

SJU Psychology News & Notes

Issue #11 Fall 2014

Saint Joseph's University Department of Psychology

The Chair's Corner



If you stop by Post Hall, you will notice some new faces and, sadly, you might miss some that were more familiar to you. For many years, Mrs. Clare McAneny was the one who greeted you whenever you had business to conduct with the Psychology Department. As I mentioned in the Department newsletter from this past spring, Clare decided to retire after many years of service to Saint Joseph's. Clare left us in May. She has been replaced by Mrs. Nancy Fiazso, the new Admin Assistant of the Department. Nancy joins the Psychology Department after spending several years with Saint Joseph's Registrar's Office. I hope that you will join me in wishing Nancy every success as she picks up where Clare left off!

Dr. Judi Chapman has also retired from the Saint Joseph's faculty. Dr. Chapman served Saint Joseph's for over twenty-five years. She spent a number of those years serving the University as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Judi will be missed by all! She will continue her association with Saint Joseph's as a *professor emeritus*. A remembrance of Judi's contributions to Saint Joseph's appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Once again, several members of the Psychology faculty were recognized by the Saint Joseph's community for the excellence of their contributions to the University's mission. Drs. Pat Garrigan and Jo Shih received Faculty Merit Awards this past semester.



Several of this year's Summer Scholars: Emily Hachey, Nicole Sammartino, and Kathleen Logan (from left to right)

Eye on Summer Scholars

The Summer Scholars Program (SSP) originally began in the biology department in 1994 and has since expanded to different departments in order to include various disciplines. SSP was established to engage select students in a variety of scholarly endeavors during the summer months including faculty-mentored research, creative writing, and fine arts. The 2014 SSP students working in the psychology department were Emily Hachey, Kathleen Logan, Kathleen McGee, Nicole Sammartino, Michael Stephenson, and Esteban Valencia. Each student conducted unique research projects within their field of interest.

Emily Hachey worked with Dr. Clare Conry-Murray over the summer to explore the theory of mind understanding in autism. Autism has been associated with a delay in theory of mind, the understanding of people's mental states. The traditional mode of testing theory of mind might cause an innate disadvantage for people on the autism spectrum because of their deficits in communication. *(continued on page 2)*

Dr. Garrigan was recognized for the excellence of his teaching; Dr. Shih was recognized for the excellence of her scholarship. Additionally, Dr. Patricia Zaleski-Krahmer, adjunct instructor *par excellence*, was recognized for the excellence of her teaching. Please join me in congratulating the three of them for their impressive accomplishments!

-Donald S. Leitner, Ph.D.

Summer Scholars (continued from page 1)...

Previous research has clearly shown that theory of mind performance in people with autism depends upon the mode of test presentation. The goal of Hachey's study is to correct methodological biases against people with autism in current theory of mind literature. It also aims to investigate interactions between theory of mind, moral reasoning, and empathy in the autism community.

Kathleen Logan and her mentor, Dr. Philip Schatz, investigated the reliability of the ImPACT test across three administrations and the utility of uploaded baselines when compared to post concussion test data. ImPACT, Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing, is currently the most widely used method of concussion assessment. Athletes undergo a baseline examination before each season, and then take it again if they experience a concussion. This allows for an objective comparison of the individual before and after the injury in order to diagnose a concussion. Preliminary results showed that for athletes taking the test three times across three administrations, there is a moderate test/retest reliability in all five neurocognitive composite scores of the ImPACT test.

Kathleen McGee along with Dr. Alexander Skolnick investigated whether there were differences in the ways men and women view hook-up culture. Participants completed surveys about their views on the nature of hook-ups and rated scenarios depicting couples hooking up. Interestingly enough, there were not large differences in how men and women defined hooking up. However, it was found that women and men did show significant differences in their expectations for post-hook-up contact with women rating men's expectations for further contact differently than men's own expectations.

Nicole Sammartino, along with Dr. Elizabeth Becker, investigated dopamine's role in the home field advantage. The winner effect describes the phenomenon of increased winning ability following previous victories. The winner effect is thought to be connected with the challenge hypothesis, which indicates an increase in testosterone (T) levels after an aggressive experience. Dopamine (DA) levels have also been seen to increase after an aggressive encounter measured by the DA precursor tyrosine hydroxylase (TH). Based on this connection, it is possible that increased T following the win of an aggressive encounter at home may trigger a release of DA, which may reinforce the aggressive behavior and initiate the formation of the winner effect. Sammartino hypothesized that individuals with both prior victories and home advantage will demonstrate a higher DA concentration in mesolimbic regions as compared to those who do not have prior victories or a home cage advantage due to the potential reinforcing effects of winning an aggressive encounter in adult male California mice. Brains were stained for a precursor indicating active phosphorylated tyrosine hydroxylase (pTH). Sections were analyzed to determine which sections demonstrated the heaviest staining for the regions of interest. Once the location of the most concentrated pTH stain was determined, photomicrographs of that region were taken so that cell counts could be taken electronically to determine how much pTH is being expressed in each given region. This data will be further analyzed to determine the importance of DA in reinforcing the formation of the winner effect through aggressive encounters in a home location.

