This fall semester is off to an excellent start in the Department of Psychology. We welcomed five new faculty members. Jeremy Gray and Alex Johnson are in the tenure stream, and Melissa Allman, Nicholas Noles, and Ed Witt joined us as fixed-term assistant professors. This year, we are searching for a quantitative psychologist to join our faculty. Our graduate program is booming, with 20 new students coming to the department this fall.

I hope you’ll notice our updated website – we are in the process of a number of changes to make the site more informative and user friendly. Our department and associated programs are offering a terrific lineup of seminars. For example, in September, the annual Messe Memorial Lecture was given by social neuroscientist Dr. John Cacioppo from the University of Chicago. Our own Dr. Cheryl Sisk presented a talk to the department on Halloween, entitled: “Pubertal Hormones and the Adolescent Brain: Now THAT’S a Scary Thought!” Tim Pleskac hosted a workshop on Bayesian data analysis, run by Dr. John Kruschke of Indiana University. This program was extremely well attended, by about 100 faculty and students from across MSU, as well as institutions as far away as Colorado. Our scholarship continues to be strong, with new grants awarded and research programs continuing in novel areas. I’ll end by congratulating two members of our faculty – Zach Hambrick and Tony Nunez – who were recently elected fellows of the Association for Psychological Science. I hope you all enjoy the rest of the fall.
Many people find questions about the relation between emotion and cognition to be intriguing, perhaps most acutely so in the context of self-regulation. People vary greatly in their self-regulatory capacities, as well as in their beliefs about whether such skills can be enhanced, e.g., through meditation or other training. The broad goal of my research program is to achieve a theoretical and mechanistic understanding of human self-regulation across levels of analysis: neural, behavioral, psychological, and whole-person, with particular attention to individual differences. I believe it is essential to understand individual differences, both as basic science and as a potentially unique source of insight into normal psychological function. Interventions may work well for some people but not others. I see my research program as contributing to human neuroscience and social-personality psychology. Building upon my work on emotion-cognition integration, I am investigating mindfulness meditation (as a way to enhance self-regulation) and creativity (as another seemingly paradoxical mental activity in which both goal-directed effort plus some surrender of control over the outcome are essential).

As diverse theorists have suggested, emotion and cognition can be viewed as distinct but interacting control systems. Each is useful for solving different kinds of problems in the regulation of behavior. For theoretical reasons, I initially focused on approach- and withdrawal-motivated emotional states. Because these emotions are strongly goal-directed, they are likely to influence the cognitive and neural mechanisms that support goal-directed behavior (cognitive control, lateral prefrontal cortex). Two related dimensions of normal personality, namely behavioral approach sensitivity (BAS, or reward sensitivity) and behavioral inhibition sensitivity (BIS, or threat sensitivity), are related to emotion and cognitive control.

Although emotion and cognition are conceptually distinct, I believe a more fundamental point is that they are not completely separable. Both are ultimately concerned with self-regulation; at some point, functional specialization is lost. As part of this work, it was important to assess individual differences. This lead to a line of work on working memory and intelligence, and another line of work on the neural bases of personality. I have since become interested in such individual differences in their own right. I seek to study not just variation, but the fundamental cognitive / affective dimensions of such variation, incorporating neurobiological correlates as further constraints.
My interests are in understanding the neural and psychological mechanisms of learning and motivation. I received my PhD from Cardiff University (Wales, UK) where I studied, in genetically targeted mice, the role of glutamate receptors in associative learning. Subsequently, I spent close to seven years as a Post-doc and Research Scientist at Johns Hopkins University. During this time I became interested in understanding mechanisms of adaptive decision-making and those responsible for maladaptive behavioral control (e.g., overeating and addiction).

In today's society we are bombarded with cues for food, such as signboards (e.g., Golden Arches) and media advertisements, which likely drive food intake and weight gain. From the perspective of associative learning, these cues can influence overeating by inducing motivational states that enhance pleasurable sensations of food, and/or overriding cues for satiety that would normally induce meal termination. In my laboratory we investigate how hormones and neurotransmitters acting in the brain come to be influenced by food-paired cues possibly leading to overeating and obesity. To this end, my laboratory will use cutting-edge optogenetic techniques, whereby we are able to silence and/or activate specific cell types with incredibly fast temporal resolution (msec range), by shining laser light of different wavelengths into the brain while the animal is engaged in a particular form of behavior (e.g., eating palatable food). This approach allows those of us interested in the brain and in psychological mechanisms of learning to answer exactly when and where in the central nervous system the decision to engage in maladaptive behavior (e.g., overeating outside of metabolic need) takes place.

I'm also interested in using analogous techniques to understand how the brain changes in response to psychoactive drugs, leading to compulsive-like behavioral control. As is well known, individuals addicted to drugs of abuse will continue drug use despite adverse consequences associated with this behavior (e.g., loss of money, ill health). It is likely that certain regions in the brain are particularly vulnerable to the detrimental effects of drugs of abuse – research in my laboratory is concerned with uncovering those brain regions and establishing whether it is possible to prevent detrimental brain changes from occurring. That is, will it be possible to disrupt the transition to compulsive behavior seen following chronic exposure to drugs of abuse?

