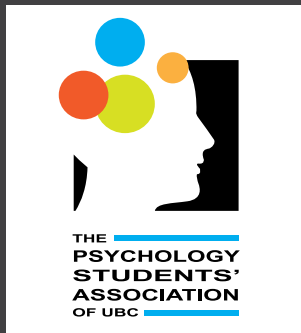


Issue 4, November 2011



Psychology
news, upcoming
events, career
possibilities and
faculty interviews

send comments to
psa.editor@psych.ubc.ca

or visit
<http://psa.psych.ubc.ca>

PsΨched!

Welcome to UBC's Psychology newsletter!

Sponsored by the Psychology Student Association, this newsletter aims to keep students and faculty alike in the know about one of UBC's most diverse and populated departments.

We hope to provide insight about opportunities for student involvement and career possibilities after graduation, information about the new and exciting

research being explored and reveal the many subfields and career trajectories available within the field.

Not to mention, we hope to provide a platform for staff and students to speak to their interests, contribute articles to the newsletter and express their opinions on a monthly basis.

Read on to find out more!

"The purpose of psychology is to give us a completely different idea of the things we know best"

Paul Valery (French
Essayist, 1871-1945)

A Letter from the Editor On Turning a New Leaf



Ashley Whillans

I am a fourth year Honours psychology student with a keen interest in wellbeing, happiness and health. I am currently working with Dr. Edith Chen, studying the effects of empathy and perspective taking on health in families with adolescent children.

Late October and early November is the season for ghosts, goblins and even scarier – term papers! We are now more than halfway through our semester, so it is time to congratulate ourselves on all of our hard work, set our clocks back and enjoy that extra hour of sleep while we still can.

Taking some time off to study and to run studies, we here at *Psyched!* are back in business with a new layout plan.

Last year, we organized each newsletter into themes; however, this year we are hoping to present each upcoming issue as a diverse array of articles that fit into the following sections:

Department: This is the place to find out new and important information about our exciting ever-evolving department.

Research: Where you can find a critical analysis of psychology research happening at UBC and beyond.

Profiles: A place to meet our amazing students and professors!

Disciplines of Psychology: Where you can learn more about the different fields and topics within psychology (e.g., cognitive psychology or developmental psychology)

Psychology & the Real World: Where we take real world issues and analyze them from a psychological perspective.

Careers: Where you can find out about careers after graduation, or other related information.

Study Tips: Where you can read some words of wisdom from Psychology Instructor Sunaina Assanand.

Fun Page: Where you can learn new psychology words (i.e., where to learn how to impress your friends or your mom), and where to enjoy the best nerdy cartoons that psychology has to offer.

Also, as always, we are looking for new writers, contributors, photographers and graphic designers. For everyone who has submitted your applications, thank you! We will be in touch shortly, and look forward to having you as part of our team.

Good luck studying, get lots of sleep and take a deep breath – finals are less than four weeks away!

Ashley Whillans

Psyched! Founding Editor
The Psychology Student
Association of UBC

Contributors

Kino Zhao – Assoc. Editor

I am a fourth year student who is not planning to graduate this year, because I love school too much, and haven't taken enough classes. I am taking a double major in psychology and philosophy, and am interested in topics related to clinical psych, religion, and travel.



Jeff Dominic Chua

I'm a 3rd year UBC Psychology major. I'm interested in culture and mental health. I also like to explore different careers, network with globally minded people, and eat international cuisines.



Leena Wu Staff Writer



Jade McGregor Staff Writer



Bella Margolles Staff Writer



Meghan Buckley Staff Writer



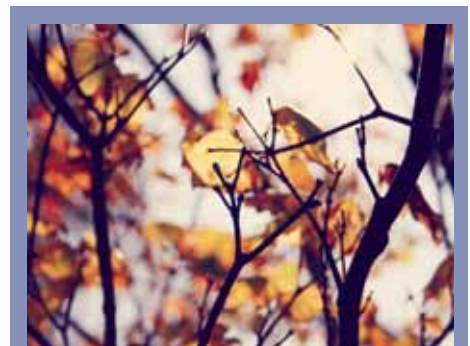
Carly Thornton – Staff Writer

I am a 4th year working in Dr. Rensink's Visual Cognition Lab, studying meditation and flow. I am interested in how psychology can be informed by and integrate ideas from eastern philosophy.



Pavel Kozik – Contributor

I graduated from the UBC psychology honours program. I have previously been involved in research that examines synesthesia, schizophrenia and aesthetics. An avid reader, I am currently enjoying *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy.



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PsΨch Stimuli

Check out the upcoming events!

PSA Sponsored Events


Learning about Schizophrenia

14 November 2011 | 400p – 530p | Scarfe 100

Learning about Schizophrenia

*Curious to know more about the nature of schizophrenia?
Eager to hear a personal story of a recovered schizophrenia patient?*

Join us for a unique and powerful presentation by a mental health professional from the BC Schizophrenia Society and a recovered schizophrenia patient. We should mention that the latter is also a recipient of Coast Foundation's 'Courage to Come Back Award'.




WHEN?
14 Nov 2011 from 400-530PM

WHERE?
Scarfe 100

WE SHOULD ADD...
Coffee and treats provided!

This event is hosted by the Psychology Students' Association. You must be a PSA member to attend this event. Current members should bring their membership card. Annual membership is only \$10!

More info? Our office is located at 2007 Kenny
psa.membership@psych.ubc.ca
<http://psa.psych.ubc.ca>



Join us for a unique and powerful presentation by a mental health professional from the BC Schizophrenia Society and a recovered schizophrenia patient. We should mention that the latter is also a recipient of Coast Foundation's 'Courage to Come Back Award'.

Coffee and treats will be provided before and after the event. Please note that we cannot eat or drink in the lecture hall and so feel free to show up a bit early and/or stay a bit late to enjoy the treats.