Michael Stephenson worked with Dr. Elizabeth Becker to explore the importance of fathers in modulating future paternal behavior in *Peromyscus californicus*. Rodent studies that have focused on paternal care reveal the remarkable ability of a father to alter specific behaviors of offspring once they reach adulthood. Increased levels of retrieval from a father facilitate an increased expression of aggressive behaviors and paternal behaviors. The simple presence of offspring has yet to be examined as a potential modulator of paternal aggression. Similarly, a direct inquiry has not yet been conducted comparing maternal and paternal retrieval effects on future paternal care. Stephenson's hypotheses will yield a greater understanding of the role fathers play in regulating the future behavior of their young. It is hypothesized that fathers who received high level of retrievals from their fathers will be most aggressive, and fathers who received low level of retrievals from their mothers to be least aggressive. It is also hypothesized that fathers who received high level of retrieval from either parent will exhibit higher retrieval behavior, and fathers who received a low level of retrieval from either parent will exhibit lower retrieval behavior.

Esteban Valencia, under the direction of Dr. Alexander Skolnick, investigated how current discourse concerning collegiate sexual violence demands a greater understanding of the language utilized in such discussions. In order to investigate this, Valencia surveyed 395 subjects to determine whether emotional equivalency exists between synonymous term-pairs. Some examples include sexual assault vs. rape and grope vs. fondle. Participants then generated a list of sexual violence descriptors and were asked to group those descriptors into synonymous term-pairs. These term-pairs were used in vignettes describing incidents of sexual violence. Many of the paired terms evoked similar levels of certain emotions such as anger and disgust. However, in the case of the term-pair *Rape vs. Sexual Assault*, results suggested that emotional equivalency might not exist between the two terms, providing foundational evidence for further inquiry.

Congratulations to all of the summer scholars!

-Courtney Alio (MS expected '15)



Faculty Profile: Dr. Donald Leitner

I received my B. A. in psychology in May of 1976 from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. I received my M. A. in physiological psychology in May of 1978 from Bryn Mawr College, and my Ph. D. in physiological psychology from Bryn Mawr College in 1981. I was a postdoctoral fellow with the New York State Psychiatric Institute and Columbia University's Department of Psychiatry in New York City from 1981 to 1985, at which time I joined the faculty of Saint Joseph's University. I was awarded tenure in 1990, promoted to the rank of Associate Professor in 1991, and to the rank of Professor in 2000. I took on the role of chair of the Department of Psychology in the fall of 2004.

My research interests include the neural processing of auditory and visual stimuli, the effects of stress, toxins, and drugs on sensation, perception, and motor behavior, and psychophysics and psychopharmacology. I have published seventeen articles in refereed journals dealing with these topics.

I am a student of the martial arts. I advanced to the rank of first-degree black belt in American Kenpo Karate in November of 2006, after training for several hours a week for eight years. I advanced to the rank of second-degree black belt in June of 2010, and to third-degree black belt in August of 2014. I am currently training for my fourth-degree black belt.



Upcoming Conferences & Events:

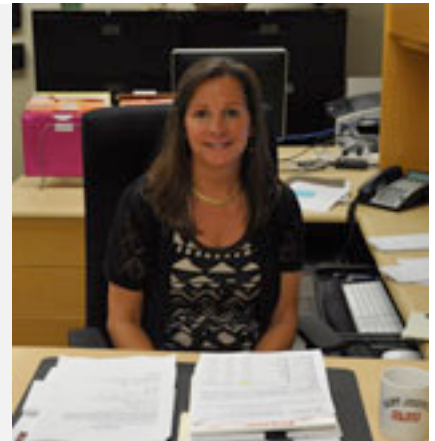
- This year's Hyatt Lecture will be Tuesday **March 17, 2015** at 11:00 am. Our lecturer this year will be Elliot Turiel, Ph.D. who will be presenting, *Moral reasoning, cultural practices, and moral resistance*.
- The 2nd annual Animal Studies Program invited lecture will take place on **January 29, 2015** at 11am in McShain's Large Lapsley Room. Phil Arkow will present, *Animal-Assisted Interventions with the Elderly: Concepts, Concerns and Strategies*.
- Annual SJU Sigma Xi Student Research Symposium: April 17 (tentative date)
- Eastern Psychological Association: March 5-7, Philadelphia, PA
- Association for Psychological Science: May 21-24, New York, NY
- American Psychological Association: August 6-9, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- Animal Behavior Society: June 10-14, Anchorage, Alaska

The Psychology Department Welcomes New Administrative Assistant, Nancy Fiazzo!

