The new school year brings a lot of change to Psychology at MSU. I have replaced Neal Schmitt as chair, and Kathy Benington has joined us as the department administrator. We also have two new faculty members, Daisy Chang and Emily Durbin (their research programs are described in articles in this newsletter). I welcome them, as well as all of the new graduate and undergraduate students who are joining us for the first time. I particularly want to thank Neal for all he did for the department. He is a terrific researcher, teacher and role model, and did a heroic job as chair, including facilitating the acquisition of a building for the department - a difficult act to follow, particularly in this budget climate.

We have a number of financial challenges this year; one of the largest is the Psychological Clinic. Our graduate students train in this facility in the Psychology Building under the supervision of fully licensed clinical psychologists who are faculty members (or adjunct faculty) in our department. A full array of psychotherapy and assessment services is offered at the Clinic for clients who range in age from infants to the elderly. Because of the paucity of low fee mental health services available in our area, the Clinic plays an important - almost unique - role in offering affordable services to those who are otherwise not able to pay for care. While a wide range of services are offered, one focus of the Clinic is autism and related developmental disorders. We offer skills training, parent training and behavioral interventions in both individual and group psychotherapy settings. Clinicians involved in the autism program offer in-service trainings for mental health providers in the community and consult to schools, pediatricians and other concerned professionals. Our students and clinicians also partner with the community in other ways. For example, the Clinic works with Head Start to provide psychotherapy services on-site at the Head Start Grand River School. By bringing Clinic services into the community we are able to reach families who would not otherwise be able to travel to our MSU location. Through this Grand River satellite clinic, we offer group intervention for children who have experienced loss or been exposed to severe trauma. In partnership
Chair’s Report: Continued...

with EVE’s domestic violence shelter in Lansing, our clinicians co-lead group interventions for survivors of sexual and domestic abuse. Finally, in cooperation with Ele’s Place in Lansing, clinical psychology graduate students co-lead groups for children who have lost a parent. We receive no funds to support these partnerships. These services are critical to mental health in our broad community, and offer terrific training experiences for our graduate students, both primary missions of our land-grant university. But, they are a challenge to maintain in this time of diminishing budgets.

While difficult to support financially, the Clinic and its faculty and graduate students contribute substantially to the diversity of research, service, and training in our department. Our faculty across the department are actively engaged in research, and the breadth (and depth) of their programs is striking. The work spans across basic and applied psychological disciplines, and covers specific topics including factors influencing brain development, memory and attention, life satisfaction, violence against women, eating disorders, and training and effectiveness in the workplace. Our research also crosses departmental boundaries through a variety of interdisciplinary programs, such as the Human Development Initiative, Consortium for Multicultural Psychology Research, and Cognitive and Neuroscience Programs.

As I begin my new role as chair, I am excited about increasing my interaction with individuals conducting research and teaching in all of these areas. I also look forward to hearing from members of the psychology department, past and present, about how we can reach our goals of excellence in research, training and community service.

MSU Launches Brain Bee Competition

A Brain Bee Competition is being launched for the first time here at MSU. The main goal of the Brain Bee is to allow all interested high school students to be exposed to the field of neuroscience. The organizational team includes Psychology professors Cindy Jordan and Marc Breedlove, Neuroscience Program graduate student Jessica Poort, and Neuroscience Postdoc Casey Henley. They will be offering weekly coaching sessions this fall, and additional enrichment experiences such as watching how a neurological exam is done, observing human brain function using a fMRI, recording electrical activity in crickets and seeing how the brain behaves during sleep. The actual Brain Bee Competition is scheduled for Feb 5, 2011. The winner of the competition will get to compete in the National Brain Bee Competition, winning an all-expense-paid trip. For more information visit www.brainbeemsu.com
As part of the Psychological Clinic's ongoing efforts to reach poor and under-served populations, we have recently expanded our partnership with the Lansing-area Head Start program. For several years practicum students in the Psychological Clinic have traveled to Lansing Head Start locations to provide group services for traumatized and abused children. These "Trauma and Loss Groups" follow a semi-structured format and provide a much needed service for children exposed to violence and/or suffering the loss of a parent due to death or long-term incarceration. Over the years it has been obvious that many of these children could benefit from more intensive individual and family-based psychotherapeutic interventions. Traditionally, the Clinic has offered such service at our MSU campus location, and we have attempted to keep these services affordable for the poor by setting our sliding-scale fees as low as possible. Even our lowest fee ($15.00) is difficult for the very poor to manage however. Additionally, our on-campus location has been experienced as a barrier by some families. (The University feels both geographically and socially remote for some poor families.)