This event is for Psychology Students' Association members only. Annual membership is only \$10 and you may join at the door of this event. Please bring exact change to expedite the membership process.

Academic Events to Look Forward to:

- Final Exam Study Days (Late November)
- Honors and Directed Studies Info Session (January)
- Careers Night (February)
- 14th Annual Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference (March 31st) – info available on website

Social Events to Look Forward to:

- Games Night (targeted for 100-level psychology students) – End of Term 1 before finals
- GRE Night – Jeopardy Style (Term 2)

Announcements

Grad Photos:

You can book your appointment anytime between now and April 30, 2012 (deadline) to get a 15% discount off of your graduation photo order(s)!

Just don't forget to book your appointment and bring your PSA membership card at the time of ordering.

You will need to go on their website at www.evangelosphotography.com and book an appointment, or call Evangelos Photography Ltd. at 604-731-8314 or 604-732-3023.

More information relating to graduation photos, or PSA in general, can be found on the PSA website: <http://psa.psych.ubc.ca/>

Research Announcements

UBC researchers were recently hand-picked to present at the Space Life Sciences Symposium. Specifically, (Suedfeld, Brcic, Johnson, & Gushin) 2012's paper entitled, "Personal growth following long-duration spaceflight" was selected to be the keynote address for the entire Space Life Sciences Symposium, at International Astronautical Congress (IAC) 2012 in Capetown, South Africa.

This symposium was comprised of eight full paper sessions (Behaviour, Performance and Psychosocial Issues in Space; Human Physiology in Space; Medical Care for Humans in Space; Radiation Fields, Effects and Risks in Human Space Missions; Astrobiology and Exploration; Life Support and EVA Systems; Biology in Space; and Living in Space - Education and Outreach in Space Life Sciences) plus several poster sessions.

Undergraduate Advising

BA Advising

Drop in hours are Tues/Fri from 10-12 and 2-4 in Kenny 2502.

Students majoring in Psychology are not required to seek Departmental advice. You are,

however, strongly encouraged to review your program with a Faculty of Arts advisor well before you plan to graduate.

Make an appointment with advising by on Weds/Thurs via telephone (822-2755) or e-mail (ugadvisor@psych.ubc.ca)

BSC Advising

E-mail Dr. Kiran Soma (ksoma@psych.ubc.ca), Dr. Boris Gorzalka (bgorzalka@psych.ubc.ca), or Dr. Michael Souza (souza@psych.ubc.ca) to ask a quick question or to book an appointment.

Careers advising

E-mail Undergraduate Advising (ugadvisor@psych.ubc.ca) to book an appointment to meet with Dr. Sunaina Assanand.

UBC Undergraduate Journal of Psychology Information Sessions

This year we are publishing UBC Psychology's first-ever undergraduate psychology journal. UBC's Undergraduate Journal of Psychology (UBC-UJP) is a student-run, peer-reviewed journal which aims to provide a platform for undergraduates to both showcase their research and to experience the publication and peer-review process.

We will be holding two informal information sessions on Monday, Nov. 21 and Tuesday, Nov. 22 from 4-5pm in Room 2101 at the Kenny Bldg. Please stop by to learn more about how to submit your work to the journal. Questions?

Please visit <http://ubcuyp.psych.ubc.ca> or email David at ubcuyp@psych.ubc.ca.

Contact us

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Three more reasons why Psych Majors have got it good

Get Psyched! for Psych Department Changes

BY LEENA WU –
with files from ASHLEY WHILLANS

Recently, throughout the UBC Psychology department, numerous initiatives have been undertaken to better engage the 1700 Psych Undergraduate in research as well as to foster social and environmental sustainability. These initiatives were undertaken as a joint collaboration between various faculty members in the Department, including Eric Eich, the previous Head of the Department, and Alan Kingstone, the current Head. According to a recent interview with Kingstone by Ashley Whillans, the Editor of Psyched!, momentum instigating these changes arose from “Eric’s vision... to really get focused on the teaching process.” Psychology is a rapidly expanding department, and to respect the increasing numbers of intellectual minds engrossed in psychology, Kingstone stated that Eric made a decision to “invest in the students,” a vision that Kingstone himself is fostering and encouraging.

The Learning Enhancement (LE) Area is the newest addition to the Psych Department. It results from the cumulative efforts of many departmental members wishing to emphasize the teaching process. The three faculty members of the LE Area – Sunaina Assanand, Catherine Rawn, and Michael Souza – are united in their efforts to promote the teaching of psychology and to foster the educational experiences of students’ learning, both inside and outside of the classroom. As Alan mentioned, “They just bring this whole other level of energy to the faculty” through their interactions with the many students and by conducting programs that provide opportunities for development outside of the classroom. For more information on the LE Area, please visit their website at: <http://learningenhancement.psych.ubc.ca/>.



Another exciting addition is the introduction of Psi Chi, an International Honour Society in Psychology. PsiChi was recently granted chapter status at UBC in September 2011, with the push for the UBC Chapter spearheaded by Michael Souza. Being accepted into Psi Chi is recognition of the student’s academic achievement and an acknowledgement of the student’s hard work and dedication to advancing the science of Psychology. Although the deadline for membership application has passed for this term, be sure to check out Psi Chi for opportunities to join for next semester at: <http://psichi.psych.ubc.ca/>.

Not to mention, have you walked past the shiny new building located on West Mall? Aptly named CIRS (Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability), this hub will be an exciting living laboratory where students and faculty can interact, bringing together new innovative ideas for our rapidly changing environment. The Psych department will be utilizing a Wing on the fourth floor of this building. According to Kingstone the Psych department has its wheels turning with innovative usages for the

building, such as to “get PSA [Psychology Students’ Association] presence in CIRS” or “to get some students unleashed to look at sustainability work.” The possibilities are endless, but the focus will be on sustainability – how Psychology students can contribute to creating social and environmental solutions that will help to cement UBC as an innovative leader in a growing sustainability economy. For more information on the CIRS building, check out: <http://sustain.ubc.ca/hubs/cirs/about-cirs>.