Nancy Fiazzo has been a member of the St. Joseph's Community for 7 years, and previously held positions in the Financial Aid Office as a Counselor and the Registrar's Office as a Records Specialist. Nancy enjoys working with students and faculty and currently has 3 sons attending SJU.

In her free time Nancy likes to decorate her home, travel, read, bake and spend time with her family, friends and dog.

We are very pleased to welcome her as the newest member of the Psychology Department family!



Congratulations to Dr. Judith Chapman on Her Retirement!



Dr. Judith Griffin Chapman. Professor of Social Psychology. Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Associate Provost. A leader in teaching, research, and service as evidenced by awards in all three areas. Mentor and inspiration to countless students...Which of those titles best befits the woman we are proud to have been able call "colleague?" Because Dr. Chapman has worn all of those titles in the 26 years she has served at Saint Joseph's University.

It is a bittersweet moment in the history of the Psychology department as Dr. Chapman retires from her long and productive career in all of these roles. Dr. Chapman began her career at Saint Joseph's University in 1988, after earning her Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Syracuse University. After only seven years, she was asked to serve as Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (quite a testament to her abilities and the admiration she garnered among her colleagues). In 1997 she became the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, a position she held until 2002. While serving as Dean, Dr. Chapman remained a productive scholar. In all, Dr. Chapman has published a book, 19 articles and technical reports in scholarly journals, and presented over 35 papers at professional meetings. Her research represents her areas of interest and expertise: self-constructs, volunteerism, flirting, blushing, and even hook-up culture.

Dr. Chapman taught classes in Social Psychology, Statistics, Multicultural Psychology, Psychology of the Self, Violence and Aggression, Intimate Relationships, Psychology and the Law, and graduate courses in Group Theory and Social Cognition. Her courses were always popular and filled with students eager to learn from her. She mentored undergraduate students in independent study projects, and graduate students who have gone on to academic and professional careers (below are some tributes from former graduate students).

Her service is difficult to capture in such a small space, but Dr. Chapman had served on such diverse committees as the Commission on the Status of Women (Chair), the Faith Justice Advisory Board (Chair), the Safe Environment Task Force, the Kinney Center Advisory Board, College of Arts and Sciences College Council (Chair), Academic Council on Mission and Identity, and innumerable search committees for deans and other administrative positions.

Congratulations to Dr. Judith Chapman on Her Retirement! *(continued from page 4)*...

Probably the best way to describe the impact Dr. Chapman has had on so many lives is to read what those who have worked with her have to say. Space prevents more comments than this, but these are very representative of what her colleagues and students say about their time with her:

Paul DeVito (former Chair of the Psychology Department; current Provost of Xavier University): It is hard for me to imagine that Judi Chapman is retiring. In psychological terms she would appreciate, I have no "schema" for that!

I vividly recall first meeting Judi at an EPA convention in the mid 1980s. She was the very first person I ever interviewed for a position—both as a chair and a person. I was immediately struck by her intelligence, integrity, commitment to student learning and scholarship, and enthusiasm for higher education. After a successful on-campus interview, Judi accepted the offer from the department without haste. I thought that, "geez, this hiring thing is a snap!!"

I later learned that hiring was not such a "snap" and we were quite fortunate to hire Judi at that time. Without Judi, the transformation and growth of the psychology department would have been much more difficult and challenging. Of course, Judi was later snatched from us by that "Dayton Guy" [Dan Curran] to lead the entire College of Arts and Sciences as Dean. Under Judi's caring and thoughtful leadership and guidance the College and University flourished—a period of time many look back to as the prime period and highpoint for the university that is sorely missed.

Alas, we all must now "accommodate" a new schema in order to honor, celebrate and support Judi in her well-deserved retirement and emerita status.

God Bless and Godspeed.

Clare McAneny (former Administrative Assistant, Psychology Department): Judi Chapman was always one you could turn to in difficult situations. As Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences as well as a faculty member in Psychology, she always had the Administrative Assistants' backs. We **all** appreciated her for her support. I would be remiss not to mention her wonderful treats. Around the holidays the students would be waiting for her fabulous cookies and incredible Easter eggs to arrive. She will be missed at Saint Joseph's University.

Sarah DeYoung, Ph.D (former graduate student): Dr. Chapman has been an amazing mentor from the moment I met her until this day. Without her confidence in me, I could not have found it in myself as I embark on an academic career.

