Greetings from the Chair

Trish Devine

Hello Alums and Friends:

As I enter my last year as Chair of this outstanding department, I’ve been reflecting on all that we have accomplished. During the time that I’ve been Chair, we have hired new faculty including two just this year. We revamped our undergraduate curriculum and improved a number of aspects of our graduate program. We added to our advising team, which is widely recognized as one of the strongest advising teams in the university. My colleagues and our students continue to be recognized for their innovative research that shapes the field.

We have also established an Advocacy Board for the department made up of alums who are committed to helping us advance the research and teaching missions of the department. We are extremely fortunate to have such energetic and devoted supporters who recognize the importance of the research conducted by members of this department and who appreciate our dedication to our teaching mission. Two members of the Advocacy Board have established endowed funds to support department members in their research activities (see column on page 2). We are grateful for their generosity and for the impact that these gifts will have for the Department and especially for Psychology students.

I’m proud of these accomplishments and, as I look forward to the final months of my tenure as Chair, I’m focused on what still needs to be done. Though we have made great strides in increasing our fundraising, and we are deeply appreciative of the donations we have received over the years, I see that we still lag far behind what we need to enable us to function as a top-tier research institution. The lag is created in large measure because state and university support for the department has decreased substantially over the last 20 years and precipitously in the wake of the economic downturn in 2008. In fact, the state provides only about 13% of the university’s operating budget. Other sources of support come from faculty grants and from fundraising.

In this modern era, without support from donors, we cannot maintain basic important departmental functions (e.g., our colloquium series, our annual graduation events for undergraduate and graduate students) or support basic faculty and graduate student recruitment activities. Our opportunities for pursuing new initiatives that would enrich the experience for our students are extremely limited by the tight budgetary climate.

Indeed, on more than one occasion, I have had to face the unpleasant (and disappointing) experience of having to say to a member of the department who has come to me with exciting and innovative ideas that would enrich the classroom or research experience for our students that “we don’t have funds to support this initiative.” This is a most unfortunate set of circumstances.
More and more the responsibility for funding department activities is falling back to departments and, frankly, we can't keep up.

In this last year of my Chair term, I would like to try to improve upon our fundraising successes. To that end, and against the backdrop of the university's budgetary woes and the excruciatingly tight budget for the department, I would like to ask, a bit shamelessly, for your support in the form of a donation to the department. Any amount would be appreciated and you can specify how you want the donation to be used.

We have identified areas of primary need on our department website and there are convenient links to the UW Foundation website where you can donate online; there is also information on how to donate through the US mail. The links provide clear information on how to specify the use of your donation. There are opportunities to donate to the Department's general fund, the undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as in support of faculty research. With a little more help from our friends (like you) we can maintain our historical standard of excellence in the experiences and opportunities we provide for our students.

Mark & Ilene Laufman Psychology Graduate Student Support Fund

Alumnus Mark Laufman (B.S., ’66), founding member and Chair of the Psychology Advocacy Board, along with his wife Ilene Laufman (photo, right), have established the Mark & Ilene Laufman Psychology Graduate Student Support Fund to enable the Department of Psychology the flexibility to respond to the financial needs and academic accomplishments of its graduate students.

As the first ever endowed discretionary fund to support Psychology graduate students, the Laufman Support Fund recognizes achievements in scholarship and provides assistance for travel and materials related to study and research, among other needs determined by the Department. The Laufmans encourage recipients of their award to one day give back as well by making a gift to the Department.

Psychology Department Support Fund

The Psychology Department Support Fund was established by Dr. Joyce Y. Rosevear who received both her MA (’70) and PhD (’74) in Psychology at UW-Madison, and her husband Fred Rosevear. This is the department's first endowed discretionary fund and it supports areas of greatest need, with preference given to graduate student assistance. Dr. Rosevear is a long-time supporter of the Department through funding of undergraduate awards and also a founding and current member of the Department of Psychology Advocacy Board.
In Memory of Bryan Hendricks (1946-2013)

By Samantha F. Anderson

Everyone has a story about how Dr. Bryan Hendricks made their life a little bit brighter. I am certain he was a large part of the reason I decided to pursue Psychology as more than a college major but as a way of life.