In order to address these problems, a "Satellite Clinic" format was proposed to Head Start. Our idea was to provide fully subsidized individual and family treatments to Head Start families on-site at the Head Start Grand River School location. This proposal was enthusiastically received by Head Start and was fully funded last May by a coalition of partners which includes Head Start, Lansing Community Mental Health and outside funding agencies. Since this last summer, Psychological Clinic practicum students have been providing treatment and assessment services to children and families at the Grand River location. These services are being supervised by fully licensed MSU Clinical faculty and community supervisors. Initial feedback from our clients and from Head Start has been very positive. Our original proposal has been expanded so that the Satellite Clinic now also takes referrals of children from Community Mental Health. We have also begun to provide on-site consultation services to Head Start teachers and staff, and we are looking forward this year to increased opportunities for running psycho-educational groups for families and doing in-service presentations for Head Start staff.
Once upon a time I was an undergraduate studying Philosophy and Literature at Skidmore College (in Saratoga Springs, NY). There my fascination with and efforts to understand the human condition were guided mainly by writings of existential thinkers like Kierkegaard, Kafka and Nietzsche, and psychoanalytic theorists like Fromm, Horney, Rank and Brown. Eventually I stumbled upon books by cultural anthropologist Ernest Becker, whose analysis of human motivation revealed to me the psychological and historical importance of the uniquely human awareness of death. Then I moved to New York City, worked as a musician, cashier, rat lab assistant, high school teacher, and legal writer over the course of 3 years. In the latter 2 years there I enrolled in a Post-Baccalaureate Psychology program at Columbia University, where I studied under many notable scholars and served as a research assistant in Dr. Tory Higgins’ lab. Next I went to the University of Arizona (in Tucson, AZ) to get my Masters and Ph.D. in experimental social psychology (along with a minor concentration in psychophysiology). For 6 years there I worked with Dr. Jeff Greenberg, renowned social psychologist and co-creator of Terror Management Theory (TMT) – a theoretical framework for testing Becker’s ideas about the influence of death-related concerns on human behavior.

As a TMT scholar, much of my work begins with the idea that we each know we're inevitably going to die someday, and have a potential to become paralyzing anxious about that. Consequently, at each moment of each day of each week, people engage in mental gymnastics to mitigate underlying concerns with their mortality. Doing so requires faith in a cultural worldview (a socially constructed "lens" though which to perceive situations/stimuli as meaningful) and a sense of self-esteem (feeling that one looks good through the socially procured lens, i.e., is a good person… a hero). So, in a plethora of ways, we each strive to see ourselves as valued entities within cultural contexts rather than mere finite animals destined to oblivion upon death. Get into that sorority, win that NCAA tournament, write that book, have great children, or maybe just deliver the mail on time or write this memorable research description – whatever your pleasure, nothing quells existential dread like a healthy dose of symbolic immortality!

In this theoretical context, I employ experimental methods to examine: a) neural processes by which thoughts of death motivate human subjects to strive for meaning and value; b) the influence of death reminders/fear-mongering on political preferences; c) how concerns with finitude motivate investment in fame, wealth, looking attractive, and who one wants to date; and d) the idea that pathological stress responses to cultural trauma are partly a consequence of being cognitively saturated with thoughts of mortality. In other work, I examine how and why people believe false political smears, the motivational underpinnings of proselytizing behavior, and conditions under which obedient killing contributes to free-willed killing behavior. Though admittedly this is pretty dark subject matter, I think it’s important stuff to understand. As Thomas Hardy once said: If a way to the better there be, it lies in taking a full look at the worst.