As for what Kingstone wants to see for the Department, in future? “Do I have any specific things, like specific visions [for the Department],” quipped Alan. “Probably not. If someone asks me what do we have to look forward it, I would say, a mirror.”

So dream big undergraduates, and think about changes wish to see in the Department. If these new initiatives are any indication, with the Department’s help and your great ideas, just about anything is possible. The future of UBC Psychology is ours. Ψ

Set Your Goals Straight

A first-hand look into UBC psychology tri-mentorship

BY JEFF DOMINIC-CHUA

As I soon approached my third year at UBC, I wanted to find an engaging way to explore the careers that psychology other majors have delved into. So, the first step I took was applying for UBC's Psychology's Tri-Mentoring Program, which was thoroughly discussed in the previous issue.

After attending an Arts Tri-Mentoring Program info session, I filled up an application form with all pertinent information and handed an updated résumé of my background and skillsets.

Why Tri-Mentoring?

Firstly, I wanted to experience Tri-Mentoring not only for the chance to be mentored by a UBC psychology alumnus, but because I would have the opportunity to assist a lower level student.

I was excited that this student would have the same mindset as me and would also be looking forward to achieving relevant transferable skills based on our mentor's own challenges and experiences.

I was in: now what?

After I received an acceptance e-mail, Grace Chan, a student coordinator for the Psychology Tri-Mentoring Program noted that the "selection criteria are primarily based upon the compatibility between students and our mentor pool — in particular taking into consideration the goals students outline in their application."

I soon realized that skill sets and interests, which complement mentors, are valued more than career aspirations. With this in mind, I learned that having an initiative to set goals and tenaciously follow them through would help us become successful within our triad relationships.

What we have been up to:

Recently, all mentees had Student Mentee Training on October 12 and Tri-Mentoring Kick-off Event on October 18 at IKBLC.

As Chan indicated, "training sessions are a great opportunity to help [us] clarify [our] goals in the program and enhance [our] communication and leadership skills for a successful mentoring relationship."

Furthermore, the kick-off event enabled us mentees to meet with our mentors and apply networking strategies that we learned from the previous training session.

My Goals:

Finally, we're encouraged to establish personal goals, solidify steps that accomplishes them, identify people who'd help us achieve them and create a progress time line that would help us track our progress throughout our mentoring relationships.

As I set my goals straight, I hope to build strong relationships, learn new skills and maximize rewarding opportunities. Ψ

How the ideas behind Tri-mentoring can benefit all students

Similar to establishing my personal and professional goals in the UBC Psychology Tri-Mentoring Program, knowing what you want to do with your Psychology degree can be made possible through consistent goal-setting.

Whether you're able to find your own mentors or ask help from UBC career advisors, being professional can be seen anywhere from how you dress appropriately for an event, keep a decent image in social media outlets and introduce yourself confidently with people you just met.

Maybe your goal is learning how to frequently approach people with firm handshakes and a friendly smile or maybe it's learning how to communicate effectively in front of them. Accomplishing these goals can be done in practical ways such as participating in conferences such as the Student Leadership Conference where you'll gain opportunities to build your network or by attending public speaking workshops where you'll definitely hone communication skills.

Basically, it's up to the student to make his or her own experiences worthwhile. Just like it's up to students to make use of opportunities provided by the mentorship program, I end this with an Albert Einstein quote, "[e]verything that is really great and inspiring is created by the individual who can labor in freedom."

Tri-mentoring Benefits for Students & UBC Mentors

Top 5 Benefits for UBC Students

- 1) An introduction into the professional world (Government, Industry, etc.)
- 2) Sharing unique life experiences, challenges & achievements
- 3) Opportunity for professional networking & employment-related contacts
- 4) Utilizing time-management, leadership & communication skills
- 5) Gain clarity on effective career, academic and personal life-long plans

Top 5 Benefits for UBC Mentors

- 1) Return social support, passion & inspiration that they've received in career
- 2) Create contacts within industries & professional networks
- 3) Further improve communication & leadership skills
- 4) Sustain UBC connections & contribute to stronger community involvement
- 5) Contribute future direction of field/industry by assisting the next generation

Alma Mater Society – Food Bank

At the AMS Food Bank, we provide 7-day emergency food relief to current UBC students with a valid ID. Visit us in the SUB basement (room 58), in the corner by Sprouts and the UBC Wellness Centre!

You can find our hours of operation and other information on our website: <http://www.ams.ubc.ca/services/ams-food-bank/>.

Please check our Facebook for our upcoming fundraising events!

Art Appreciation & Mirror Neurons

An empathy and embodiment driven appreciation of art

BY PAVEL KOZIK

The lure of an art gallery is sometimes just too enticing to resist. From Gustave Doré's Depiction of Satan to Francisco Goya's Saturn Devouring His Son, deep thought, emotion and inspiration may all be elicited as we walk through that gallery. However, from a psychological point of view an instant curiosity emerges: How do these artworks actually elicit such feelings and experiences?

If we consider the work of Gustav Fechner as a starting point, the psychology of esthetics is over 125 years old! Yet, the process of art appreciation is still not fully understood. Before one gets gloomy, research has recently considered the role of mirror neurons in the process of appreciating art.

Originally discovered in macaque monkeys, mirror neurons are neurons that fire both when completing a certain action and when witnessing that same action. For example, to make a facial gesture, such as say a smile, certain neurons within your brain must fire. However, many of these neurons will also fire simply when seeing the smile of another individual. Thus, many of the same neurons involved in forming a smile, also become active when witnessing a smile. Following such findings, some scientists have wondered whether mirror neurons may become active when viewing artwork.