I have had a host of inspiring teachers, professors, and mentors who have shaped my aspirations over the years, but I cannot seem to come up with anyone quite like Bryan. With the longest office hours of any professor in history, Bryan made it his philosophy to put students first, and always first. Every student knew that Bryan cared personally for their academic success, Psychology undergraduate experience, and future aspirations. The challenging courses of Statistics and Research Methods are often taken at a time when students are still adjusting to university life and may be uncertain as to the career path they see themselves taking. Bryan made that choice simple. Statistics was not a complex web of numbers and equations but rather a logical, explainable metric for testing important hypotheses. Experimental Psychology was not a burdensome obstacle that had to be surmounted but rather a guided expedition into what researchers really do and why they love what they do.

One of Bryan’s strengths was reminding students that they often already know the answers to the questions they seek. When I was frustrated with unsuccessful attempts to begin my graduate school personal statement, Bryan offered his advice. “Tell me about your experiences here,” he calmly said. I followed up with an honest telling of the path that led to my passion for clinical research. “That’s it,” he said frankly, reminding me that I had known what to write all along. Students would come into Bryan’s office with dozens of pages of statistical print-outs, puzzled at what their results meant in words. In just a few minutes, Bryan would have painted a telling portrait of the results on his ever handy pad of paper, reminding students that the answer is often more simple than they make it out to be.

Bryan’s title of “lecturer” did not truly do him justice. In the classroom, Bryan’s lessons were passionate, applicable, and intellectually stimulating, qualities that mean much more than a simple lecture. Day in and day out, Bryan demonstrated that teaching did not stop with coursework, that difficult skills could be mastered when uniquely posed to each individual, and that students can become passionate when they see the same in their instructor. Bryan truly loved what he did, and his students certainly knew. In individual meetings, Bryan demonstrated his ability to adapt his teaching techniques to individual student personalities and academic needs, and his always positive, always calm demeanor provided a respite for students during what could have been very stressful college years.

I have always thought that my life will have meaning, as long as I can positively have an impact on one person. Bryan Hendricks touched the lives of many. He emanated the spirit of generosity, encouragement, and passion. He reminded students that knowledge means little if it cannot be shared with others. He was truly a hero to the students he taught, and his humility was a model for all to emulate. Dr. Bryan Hendricks and all he gave to the department of Psychology will never be forgotten.

Donate to the Bryan Hendricks Peer Mentor Award

Please use the form at the end of the newsletter or go to our website and click the “Giving Opportunities’ link.
Meet the Faculty: Paula Niedenthal

Have you ever walked into a room in which a group of your friends was watching a Badger football game, and known in a split second that the Badgers were winning? Or were losing? How did you know? In that second, you probably scanned the facial expressions of some of your friends. And their facial expressions told it all.

Research in the Niedenthal Emotions Lab examines the processes of brain, behavior, and culture involved in the interpretation of other people's facial expressions of emotions. Most recently our research focuses on the human smile. How many categories of smiles are there? How do we know which category a particular smile belongs in? Are the categories the same, and do people come to the meanings in the same way across cultures?

Let me provide a few answers. In our view, there are three general categories of smile, each of which helps us accomplish a specific task of social living. One social task is to reward behavior in ourselves and others. When we do something good or when someone does something good to us, we smile. This smile makes everyone feel good. It is a reward smile, and it increases the future probability of the behavior that preceded it. Another type of smile is an affiliative smile. This facial expression might look a little different from the reward smile, most often it involves a closed mouth, so no teeth are showing. Affiliative smiles communicate to someone else a social connection and absence of threat. Finally, some smiles do not convey positive feelings or intentions, but rather aggressive warnings. Smiles that we call dominance smiles are used to negotiate social hierarchies; they may signal superiority or impending criticism. New studies from our laboratory provide scientific evidence for these three categories of smile.

How do we know a particular smile when we see it? Two behaviors, eye contact and facial mimicry, are very important in this endeavor. Our research suggests that in many situations, especially when a person truly cares about understanding someone else’s feelings, observers achieve eye contact with the smiler and then mimic the smile on their own face. These two behaviors appear to help the body and the brain of the observer re-create the feeling of the smiler. Rather than an intellectual process, that is, we know what facial expressions mean by making them and feeling the burst of corresponding emotion in ourselves.

Of course, we sometimes misinterpret the meaning of a smile, and that problem might be most acute in international relations. Our cross-cultural research indicates that the three categories of smiles are universal, but also that their importance varies across cultures. For example, in some cultures the tasks of rewarding behavior and affiliating with new people have been more important in establishing the current cultural practices than the negotiation of hierarchy. When people make errors in interpreting facial expressions such as the smile, then, it may be because they avoid eye contact and facial mimicry. They may miss the meaning by failing to “embody” the facial expression. Our ongoing research addresses just this question.

