assume that the internship you complete will lead to a job, especially if it is in a not-for-profit social service organization. Whatever the variables that influence the conversion rate from internship to job, the bottom line is that you should get out of the classroom during your college education and try to experience real-world working conditions in your areas of interest. Finally, prepare for your internship as you would a major paper or thesis. Consult sources such as the CERI Thought Piece below and other CERI online reports, and follow Keil's advice to "research, research, research!" as a competent psych major can and would—your first satisfying full-time job may depend on it.

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Additional Resources

www.ceri.msu.edu CERI surveys of work-related issues of interest to college students.
www.internmatch.com InternMatch helps you find internships by field and by location.
www.naceweb.org NACE home page.

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Sex
With Former Therapy Clients:
The 2-Year Rule

It's pretty common knowledge that therapists should not have sex with their clients (Kitchener & Anderson, 2011). The APA Ethics Code (APA, 2010) is unequivocal on this; Standard 10.05 states, "Psychologists do not engage in sexual intimacies with current therapy clients/patients." The harm done to clients has been well-documented (e.g., Pope, 1990). The APA Code also recognizes that sex with relatives, guardians, or significant others of clients is also unethical (APA, 2010, Standard 10.06). Picture a situation in which a therapist is seeing a child; the Code forbids the therapist from initiating a romantic or sexual relationship with the child's parent. By the way, Standard 10.06 goes on to say that "psychologists do not terminate therapy to circumvent this standard."

This leads us to the issue of therapists initiating (or agreeing to) sexual activity with former clients, which is a little more controversial and often misunderstood. The APA Code, Standard 10.08(a), states: "Psychologists do not engage in sexual intimacies with former clients/patients for at least two years after cessation or termination of therapy." This is the first part of the 2-year rule. One purpose of the prohibition against post-therapy sexual activity is that the effectiveness of therapy can be compromised if clients are either hopeful or concerned that the therapeutic relationship might turn into a romance the day (or month, or year) after therapy is over.

Some people hold the view that *once a client, always a client.* They would argue that the prohibition against sex with former clients should be absolute and life-long. However, a lifetime ban on sexual intimacies with all former clients might be too stringent. Picture this: A therapist and client meet once for an initial consultation about therapy and quickly agree that the therapist does not do the kind of therapy the client needs. They do not see each other again for

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Mitch won the 1992 CASE (Council for the Advancement and Support of Education) Colorado Professor of the Year Award, and the Excellence in Teaching Award from the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (APA Division 2) in 1995. He has published several book chapters and over 50 articles in journals ranging from the *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* to the *Journal of Polymorphous Perversity.* His major research area is professional ethics; he is the coauthor (with Sharon K. Anderson) of a text on ethics in psychotherapy (*Ethics for Psychotherapists and Counselors: A Proactive Approach*) from Wiley-Blackwell. His ethics blog, "The Ethical Professor," can be found at http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-ethical-professor.

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25 years. They run into each other at a public lecture and decide to go for coffee. Would you see this potential romance as unethical? (See Yalom, 1996, for an interesting fictional exploration of this and other ethical issues.)

When I present this type of case to students they typically say it's OK to pursue a romance after (a) a 25-year hiatus and (b) a one-session professional relationship. They also agree that it would not be OK to ask a former client out (or to accept an invitation) two days after terminating a 10-year therapy! Somewhere in the middle is a point at which post-termination relationships cross the line between ethical and unethical. The 2-year rule is APA's way of acknowledging that life holds few absolutes; many continua need to be considered. Thus, the Ethics Code includes an absolute prohibition against sex with former clients for a period of two years following termination. The next part of the 2-year rule provides an opportunity for some judgments to be made by therapists. APA Standard 10.08(b) starts:

Psychologists do not engage in sexual intimacies with former clients/patients even after a 2-year interval except in the most unusual circumstances. Psychologists who engage in such activity after the two years following cessation or termination of therapy and of having no sexual contact with the former client/patient bear the burden of demonstrating that there has been no exploitation, in light of all relevant factors, including ….

Many people, especially graduate students I've talked to, are under the misconception that, as one student put it, "all of a sudden after two years it's OK to have sex with a former client." As you can read in Standard 10.08(b), therapists are not that free—they need to assure that the relationship will not be exploitative. Here are the seven factors the Code says therapists should consider:

1. How much time has elapsed since the end of therapy
2. The type of therapy, how long it lasted, and how intense it was
3. How the termination was handled
4. The "personal history" of the client
5. The client's current functioning
6. The risk of harm of the contemplated relationship
7. "Any statements or actions made by the therapist during the course of therapy suggesting or inviting the possibility of a post-termination sexual or romantic relationship with the client/patient."

This is worse than asking the parents of your fiancé for their child's hand in marriage. The likelihood that these conditions are met is pretty small, don't you think? The bottom line: Sexual intimacies with former clients are strongly discouraged by the APA Ethics Code at any point in time. At the same time, as in most ethical decisions, the code cannot take away all judgments.

To close, I leave you with a question for you to ponder: The APA Code is silent about the issue of relationships between professors and former students. What do you think the standard should be about professors engaging in postgraduation relationships with undergraduate or graduate students?

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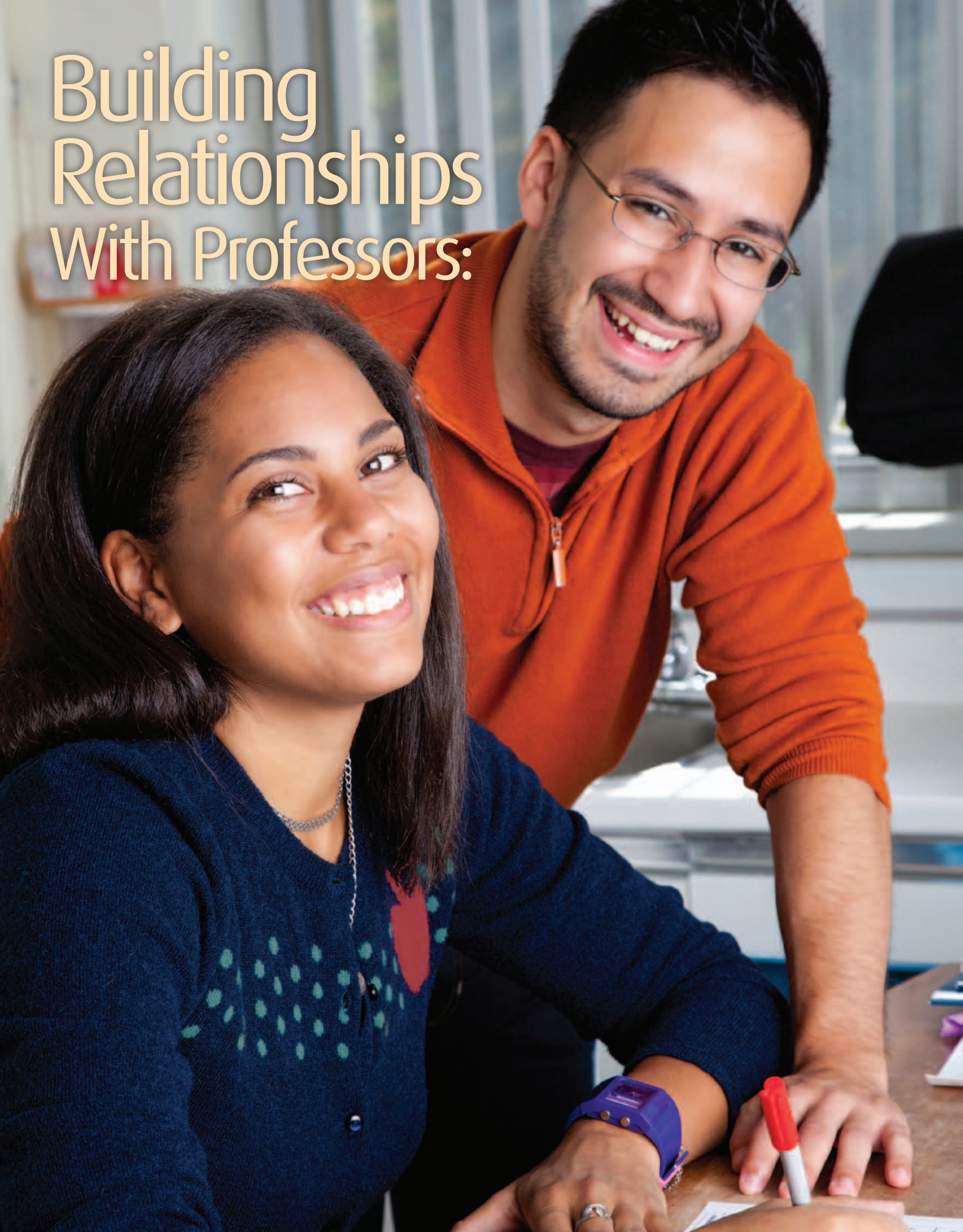
Building Relationships With Professors:



A Roadmap to Obtaining Strong Letters of Recommendation

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If you are preparing to apply to graduate school, you may have noticed how important it is to make connections with faculty. This is a process best started at the beginning of your college career, but if you are preparing at the start your senior year, all is not lost. This article aims to provide students with a road map for establishing contact with faculty. It will provide an overview of the "nuts and bolts" behind formal correspondence and meeting preparation.

Most graduate applications require at least three letters of recommendation. It is important these are strong letters from professionals who can speak to your abilities as a student. These should include abilities such as research experience, public speaking, writing, critical thinking, community involvement, volunteer work, enthusiasm for psychology, and dedication to studies. Ideally, students should ask for letters at least six weeks prior to the deadline; however, around four months is ideal.

Do Your Research

The process of discovering professors can take months, but you want to form a relationship before you need to ask for letters, which is generally the end of summer or early fall, depending on your application deadlines. It is often useful to investigate the faculty websites, usually found in the psychology departments' webpage of their respective institutions, in order to read about their recent work. Is there a specific person's whose work catches your eye? It is often helpful to copy and paste their information into a Word document so you can easily store what you find for future reflection. Adjunct faculty can also be a great source for letters of recommendation or professional advice.

Once you have found faculty members you are interested in pursuing as mentors, search their literature to discover what their specialties are to provide topics for discussion during prospective meetings. On most professors' websites, a link will be provided to a list of publications or their curriculum vitae, also known as an academic resume, which usually contains a list of recent works. Search for the most relevant and recent articles. Limit your search to their last five to ten publications, or those pertaining to your interests.

Use PsycINFO, Google Scholar, or any other professional search engine to obtain copies of their most recent articles. Take special note of articles in which they appear as first author. Pay attention to the theories they use, particular populations they focus upon, ways they approach a certain topic, or methodologies that distinguish their work. Highlight, take notes, or summarize sentences that will jog your memory of the article. Make a list of items that you find interesting or might be related to your future work. Is there anything you would like to research more? Think of questions as well as references to work you find interesting. Use the list below to outline an e-mail to your prospective mentor and for discussion topics during future meetings.

Make a List

Make a list of items you would like to discuss during the meeting. If you are forming a new relationship, it is not necessary to state that you are interested in obtaining a letter of recommendation. Focus on demonstrating your research or professional goals and sincere interest in their work. Your list should include:

- **The purpose of your contact.** What is your goal for the meeting? Are you trying to learn more about an area of study they are researching?
- **The reason they are the best source of the information you are seeking**. Are they working in a field which interests you for graduate school? Did they teach a class you attended and enjoyed?
- **Specific questions or comments regarding their research or field of study.** This is where the notes from your research are useful. Write down anything that interested you and why.