In their paper "Motion, emotion and empathy in esthetic experience," researchers Freedberg and Gallese argue that art appreciation is grounded in mirror neuron activation. Take a glance at the painting *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas* by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio:



The specific cortical areas that become active when we are touched might also become active when witnessing this painting of someone being touched. Through this mirror neuron activation, the researchers argue that we come to embody experience and appreciate the artwork.

Another example would be the etch *What more can one do?* by Francisco Goya:



On viewing this etch; parts of the brain involved in experiencing pain might become active as we are witnessing quite a gruesome and painful event. The overall theme of this research is that mirror neurons help to create an empathetic and embodied appreciation of art.

Of course, considering that mirror neurons are a controversial topic in their own right, their application to art appreciation has brought forth various criticisms. Some researchers have argued that while mirror neurons might play a role in art appreciation, this role is only marginal. Other factors such as expertise, novelty, and fluency of processing have all been shown with empirical data to influence one's attitude toward a visual image. Any proposed mirror neuron theory of art would have to take into consideration the weight and role of these other factors.

A second and perhaps deeper scrutiny claims that mirror neurons only apply to artwork that very saliently depicts emotion, gore, or other such states. Artwork that is more abstract, more difficult to decipher, or that does not contain any particular emotion might be more difficult to explain through a mirror neuron approach.

Lastly, one of the most intriguing points being raised is whether or not any of these

findings are unique to art. Yes, viewing a painting of someone being touched, might cause certain mirror neurons in the brain to fire, but so does actually witnessing a person being touched. Is there any meaningful difference between these two situations in terms of mirror neuron activation? If not, perhaps we are simply discussing a broader principle of vision and cognition rather than a unique property of art. It would seem that future experiments might blossom from this consideration.

Certainly, as with most new ideas, there must be a healthy dose of caution and skepticism, yet at the same time one cannot help but also feel excited as we attempt to advance onward. For every criticism raised, there is the potential for a more fine-grained understanding as further research emerges. The mysterious power of art has clearly spread beyond museums and art galleries, and has now found its way into our laboratories and scientific journals. Ψ

Reading List

Articles Cited in the Article:

Gallese, V., & Freedberg, D. (2007). Motion, emotion and empathy in esthetic experience. *Neuropsychologia*, 11(5)

Some criticism the authors received:

Casati, R., & Pignocchi, A. (2007). Mirror and canonical neurons are not constitutive of aesthetic response. *Neuropsychologia*, 11(10), 410.

A Response:

Gallese, V., & Freedberg, D. (2007). Freedberg, Mirror and canonical neurons are crucial elements in esthetic response. *Neuropsychologia*, 11(10), 411.

Other Articles:

Enticott, P. G., Johnston, P. J., Herring, S. E., Hoy, K. E., & Fitzgerald, P. B. (2008). Mirror neuron activation is associated with facial emotion processing. *Neuropsychologia*, 46(11), 2851-2854.

The original mirror neuron discovery paper:

Di Pellegrino, G., Fadiga, L., Fogassi, L., Gallese, V., & Rizzolatti, G. (1992). Understanding motor events: a neurophysiological study. *Experimental Brain Research*, 91(1), 176-180.

Transpersonal Psychology

A field devoted to connection,
ego-transcendence and wellbeing

BY CARLY THORNTON

Where do you draw the boundary between self, other and the environment? Psychology tells us that we are influenced by interactions with other people and with nature. But how connected are we really, and how does our perspective on this connection to others impact our happiness? Transpersonal psychologists are interested in these questions.

Transpersonal psychology focuses on maximizing human potential by investigating how individuals can expand their self-concept beyond the level of the persona or the ego. For a further understanding of the field, we should first consider the definition of transpersonal. The prefix of trans is Latin for across, beyond, or over, while the term personal is Latin for body, character, and personality. Therefore, transpersonal psychology is interested in activities that lead to experiences of unity and connection with aspects of the universe beyond the common conceptualization of self.

The first psychologist to use the term transpersonal was William James, who referred to a connection with a higher part of the self—be it the universe, spirit, God, or cosmic energy. Furthermore, transpersonal psychologists take ideas from ideologies in eastern philosophy, which has a similar concept of self. These topics can be empirically studied, and can even be explained through physics!

Maslow was the first psychologist to bring transpersonal psychology to the forefront of the field, calling it the fourth force in psychology. In fact, he modified his hierarchy to include transpersonal as the highest level of human potential, although most textbooks only include his original hierarchy.

Transpersonal psychologists often study non-ordinary states of consciousness, also referred to by Maslow as peak experiences. These peak experiences are characterized by temporary distortions in space and time, feelings of happiness, momentary com-

plete loss of fear, and the collapse or transcendence of polar opposites such as good/evil, free will/destiny, and perhaps most importantly the opposites of self/other.

Such experiences are often found in practices that involve absorbed attention, like meditation, and activities that elicit flow, or “being in the zone,” such as long distance running. During such activities, the person becomes so absorbed in what they are doing that the distinction of subject and object cease to exist, and there is only the present state of doing or of being, or in other words ego transcendence.

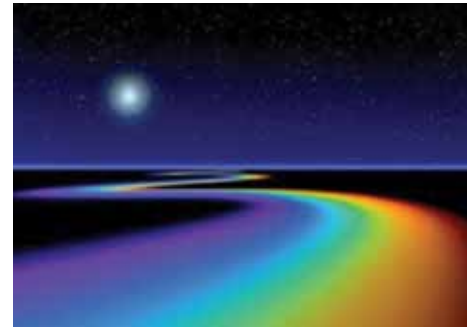
The self-concept we have can certainly influence our behaviour, as we have seen with independent and collectivist self-concepts, in western and eastern cultures respectively. But, can a more expansive sense of self lead to greater happiness? This is what William James, Maslow, Buddhist, Hindu’s, and transpersonal psychologists believe.