More information about the Niedenthal Emotions Lab can be found on her website: http://psych.wisc.edu/niedenthal/.
Professor Chuck Snowdon retired from the University in December, 2012. A festschrift in his honor will be held on Saturday, August 24. For further information, contact Professor Janet Hyde, jshyde@wisc.edu. What follows is an overview of Chuck’s work by his long-time collaborator, Dr. Toni Ziegler.

While Chuck started out his career in the UW-Madison Department of Psychology studying rodent sensory and motor control, learning and communication, he was well on his way to being a primatologist and animal behaviorist by the early 1980s when I arrived in Madison to work with him. Lucky for the field of primatology, Chuck developed allergies to rodents and found his love of nonhuman primates.

Chuck is one of the unique psychologists who are well versed in all areas of psychology. He has had seminal papers in the areas of conditioned learning, child development, social learning, speech and language, social memory, social bonding and neuroscience. In his specialized fields of Animal Behavior and Primatology, there are many influential discoveries that Chuck, with his collaborators and his students, have published as important papers to the primate science-animal behavior community: speech and language acquisition in pygmy marmosets, long-term memory in cotton-top tamarins, the effective responses of tamarins to species-specific music, reproductive endocrinology in cotton-top tamarins, neuroscience and brain imaging in common marmosets, social bonding in tamarins and marmosets, chemical communication in marmosets and tamarins, cooperative breeding and prosociality in tamarins, social learning, infant care behavior – particularly paternal care and neuroendocrine controls of behavior in marmosets and tamarins.

These are but a few of the important studies that Chuck has instigated. Chuck was also a pioneer in promoting non-invasive techniques for gathering neural and physiological data. At one point, Chuck worked with Anita Ginther (now Ph.D.) and Kate Washabaugh (now D.V.M.) in developing the first ever card for measuring scrotal and testis size in an unrestrained cotton-top tamarin for reproductive maturation!

Equally impressive, is Chuck’s work with students on field-based studies that incorporate components of his lab-based studies. His students have worked with pygmy marmosets, cotton-topped tamarins, common marmosets, baboons, chimpanzees and gorillas. His appreciation of the mutually informative nature of field and captive studies reflects his unfailing curiosity about both proximate and ultimate mechanisms of behavior. It has also generated new ways of thinking about animal behavior and its applications to humans.

Throughout my time of collaborating with Chuck, I noticed and admired his ability to foster close collaborative relationships with his fellow colleagues, students and junior faculty. No one can deny his motivation and devotion to his students and those on faculty who needed a lift up.

Get LinkedIn!

Psychology is on LinkedIn! Are you? Join our UW-Madison Psychology Alumni Group and connect professionally with your fellow Psychology alumni.
The Bryan Hendricks Peer Mentor Award was established upon Bryan’s retirement to recognize a graduating senior student who actively mentored and guided a fellow undergraduate student or students. A beloved teacher, Bryan was known for his dedicated teaching and guidance, as well as his commitment and mentorship to our undergraduates. We are proud to announce Kelsey Ward as the inaugural recipient.

Kelsey was nominated by a fellow member of Professor Judy Harackiewicz’s research lab, McKaye Whiteside, where Kelsey was a mentor to her and many others in the lab.

In her nomination, McKay states, “in her lab mentoring role, she has done an exemplary job helping me and others learn how to perform the daily tasks of running participants through various social psychological studies. Kelsey has consistently proven to be an exceptional support system for all of the research assistants in our lab and demonstrates openness to others’ thoughts. She has an obvious enthusiasm to help others. My experience in lab has been greatly enriched and would not be the same without Kelsey as my mentor.”

As Kelsey reflected, “Being recognized as this year’s recipient was particularly meaningful to me considering my relationship with Bryan and the impact he had on my life. Bryan was my professor for Experimental Psychology in the Fall of 2011. The class that had seemed so stressful and intimidating to me in the beginning of the semester ended up being my favorite class I took in college, and to this day I have never learned as much in a course as I did in Bryan's Psychology 225 class. During lectures and my individual meetings with him, I got a chance to observe how passionate he was about psychological science and his enthusiasm for research sparked a further interest in the field for me also.”