Bryan Kissinger, M.S. (product manager at Comcast and former graduate student): Dr. Chapman was so supportive but always knew when and where to push so my best work shined through. Her guidance was invaluable both as an instructor and as a mentor.

Joseph Lambert, M.S. (doctoral candidate and former graduate student): I was very fortunate to have Judi as my advisor. Thanks to her, I will now have the opportunity to work with one of the most well-known researchers in the field of positive psychology.

I will always be grateful for her support, patience, and encouragement, which continue to this day.

Ryan Parsons, M.S. (former graduate student): Dr. Chapman is the best mentor I could have asked for. She always supported my ideas and pointed out the best aspects of my work while helping me develop and improve to arrive at the best possible final product. Dr. Chapman could give me the push I needed (often in the form of sweets to give me an energy boost). I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to work with and learn from Dr. Chapman, and to have had her support and encouragement along the way.

So – it is with a mixture of sadness and joy as we wish Dr. Judi Chapman all the best in her newest phase of life!

Recent Publications:

- Garrigan, P. & Hamilton, C.M. (2014). Coherence of visual representations: Attention and integration of contour shape information. *Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics*, 76(8), 2346-2359.
- Meltzer, L. J., & Mindell, J. A. (2014). Systematic review and meta-analysis of behavioral interventions for pediatric insomnia. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, 39, 932-948.
- Meltzer, L. J., Plaufcan, M. R., Thomas, J. H., & Mindell, J. A. (2014). Sleep problems and sleep disorders in pediatric primary care: Treatment recommendations, persistence, and health care utilization. *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, 10, 421-426.
- Mindell, J. A., Leichman, E. S., Puzino, K., Walters, R., & Bhullar, B. (2014). Parental concerns about infant and toddler sleep assessed by a mobile app. *Behavioral Sleep Medicine*, 12, 1-16.
- Owens, J. A., Mindell, J. A., & Baylor, A. (2014). Effect of energy drink and caffeinated beverage consumption on sleep, mood, and performance in children and adolescents. *Nutrition Reviews*, 72, 65-71.
- Paul, I. M., Williams, J. S., Anzman-Frasca, S., Beiler, J. S., Makova, K. D., Marini, M. E., Hess, L. B., Rzcuidlo, S. E., Verdiglione, N., Mindell, J. A., & Birch, L. L. (2014). The Intervention Nurses Start Infants Growing on Healthy Trajectories (INSIGHT) Study. *BMC Pediatrics*, 14, 1-15.
- Schatz P, Kelley T, Ott S, Solomon G, Elbin RJ, Higgins K, Sclaro Moser R. (2014). Utility of repeated assessment following invalid baseline performance. *Journal of Athletic Training*, 49, 659-664

Congratulations to Psychology Faculty Merit Award Winners!

Teaching Awards

Patrick Garrigan, Ph.D. – Associate Professor – Psychology
Patricia Zaleski-Kramer, Ph.D. – Adjunct – Psychology

Research Awards

Joseph Shih, Ph.D. – Associate Professor – Psychology

Got News or Suggestions?

Contact the editors:

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Alumni Notes:

Adriene Beltz (BS'08, MS'09) has earned a Ph.D. in Psychology (specializing in cognitive and affective neuroscience) from Penn State University and will begin a postdoc in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Penn State.

Andrew Bulla (BS'12) Upon graduation, he was accepted into a Ph.D. program in Behavior Analysis at Western Michigan University. He has been conducting research, and just finished his thesis on teaching non-verbal individuals how to speak utilizing the principles of behavior applied to language, as described in Skinner's book *Verbal Behavior*. He is currently serving on state boards, teaching and mentoring both undergraduate and master levels students, and developing new courses for the university in the areas of autism and educational psychology. He has served on the university's IRB, and am part of the state's autism conference planning committee. He is engaged to his college sweet heart, Casey Fry, and has beautiful dog named Kobe.

Kait Clark (BS'08) has accepted a postdoc at Cardiff University in Wales

Erica Royer (MS'13) is Animal Keeper in the Bird Unit at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute working with rare and endangered species. More specifically, she works with Micronesian kingfishers *Todiramphus cinnamominus* and Guam rails *Gallirallus owstoni* (both extinct in the wild), as well as Bali Mynah *Leucopsar rothschildi* and the only Mariana crow *Corvus kubaryi* in captivity.

Are you a graduate of the SJU Psychology BS or MS programs? We would love to hear from you and share your news with others in Alumni Notes. Please direct your news and updates to Dr. Matthew Anderson at mander06@sju.edu. Be sure to indicate the year you graduated and which program you were enrolled in. If you would like to prepare a longer 'Alum Profile' we would be happy to consider it for inclusion as well.



Post Hall, Home of the SJU Department