It is important to have your list completed before you make contact. While some professors may take weeks to respond, some will write you back in the same hour! You want to be prepared if they suggest setting up a meeting in the near future, and having this list will ensure you will be prepared.

Make Contact

One great way to establish contact, and some consider it the easiest, is to show up during the faculty member's office hours. These can usually be found on their department's webpage or posted in the main lobby of the department. However, this is not always possible and sometimes it is best to ask for a formal meeting via e-mail. Write a draft of your e-mail in a Word document in order to ensure there are no spelling errors, and use the spell check function. This will also provide you with a draft for future contact with faculty.

- **Start with "Dear," because "Hi" and "Hey" are too informal.** This is a great standard for all professional e-mails and letters.
- **Address professor by Dr. Last Name in an e-mail.** Do not deviate unless they ask you to or give you permission to use another name.
- **Identify yourself.** Start with the basics; are you a student at their institution, or were you a student in one of their classes? Include anything that will jog their memory of you or put you into context.
- **Purpose of your inquiry.** Are you trying to set up a meeting to discuss their research in order to explore a possible interest of yours? This is a good place to add a few pieces of the information you discovered during your review of their research.
- **Add a closing statement.** "Sincerely," "Thank You," "Best Wishes," and "Warmest Regards" are all great closing statements. Skip one line and add your first and last name.
- **Spell check again.** Even if you wrote your draft in Word, it is very tempting to make changes at the last minute. It is good practice to always use your spell check before sending an e-mail.

Remember, you should customize the

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e-mail to the purpose of your inquiry. If you are asking for a letter, attempting to set up a meeting, or updating them regarding previously discussed items, tell them. Something as simple as, "Would you be available for a meeting to discuss topics we discussed during Tuesday's lecture?" is perfect. Keep it simple and concise!

For the Meeting

- **Dress professionally.** There is no need to wear a three-piece suit (unless you would like to), but avoid jeans with holes, tank tops, or other clothing that may be considered inappropriate. Remember to think of yourself as a professional and fellow colleague.
- **Bring your list.** Although it is easy to think all those great ideas are going to come streaming out of your mouth (and most will), there will be moments when the discussion of a topic has come to an end, and trying to remember one of those great ideas on the spot can be difficult. If you consider yourself a shy person, this is the perfect way to initiate the conversation and keep it going if you start to feel awkward. Demonstrate that you have put in the extra effort to keep the meeting focused.
- **Show up early to the appointment.** This not only prevents uncontrollable events from ruining the meeting, but will give you time to go over your notes. Plan to arrive 10 to 15 minutes early, and spend at least 5 minutes refreshing yourself on the topics you want to discuss.
- **Smile.** Most professors are accustomed to students being nervous during these meetings. Follow your list, and feel free to skip items that don't seem as important in the moment.
- **Bring a pen.** This will allow you to check off questions you have already asked to keep the meeting focused, and take notes on responses the professor has for you.
- **Take notes on what the professor tells you during the meeting.** It can be very difficult to remember the name of an author they mention or a tip for grad school after the meeting has ended. Don't be afraid to pause the meeting to write something down. Professors expect you to take notes in such meetings because it shows you value their time and opinion.
- **Thank them for their time.** Let them know you will be in touch to keep them updated regarding any progress on the topics discussed during the meeting.

Asking for a Letter of Recommendation

When you feel you have built a relationship with a professor and are prepared to ask your mentor for a letter, specifically ask if she or he can provide a "strong" letter. Specify whether that professor may have a unique perspective on your writing abilities, research interests, public speaking skills, etc. Ideally, your letters will provide an overview of your abilities. Three letters describing what a great writer you are will not be as useful for your prospective mentors as letters describing three different aspects of your abilities. Try to obtain letters that provide an array of information for graduate school admission committees.

When you are ready to meet with your professor regarding a letter of recommendation, bring a packet of information with you. A manila envelope or paper folder will do just fine. This should include everything the professor will need to write you a strong letter.

1.) **Transcripts:** Print an unofficial copy of your transcript, and highlight your overall GPA and classes you have taken with that professor, including the grade you received.

2.) **Writing Sample:** Bring a short paper you have written as a writing sample. Keep this around five pages, double-spaced. Make sure to edit the paper properly, and ask for feedback from other students or professors before using it as your writing sample.

3.) **Statement of research interests:** Include a short paper (one to one and a half pages, double-spaced) which outlines your research interests, and how the schools you are applying to match these interests.

4.) **Copy of GRE scores:** Photocopy the official score report sent from ETS.

5.) **List of schools you are applying to:** Include a list of schools, their deadlines, and the respective professors to which you are applying, if applicable.

6.) **Addressed envelopes:** Include an addressed envelope for each school you are applying to that requires a paper copy of recommendation letters. Make sure the envelopes are already addressed and stamped; give the professor as little work as possible.

Follow-Up

It is important to keep the relationship warm by maintaining contact with the professors who wrote your letters or recommendation. This can be anywhere from a few weeks to a few months after the meeting, depending upon how the initial conversation went, whether you agreed to set up another appointment, and the progress on any topics discussed. Update them regarding any successes resulting from their advice, and suggest setting up another meeting to discuss any new questions you might have generated after the appointment. This new meeting can be set immediately or suggested for the next academic term. When that time rolls around, create a new list of topics for discussion, and repeat the process. It is also important to meet with or e-mail the professor at least once every 4 to 6 months to keep the relationship fresh.

The professors who write your letters for graduate school can also serve as a faculty supervisor for research experience, a source of information regarding new research assistantships, or a provider of graduate school advice that only a person who has been in the position of advising graduate students would have. Continuing this process of meetings and follow-ups will allow you to build relationships with faculty during your undergraduate studies and to maintain those relationships through graduate school and later become collaborators and/or colleagues in your future field of employment.

As a peer-adviser for the psychology department at Portland State University (OR), I am constantly passing on graduate school advice to students seeking to take the next step in their education. I began asking students if they would like to compose e-mails to professors during the advising meeting so I could assist in the letter writing process. I quickly noticed that students were making many of the mistakes I had once made: typos, greeting professors with "Hey," and disorganized writing. This article intends to guide students through the etiquette expected during the establishment of contact, meetings with faculty, and maintenance of professional relationships which can yield strong letters of recommendation.

I thank Dr. Debi Brannan for her helpful advice during my graduate school pursuit. I also thank Nicole Atkins, Ryan Abbot, and three anonymous reviewers for their helpful reviews and comments. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Amber Anthenien, 11865 SW Tualatin Rd. Apt. 30, Portland, OR, 97062. Email: aamber@pdx.edu.

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The Career Skeptic: An Interview With Dr. Michael Shermer

Clark Anderson and Elizabeth Behrends
Nebraska Wesleyan University

This interview was conducted during Dr. Shermer's visit to Nebraska Wesleyan University on October 28, 2010. He was the invited speaker for the annual Fawl Psychology lecture, which is held in honor of former NWU Psychology Professor, Dr. Cliff Fawl. We thank Dr. Shermer for allowing time in his schedule for this interview.

Student: Thank you for allowing us to conduct the interview this morning. Could you start with some facts about yourself?

Shermer: I am the Executive Director of the Skeptics Society, a monthly columnist for *Scientific American* and the publisher of *Skeptic Magazine*. The last magazine I mentioned investigates paranormal claims and fringe science among leading experts while promoting critical thinking. I am a science educator and researcher on belief systems. We question why people will believe in almost anything.

Student: When did you decide to start publishing *Skeptic Magazine*, pursuing that route instead of education or research?

Shermer: In the past, I was teaching at Occidental College full time. I had just earned my doctorate in the history of science from Claremont Graduate University (CA) and started a lecture series at Cal Tech on Skeptical type topics: science, pseudoscience, and other related topics. At that time, it was simply a hobby, but it started growing over the years. We started the magazine in 1992, and I started doing it full time around 1998. My first book was *Why People Believe Weird Things*, and that was in 1997, which gave me the impetus to write more books and run the society as a full-time job. So that's my day job now. I also teach one class a year for doctoral students at Claremont Graduate University called evolution economics and the brain.

Student: When did you become a skeptic? When did you start questioning everything?

Shermer: When I was a psychology student, there was an interest in the paranormal in some psychology circles. The one person who made me question what people are capable of doing in regards to the paranormal was Uri Geller (an Israeli

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psychic). Geller claimed he could bend spoons with his mental powers and received quite a bit of attention in the 1970's. Geller was on the cover of magazines and made his way onto popular television shows. Then, I saw the former magician, James Randi (The Amazing Randi), basically replicate Uri Geller's abilities using magic tricks. At first, with Uri Geller, I thought there might be something to it. But then when I saw Randi doing his tricks, I started questioning the validity of what Geller claimed to be true. The point Randi wanted to make was that scientists are not trained to detect intentional deception on the part of their subjects. Randi theorized that scientists would not be able to differentiate between deception and truth. For example, when Randi sent a few kids as trained magicians into paranormal laboratories, they fooled the scientists consistently. The students were told by Randi, "If they ever ask you, 'Are you doing these things with tricks?' you are to say 'yes, I am,' but the scientists never asked.

Student: Speaking of superstitions such as the paranormal, why do people believe in *weird things* even after they've been disproven?

Shermer: Well, first of all, people don't necessarily educate themselves with the material where pseudo-science is debunked. However, if they do, it is not hard for individuals to rationalize their way around the facts. Individuals who continue to believe weird things find the devices that reinforce those beliefs and only focus on those small pieces.

Student: Is there a reason people are so captivated by wanting to prove pseudo-science, such as magic or ghosts?

Shermer: Yes, this is probably related to a sense that there is something else out there, a nonphysical, an extension of our bodies, or a sort of a dualism. I think many individuals assume there is not just brain, but mind; not just body, but soul. So all these kinds of claims (out of body experiences, near death experiences, psychics, ESP, etc.), are ideas about there being *something else*, something that extends beyond *me*. The answer is that many pseudo-sciences portray themselves as the answer to that *something else*.

Student: When a theory is formed, pseudo-science or not, how many holes have to be poked in the theory before the public can say that theory doesn't hold?

Shermer: There's no formula. There will always be the residue of unexplained anomalies in any theory of science. For example, no theory of economics explains everything, and no theory of science explains everything. The fact that there are anomalies does not mean the theory is invalid. Conspiracy theories must bring factual evidence to support their claim. Theories have to stand or fall on their own, with evidence, in favor of *their* theory, not just against the other theory. Conspiracy theorists use circular reasoning and negative evidence. The best example of this is UFO conspiracies: they do not provide any positive evidence. For example, when asked how they can prove the existence of UFOs they say, " I can't because the government covered it up." I ask "Where's the evidence for that?" An individual cannot prove a theory by saying that the same theory was covered up. Just like an individual cannot prove a theory by disproving the opposing theory.

Student: Thinking about how theories are formed, do you have any advice on how we should look at the world or do research?

Shermer: I guess in general, there is the whole skeptical movement as advised in *Skeptic Magazine* and others. There's quite a bit of research now about how the brain works in terms of fooling yourself and being fooled. So, look for alternative explanations and look for parsimonious explanations the—simplest answer. For example, how do you explain near death experiences? How do you explain big-foot sightings or UFO and alien abductions? They could be supernatural events, or they could be caused by natural phenomena. Try to find the natural explanations first before you leap to conclusions like, *"it's unexplained or supernatural."* I like to say, before saying that some phenomena is out of this world, make certain it is not in this world.