Kelsey’s passion for mentoring and advising students has shaped her career path and she will be attending graduate school at Northern Illinois University in preparation for a career in higher education. “It means so to me to be recognized in respect of Bryan, and I am extremely grateful for everything he has done for me and the impact that he has had on my life.”

Senior Rachel Wang Earns Dean’s Prize

The College of Letters and Science has awarded Rachel Wang with the prestigious Dean’s Prize, which recognizes a high achieving student. Rachel graduated with majors in Psychology and Linguistics as well as a certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). As an undergraduate, she worked in the Language and Cognitive Neuroscience Lab and the Infant Learning Lab. She has served as an officer with Psi Chi Psychology Honor Society and the Honors Student Organization, was president of Wisconsin Literacy Initiative (which provides tutoring to non-native speakers), and has volunteered for six more organizations that focus on language and literacy.

This past year Rachel worked with Professor Maryellen MacDonald to complete her senior honors thesis “Implicit Language Learning: The Malleability of Adult Grammar.” Professor MacDonald shares, “She’s really smart, ambitious, organized, a wonderful team player with others. She does this all the while working in two labs, tutoring, taking rigorous classes, and working on her Hilldale research. She is simply outstanding.”
Graduate Student Spotlight: Arielle Baskin-Sommers

From the fictional Norman Bates in Hitchcock’s *Psycho* to the real life Ted Bundy, psychopaths have been portrayed as callous, unemotional cold-blooded predators. Our media and even the general public have consistently demonstrated a fascination with the behavior of psychopathic individuals. Often this behavior has been attributed to a certain “fearlessness,” that is shown by the psychopath as s/he commits what are portrayed as the most horrific acts. However, “the low-fear perspective” that dominates much lay and even scholarly work in the area fails to take into account many other characteristics of psychopathic behavior, most importantly those associated with the ability to attend to a wide array of contextual stimuli as well as to the ways in which psychopaths process their emotions.

Under the guidance of Drs. Joseph Newman and John Curtin, I focused on providing a more nuanced picture of the underlying mechanisms associated with psychopathic behavior. In two studies, we had incarcerated offenders view and categorize letter and color stimuli that could also be used to predict the administration of electric shocks. There were two types of task instructions: one, respond to threat-relevant information (i.e., the color that predicted the threat of shock); or, two, respond to a threat-irrelevant dimension of the stimuli (e.g., the case of a letter), but despite this alternative goal, the threat information (i.e., color) still predicted the potential for shock. First, the longstanding belief that psychopathic individuals are “fearless” was not supported. Instead, the results showed that psychopathic individuals were able to display fear responses under conditions that focused attention directly on the threat-relevant dimension. However, psychopathic individuals showed a deficit in the fear response under conditions that required participants to focus on a threat-irrelevant dimension of stimuli (i.e., when threat cues were peripheral to the goal of responding to information about the letter). These instructed fear conditioning studies demonstrated that psychopaths, rather than having some immutable traits, actually suffer from what is called an “attention bottleneck” that prevents them from processing important cues from the environment.

In contrast to our traditional ways of thinking about psychopaths as innately fearless, the existence of such an attention bottleneck suggests that their emotion deficits are moderated by attention. This is particularly exciting given the emergence of work suggesting that attention is a trainable skill. Using a method known as cognitive remediation, it may be possible to train psychopathic individuals to pay attention to contextual clues, thereby reducing their callous disregard for the rights and well-being of others. I, along with a number of collaborators, have already begun to test such an intervention and preliminary results seem to support a cautious optimism. It is important to note, as well, that the research in which I have been involved is an important example of translating experimental research into effective treatments that will lead to a reduction in the suffering of others—-a goal that has motivated me personally for as long as I can remember and, now, professionally.

Congratulations to Our New Ph.D. Recipients!

Arielle Baskin-Sommers • Jennifer Boylan • Andrew Garfield • Daniel Grupe • Aaron Heller
Kristin Javaras • Sharee Light • Myeshia Price • Sarah Romens
Brooke Wilken • Joshua Zeier
Who would have thought that studying in Professor Lyn Abramson’s Intro Psych class and Professor Janet Hyde’s Human Sexuality class would have planted the seed for a unique career combining psychology and cooking? Well, when cognitive behavioral psychology and gender role conflicts are taught by such wonderfully engaging professors, it’s hard not to be inspired to think out of the box.