I’m very happy to be here at MSU continuing my exploration of these topics. To learn more about my ongoing projects and/or inquire about assisting me in my research, blast me an email at kosloff@msu.edu or dial me up at 517-355-6645.
I am very excited to come back to a psychology department after spending three years hanging out with engineers, chemists, doctors, and nurses at the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at the University of South Florida. I completed my undergraduate degree at University of Waikato in New Zealand, double majoring in industrial/organizational psychology and human resource management. I came to the US for my graduate training, and received my PhD in I/O psychology from the University of Akron in 2005. After graduation, I took a position at Roosevelt University, spending two years in the windy city of Chicago. When I was offered a chance to shake off the icicles and move to Florida in 2007, it wasn’t a hard decision. But when the opportunity of returning to a psychology department came knocking this past year, I didn’t hesitate. Joining MSU is like a homecoming—I am very glad to be surrounded by people who speak my language again!

In general, my work focuses on cognitive and motivational processes as applied to organizational settings. One such application concerns occupational stress. For example, I have examined the detrimental effects of negative organizational characteristics, such as politics, on employee health and behaviors. I have also explored individual characteristics, such as personality traits and motivational attributes, as buffers of the negative effects of occupational stressors on employee well-being and performance. Recently, my work has focused on a particular stressor: workplace aggression and violence. I am interested how organizational characteristics and supervisor behaviors influence the occurrence of workplace aggression, and how victims respond to such incidents. By understanding these phenomena, my hope is that practitioners can develop and implement effective organization-based interventions aimed at reducing workplace violence.

Another area of my research focuses on understanding how people regulate their behavior while striving toward goals. I am particularly interested in the role of velocity, that is, the rate at which individuals approach their goals in self-regulation activities. I have worked on projects that examined velocity in the laboratory and classroom settings, and found that velocity information was more important in determining individuals’ emotional reactions during the goal striving than other types of feedback. I hope to extend these findings to employees at work, and assess how velocity may influence their various attitudes and behaviors.

A final area in which I conduct research involves leadership and understanding the processes through which leaders alter followers’ self-concepts and thereby change follower behaviors. These behaviors may include performance, extra-role behaviors, and safety- and health-related activities. In addition, I’m also interested in looking at how various self-related individual differences, such as identity levels, efficacy beliefs, and regulatory focus, influence interactions between leaders and followers. I hope to integrate this line of research with my other interest areas, as leaders play an integral role in understanding how employees respond to occupational stressors as well as how they regulate their goals.

Again, I am thrilled to be part of the Organizational Psychology group, and the larger Psychology Department at MSU. I look forward to my adventures here, including those involving icicles.
I am very excited to join the Department of Psychology at MSU! I am a clinical psychologist, and my main interest is in understanding the causes of chronic forms of depression. I received my bachelor's degree in psychology at the University of Evansville, then a Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Stony Brook in 2002. Prior to joining the faculty at MSU, I was an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Northwestern University.

Since my time in graduate school, I have focused on exploring how temperamental differences in children related to their emotional behavior may play a role in their risk for developing mood disorders later in life. I hope that by better understanding the development of normal and abnormal variations in young children's emotional reactivity, we can discover both which children are at greatest risk for psychopathology (and eventually develop preventive strategies for these children), but also learn more about the precise mechanisms of emotion (both psychological and biological) that go awry in individuals with mood disorders, and how these mechanisms work to increase (or decrease) risk for depression across the lifespan. As a result, I am interested in emotional and temperamental variables in both children and adults, so many of my studies use a family design in which young children and both of their parents are assessed for mood disorders, emotional behavior, and temperament traits. To learn more about temperamental risk for mood disorders, my work includes both studies of normal developmental effects on basic emotions and temperament traits, and studies of children at high risk for mood disorders by virtue of having a family history of these disorders. In my lab, we focus in particular on using laboratory methods to measure temperament traits in children and adults. For example, in the lab, we simulate real-world challenges young children face in their daily lives (for example, having to wait to receive a prize or working on a difficult puzzle), and code the children's response to these challenges to understand the major ways in which children differ from one another in their sociability, activity level, joyfulness, and tendency to experience negative emotions. Our research goal is to link these laboratory measures of children's traits to their risk for psychopathology, and to explore how these traits change as children age.