Student: What would you say to someone being skeptical of the skeptic or questioning why some pseudoscience is not viable?

Shermer: We should be skeptical of the skeptics, we should be skeptical of everything: it should not be any other way. That's what science is: skepticism. Skepticism is not a special thing, it is just what scientists do and should do. So, science, by nature, is skeptical simply because there are so many wrong ideas. Scientists have to be conservative and assume that your claim is not true. In science, we look at the null hypothesis: we assume that your hypothesis is not true and it probably isn't. Go ahead and run the experiments, let's see if we can find evidence for it and we'll see. Keep an open mind, but most likely it's not true. Most claims are not.

Student: What do you think our future is in terms of critical thinking?

Shermer: The Internet has and will continue to be a significant influence on our thinking. The Internet is like an impressive text book: it's good and it's bad. It's good in that we can have instant access to information, but that allows the quacks to promote their quackery much easier, cheaper, and it is made more available. September 11 conspiracy movements are completely Internet-driven because of that ease of access. There's a movie called *Loose Change* that promotes that the events of September 11 were the result of a government conspiracy. People watch this movie and are impressed. However, there's nothing to it, because somebody just cleverly used Apple software to make a movie. But on the other side, we don't want to practice censorship, right? And so we just have to combat bad ideas with good ideas.

Student: Is there any career advice you would give to psychology students?

Shermer: It's a tough job market now in the recession, but I think the sciences will be crucial: it's where the economic power will be for countries. I'm glad Obama is pushing through more funding for science education. I think the brain sciences (i.e., neuroscience) are the most exciting area to study, personally. Behavioral psychology is important, but we now have some very sophisticated research tools to get inside the ""black box"" such as PET, MRI, and fMRI brain scans. It's really very exciting to see what's going on inside the human brain; I think that is a good area to go into.

Nebraska Wesleyan undergraduate students **Clark Anderson** and **Elizabeth Behrends** conducted, transcribed, and wrote the interview. Mr. Anderson is a senior pursuing graduate studies in the field of health psychology. Ms. Behrends is a senior with career aspirations in psychiatry. Dr. Frank Ferraro assistant professor of psychology at Nebraska Wesleyan University, supervised the interview.

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Implementing a Successful Student Research Conference

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Planning a student research conference may seem like an intimidating venture, but with enough determination and effort, it can be in any Psi Chi chapter's reach. Implementing a student research conference not only boosts chapter recognition on campus, but also increases opportunities for students. Student research conferences provide students with the opportunity to present research, hear distinguished professionals in the field, network, and increase professional development. Creating an event of this magnitude brings the experience and feeling of a large- scale conference to a local level to students who are unable to travel to regional and national conferences. This experience also provides students the opportunity to prepare themselves for larger-scale conferences by enabling students to practice presenting research to an audience. Students are able to develop dialogue skills that are required to present at a poster session while in a comfortable environment among their peers. Yet, the mere notion of planning a conference may appear daunting to some, which keeps many chapters from pursuing this endeavor. Establishing a student research conference is like any event that requires planning, fund-raising, and teamwork. With enough support and ambition, any chapter can implement a student research conference on its campus.

Initial Meeting

Prior to planning anything, it is pivotal that members of the chapter's executive board meet with their advisor. As previously noted, this is a large step for a chapter and requires a lot of resources, so getting advisor and member support is essential. This phase of the planning process is imperative to ensure all board members are on the same page. All board members play a key role in making the event a success. If some officers are opposed to the idea and workload, further discussion is needed. A chapter should never begin a large project without officers and most members supporting the idea. Therefore, it is imperative that a vote take place among the chapter's executive board and at a meeting for member approval. Once officers and most members have approved the idea, the chapter should establish the date and location of the event. It is crucial to think ahead and allow enough time for planning, fund-raising, and organization. Ideally, a chapter should plan its conference for the following year. When the chapter has finalized the date of the event, reservations need to be made for the location.

Preliminary Planning

The executive board and faculty advisor should establish a conference theme and contact potential speakers. However, when selecting a theme, the chapter should consider its scope of reach. Does the chapter want to open the conference to psychology research only or does the chapter want to

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open the conference to the entire campus regardless of the area of research? Although a theme is not required, it may help to narrow down speaker options, make planning easier, and entice more students to attend. There are various subfields within the general psychology field, so finding a new theme each year for a conference should not be a problem. Rather, it may be more difficult to narrow down your options due to the abundance of excellent topics available. For example, our chapter held its first conference in April 2011 around the theme of the multiculturalism in psychology.

Once speakers and topics have been finalized, a schedule of events should be drafted. The schedule should outline the entire conference day including the time and location of where presentations will take place. Reservations for a room on campus may need to be made as far as one year in advance. When the schedule is finalized, the chapter may begin publicizing the conference. Submission guidelines should be made available on a chapter's school website, at chapter meetings, and in the psychology department of the institution.

Because the focus of the conference is on research, it is pivotal to establish research submission guidelines. These guidelines should include important deadlines, conference information, research requirements and/or restrictions, and research award information. Although research awards are optional, it is encouraged to have some monetary awards for outstanding research. The focus of the conference is to invigorate students to conduct research and earn recognition for outstanding work. Thus, having research awards will entice students to present and encourage more students to present at future conferences.

Conference Planning Check-List

- Meet with executive board and advisor
- Present the executive board's idea to chapter members for their approval
- Finalize date and location
- Form conference committees
- Finalize theme
- Contact and finalize speakers
- Create research submission guidelines
- Finalize research awards
- Contact and finalize research submission reviewers
- Finalize schedule of events
- Fund-raise! Fund-raise! Fund-raise!
- Publicity! Publicity! Publicity!
- Create conference program
- Order conference refreshments
- Arrive early on conference day
- Send "Thank You" notes to guest speaker(s) and sponsors

Fund-raising

The key to a successful conference is fund-raising, because without funds, chapters will have a difficult time advertising the event, providing food for attendees, and having essential conference supplies, such as programs, name badges, and signs for the event. Chapters should fund-raise according to the extent of the conference they plan to host. For instance, if chapters plan to invite other chapters or institutions to participate in their event, more funds are required due to the higher attendance. A budget for a conference will vary depending on the number of attendees, honorariums for speakers, cost of research awards, refreshments, attendee gifts, programs, and other expenses. Thus, chapters should create a budget and do their best to spend funds appropriately. A chapter may spend between $2,000 and $5,000 for a conference serving approximately 100 attendees. In order to fund for the conference, chapters may consider applying a registration fee to help with costs.

Fund-raising should begin as soon as the conference date is confirmed to allow time for accumulating funds. Chapters should plan at least three fund-raising events each semester. Possible fund-raisers include bake sales, raffles, restaurant events, car washes, and rummage sales. Successful fund-raisers can make $200 to $800 if multiple members participate, and it is crucial that chapters start early. Chapters may also seek assistance from their psychology department. In most cases, departments have funds available for student activities that promote the department or discipline. Various universities' student government board's also have funding available for student organizations and simply require the organization to make a presentation, fill out a form, and/or provide a letter of recommendation. At times, the student government may provide enough funding to cover half of the cost of the event. Some student governments may also have requirements that must be met in order for funding to be given. It is advised that the chapter executive board and faculty advisor communicate with its university student government regarding requirements for funding.

Additionally, Psi Chi has an undergraduate research conference grant program that assists chapters that wish to start their own conference. This Psi chi grant awards chapters up to $1,000 for the purpose of implementing a student research conference. If interested in obtaining funding from Psi Chi, chapters must submit an application and a detailed description regarding the conference the chapter plans to implement. The deadline to submit materials for this award is October 1. Information regarding the grant and submission requirements are available on the Psi Chi website. Chapters should not rely solely on one funding source. Chapters may need to use multiple fund-raising sources listed in order to accumulate enough funds to host a conference.

Conference Committees

Creating conference committees may ease the workload of hosting a student research conference. The executive board should consider creating committees for each aspect of the conference and recruit members and officers to join. Ideally, the executive board should nominate officers to hold committee chair positions, or create a chapter officer position for research conference chair, and encourage members to sign up for committees. This ensures that the executive board is aware of assignments and conference planning at each stage at all times. The types of committees many chapters choose to create depend heavily on the type of conference they wish to have. All chapters considering a conference should have at least five committees: registration, research poster submissions, publicity, fund-raising, and conference assistants. Chapters should also consider having an additional three committees: food, programs, and gifting. Possible committees and descriptions of what each committee would be responsible for are listed below.

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Registration

The registration committee oversees the entire conference registration process. Although students who do not register are able to attend the conference, it is encouraged for all students who plan to attend to register. This helps the chapter decide how many seats, food, and materials are needed. Members of the registration committee create the registration form, distribute registration forms, record registrant information, and oversee the registration check-in booth on the day of the conference. The registration committee also keeps track of the number of registrants to guarantee there is enough materials for attendees. The main responsibility of this committee is to make sure conference paperwork is available to students and that student registration is high.

Submissions

The submissions committee oversees the research component of the conference. Members of this committee are required to contact potential abstract reviewers to determine acceptance or rejection of submissions and award research awards. The committee should also ensure students submit all materials. The submissions committee is responsible for organizing research awards, research guidelines, and distributing research abstracts to reviewers. The members of this committee also oversee the poster session during the conference and present the research awards to the students during the conference.

Publicity

The publicity committee oversees the conference's advertising. Members of this committee are required to create and post flyers around campus, contact the school's newspaper or radio station, and announce the conference in classrooms. The committee should consider creating a press release and submitting it to the university's publicity department to spread awareness about the conference. The committee designs all conference announcements and posters and is responsible for spreading the word on the campus. This is possibly one of the most important committees and requires that members continuously create new methods of promoting the event and enticing students to attend.

Fund-raising

The fund-raising committee is responsible for overseeing and organizing all fund-raising events to pay for costs incurred from the conference. Members of this committee formulate fund-raising ideas and find sponsors or donors to donate for the conference. This committee should start planning regular events immediately to ensure the chapter has enough funds to host the event.

Food

The food committee is responsible for communicating with caterers for the event. Although food and refreshments are not required at a conference, it is recommended. Students and faculty often take time off from other personal obligations to attend, so having snacks may be a good gesture of appreciation. Additionally, conferences may last three to six hours, so having food may reduce the likelihood of attendees leaving the event due to hunger.

Programs

The programs committee is responsible for designing the event program. Members of this committee obtain presenter information, award winner information, event information, and sponsor information for the program. Chapters may choose to opt out of having programs in order to reduce costs; however, it is important to have speaker and conference scheduling information available at the conference. This information may be displayed in a program or poster where attendees will see it, such as at the registration table or at the doorway of the room where the talk will be given.

Gifting

The gifting committee is responsible for ordering attendee gifts and/or speaker gifts. The chapter executive board and gifting committee work closely to determine the type of research awards that are given. In most cases, the research awards are monetary, but a plaque or certificate is often awarded in addition. Members of this committee must find donors or search for items that may be given at the conference. This is committee is also optional, but is a good way of showing appreciation to all attendees and speakers. Chapters may want to consider working closely with the university to acquire university merchandize such as pens, notepads, or binders. For chapters that wish to acquire non-university items, this is where fund-raising and/or networking is required.