I received my Masters in Social Work a few years after leaving UW-Madison where I was a psychology major and eventually created my dream career. Combining my passion for counseling and cooking, I help people, primarily women, overcome their practical and psychological obstacles to cooking through my consulting company and blog, Take Back the Kitchen.

With the prevalence of health problems related to poor diet, we have a great need to cook healthy food from home but we are a society that no longer teaches our children the basics of cooking. Whereas teaching and modeling cooking were integral parts of life before the proliferation of convenience and prepared foods in the 1970s, we now have a new generation of non-cooks who are not only challenged in the kitchen but who can actually live their lives without ever having eaten a home cooked meal.

Cooking challenges cross all socioeconomic lines from affluent suburbanites to those living in urban projects. In my individual sessions and workshops, many clients struggle with feelings of inadequacy in their roles as family chef because they cannot cook and provide healthy meals on a consistent basis for themselves and their families.

My work is two-fold: Part exploration of the obstacles and goals in the kitchen, past and present; and part practical instruction on how to cook. We first explore their cooking past to help identify from where the challenges stem; Were they even allowed to help in the kitchen? Did an old flame criticize their cooking and they decided to never return to the stove? Did they not want to be the oppressed housewife they saw in movies or in their own home?

Once we explore where the lack of cooking confidence or competence started, we explore what the incentives to cook are now. Some incentives to invest the time and energy may be an overweight child being ridiculed, restaurant bills that are through the roof, or marital tension around dinner time, to name a few.

After the past challenges and incentives have been explored, we then work on behaviors that change the thoughts and feelings of insecurity or inadequacy such as setting extremely small, manageable goals. One example might be donning an apron to get into full cooking mode and preparing an extremely simple recipe. The client may then serve the dish to a very supportive friend. The goal is to feel successful once the manageable tasks are accomplished which will then inspire the novice chef to persevere in the kitchen.

For more information on Take Back the Kitchen, check out [http://www.takebackthekitchen.com](http://www.takebackthekitchen.com).

Correction

Unfortunately, our last edition incorrectly identified our alum Michael Perelman as Richard Perelman. We extend our sincerest apologies for the error.
Psychology Alumni Homecoming Weekend!

Save the date for our first annual Psychology Alumni Homecoming weekend! It is the perfect opportunity to reconnect with the Department, see the developing UW campus, and once again enjoy all your favorite Badger activities! All alumni and friends of the Department are welcome. We hope to see you there!

ON WISCONSIN!

Schedule of Events

**Friday, October 11:**
- Early Morning: Psi Chi and Psych Club 5k Run/Walk
- Late Morning: research update with current professor, graduate student, and undergraduate student at the Psychology Building
- Lunch: “Meet the Board” & Department update with Chair Patricia Devine and Professor Janet Hyde at the Psychology Building
- Early Afternoon: tour of the Wisconsin Institute of Discovery
- Late Afternoon: networking happy hour at Der Rathskeller at the Memorial Union Terrace
- Early Evening: UW Homecoming Parade on State Street
- Evening: Wisconsin Fish Fry at Brocach’s on the Capitol Square

**Saturday, October 12:**
- Morning: Dane County Farmer’s Market on the Capitol Square
- Lunch: tailgate at the home of Professor Janet Hyde
- Afternoon: Badger Football game at Camp Randall with continued tailgate at Professor Hyde’s

Questions?
Please contact Amanda Riek at riek.amanda@gmail.com for questions related to Homecoming weekend.

Planning on an Extended Visit?

The official hotel of Alumni Weekend is the Hilton Madison Monona Terrace. To reserve a room, please call Eric Knapton at (866) 403-8838 and use group name “UW Psychology Alumni” and group code “UWPA.” We have single and double rooms reserved for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night. Please call by September 10 - space is limited.
We have a long history of excellence in teaching and research in the Department. To maintain this high standard we need support from our alumni and friends. Donations in any amount are greatly appreciated and go directly to supporting our students, faculty, and programs. If you would like, you may designate your gift to one of the following areas (please check one):

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Checks may be made payable to University of Wisconsin Foundation/Dept. of Psychology. Please mail this form along with your contribution to University of Wisconsin Foundation, US Bank Lockbox, PO Box 78807, Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807.

For more information on how you can help or to donate online, please visit our Department website at http://psych.wisc.edu and click “Giving Opportunities” or contact Professor Janet Hyde, jshyde@wisc.edu, (608) 262-9522.