In addition to exploring individual risk factors for mood disorders, I am also interested in understanding how important contexts that impact children's lives are related to their risk for psychopathology. In particular, some of my recent work involves testing how aspects of children's relationships with their mothers and fathers, and their parents' relationships with one another, are related to early markers of risk for depression in these children. In the course of this work, I have become very interested in basic issues in parenting and the parent-child relationship, such as the ways in which the mother-child and father-child relationships are similar and different from one another. Our work has benefitted enormously from the gracious contributions of hundreds of families of young children (from Chicago and Long Island, New York), who have allowed us to observe slices of their family interactions and their child's temperamental behavior in our research lab. I am looking forward to future collaborations from families in the communities surrounding MSU.
Obtaining external funding has gotten increasingly difficult over the last few years. That makes the following news even more noteworthy: Psychology Professor Cindy Jordan’s recent NIH R01 application received a perfect score, was fully funded for 5 years, and was given an expedited start date. A little bit about this study is below:

Title: *Androgen Targets in a Simple Behavioral System*

Kennedy’s disease (KD, or spinal and bulbar muscular atrophy) affects men in mid-life and impairs motor function. Men with KD generally leave the work force early and usually require wheelchairs and other specialized aides to perform daily functions. KD is caused by a mutation in the androgen receptor (AR) gene. Mutant AR is presumed to act directly in motoneurons to cause their death, with muscle atrophy as a secondary response. Data from recently developed KD mouse models have taught us that 1) cell *dysfunction* rather than *death* underlies early losses in motor function (with motoneuronal cell death representing a late-stage event), and that 2) androgens drive expression of KD (explaining why only men develop KD). The important implication of these findings is that KD is treatable by limiting AR activity. Our novel myogenic mouse model of KD, expressing pathogenic AR only in muscle, shows the same disease phenotype as seen in other mouse models of KD, namely androgen-dependent losses in cell and motor function. Our model however offers the unexpected and novel perspective that AR may act in muscle fibers and not motoneurons to trigger KD, since the AR transgene is expressed only in skeletal muscle fibers and not motoneurons. Preliminary evidence indicates that pathogenic expression of AR in muscle has two distinct consequences: it impairs the function of motoneurons by causing defects in axonal transport and impairs muscle function by altering its contraction kinetics and overall strength. Thus, the broad goal of this project is to identify the mechanisms by which pathogenic AR expressed only in muscle fibers impairs both muscles and motoneurons, and determine how these events together cause behavioral dysfunction. To achieve this goal, we will assess muscle contraction kinetics and synaptic strength, parameters that have not been assessed in any KD model, using standard *in vitro* electrophysiological approaches. Not only will these experiments provide information about the factors causing a loss of muscle function, but they will inform us about whether synaptic dysfunction, muscle dysfunction or both triggers behavioral dysfunction. We will also examine the structure of neuromuscular synapses and monitor directly the transport of moving cargo in living mouse nerve, using a novel technique recently worked out for mammals. While neuromuscular synapses have been widely shown to be affected in motoneuron diseases, including amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and spinal muscular atrophy, neuromuscular synapses have yet to be examined in any KD model. Thus, these experiments are likely to yield new, important information about the critical mechanisms underlying the loss of motor function in KD. More importantly, because our model suggests that the critical pathogenic events in KD originate in muscle, our work may identify new targets in muscle for treating KD.

Congratulations Cindy!
Six outstanding online and blended courses from Michigan State University were selected as recipients of this year’s AT&T Faculty-Staff Awards in Instructional Technology. Two of those six were taught by Psychology’s Cathleen McGreal. Her blended course **ISS 318: Lifespan Development across Cultures** won **first prize in that category**, and her online version of the same course received an **Honorable Mention**. Both the blended and the online versions of ISS 318 use a custom-designed, visually rich, personalized ANGEL web site, including personalized to-do checklists. The course was designed to:

- encourage individuality and have students drive their own learning;
- have students make the connection between the course and their own life experiences;
- encourage critical analysis and facilitate meta-cognitive skills.