The self can be viewed as independent and separate, socially and ecologically connected, or even more expansively as connected through time and space. Non- of these concepts require us to think in terms of supernatural phenomenon, as all of the concepts are grounded in physics, an idea worth thinking about. Ψ

Quantum theory, may show that particles are not isolated grains of matter, but are instead probability patterns, interconnected within a cosmic web (Superstring theory) (203 Capra) As we break down matter we see that all that exists beyond that matter is energy (String theory). Matter, space, and time cannot be discussed as separate entities, but dynamically interacting (Einstein’s special and General relativity theory) (63 Capra).

Finally, Quantum entanglement has shown that two particles created together can be placed at the opposite sides of the universe and still be reliant on each other’s characteristics; for example the direction of their spin. When created, both particles will be in a superposition of all possible spins, until one of these particles is interacted with. Once one particle is interacted with both particles wave functions will collapse and they will have opposite spins Therefore an interaction with particle X instantly affects the characteristics of particle Y located billions of light years away.

In essence space provides the illusion of their being separate objects. Although science may never prove the Big Bang theory, it is certainly the most plausible theory out there. Since the Big Bang is thought to have originated from a single particle, due to quantum fluctuation, this may mean that we are more intimately connected than we thought. We very well could still be entangled (Eg. A particle in my liver may be connected (touching) with an atom in the star Beetlejuice, which is located 640 light years from Earth).



Reading List

Books:

1. Psychotherapy and spirit: Theory and practice in transpersonal psychology. By Brant Cortright
2. The Tao of Physics: An exploration of the parallels between modern physics and eastern mysticism. By Fritjof Capra.
3. Humanistic and transpersonal psychology: A historical and biographical sourcebook. By Donald Moss

Research:

1. The construct of self-expansiveness and the validity of the transpersonal scale of the self-expansiveness level form. By James D. Pappas, and Harris Friedman.

Websites:

1. Canadian Humanistic and Transpersonal Association: <http://www.chata.ca/>
2. International Transpersonal Association: <http://www.transpersonalassociation.org/information.aspx>
3. The international Journal of transpersonal studies: <http://www.transpersonalstudies.org/>

Who needs sex when you can have cake?

The Psychology of Asexuality

BY BELLA MARGOLLES

There's no doubt that we live in a sex-centered society. Sex is used to sell products, and even shows up on day-time television. Take for example the controversial Carl's Junior commercial, in which scantily clad Paris Hilton struts around in a barely-there swimsuit while soaping up a Bentley. Ads such as this are unfortunately; commonplace. Sex influences our relationships, our work and most aspects of our lives. But, what would it be like to feel no sexual attraction at all? About 1% of the population would be able to tell you: It's no big deal..

What is Asexuality?

According to the Journal of Sex Research, 1% of the human population has never felt sexually attracted to anyone, and could be considered asexual. Those with an asexual orientation are characterized as lacking interest in or desire for sex. Popular among the asexual community is the cake analogy, which compares sex with cake: If you like cake have a slice, and if you don't, no one's forcing you to.

I developed an interest in asexuality when two fantastic speakers, Cole Brown and David Jay, from the Asexual Visibility and Education Network (AVEN), came to give a talk during my Human Sexuality class. Prior to the talk, I didn't really know what to expect. Asexuality seemed like an easy enough concept, so what would the speakers discuss for an entire hour?

It turns out that asexuality is far more complex than I thought. For example, there is a range of romantic orientations including hetero-, bi-, homo-, and aromantic (aromantic referring to someone not desiring a romantic relationship). Further categories include individuals existing 'in-between' such as demi-sexuals – asexuals who only feel a need for sex when they form a strong emotional connection with someone, and Grey-As, which could include, but is not limited to, individuals who feel sexual desire only in limited circumstances.

Asexuality and relationships?

Much to my surprise, I also learned that Asexuals pursue relationships. Somehow I

had interwoven the concepts of "sex" and "relationships" into one bundle, as many of us do. However, as I found out, not all kinds of relationships involve sex. Cole Brown succinctly explained her bi-romantic orientation with the quote: "I'm attracted to the same personality traits, regardless of gender." I was also surprised to learn that some asexual individuals paired up with sexual individuals. In this type of relationship, compromise is key, especially when it comes to sexual needs or the lack thereof.

Asexuality: Prevalence & Awareness Initiatives

Until recently, the general population has largely ignored asexuality, mostly because the asexual community is an extreme minority. In fact, the first study to explicitly explore asexuality was done in 2004 by Anthony Bogaert. Out of approximately 18,000 people he sampled, 195 (or 1%) reported no sexual desire. Studies continue to emerge as awareness of asexuality spreads and studies are moving away from a focus on demographics to focus on the roots of asexuality.

Efforts to form asexual communities and to help individuals understand that asexuality is an orientation (not an abnormality, as many asexuals initially believe, growing up in a sex-fueled society) are aided by websites such as www.asexuality.org (the headquarters of AVEN). On this website, forums allow users to interact, to tell their stories and to feel like they belong.

Furthermore, Asexual Awareness Week 2011, an international campaign promoting asexuality awareness, took place from October 23-29. Events included a community wide demographic survey, screenings of the new documentary '(A)sexual,' and guest blogs. For more information, visit: www.asexualawarenessweek.com/index.html.

Finding out more about the topic is easy: just tell someone about asexuality, it's as simple as that. You can post AVEN's pamphlet (www.asexuality.org/docs/AVEN%20pamphlets.pdf) on facebook, and discuss it with your friends. Simple acts like this can make a big difference in helping the asexual community become more visible in society. Ψ



CANADIAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION



SOCIÉTÉ
CANADIENNE
DE PSYCHOLOGIE

Calling all UBC Psychology Majors

Be a part of the Canadian Psychological Association
by Zarina Giannone

My name is Zarina Giannone and I am a fourth year Psychology Major at UBC. I also represent the Canadian Psychological Association here at UBC, serving as a link between our student body and the CPA. It is my main objective to inform you of all the great opportunities that are currently transpiring within this organization and within the field of Psychology across Canada.