Conference Assistants

The conference assistants committee ensures that conference attendees go to the appropriate locations for conference events. This committee is solely needed on the conference day. Members of this committee alternate throughout the various conference locations and act as guides for individuals unfamiliar with the location, conference information, and other issues. This committee also monitors the time limits of speakers to ensure presentations begin and end on time. Members of this committee can also monitor the entrance to allow the audience to come and go between speakers.

Conference Day

All of the planning leading up to the conference day does not stop once the day arrives. On the conference day, the executive board and some members should arrive early to take care of last minute details. Many issues may arise prior to the event starting, such as chairs not being set up, poster session easels disappearing, or registration tables not being set up. In most cases, when events are booked in university ballrooms or auditoriums, university staff is usually responsible for setting up. However, it is also likely that other events are booked during the same day of your event, which may cause staff to be late due to setting up those events. Thus, plan to arrive at least one hour early to the conference venue. Committees should also arrive early for orientation prior to the conference commencing. Committee chairs may have created schedules or have information they need to discuss prior to committee members taking their posts. Creating a student research conference is a big achievement and a rewarding experience, so make sure to take some time to truly appreciate what it is your chapter has done for the community, the organization, and for your chapter.

Thelma Pinheiro, BS, is a doctoral student in the clinical-community psychology program at the University of La Verne (CA; ULV). She graduated magna cum laude from ULV with a bachelor of science degree in psychology and a minor in sociology and earned psychology departmental honors. During her senior year at ULV, she helped start the ULV Psi Chi chapter's first student research conference. She is also in the midst of finalizing the ULV Psi Chi chapter's second research conference that will take place in early May 2012. Ms. Pinheiro is currently the president of graduate affairs for the ULV Psi Chi chapter and has been an avid member of her chapter for over four years. Thelma's research interests are in acculturation issues among immigrant populations, their stress and coping, and their psychological well-being.

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Exploring the Brain Basis for Crime

With Dr. Adrian Raine

Meagan Frey
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Early Career

Dr. Adrian Raine, university professor and the Richard Perry Professor of Criminology, Psychiatry, and Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, has traveled a very interesting road in academia to be where he is today. He started his career as a primary school teacher before deciding to pursue a PhD.

"I was uncertain of what to study when someone suggested that I get a PhD," Dr. Raine says. "After searching through old college essays, I found that I received the best marks on a paper dealing with the psychophysiology of psychopathy, and I decided to make this my main area of study." In 1982, he earned his PhD in psychology from York University, England. Before receiving his PhD, however, Dr. Raine spent four years working in two high-security prisons in England as a prison psychologist.

"I was fortunate to have started working for the prison in 1980 during the same time the original Psychopathy Checklist, created by Robert Hare (2003, revised), came out," he says of his experience working in the prison. "I was eager to use this psychopathy assessment tool on the inmates."

While working in the prison, Dr. Raine says his "most frightening experience was nearly being attacked by an inmate with an iron bar. The inmate, serving a five-year sentence, was wanting to gain a life sentence by attacking the psychologist he knew he was about to meet." Fortunately for Dr. Raine, the inmate could not hold his aggression and attacked another prisoner just before their scheduled meeting. "The inmate who was attacked suffered brain damage from the incident. In that moment, I realized how close I had been to brain damage." This disconcerting experience, however, did not deter Dr. Raine from pursuing his studies.

Brain Basis for Crime

Dr. Raine's studies on the biological basis of crime have revealed that antisocial and aggressive behaviors are created early in development and they have both hormonal and neuropsychological causes. Additionally, Raine says that "enriched environments (better nutrition, exercise, and constant stimulation) in the early years of life promoted a reduction in criminal behavior by 35% in studies conducted over 30 years. Conversely, poor nutrition and neglect were shown to be other indicators of antisocial behavior." Currently, Dr. Raine is studying how Omega 3 fatty acids work as treatment in antisocial and aggressive behavior. "Although research is new," he says, "positive results have been shown in reducing antisocial and aggressive behavior."

Another area of interest for Dr. Raine is white-collar crime, which includes offenses that are financially motivated and usually nonviolent, typically "committed by a person of respectability and high social status in the course of his occupation" (Sutherland, 1939). Some of these crimes include fraud, embezzlement, and money laundering.

"Criminals who commit these offenses have abnormalities, or 'brain superiorities,' that give them advantages when perpetrating crimes," says Raine. "Some of these advantages include increased executive functioning, superior information processing, and enhanced decision- making skills." Dr. Raine's research on criminality has led him to investigate the moral decision- making of criminals; he says that people who commit crimes may have what he calls "emotional impairments."

Legal Implications

"While some criminals may understand the difference between right and wrong (by society's laws and standards), they do not have the same *feelings* or emotional ties to what is right and wrong," says Dr. Raine. "Essentially, the behaviors and morals of criminals are not influenced by their feelings; their moral circuitry may be dysfunctional." Because of this, Dr. Raine questions the ethical dilemma of punishing someone with a brain dysfunction that causes antisocial and aggressive behaviors and criminality. "This problem has implications for the judicial system, and questions whether people who were born with this impairment should continue be punished in the manner they currently are," he says.

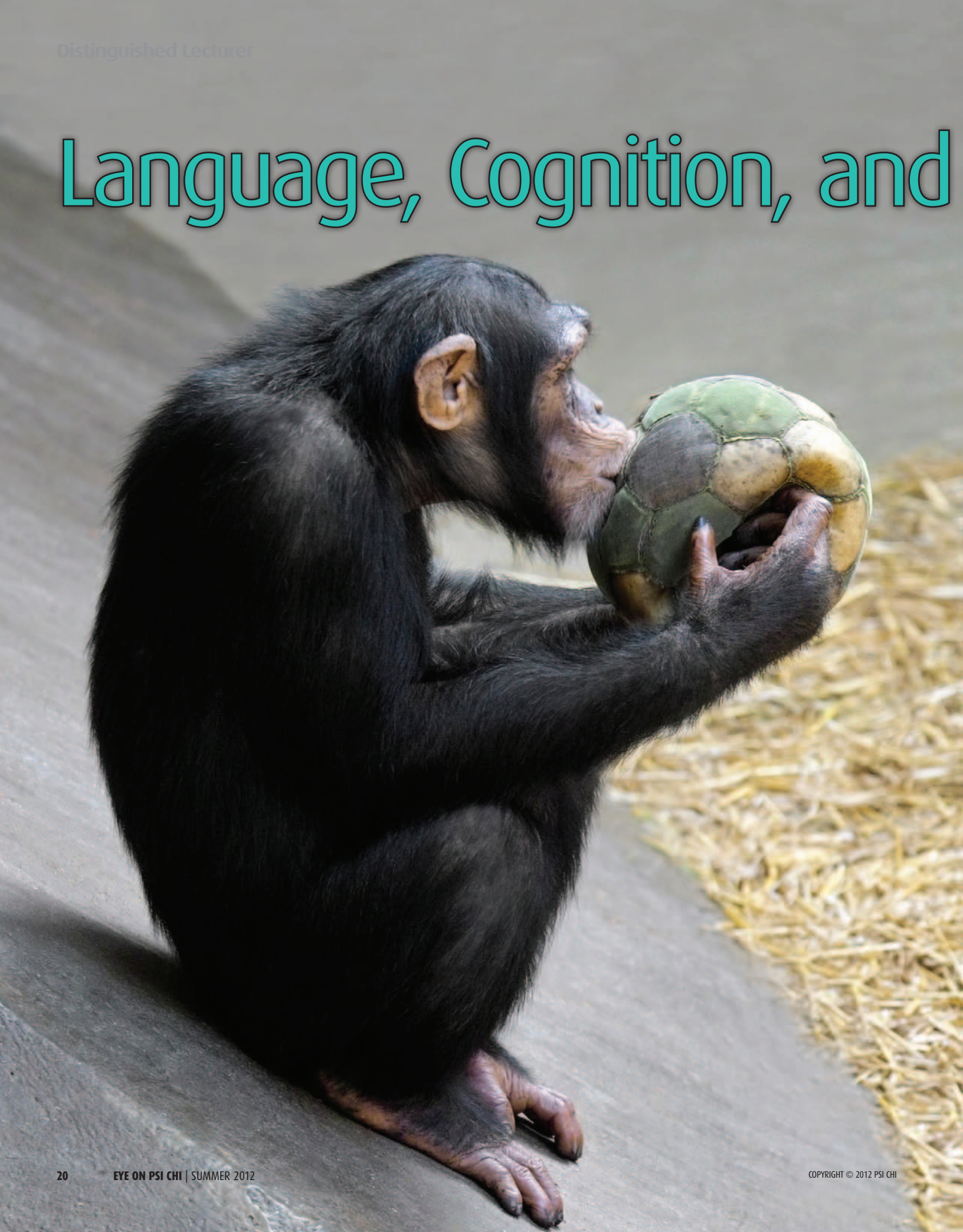
Current Projects and Recommendations for Students

As a result of a diverse career in psychology, Dr. Raine has won many awards for his contributions to the field; however, his most prized award has been the USC Associate's Award for Creativity in Research. "This award meant the most to me because I feel I have always gone out on a limb in my career," he says. "I began studying in a field that no one was interested in at the time." When applying for jobs, Dr. Raine was rejected 67 times before finally receiving an academic career. Now, his favorite course to teach is biosocial criminology, because "it blends the psychological, genetic, brain, and environmental factors that contribute to criminal behavior," he says.

Dr. Raine's persistence and creativity are inspiring for students looking to further their career in psychology. He advises that students who are interested in criminology and looking to enter graduate school get involved in research in antisocial behavior, learn good research skills, and take advantage of biological research. "Most importantly, spend time developing good research and statistical skills," he suggests. "I also encourage students interested in criminology to apply to study with me at the University of Pennsylvania. This is an exciting time to study the brain basis for crime. The new field of neurocriminology is upon us!"

Adrian Raine, D.Phil., is the Richard Perry Professor of Criminology, Psychiatry, and Psychology, and also chair of the Department of Criminology at the University of Pennsylvania. Following two years as an airline accountant with British Airways, he received his bachelor's degree in experimental psychology from Oxford University in 1977 and his D.Phil. in psychology from York University, England, in 1982. After spending four year in two top-security prisons in England, where he worked as a prison psychologist, he was appointed as lecturer in behavioral sciences in the Department of Psychiatry, Nottingham University in 1984. In 1986, he became director of the Mauritius Child Health Project, a longitudinal study of child mental health that today constitutes one of his key research projects. He emigrated from England to the United States in 1987 to take up a position as assistant professor in psychology at the University of Southern California. He was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 1990 and to full professor of psychology in 1994. In 1999, he was the recipient of an endowed chair, the Robert G. Wright Professorship of Psychology, at USC. He has published 5 books and 271 journal articles and book chapters and has been the principal investigator on 17 extramural research grants and main mentor on 11 NIH pre- and postdoctoral awards. He has given 252 invited presentations in 25 countries. For the past 34 years, Dr. Raine's interdisciplinary research has focused on the biosocial bases of antisocial and violent behavior in both children and adults and prevention implications. His research interests include neurocriminology, nutritional interventions to prevent child behavior problems, white-collar crime, neuroethics, neurolaw, alcoholism, schizotypal personality, positive psychology, brain imaging, psychophysiology, neurochemistry, neuropsychology, environmental toxins, and behavioral and molecular genetics.