In the blended class, face-to-face time is used for lectures, for group interactions that reinforce points made in lecture, for plays and demonstrations. In-class activities are frequently team activities which add a collaborative focus to lecture content or to work done online. Online time provides media experiences and other opportunities that would not be possible face-to-face.

Since ISS 318 focuses on Lifespan Development Across Cultures, it is emphasized that students are living the class in the everyday moments of our lives. “Cultural dialogues” in ANGEL introduce each weekly topic. These attention-getters stimulate curiosity. Students go to a Custom Media Website and respond to media, writing one-page reaction papers using a detailed rubric posted in ANGEL.

Congratulations Cathleen!
Recent Faculty Awards

The Children and Technology Project (Professors Jackson, Von Eye, Zhao, Fitzgerald, and Harold) received the 2010 Excellence Award in Interdisciplinary Scholarship from the Michigan State University Chapter of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

Bill Davidson, Jodi Petersen, and Sean Hankins were awarded the 2010 Jimmy and Rosellynn Carter Partnership Award for Campus-Community Collaboration.

Jenna Watling Neal was awarded the 2010 Best Dissertation on a Topic Relevant to Community Psychology from APA Division 27 (Society for Community Research and Action).

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Also, emeritus faculty member Norm Abeles received the Senior Distinguished Career Award for Contributions to Psychology in the Public interest. The paper will be published in the November 2010 issue of the American Psychologist. He also received a Carl Heiser award for advocacy on behalf of Psychology from the current President of APA.
Recent Faculty Grants

**Ryan Bowles**, Megan McClelland (Oregon State), Alan Acock (Oregon State), and Claire Cameron Ponitz (University of Virginia) were awarded a 4-year grant from the Institute of Education Sciences in the U.S. Department of Education to develop a test of self-regulation for young children. $1,600,000

**Alex Burt** and **Kelly Klump** received a 5-year R01 grant from The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute for Child Health and Human Development: “Integrating contextual, proximal, and individual risks for child conduct problems.” $2,957,439

**Becki Campbell**, Jenna Watling Neal, Deborah Bybee, and Megan Greeson received a 2 year grant from the National Institute of Justice entitled “Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) implementation and collaborative process: What works for the Criminal Justice System?” $278,713.

**Bill Davidson** and Sean Hankins were awarded $168,000 from Ingham County, Michigan to support MSU's Adolescent Project.

**Bill Davidson** and Jodi Petersen were awarded $29,000 from Ingham County, Michigan for the Juvenile Justice Systems Assessment.

**Pennie Foster-Fishman**, Jenna Neal, and **Hi Fitzgerald** were awarded $172,000 from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation to evaluate the impact of their system-building efforts at the state and local level.

**Pennie Foster-Fishman** and Jeff Grabill (College of Arts and Letters) were awarded $332,518 from Communities Anti-Drug Coalitions of America to evaluate the impact of their National Youth Leadership Initiative and to engage 220 youth in West Virginia in participatory evaluation techniques including Photovoice.

**Pennie Foster-Fishman** was awarded $815,000 from Alvarez and Associates to study the impact of coalition building efforts in Lima, Peru on community health and youth substance-abuse rates.

**Chris Hopwood** received an internal CDFP (competitive discretionary funding program) grant to study adolescent personality development.