What is the CPA?

CPA's goal is to use science and practice in support of each other and the discipline as a whole. The CPA is an exciting resource that all students looking to pursue a career in Psychology should utilize. If you are looking to become more involved within the CPA, then I encourage you to consider becoming a Student Affiliate Member of the CPA.

Why you should become an affiliate member:

All student affiliates are automatically members of the Student Section of the CPA. The Section supports student activities by providing regular columns on pertinent student issues through their Psynopsis, their student newsletter, advice on choosing graduate schools and internships and information regarding the Annual CPA Convention. The Section supports advocacy on such topics such as tuition, ethics, and student life.

Membership benefits and services:

- Professional Development: Workshops on grad school applications and CV's
- Eligibility for CPA Student Success Awards
- Eligibility to present at the CPA Convention
- CPA Journals, like Psynopsis
- The opportunity to join the Student Section free of charge which has over 1600 student members

If you have any questions regarding memberships, my role here at UBC or the CPA in general please feel free to contact me via email. Please stay tuned for updates!

Thank you for taking the time to read this short summary of the CPA- I hope to see you get involved in this exciting organization!

Check out the CPA website to learn more! www.cpa.ca/students

Regards,
Zarina Giannone
zarina.giannone@gmail.com

Dr. Amori Mikami, and the Peer Relationships in Childhood Lab

BY KINO ZHAO

This year, the UBC Psychology Department welcomed a new clinical psychology faculty member. In this issue's professor profile, *Psyched!* sets to discover more about Dr. Mikami and her clinical/developmental lab.

Growing up in California, Dr. Amori Mikami went to school at Stanford University, where she finished her B.A. and M.A. in psychology, before getting her Ph.D in clinical psychology at University of California. Prior to coming to UBC in late August, she worked as an assistant professor at the University of Virginia. Her research interests are centered on children, and their relationships.

"I study children's friendships. Why it is that some children can make friends really easily, but then, when you look at other kids, they really have a lot of trouble... one of the things that I'm studying is why that is," explained Mikami. "Also, I work on interventions to help kids that have trouble with friendships," she said.

However, unlike most traditional childhood psychologists, Mikami's interventions do not only focus on children. Instead, she takes a broader, systems level approach to her work, providing advice to parents and teachers to prevent some of the problems that children have, from developing in the first place.

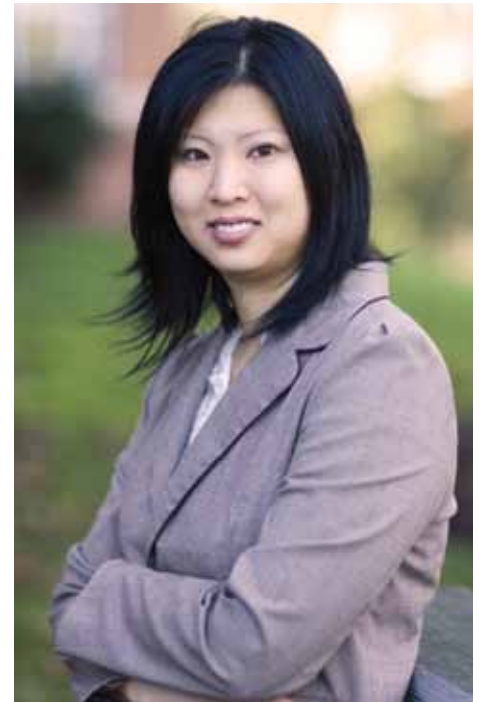
As she explained, "Just this past summer before I came to Vancouver, I was running a summer camp over there [Virginia] for kids with friendship problems. So what I was doing was training the teachers at the summer camp ways to help the children," she said.

Does this research sound like something you might be interested in? We also asked about Dr. Mikami's plans here at UBC. As it turns out, although her lab is still get-

ting set up (it was being painted the day of the interview), Mikami is already thinking about taking student research assistants in the winter semester, and said she would definitely be looking for student volunteers starting next year.

So what kind of students is her lab looking for? "For the undergraduate student volunteers, it's generally students who... care about children and who want to learn more about the research literature," she said. "Typically what undergraduate students do in my lab is interview the kids and the parents, or they run participants," she added. She further explained that her studies involve taking a child and their friend into the lab to videotape them playing a game together. Undergraduate research assistants would be in charge of explaining to the children what their tasks are, as well as videotaping them and handing out questionnaires.

On a lighter note, since coming to Vancouver, Mikami told *Psyched!* that she has been sampling food during her free time.



"I really like bubble tea," she said with a laugh. "I've been making a list about the bubble tea places here that I've tried and what I think of them, and the list has already gone up to 25." She also enjoys walking on the beach, and spending time with her husband and her cat.

If you are interested in finding out more about Dr. Mikami and her exciting research, visit her website at <http://www2.psych.ubc.ca/~mikamilab/>. ☽

Psyched! Newsletter: We're looking for you

Psyched! is the Psychology Student Association's (PSA) departmental newsletter written by psychology students for psychology students.

Published once per month, *Psyched!* is designed to highlight exciting topics in the psychological community and to inform both students and staff about what's current in the department. Past topics have included career possibilities, relationships tips, faculty interviews, GRE advice, the history of psychology, and more. The process is simple: we write about what we find interesting and in doing so, develop our writing skills while learning about a variety of topics.

Psyched! is a great way to express your opinions by bringing your own perspective to the table, alongside other similarly-minded psychology students. If you think contributing to *Psyched!* is something you can see yourself doing, please let us know! Positions include graphic design, photography, and writing as either a staff writer or contributor.