Language, Cognition, and



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Primates with Dr. Herbert Terrace

Meagan Frey | University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Early Career and the Mechanics of Teaching Apes Sign Language

Dr. Herbert Terrace, eminent psychologist and professor at Columbia University received his PhD from Harvard University in 1961. Before he was interested in psychology, however, language was his primary interest. "Undergraduate literature courses and language had always been my main interest, and I discovered that the key to understanding them is in psychology, which brought me to studying the evolution of language," says Dr. Terrace.

Renowned for his studies on language with the ape Nim Chimpsky, Dr. Terrace describes the mechanics of teaching American Sign Language (ASL) to an ape as being relatively simple. "Apes are not the least bit interested in signing, but they do want to be your friend. Because of this, they will go along with the motion when you mold their hand to make a sign but with the expectation that they will receive a reward: they imitate only as a step toward getting what they want."

The process goes something like this, "You tell a chimp, 'if you want a banana, show me the banana sign,' and you teach him how to make the sign for banana; when he does this, you give him a banana," explains Dr. Terrace. "As time goes by, he realizes that he does not get a banana unless he makes the sign for it. Effectively, it is tantamount to going to a vending machine and pressing the button for 'banana.' There is no difference between that and teaching an ape sign language." According to Dr. Terrace, Nim did not learn language at all, but simply a trick to be rewarded, a result quite different from what he hoped to find.

Honestly Reporting Results

Dr. Terrace's study with Nim Chimpsky is a textbook example of how negative results can still lead to interesting conclusions. As he puts it, "the only line between success and failure for scientists is whether or not they honestly report their results."

"I had initially read my results as being very positive that a chimp could learn the rudiments for grammar in ASL: this conclusion was soon to be accepted by the scientific community. However, after reviewing the tapes from a different perspective, I realized the results were not as I had first assumed. In the beginning, I kept my eyes only on Nim; I thought that history was being made. Later, I widened my view to see the entire picture. When I did this, I saw that the teacher was unconsciously indicating what signs Nim should be making, and I realized that most of what Nim was signing was being cued by the teacher. Once I discovered that, it radically changed my conclusion: Nim, and therefore apes, could not learn language in the same manner that we can," according to Dr. Terrace.

"Had I reported the results based on my original assumptions, the true conclusion may not have been discovered for years. Some researchers in a century from now might say, 'No, Terrace's results do not work because the study is not replicable.' I could have been dishonest and let the study go on to be published with my original conclusion, but I knew that I could not let that happen. Although the study had a negative result, it was a very interesting negative result." Dr. Terrace's experience in dealing with this negative result is important for students to understand: negative results do not always equal failure.

Human Versus Ape Communication

"Chimps communicate through what I call begging." Dr. Terrace goes on to say, "They are learning what tricks they have to perform in order to get a reward and this can be very subtle at times. In several projects, I have seen the teacher walking around with a pocket full of candy; as long as the candy is swept to the chimp every so often, he or she will continue playing the game. Humans are different from chimps in that they can have a conversation and understand one another; chimps simply demand without caring who satisfies that demand. My argument is that you cannot have a conversation unless you have a theory of mind; it is the key to the notion of acquiring any language," he says.

A theory of mind is the ability to understand what people know, think, or feel in relation to oneself. "I think the way humans have a theory of mind has to do with a lot of anatomical twists and turns that were never motivated by language; the stars just happened to be in the right position and human infants for a few hundred thousand years were born with the capability of forming a theory of mind," Dr. Terrace explains. "What chimps have convinced me of is that problem solving on the individual level is not enough to learn language. What is needed is social intelligence, because language is different from the automatic responses we are born with. Since I happen to believe a theory of mind is necessary to learn language, I do not see how any of the apes are going to qualify," he says.

Current Projects

Presently, Dr. Terrace is studying how nonhuman primates learn to produce sequences without words. "I want to know how they organize what they have to remember in a way that facilitates that remembering," he says. "What I decided to do after the Nim project was to create a new paradigm where all the choices are laid out for the ape. It is sort of like going to an ATM: you put in your pin and touch each item in the correct order. For my monkeys, I do not want them to rely on muscle memory: I want to make sure they learn cognitively as opposed to just motor responses. For each trial, I reconfigure all the items so the apes have to think about it cognitively. I want to make sure there is nothing in the external world that can give them any clue as to what to do next."

For students interested in thought processes and the evolution of language, the field of primate cognition is as alive and captivating as ever, and Dr. Terrace's research is important for students to investigate to gain his perspective concerning apes and language. One of Dr. Terrace's most important contributions to the field of primate cognition is his example that a negative result can lead to many interesting conclusions.

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Making a Change With Dr. Joseph Ferrari

Meagan Frey
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Early Career

Dr. Joseph Ferrari, professor of psychology and St. Vincent DePaul Distinguished Professor at DePaul University, is as inspiring and charismatic as he is hard-working. Some of that charisma may have to do with his desire to major in theater when he was an undergraduate. "Although I did not follow through with theater, I incorporate my love of drama into teaching. I want to engage students, so I do not just stand at a podium and lecture: I have to walk around, tell stories, and include students in learning," he says. Students who would normally be asleep during an 8 a.m. lecture will find themselves wide awake to hear Dr. Ferrari. "I started teaching full time in 1980 at a junior college: after 32 years, I still love it! Before I got my PhD, I taught at a two-year college, which is where I really learned to teach. I think community college is a great place for learning teaching skills. Frankly, the PhD did not make me a teacher, it just gave me more information," he says.

In the Summer 2011 issue of *Eye on Psi Chi*, Dr. Ferrari detailed his research on procrastination (2011, Ferrari). Where did that interest begin? "I started my work with self-handicapping behaviors like procrastination in 1988, it was actually my doctoral dissertation," he says. "Different topics become vogue in psychology depending on the time, and back in the 80's the big topic was self-handicapping."

Self-handicapping behaviors are those actions that people use in order to sabotage their performance. "This protects the self-esteem," explains Dr. Ferrari, "If someone puts an obstacle in their path and does poorly on a task because of that obstacle, the failure will be attributed not to the person, but to the obstacle. In my research, I wanted to find out if procrastinators self-handicap in order to protect their self-esteem, and I found that they do."

"Procrastinators are very concerned about what others think of them. They assume that if they never finish a task, no one will be able to judge whether or not they would have actually done well on that task, only that they did not complete it. My research has shown that procrastination itself is a handicap, and it is not adaptive or successful to procrastinate," he says.

Undoing the Procrastinator

In his last interview with *Eye on Psi Chi,* Dr. Ferrari said that "we learn to be who we are and can unlearn it, too" (2011, Ferrari, p. 31). Today, he still holds to that idea. "If psychology has contributed anything to science, it is the concept of learning: We have learned to be the people we are and that means that we can change. If someone has been procrastinating for years, it is going to be difficult, but it is possible," he explains. "I think it is very fatalistic to not have a learning view, to throw your hands up and give in. Unfortunately, too much of our society is moving that way," Dr. Ferrari believes.

"The procrastinator believes everything is about them, but life is not about 'me,' it's about all of us. We live in communities (common + unity), but people forget that. If I delay on something, it prevents someone else from accomplishing their task, and so on. Everything is connected and that is what chronic procrastinators need to understand."

As Dr. Ferrari likes to say, "Everyone procrastinates, but not everyone is a procrastinator. About 20% of adults put off tasks across situations: at home, school, in relationships. My research looks at the causes and consequences of chronic procrastinators. As a social personality psychologist, I am interested in why people procrastinate, when will they do it, how do they handle it, and so on. Those are the questions that fascinate me," he says. "In my book, *Still Procrastinating: The No-Regrets Guide to Getting It Done* (2010), I go into detail about the data surrounding the causes, consequences, and 'cures' to procrastination. To overcome procrastination, you have to teach the procrastinator that it is not all about them, and they must change cognitively as well as behaviorally."

On Mentors and Tips for Students

"I was mentored from afar by Charles R. Snyder (University of Kansas), who was a big name in psychology at the time. I was never a student of his, but he looked at my research on procrastination in the early 90's and advised me that it was time to write 'the book,' which was *Procrastination and Task Avoidance: Theory, Research, and Treatment* (1995). I have only met him a few times, and we have spoken by phone, but he was a big influence on me. I want students to understand that they should not be afraid to reach out to well-known psychologists. It is all about networking, and even well-known psychologists are often willing to take risks on students. I definitely try to be like Snyder in making sure I help undergraduates with their projects," he says.

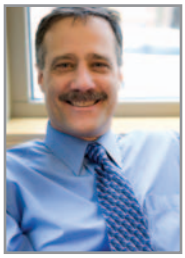
"Life is short. If you're healthy, you have 70, maybe 80 years to live on this earth. How are you going to leave a legacy? What is going to make the world different and better because you were here? I like to tell my students that only 30% of this country and 7% of people in the world have a college degree; what a gift you have been given! The students of today have to focus on solutions to make the world better: Students are the solution. So, don't procrastinate!"

Future Projects

Dr. Ferrari is currently branching out into many areas of social-community psychology. Some of these areas include research on social loafing, spirituality, social healing, and what kinds of careers procrastinators go into. He is also working on a study abroad program for doctoral students. "When you hear about study abroad programs, it is usually for undergrads. What I am helping to create is called a 'Global Growth Experience (GGE)' for doctoral students at DePaul, where you don't just go overseas for a couple weeks to collect some data for your dissertation, you actually live and immerse yourself in the culture: You become a pilgrim, not a tourist," he explains. "Social change is a major component of community psychology, and this program will hopefully help students to get involved and make that change."

Dr. Ferrari, considered the international research expert on the study of procrastination, has contributed much to the discipline of psychology; however, one of the most important aspects of his work is his philosophy on teaching. He inspires students to not only make changes within themselves but in the world. From his commitment to engaging undergraduate students in the classroom, to helping doctoral students travel abroad, Dr. Ferrari is dedicated to seeing students of psychology succeed.

Ferrari, J. R. (2011, Summer). Psi Chi Distinguished Lecturer Series: Q&A With the 2011 Regional Convention Speakers. *Eye on Psi Chi, 15* (4), p. 30–31.



Joseph (Joe) R. Ferrari, PhD, is a psychology professor and Vincent DePaul Distinguished Professor at DePaul University (IL), since 1994. He was the founding director of the PhD program in community psychology and now director of the MS in general psychology program. Dr. Ferrari is a fellow in APS, APA, APA/Div 27, EPA, MPA, and until recently, member of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology (SESP). DePaul awarded him in 2001 the 'Excellence in Research' and in 2009 the 'Excellence in Public Service' awards.

Since 1995, Dr. Ferrari is the editor of the *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community.* He is the author of over 200 scholarly research articles, 7 scholarly books, and 450 professional conference presentations. His research interest includes community volunteerism/service, sense of community, and addiction recovery. Within social-personality, Dr. Ferrari is considered the international research expert on the study of PROCRASTINATION.

A popular, sought-after public speaker, Dr. Ferrari's work on the causes and consequences of procrastination appeared in *USA Today, New York Times, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, Cranes Business Weekly, Money, Fitness, Self, Good Housekeeping, Cosmopolitan, Psychology Today* and NPR, ABC radio, CBS radio, as well as local and national TV, such as *ABC/NEWS–Good Morning America.*

Dr. Ferrari's first popular book was released in 2010, *Still Procrastinating? The No Regrets Guide to Getting It Done* (J Wiley & Sons, publisher).