**John Hollenbeck** (Management), **Dan Ilgen**, & Brent Scott received a grant from the Air Force Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy, “Leadership education and research partnership: A web-based approach to experimental leadership training.” $460,000
Recent Faculty Grants (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grant Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brooke Ingersoll</td>
<td>was awarded $38,000 from Livingston Educational Service Agency to support the implementation of Project ImPACT.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cindy Jordan</td>
<td>received a 5-year NIH R01 grant: “Androgen targets in a simple behavioral system.”</td>
<td>$1,636,984</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly Klump, Alex Burt, Brent Donnellan, and Cheryl Sisk</td>
<td>received a 5-year NIMH R01 grant entitled “The effects of estradiol on genetic risk for disordered eating during puberty.”</td>
<td>$3,545,295</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fred Leong, Jan Collins-Eaglin (Counseling Center), Nicole Buchanan, and Zaje Harrell</td>
<td>were awarded a $20,000 Creating Inclusive Excellence grant for a project titled, “Towards a culturally adapted model of risk and protective factors for African American women college students’ mental health and adjustment.” This project was submitted through the Consortium for Multicultural Psychology Research (CMPR).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fred Leong</td>
<td>received a subcontract for $16,797 from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, to complete the U.S. data collection for their study: “A cross-cultural study of personality and socialization antecedents of career self-efficacy among high school students.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe Lonstein</td>
<td>received a 5-year R01 from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development entitled, “Neurobiological control of maternal anxiety.”</td>
<td>$1,552,795</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soo-Eun Chang (Communication Sciences), Peg Semrud-Clikeman, David Zhu, and David Todem (Epidemiology)</td>
<td>received a 5 year NIH grant, “Sexual dimorphism of neural development underlying childhood stuttering.”</td>
<td>$1,860,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peg Semrud-Clikeman</td>
<td>received $40,000 from a private foundation (wishing to remain anonymous) for her neuroimaging study on social competence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheryl Sisk and Lydia DonCarlos (Loyola Medical School, Chicago)</td>
<td>were awarded a 5-year NIH R01 grant: “Mechanisms of sexually differentiated brain remodeling during adolescence.”</td>
<td>$1,893,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cris Sullivan and Sheryl Kubiak (Social Work)</td>
<td>received $75,000 from the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence to evaluate their statewide project expanding services to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated survivors of violence.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Recent Graduate Student Awards

Reem Alzahabi received a Rasmussen Fellowship award.

Jesse Bledsoe was awarded a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Student Award Grant.

Samantha Baard, Felix Cheung, Rachel O’Connor, and Jessica Wortman received University Fellowships.

Felix Cheung received a Graduate Student Fellowship through the National Science Foundation.

Mikhila Humbad and Ashlea Klahr received student travel fellowships from the Behavioral Genetics Association.

Johanna Malone received the 2010 APA Division of Psychoanalysis (39) Early Career Professional Paper Award for the following paper: Malone, J.C. (April, 2010) What is the container-contained when there are ghosts in the nursery?: Synthesizing the work of Bion and Fraiberg within interventions with mother-child dyads. Paper presented at the annual spring meeting of the American Psychological Association Division of Psychoanalysis (39), Chicago, IL.

Sarah Reed was awarded a fellowship from the Fenway Institute to study for a month in Boston at the Institute for LGBT Population Health.

Edward Witt received the graduate student travel award from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP).

Recent Graduate Student Publications


Graduate Student Publications continued ....


Support Your Alma Mater

Higher education faces a fiscal crisis and MSU is no exception. Now, more than ever, we need the financial support of our friends and alumni. If you visit our web page (http://psychology.msu.edu), you will see a link for Direct Giving. When you click this link, you will be on your way to a secure, encrypted, University Development page that will allow you to make a credit card donation to the Psychology Department at MSU. You can give to the department or to one of the six new funds to support a specific interest group.

Thanks for your generosity.

In Memory of Al Rabin

Al Rabin passed away Sunday, October 24, 2010, at the age of 98. He entered our department as an associate professor and Director of the Psychological Clinic in 1948. He was promoted to professor in 1953 and retired in 1982. Dr. Rabin had a distinguished career, with interests focused on personality theory and personality development. His research on Israeli kibbutz children brought Dr. Rabin international recognition. He received MSU’s Distinguished Faculty Award in 1979. He is survived by his wife Beatrice, daughter Sarah, and three grandchildren. The funeral service will be held at 11am Tuesday October 26 at Congregation Shaarey Zedek in East Lansing.