Email Recruitment Coordinator and Staff Writer
Meghan Buckley (psa.editor@psych.ubc.ca) today!

400mg of Diazepam and Thiopental

BY JADE MCGREGOR

“I am giving you an opportunity to do the right thing. It will be cleaner with your help, but I will do it either way. You can be a part of it or not.”

He is decisive, composed.

Too straightforward. It makes me uncomfortable. I'd rather meet with a hysterical mother demanding extensive treatment for a child I had not yet evaluated.

I'd rather receive a rectal examination.

“I have about 2 months left. These 6 years have been wearing. Everything is ready.”

His wife rubs his back.

The children lean up against him. Their eyelids fall slowly until their upper eyelashes touch their lower ones. And up slowly. Like Japanese fans. Like jaws.

The blink of exhausted children who understand affliction.

It would be easiest to say no.

My eyes search for compelling evidence to support that claim.

They meet cold white floors, a desk – neatly stacked with gauze and disposable gloves and ace bandages and cotton swabs.

Turquoise stools.

Turquoise trimmed posters frame the decaying inside of a smoker's body.

Fat flat sticks fight against the wall of a jar on my faded turquoise counter.

Turquoise, turquoise, turquoise, like the synthetic smiles of parents whose children have been prescribed another last-ditch attempt at survival.

I am responsible for persistent breathing; for blood to pump through the heart's atria, for nutrients to squeeze through the intracellular liquid and make their way into cells.

Homeostasis.

But what of life? How much am I responsible for?

See, I am not God.

I am a mechanic. I tinker with people. I do hazard checks and tune ups, patch up jobs and assessments.



Whatever it takes to keep the product on the road, I do.

How dare he ask this of me! My reputation would be ruined as fast as a tiny water droplet tarnishes metal.

I would be excommunicated.

Emily would leave me.

And worse, I'd go to jail. This isn't Oregon.

“They would like to get on with their lives. See the sun set and rise again. Please consider my request. I will be back in three days for your answer.”

But his choice is not mine. My choice is to help or not.

They will know where he got it. Like Big Brother. They always know.

I look around. Had my office absorbed the tone of the interactions played within? Or did it help to foster them? The chicken or the egg.

“I don't need three days,” I say with a sigh.

“I'll have 400mg of Diazepam and Thiopental ready for tomorrow morning.” Ψ

Inside Jade's brain: Background information about this author's inspiration

Positive psychology and the promotion of wellbeing certainly have a place within the discipline of psychology, but unfortunately this place appears to land secondary to the 'rational/mechanistic approach' and focus on absence of psychopathology.

Disappointed that much of academia in the West shared the dominant culture's emphasis on concrete “outcome” first and foremost over the individuals' subjective experience, just under a year ago the first draft of this story came into existence as I began to creatively explore the arguments in favor of euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Believing it is important that critics of the field arise from within the discipline itself, I wanted the tone of the piece to reflect a somewhat dystopic society, which can sometimes be found Here and Now.

I hoped the narrative and the project itself would challenge the notion that if one is an academic one is not an artist, that science and activism are dichotomous in nature, and that different ways of knowing cannot be synthesized into more powerful new ways of knowing.

FUN PAGE!

Learn a Bit, Laugh a Lot (Or Vice Versa)

BY KATE AND MEGHAN

Actor-observer Attributional Difference:

This phenomenon describes the tendency to ascribe the behaviour of others' to dispositional factors, while focusing more on the influence of situational forces when explaining one's own behaviour.

For example, if you happened see me walking down the street frantically talking to myself about how there are frightening creatures flying through the air trying to eat the souls of innocent people, you might conclude that I am suffering from some sort of psychological disorder. In reality, I might just have a Bluetooth headset hidden under my hair and instead, I am currently describing how frightening the plot of the new Harry Potter movie was to one of my friends.

The Mere Exposure Effect: The more we see or experience something the more positively we evaluate it. So, if you tie me to a chair and force me to watch The Hannah Montana Show over and over and over again, not only would I start to think that Miley Cyrus is a great actress, but also that she is a great singer (Please don't try this at home).

GRE Words-of-the-Month:

Inveigle - verb

to persuade (someone) to do something by means of deception or flattery

While he attempted to *inveigle* his TA into giving him a better grade on his term paper, Alistair was certain she would notice the lack of sincerity behind his praises and he was starting to doubt his chances of success.

Imprecation - verb

a spoken curse

Marrian began to mutter *imprecations* at the 99 B-Line after being passed for a second time.

Multifarious - adjective

having many varied parts or aspects

Duncan hoped his *multifarious* resume would be enough to help him through the interview he had that afternoon. If not, there was always his charming personality.

Insouciant - noun

casual lack of concern; indifference

While *insouciance* may be particularly appealing in a friend, it is not so appealing (and often annoying) when you end up finishing an entire group project because your partner was too carefree to be concerned about deadlines. Ψ

Learn how to study smart with Psychology Instructor Sunaina Assanand

Dr. Sunaina Assanand is an Instructor in the Learning Enhancement Area of Psychology. Dedicated to teaching and to helping students learn, Assanand will provide *Psyched!* with one study tip each month and in the process, help all of us undergraduate students to achieve our study goals.

If there is any aspect of studying that you would like to learn more about, or if you have a specific question you would like answered, please email Ashley psa.editor@psych.ubc.ca. She will be sure to pass your question on to Sunaina for next month's issue!