Sleeping Well for Better Life With Dr. Richard Bootzin

Meagan Frey
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Early Career and the Importance Of Sleep

Richard Bootzin, PhD, is a clinical research psychologist and professor of psychology and psychiatry at the University of Arizona in Tucson. He is also the director of the insomnia clinic at the University Medical Center and the sleep research laboratory in the psychology department. Today, he is considered one of the leading researchers in the field of sleep and insomnia.

"Sleep is at the core of the rest of our lives: It affects cognition, regulation of emotion, health, our capacity to think clearly, and our ability to have enough energy to engage in activities. It affects us fairly broadly," says Dr. Bootzin. "At every developmental age, persistent sleep problems cause problems in other areas of functioning. People who have persistent sleep disturbance are more likely to have issues with anxiety, depression, impulsivity, drugs, cognition, memory, and problem solving. The consequences of not getting sleep or having a disturbed sleep schedule are rather substantial. We live in a fast-paced society where people expect sleep to take care of itself, but there is good evidence that having an irregular sleep schedule does not give you the resources to deal with all aspects of life."

Dr. Bootzin became interested in sleep research, insomnia in particular, when he was at Northwestern University (IL) teaching abnormal psychology. "One of my students asked if I knew anything about insomnia because her husband had a fairly severe case. I didn't know anything then, but began to look into treatments that were not medication based," Dr. Bootzin recalls. "Most of the treatments I found talked about relaxation training, but, at the time, I was interested in the self-control treatments using stimulus control. So I suggested to the student that we develop a set of instructions based on stimulus control, and it worked very well."

The Stimulus Control Treatment for Sleep

Stimulus control, a method of treatment developed by Dr. Bootzin, is one of the most effective treatments for insomnia. Stimulus control is a "strategy for self-modification that depends on manipulating the cause of behavior to increase goals or behaviors desired by a patient while decreasing those that are undesired" (Mosby's Medical Dictionary, 2009). "It was already a principle within learning psychology (used for dieting and smoking), but it had not been applied to sleep or insomnia," says Dr. Bootzin. "The idea is that there are certain cues that trigger various kinds of responses. For example, if you study in bed, it is likely that the bed and the cues for bed will make you sleepy; therefore, if you study in bed, you will be more likely to fall asleep rather than study. Likewise with studying at the kitchen table: You are more likely to be reminded that you are hungry and eat instead of study. The stimuli do not control everything, but they may trigger information and responses that compete with whatever it is that you are trying to accomplish."

"For someone who wants to sleep well, it is important not to use the bed or bedroom to do things that compete with sleeping: worrying, reading, watching television. Preserve the bed and bedroom as strong cues for sleep so that when you want to go to bed, you are not reminded of other things you want or need to do. By strengthening the cue for bed and eliminating cues that compete with sleep, you will sleep better."

Dr. Bootzin says that stimulus control treatments are considered one of the best non-pharmacological treatments for insomnia as a single treatment. "What has happened over the past ten years or so is various treatment elements have been combined with each other to make for a more integrated treatment in which other components are also included, such as cognitive therapy focused on attitudes and beliefs about treatment, or relaxation focused on reducing arousal. Treatments are less likely to be evaluated as single entities, but rather as a combination of treatments. Stimulus control continues to be one of the core elements of any of these combination treatments," Dr. Bootzin states.

"Not everyone has to banish eating, reading, or watching television from the bed: only those who have trouble getting to sleep at night. If you are a worrier or have a racing mind, you could take time out of your day to review your worries, write them down when you are not tired, or reserve the worries for the morning. Many people find that when they wake up, the things that they were worried about in the middle of the night do not seem so unsolvable," Dr. Bootzin suggests. "The primary part of the stimulus control rules that deal with worries and mind-racing is not to stay in bed if you have not fallen asleep within 15 minutes. If you stay in bed worrying, you are associating worrying with the bed. Instead, get up, go into another room, think about things, write them down, whatever you have to do. When you have done as much as you can, go back to bed and tell yourself, 'I've done all I can do for now; save it for the morning.' Do not associate worry with the bed or bedroom. If you are worrying or distressed about not sleeping, you should be out of bed."

One of the most important aspects of sleep, according to Dr. Bootzin, is having a regular schedule seven days a week:

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one where you are awake during the day and asleep during the night. "The most important point for college students to remember is to keep a consistent sleeping schedule. It is hard to actually maintain because there are so many pressures to violate it: being up late for parties and pulling all-nighters to study—all of these things affect sleep. Although young adults are more adaptable than older adults, they are not invulnerable to problems. We often have the feeling when we are 20 that it does not matter when we sleep because we will always be able to catch up, but we do not completely catch up, and we throw off our natural sleep-wake rhythm. We do better by being more consistent."

Future Research

As for future research, Dr. Bootzin currently has two projects in the startup phase: one dealing with the impact of sleep on people going through divorce, and how sleep effects their resiliency and ability to deal with the situation. The other study involves older individuals who sleep longer than average and what positive or negative outcomes occur when their time in bed is reduced by one hour a night. "We don't have preconceptions about whether this modest change of one hour will be good or bad for people, but we want to find out what exactly are the effects on sleep, health, immune functioning, and daytime sleepiness," says Dr. Bootzin.

Tips for Students

For students interested in entering the field of sleep research in graduate school, Dr. Bootzin says the most important thing to do is gain experience in sleep research. "If people at your school are doing research on sleep, working as a research assistant or doing an independent study is a real plus. There are sleep disorder centers at many major hospitals that you could work at. Becoming a sleep technician and getting experience in the psychophysiology of sleep at those centers will also put you ahead. When people apply to work with me, I almost always ask them what actual experience they have had with sleep. Simply reading or talking about it in class is usually not enough; you need to have some actual experience, as well. However, having an interest in sleep is seldom enough to get into a good graduate school." says Dr. Bootzin.

The field of sleep research has been a hot topic in psychology for a very long time, and it continues to be a growing area. Dr. Bootzin has pioneered methods of treatment for insomnia through his research and encourages students of psychology who are interested in sleep to further their education and help contribute to this dynamic field.

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Richard R. Bootzin, PhD, is a professor of psychology at the University of Arizona. He is the recipient of the 2008 Mary A. Carskadon Outstanding Educator Award from the Sleep Research Society and the 2011 Distinguished Scientist Award from the Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology. Dr. Bootzin has coauthored successful textbooks for introductory psychology and abnormal psychology and is a frequent grant reviewer for NIH and NASA. He is president of the board of the Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System, a new organization that strengthens the role of psychological science within clinical training programs. Best known for his research on sleep and insomnia, Dr. Bootzin has extended the treatment of insomnia to adolescents. He is also involved in basic research in sleep and its impact on memory, learning, and health.

Little Albert Found: Ethical Dilemmas With Watson's Research

With Dr. Hall "Skip" Beck

Meagan Frey
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

The Journey to Find Little Albert

Since his last interview with Psi Chi, Hall "Skip" Beck, PhD has seen many developments on the project to find Little Albert that he undertook eleven years ago.

"Sometimes in life, we are wrong, and it is absolutely wonderful that we are," says Dr. Beck in response to his early thought that searching for Little Albert was one of the "worst ideas [he] had heard in years" (Sharp, 2011). "My students were more insightful at the start than I was. Initially, I was hesitant to begin the Albert quest because I felt it was highly unlikely that a child missing for almost a century could be found," explains Dr. Beck, "but we redesigned the project to learn as much as we could about Watson's infant studies and in the course of that research, we found the identity of Little Albert."

Dr. Beck has had some major surprises since his first article was published. "My colleagues, Alan Fridlund, Bill Goldie, Gary Irons, and I discovered that Albert was not the healthy, well-developed child that Watson and Rayner portrayed him to be; rather, he was seriously ill from birth. Albert was hydrocephalic when Watson and Rayner tested him," says Dr. Beck. Hydrocephalus was, at the time of Watson's experiments (1920), a fatal illness; the condition causes the cerebral fluids to accumulate inside the skull and puts pressure on the brain, which leads to a deterioration in function and ultimately death if it is not corrected. Today, this condition can be treated by implanting shunts that allow the movement of fluid from one part of the body to another, but in 1920 this procedure had not yet been developed for infants.

When asked about what these new findings indicated about the ethics of the Little Albert investigation, Dr. Beck replied, "For many years, people have questioned whether or not it was ethical for Watson and Rayner to induce fear in an infant. Now that we know Albert was neurologically impaired, the implications of their procedures are even more disturbing," says Dr. Beck. "Also, if Watson knew the true state of Albert's health, then he misrepresented his findings in his study. The fraudulent misreporting of scientific data was as indefensible in 1920 as it is today," explains Dr. Beck.

Indeed, in Watson's study, he stated that Albert was not only "healthy from birth," but that he was "one of the best developed youngsters ever brought to the hospital" (Watson & Rayner, 1920). Is it possible that Watson and Rayner did not know that Albert was such an ill child? "It seems very unlikely Watson believed Albert to be healthy. Watson contended that he was an expert in child behavior and tested Little Albert multiple times. How could he not have noticed that the child's reactions were not typical of a nine month-old? Furthermore, if Douglass Merritte was Albert, as our findings demonstrate, his medical records, which Watson would have had access to, clearly indicate that the infant was terminally ill and neurologically damaged," reveals Dr. Beck. "Finally, Watson had contact with Albert's mother and other hospital staff who certainly knew that Albert was a very sick baby. The consequences of these new discoveries have definite implications for Watson and Rayner's study: "Even if Albert was conditioned to fear furry objects, the generalizability of those findings is seriously called into question," says Dr. Beck.

Watson and Rayner were not the only psychologists to experience ethical quandaries during the research process; Dr. Beck and his colleagues had their own set of ethical issues to deal with. "The paramount consideration during the first and second studies was to treat Douglas/Albert, first and foremost, as a member of the Iron's family. Although he is a historical figure, we had to respect the fact that he belonged to someone's family," says Dr. Beck. "Another concern was to fairly deal with Watson and Rayner, especially since they are deceased and cannot defend themselves. In viewing their actions, we cannot judge them on the standards of our time, but we must do our best to judge them by the standards of their time," says Dr. Beck.

"I think there are three types of ethics one must consider when undertaking any

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project. First, there are the ethics of our discipline, such as the APA Code of Ethics and the regulations of our local IRBs. Second, there are laws with an ethical basis, such as HIPPA, that must be followed. But I believe there is a higher form of ethics and that is one's own personal beliefs about what is right and wrong," says Dr. Beck.

Other Research: Current and Future

In his last interview with Psi Chi, Dr. Beck spoke about his current research on college student retention methods. "Thirty or forty years ago, many schools saw college as a crucible, a way of separating the weak from the strong, the worthy from the unworthy. Now, that belief has largely been replaced with the notion that the school's objective should be to help every student realize their full potential. This change in perspective demonstrates substantial progress," explains Dr. Beck. "Where I think many schools have floundered is that they employ nonscientific and unsystematic procedures in their efforts to identify students who are at-risk from dropping out. An overreliance on opinion and poorly validated instruments has produced great inefficiency. What we have advocated for is a more scientific approach. That is why my partners and I developed the College Persistence Questionnaire. I believe that people who pursue a scientific approach to retention will provide most of the answers for reducing attrition in the future," believes Dr. Beck.

Dr. Beck's questionnaire yields a probability statement predicting whether or not a student will graduate. The questionnaire also provides advisors, counselors, and faculty members with reasons why a particular student may choose to discontinue his or her education. "If you are a policy maker or administrator concerned with groups, the College Persistence Questionnaire identifies the variables that best distinguish graduates from nongraduates at your school. This information allows for the development of efficient programs meant to rectify those problems," suggests Dr. Beck. "Often, what happens is administrators hope a certain program will work (e.g., a "First Year Experience" program), but they have no data too back up their personal beliefs."

As for future projects, Dr. Beck's research on how to reduce friendly fire by monitoring eye movement is still in the pilot stages, but he is very excited about the prospects. "What we're trying to do is determine when mistakes are going to be made before they are actually committed. In other words, what we hope to do is realize whether people can distinguish if a target is a friendly or an enemy vehicle. If we can do this, we can develop a mathematical equation which could tell us the probability that a person is going to make a correct or catastrophic targeting decision. Such an equation could save lives. I think this is a really novel approach because if we can tell that someone is going to make a mistake before it occurs, that could go a long way in helping with many different tasks. The research looks very promising; it is the type of study where if you can save one life, it is worthwhile," says Dr. Beck.

Psychologists Impacting the Future

"If you think about the 'great problems' that the world confronts, the sciences all make a contribution, but in very different ways. Take the environment for example: The natural sciences can help to develop alternative forms of energy and more efficient ways of disposing waste, but there is a key behavioral element to this problem. To reap the advantages of these technologies, you have to get people to use them, to conserve, and act in ways that benefit society—that task is the domain of psychology. Similarly, there are critical behavioral issues that must be dealt with if we are to successfully combat overpopulation, starvation, ignorance, and many other problems that confront this generation. I believe that psychologists will have an increasingly large say in how we meet the challenges of the next century. This is what I mean when I say what 'psychologists are making the future' (Sharp, 2011).To glimpse tomorrow, look at today's behavioral science."

Graduate School and Tips for Students

Although graduate school may not be right for everyone, Dr. Beck recommends students question whether or not they really have a passion for the field they are looking into. "If you do not have a fire in your belly, then I would not advise you to apply to graduate school. However, if you have the passion for psychology, graduate school is something you might want to consider," suggests Dr. Beck. "In fact, it might be the only path to satisfying your professional dreams."

For those students planning to enter graduate school, a letter of intent is an important step in the application process. "The letter of intent is the first impression you make on someone whose decision could change your entire life. I suggest that you begin with a paragraph about how you became interested in psychology and how it fits into your life goals. Next, discuss the experience you have had beyond the classroom, especially if you have done research as a member of a professor's laboratory. After all, most professors who train graduate students are researchers. Near the end of the letter, I would target one or two professors, mention their work, and make clear why you are interested in them. They are, amongst other things, trying to determine if there will be good chemistry with you. Above all, ask a professor to read over your letter and to make suggestions. They know best of all what other professors will be looking for," suggests Dr. Beck.

For students who think graduate school might be the right path, Dr. Beck has a special message for them: "This is a very exciting time to be a behavioral scientist, and I expect that this new generation of psychologists will pioneer new areas and make significant contributions to the resolutions of the great problems that beset our planet."

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Dr. Hall 'Skip' Beck received his PhD from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro in 1983, specializing in social psychology. He accepted a position in the Psychology Department at Appalachian State University in 1984 and is still happily at that university. For the past decade, most of Beck's research has focused upon improving student retention; he is a codeveloper of the College Persistence Questionnaire. His other main area of inquiry is human-computer interaction, especially the use of automated devices to reduce fratricide in the military. The search for Little Albert began as a lark, but soon became a passion taking Beck and his students on a historical journey to John B. Watson's infant laboratory.

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Language as a Vehicle to the Mind

With Dr. James Pennebaker

Meagan Frey
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Early Career

Dr. James W. Pennebaker is the departmental chair of psychology at The University of Texas at Austin where he received his PhD in 1977. In his research, he has explored the link between expressive writing and well-being. By writing about the personal, often traumatic experiences that people encounter, his studies have shown an improvement in many areas of life, including work, school, and physical and mental health. Dr. Pennebaker also explores how the usage of particular words, pronouns especially, can reveal much about one's personality.

Early Career and Expressive Writing

In the beginning, Dr. Pennebaker was unsure of what he would end up studying in school. "I was the kind of person who majored in something different every semester; I never even took a psychology course until the second semester of my junior year. There, I read about social psychology and thought 'Wow, this is me! This involves everything I'm interested in and gives me the freedom to play,'" remembers Dr. Pennebaker.

"It was a series of accidents, however, that led me to study language. Many years before, I had been studying psychosomatic issues and I discovered an odd thing about traumas: if a person had experienced a major trauma and kept it a secret, it increased the odds that they would get sick. Keeping secrets is associated with increased risk for almost all health problems. This led me to conduct an experiment where participants were asked to reveal their secrets in order to see if it would improve their health, and it did," says Dr. Pennebaker. "I asked people to write about their deepest thoughts and feelings for three to four days for 15 minutes a day. What we found was that people who write about emotional upheavals show improvements in physical health: they go to the doctor less, there is an enhancement in immune function. After people write, they sleep better, they do not obsess as much, they're more socially engaged, they have better working memory. Writing brings about all of these changes that ultimately enhance people's health. Writing is socially safe, it forces you to slow down and think about the issues that have been weighing on you."

Current Research and the Power of Pronouns

Dr. Pennebaker's current research deals with the implications of pronoun usage. He believes that much can be discovered about a person by what pronouns they use. "I became interested in what people were writing because they had provided me with so many amazing, depressing, and even uplifting stories. At first, I was just having student researchers read these stories, but I soon developed a computer program to analyze the multiple dimensions of language, and everything took off from there. Now I could start looking at books, poetry, political speeches, essays, and student projects: It opened this new world that I could begin to analyze."

"The small words (pronouns, articles, prepositions) are processed in the brain differently than are content words, and they are interesting because they are ultimately very social: Pronouns by definition are making references to people (the self, the group, others). The more a person uses second or third person, or even first person plural pronouns (you, he/she, we), they are more likely to be interested in people. Someone who is more interested in objects and things is less likely to use pronouns and instead they will use articles (a, an, the). By simply analyzing language, we can tell if a person is socially oriented or mechanically inclined. You really can tell a lot about what a person is interested in by what they are paying attention to."

The Pronoun 'I' and the Differences Between Demographic Groups and Pronoun Usage

"The pronoun that is most interesting from a psychologist's perspective is the word 'I,' because it is the most commonly used word in natural language. It can also tell us a lot about how a person is paying attention to themselves. Often, the more a person uses the word 'I,' the more self-focused they are, which could mean that they are more anxious, more insecure, or more depressed than the average."

According to Dr. Pennebaker, a particularly striking difference of pronoun usage occurs between men and women. "Women use the word 'I' at much higher rates than men, partly because they tend to be more self-focused and more aware of their thoughts and feelings. Racial differences are not as striking as social class differences. The lower the socioeconomic status, the more individuals use 'I;' the higher the status, the more distant their writing: they pay less attention to themselves and are more psychologically distant from their topic. Concerning age, younger people tend to use 'I' more. About fifteen to eighteen percent of all the words spoken by younger people include the word 'I.'" On the other hand, an 80 year-old will only use 'I' in three percent of their speech."

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Behavioral Predictions and Legal Implications

Dr. Pennebaker says that many behaviors can be predicted by pronoun usage. Lying, aggression, even suicidal tendencies can be predicted by how a person uses pronouns. "People who are lying tend to use the word 'I' less than when they are telling the truth; people tend to avoid 'I' when lying. When someone is about to behave aggressively, they tend to use the word 'I' less, partly because they are paying attention to who they are aggressing against rather than on themselves. In examining poetry, we have found that suicidal poets use the word 'I' at much higher rates than poets who are not suicidal," explains Dr. Pennebaker.

As for the legal implications to Dr. Pennebaker's research, he has performed analyses on the documents of people whose causes of death were questionable. "If they have left a written record, we can get a sense of whether they were murdered or committed suicide. On one occasion, we found that as one person got closer to death, he started using the word 'I' at increasingly high rates, which supported the speculation that he committed suicide," says Dr. Pennebaker. "Lawyers, national security workers, and many others are very interested in the behavior and personality of groups and people and with the program I created, you can get a picture of a person's mind. It isn't perfect, but it is promising."

Future Projects

Dr. Pennebaker is going in many directions with his research on language and pronouns. His new book, *The Secret Life of Pronouns, What Our Words Say About Us*, explores how words reveal much about one's personality, feelings, and social intelligence. "One study that I am very excited about deals with the world of education and group dynamics. I want to find out if we can use the power of language to get groups to work better," explains Dr. Pennebaker. "The study focuses on a virtual group, and we want to see if we can get the groups to improve how they work, talk, and listen to one another."

The Field of Language Research and Tips for Students

Language research is a new and exciting field that deals with how people interact with language. "I work with linguists in my research, and I have discovered that while they mostly care about language, I care about people and how they use language. For me, language is a tool to get inside people's heads and to get a sense of how they think and feel."

For students interested in pursuing language studies in psychology, Dr. Pennebaker recommends that they jump into this growing field. "On my website (secretlifeofpronouns.com), I have a number of exercises that students can use to analyze their own language; one exercise even analyzes tweets and text messages. If students are interested more broadly in writing and research, I encourage them to "Google" me, or go to my website to find out more about this very interesting field."

Dr. Pennebaker's research on how language and pronouns can be used to analyze a person's thoughts and feelings is a very new area of study, but students should know that it is full of research possibilities. As Dr. Pennebaker experienced, it can take quite a while to discover what you may be interested in, but there are many tools and opportunities out there to help you discover what is right for you.

James W. Pennebaker, PhD, is the Regents Centennial Professor of Liberal Arts and the departmental chair in the Psychology Department at the University of Texas at Austin, where he received his PhD in 1977. He has been on the faculty at the University of Virginia, Southern Methodist University, and, since 1997, the University of Texas. He and his students are exploring the links between traumatic experiences, expressive writing, natural language use, and physical and mental health. His studies find that physical health and work performance can improve by simple writing and/or talking exercises. His most recent research focuses on the nature of language and emotion in the real world. The words people use serve as powerful reflections of their personality and social worlds. Author or editor of 9 books and over 250 articles, Pennebaker has received numerous awards and honors.

Psi Chi is pleased to offer over **$300,000** in awards and grants to its members each year. Don't miss the exciting opportunities and funding these programs provide! Here are some upcoming deadlines to add to your chapter calendar or website:

October 1

SuperLab Research Grants

Thelma Hunt Research Grants

Undergraduate Psychology Research Conference Grants

November 1

Graduate Research Grants

Mamie Phipps Clark Research Grants

Undergraduate Research Grants

December 1

Paper/Poster submissions for the APA/ Psi Chi Society Annual Convention

Poster submissions for the APS National Convention

Denmark Faculty Advisor Award

Kay Wilson Officer Team Leadership Award

Regional Chapter Awards

Regional Faculty Advisor Awards

Regional Research Awards

Psi Chi congratulates all of the Regional Research Award Winners for 2011-12. Each of the winners listed below received a check for $300 and a certificate recognizing him or her as one of Psi Chi's award winners.