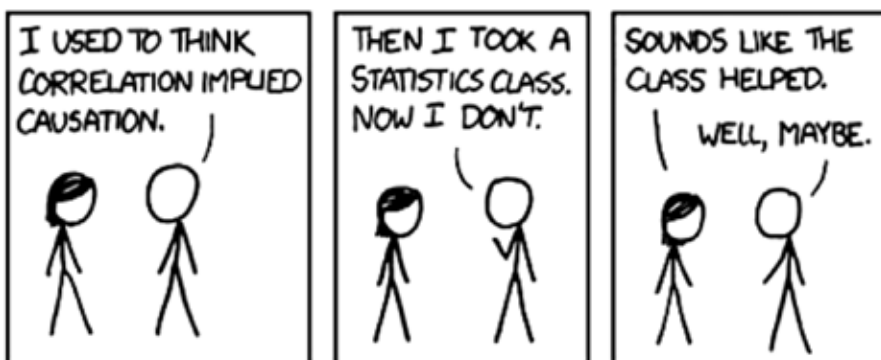
One of the challenges associated with studying psychology is working with the vast amounts of textbook content that you are asked to read.

Try turning chapter headings and subheadings into questions before you begin reading. As you read the chapter, try to answer each of the questions that you generated.

This is one way to ensure that you have grasped the major points that the chapter is attempting to convey to the reader!

Answers to Crossword on Page 12:

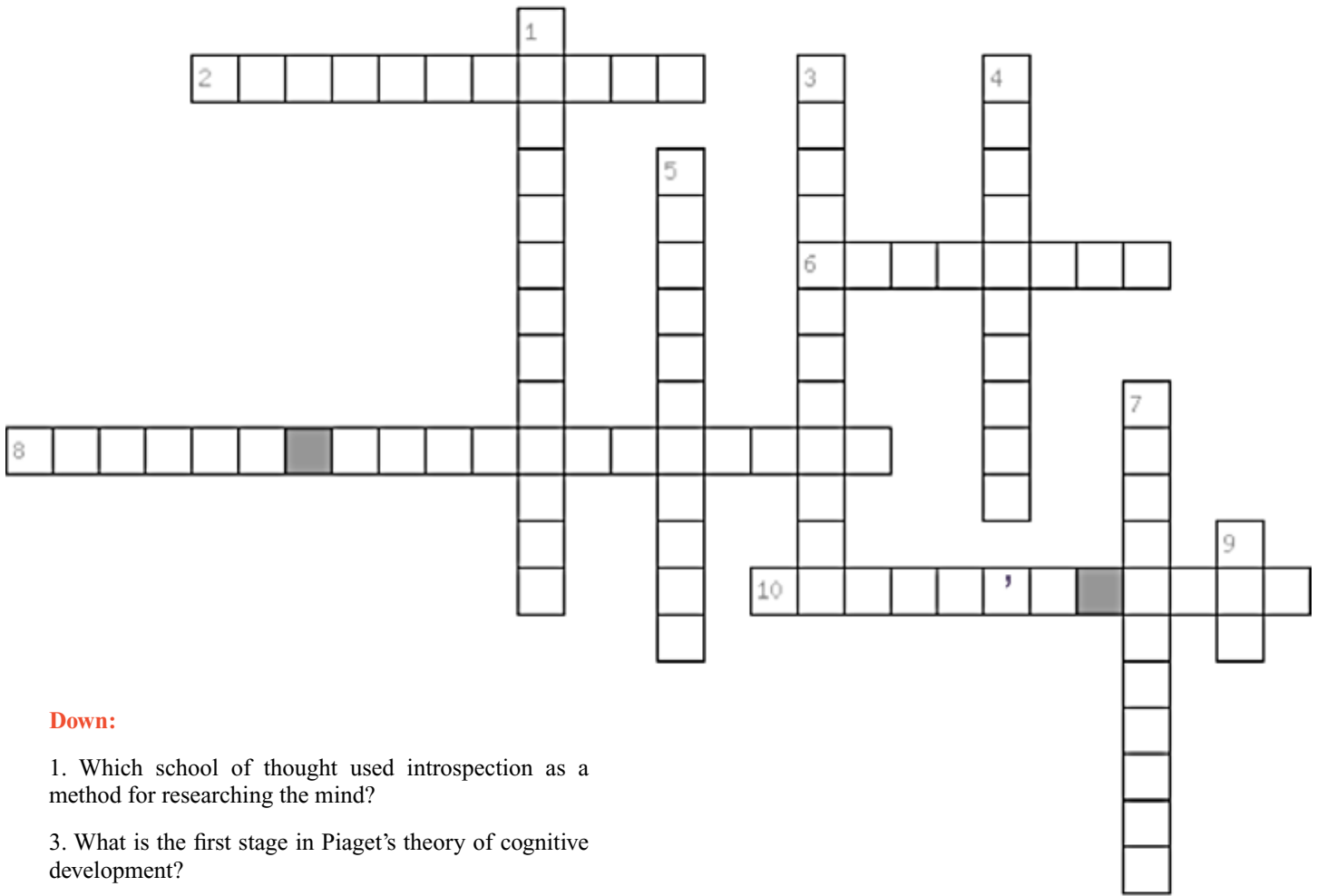
1. Structuralism, 2. Correlation,
3. Sensorimotor, 4. Extinction,
5. Sublimation, 6. Openness,
7. Agoraphobia, 8. Social Facilitation,
9. REM, 10. Broca's Area



Correlation doesn't imply causation, but it does waggle its eyebrows suggestively and gesture furtively while mouthing 'look over there'. (c) "Correlation" xkcd.com



CRAIG SWANSON © WWW.PERSPICUITY.COM



Down:

1. Which school of thought used introspection as a method for researching the mind?
3. What is the first stage in Piaget's theory of cognitive development?
4. In operant conditioning, which term describes process of ending a conditioned response?
5. Which defense mechanism involves channeling threatening drives into acceptable impulses?
7. What is the term used to describe a fear of situations that are not easily escaped and might elicit a panic attacks?
9. During which stage of the sleep cycle do we dream?

Across:

2. _____ does not equal causation? (SERIOUSLY!)
6. What does the O in the acronym OCEAN stand for?
8. Which phenomenon describes the enhancing or inhibiting effect of the presence of others during task performance?
10. Which area of the brain is associated with speech production?