All Psi Chi members are eligible to compete for these awards each year. All research submitted by a Psi Chi member for presentation at a Psi Chi program at one of the six regional psychological conventions (Eastern, Midwestern, Rocky Mountain, Southeastern, Southwestern, and Western) by a first author who is a student and Psi Chi member, may be considered for an award. The top papers received by the Psi Chi Regional Vice-Presidents are named as winners in each of the regions. The 2011-12 Regional Research winners are listed below.

Eastern Region

Jaqueline F. Abate, Monmouth University (NJ)
Daniel A. Chapman, Millersville University of Pennsylvania
Leah Fredman, Lehman College, CUNY
Amanda Griffith, Grove City College (PA)
Sharaya Groom, University of Southern Maine
Sarah N. Guarino, Ashland University (OH)
Shannon Haberzettl, Cedar Crest College (PA)
Rachael E. Jones, Elon University (NC)
Cara A. Palmer, West Virginia University
Adriana Rodriguez, Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus (NY)
Romane Robinson, East Stroudsburg University (PA)
Harpreet Sarao, Chatham University (PA)
Megan O. Slater, State University of New York at Potsdam
Simone Westerman, The College of Saint Rose (NY)
Kristin A. Wymard, George Mason University (VA)
Lauren B. Yadlosky, Xavier University (OH)

Midwestern Region

Jennah Arndt, University of Wisconsin La Crosse
Heather Burcham, University of Michigan
Ariana Cappuccitti, Hope College (MI)
Jennifer Draiss, Simpson College (IA)
Elizabeth Fast, Hope College (MI)
Sally Fullard, Cardinal Stritch University (WI)
Joe Gatuz, University of Illinois at Chicago
Caroline Hoyniak, Saint Louis University (MO)
Judson Kuffel, Iowa State University
Bethany Lyon, Augustana College (IL)
Andrea MacKenzie, Augustana College (IL)
Scott Marek, John Carroll University (OH)
Elizabeth McDermott, University of Missouri
Leah Miller, Wright State University (OH)
Angela Phillips, Indiana University Northwest
Colleen Russo, Denison University (OH)
Melissa Tapia, University of Missouri
Elizabeth Terpstra, St. Olaf College (MN)
Justin Tesser, University of Missouri
Craig VanPay, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
Laura Rose Welp, Saint Louis University (MO)
Jamie Whisman, College of Mount St. Joseph (OH)
Kate Winderman, Saint Louis University (MO)
Andrea Yetzer, Northeastern Illinois University

Rocky Mountain Region

Kat Green, Brigham Young University (UT)
Peter Marle, University of Colorado Springs at Colorado Springs
Emilee Naylor, Westminster College (UT)
Annette Peters, University of Northern Colorado
Ashley Pyne, University of Utah
Heidi Vuletich, Regis University (CO)

Southeastern Region

Luke A. Beischel, Xavier University, Louisiana
Manuel R. Camargo, The Citadel (SC)
Brittany E. Camp, Milligan College (TN)
Rachel E. Cook, Agnes Scott College (GA)
Sarah K. Finley, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Cecile A. Gadson, Winthrop University (SC)
Meghan R. Hawkins, Winthrop University (SC)
Erin K. Sim, Winthrop University (SC)
Sara J. Whisnant, Tennessee Technological University

Southwestern Region

Whitley Berry, Ouachita Baptist University (AR)
Kevin Hutzler, Southwestern University (TX)
Jasmine Elaine Bishop, Henderson State University (AR)
Adrienne Gilmore, Prairie View A&M University (TX)
Sarah Johnson, Southwestern University (TX)
Mandi Laurie, Texas State University, San Marcos
Kyle Austin Leihsing, Texas Lutheran University
Na Thi Nguyen, McNeese State University (LA)
Jessica Packard, Hardin-Simmons University (TX)
Taylor Roche, Stephen F. Austin State University (TX)
Austin Guy Roche, Stephen F. Austin State University (TX)
Emily Trower, University of Central Arkansas

Western Region

Shiloh Betterly, California State University, Fullerton
Abdiel Flores, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
Caitlin Handron, University of Washington
Christina Shin, California State University, Long Beach
Yvette Szabo, San Jose State University (CA)
Bradley Weisz, San Diego State University (CA)

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Graduate Assistantship Grants

The 2011–12 academic term is the first year that Graduate Assistantship Grants were awarded. Four teaching and four research assistantships of $3,000 each are available annually for use in any academic semester. All currently enrolled Psi Chi graduate students are eligible to apply. The deadline to submit applications is January 1.

Kelly Bennion
Boston College (MA)
Research

Originally from Scottsdale, AZ, Kelly Bennion is a first-year graduate student in Dr. Elizabeth Kensinger's Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Laboratory at Boston College. Prior to entering the PhD program in psychology, she received BA degrees in psychology and Spanish from Middlebury College and an EdM in mind, brain, and education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Ms. Bennion's research uses a combination of behavioral and fMRI methods to investigate the influence of sleep on emotional memory consolidation. Specifically, she is interested in how the emotional memory trade-off (individuals' tendency to preferentially remember emotional information at the cost of memory for neutral details presented concurrently) develops over time. During the semester while on assistantship tenure, she will use polysomnography to investigate the contribution of specific sleep stages to these emotional biases in memory.

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Jackson Taylor
Adelphi University (NY)
Research

Jackson J. Taylor is a doctoral student of clinical psychology at the Derner Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies, Adelphi University. His current research efforts focus on understanding the role and impact of cultural identity factors in the therapeutic relationship. Under the mentorship of Dr. J. Christopher Muran, he is a research assistant at the Brief Psychotherapy Research Program at Beth Israel Medical Center, a program aimed at the study of therapeutic alliance ruptures and rupture resolution training (supported in part by grants from the NIMH). Along with a passion for psychotherapy research, Mr. Taylor is interested in diagnostic evaluation, personality assessment in particular. He graduated summa cum laude with a BS in applied psychology from New York University in 2011. His undergraduate honors thesis project, funded in part by a Psi Chi Undergraduate Research grant, was recently published in the *Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research*.

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Callie Tyner
Agnes Scott College
Research

Callie Tyner is a fourth-year doctoral student studying neuropsychology in the department of Clinical and Health Psychology at the University of Florida. She was awarded this Graduate Research Assistantship Grant from Psi Chi to conduct her innovative dissertation research on applications of item response theory (IRT) to improve measurement precision in neuropsychology. Ms. Tyner was a Psi Chi chapter president as an undergraduate student at Agnes Scott College and remains actively involved with Psi Chi through the chapter at the University of Florida. After graduation she plans to pursue a career in clinical research within her areas of interest, which include traumatic brain injury, item response theory, and other psychometric issues within neuropsychology.

Chrystal Vergara-Lopez
SUNY at Buffalo
Research

Chrystal Vergara-Lopez is a 5th year doctoral student at the University at Buffalo. She received her BA in psychology from New York University in 2005 and her masters in clinical psychology from the University at Buffalo in 2007. She is interested in studying etiological models of early-onset depression, with an emphasis on motivational and cognitive processes. Her current research concentrates on investigating the role of self-regulatory components (i.e., motivation, executive function), cognitive vulnerability, and environmental risk factors (e.g., negative life events, stress) in the development of depression.

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Kay Wilson Officer Team Leadership Award

This year, Psi Chi Awards and Grants presented the first Kay Wilson Officer Team Leadership Award to **Lehman College, CUNY.** The purpose of this $2,000 award is to acknowledge the best chapter officer team for exceptional leadership as a group and demonstrating abilities to achieve management objectives through collaboration. The officer team must be serving in the current academic year or the previous academic year. The deadline to submit applications is December 8.

Lehman College, CUNY

Advisor: **Vincent Prohaska, PhD**
Officer Team:

Dana Miller
President, 2009–10 and 2010–11

Alex Dopico
Vice-President, fall 2010

Sumaira Ismail
Vice-President, 2010–11

Paulette Monforte
Vice-President, 2010–11

Rasheda Simpson
Vice-President, 2010–11

Jennifer Alcon
Secretary, 2010–11

Catherine Acosta
Treasurer, 2010–11

Jatnna De la Cruz
Community Service Officer, 2010–11

Daisy Mejia
Community Service Officer, fall 2010

Mylanie Alvarado
Awards Officer, fall 2010

Suzie Mahase
Website Coordinator, 2010–11

Christina Barbieri
Alumni Advisor, 2010–11
(Vice-President 2009–10)

From left: Christina Barbieri, Paulette Monforte, Dana Miller, Vincent Prohaska, Sumaira Ismail, Jatnna De la Cruz, Jennifer Alcon.

FBI NCAVC Internship Grant–Fall

For the 2011–12 year, Psi Chi has continued its partnership with the FBI National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crimes (NCAVC) to provide grants for NCAVC interns who are Psi Chi members.

Holly Hargreaves
Marymount University (VA)

The opportunity to serve as an intern at the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) has been the most rewarding and beneficial professional experience in my life, and I shall carry this experience throughout the duration of my career. The invaluable knowledge and training that I received from my mentor and other agents and research personnel at the NCAVC has assisted me in more ways that words can convey. My skills as a researcher, especially in regards to issues related to forensic psychology, have been enhanced significantly as a result of my experience at the NCAVC.

Holly Hargreaves holds a BA in psychology and two masters degrees from Marymount University, the first in forensic psychology and the second in counseling. She is currently a doctoral student at the George Washington University where she plans to earn a PhD in counseling, with a specialty area in forensics in 2013. She is assisting in conducting research on the association between interpersonal violence and animal cruelty as part of her internship at the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC). This research was presented at the 2011 APA convention. Ms. Hargreaves currently serves as the cochair of the Interpersonal Violence and Animal Cruelty Research Group for the APA Governing Board of Division 17, Section 13. She has conducted presentations at various national conferences, published articles, and contributed to a book on human-animal interaction. She is also a licensed clinical professional counselor and a nationally certified counselor who uses her clinical experience and practice to inform her research. Ms. Hargreaves plans to continue to conduct this research at the NCAVC throughout the duration of her career and will also continue to work toward pursuing her ultimate aspiration of working for the NCAVC.

Thelma Hunt Research Grants

Psi Chi Awards and Grants is pleased to announce the 2011–12 winners of the Thelma Hunt Research Grants. Two grants of up to $3,000 each are available annually to enable member to complete empirical research directly related to Psi Chi. All Psi Chi students and faculty members are eligible to apply. The deadline to submit applications is October 1.

Wendy Close, PhD
Wisconsin Lutheran College
"Faculty Perspectives on Collaborating With Students on Research"

John Davis, PhD
Texas State University–San Marcos
"Expanding Psi Chi Abroad: Development of a Database of Psychology Education and Training Around the World"

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Faculty Members Provide Essential Support

for Psi Chi Awards, Regional and National Programs,and Journal of Undergraduate Research

2011–12 Psi Chi Faculty Consultants

Joanne D. Altman, PhD, Washburn University (KS)
Kristen Asplin, PhD, University of Pittsburgh (PA)
Lori Barker, PhD, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
Kristen Beals, PhD, California State University, Fullerton
Joan Bombace, PhD, Quinnipiac University (CT)
Charles Brewer, PhD, Furman University (SC)
Sheila Brownlow, PhD, Catawba College (NC)
Ngoc Bui, PhD, University of La Verne (CA)
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Erin Wood, PhD, Catawba College (NC)
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