Finally, in collaboration with my wife (Dr. Melissa Allman) who is also a new faculty member in the department, I am interested in translating these basic mechanisms of learning into human subject samples. Using this translational approach, we are examining whether responses outside of our conscious awareness are driven by mechanisms that are shared with other species.

Thus, although the majority of my research is in behavioral neuroscience with rodents, it complements interests across disciplines in psychology (cognitive, clinical) and neuroscience (cellular, systems). I am extremely enthusiastic and excited to be joining such a fantastic group of researchers and look forward to establishing mutually beneficial collaborations across disciplines in psychology.
Hi, I’m very excited to be back in an academic environment, particularly one as stimulating and beautiful as MSU! I am quite unique in my research background, as although it has been focused in the principles of learning and behavior, it has been quite diverse in psychological paradigms and subject populations—this has provided me with a ‘big picture’ perspective on the workings of the human mind; particularly in relation to organized patterns of thoughts and behaviors.

I conducted my PhD in behavioral neuroscience working with rodents on Pavlovian studies of mediated conditioning (learning about stimuli that are being remembered, and generalization and discrimination effects) in the UK (where I met my husband Alex Johnson, also new faculty in the Department). I then worked for several years as a postdoc in Pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, in an affiliated clinical facility for children with disorders of brain and spinal cord, Kennedy Krieger Institute, in the department of Behavioral Psychology. There I worked on projects with inpatient children with autism and developmental disabilities, using operant behavior principles (focused on the role of the environment in supporting behavior) to treat aberrant behaviors for which they were receiving treatment interventions (e.g., self-injury, aggression). I also worked on several neuroimaging projects, in children with autism and ‘normal’ adults, and a variety of behavioral and cognitive tasks. Physically ‘seeing’ behaviors in affected children allowed me to develop a timing theory of autism—which may account for the defining features of the disorder, and which has intuitive appeal given timing and time perception is (phylogenetically and ontologically) a basic building block for behavior and cognition. I currently have a NICHD Pathway to Independence award to examine interval timing in autism, and as a consequence, have been fortunate to have mentoring and successful collaborations with a ‘guru’ of timing, Dr. Warren Meck at Duke University. I am hoping to extend this award at MSU, and also begin to study timing in young infants, in addition to children with and without autism. Essentially, my lab will be concerned with studying the development of timing ability in children (sensitivity to temporal cues, and subjective experience of time) and the relation of this ability to other cognitive and behavioral functions. I am also interested in how the subjective experience of time appears disturbed in various other clinical populations (e.g., schizophrenia, ADHD, Parkinson’s).

Although it is true that academic life can oft take over your life, I am fortunate that I share this and collaborate with my husband, as we are mutually interested in translating animal learning principles into factors affecting human decision-making, and plan to continue this line of research in a joint lab in the department (in addition to our own). I am also in the early stages of developing a general neural network model of the mind, in which thoughts, cognitions and emotions are interchangeable nodes, with learning and temporal integration forming the strength of the links between them. I’m a keen writer (and collaborator) and welcome the opportunity to interact with fellow faculty and students.
New Faculty — Nick Noles

My research program is dedicated to understanding children's cognitive and social development. Specifically, I study the psychological phenomenon that underlie essential everyday experiences. These phenomena often involve input that may be visual and social, and I employ cognitive and developmental methods to study how they emerge and function over time. A critical feature of my work is that I take what is known about canonical representations and apply it to understanding more abstract concepts, such as ownership, value, perception, and fairness.

Concepts of Ownership — I am currently examining ownership concepts along two parallel paths. First, I ask questions that may help illuminate the development of ownership concepts (e.g., What is property? What is an owner? What are the rules governing transfers of ownership?). The goal in pursuing these questions is to examine the mental representations that drive inferences of ownership and to investigate the role of cognitive development in the formation of these concepts. Second, I examine the interaction between children's ownership concepts and their ability to navigate social situations. Property provides affordances (e.g., a smart phone allows me to access information remotely), but property is embedded in a nonobvious and social network that humans use for communication. I investigate when children begin to become attuned to this network and how they learn to manipulate it in an adaptive manner. Some elements of ownership concepts appear to be innate and early emerging, while other elements continue to develop well into adolescence. By approaching ownership from two directions, I hope to more fully understand the relationship between people and property.

Role of Perception in Conceptual Development — Drawing from my background in perception, I study the impact of perceptual input on children's concept formation. For example, I study how special kinds of words and linguistic devices (e.g., generic language, labels, etc.) affect human cognitive development. The stimuli in a child's environment are structured, but what kinds of information influence their perception of this structure?

Other Interests

Prosocial Behavior - Like some aspects of ownership, concepts of fairness, generosity, and perhaps gratitude emerge early and are dominated by relatively abstract input and a large degree of unconscious computation. I am specifically interested in how feelings of “being even” and the compensatory behaviors involved in “getting even” (i.e., revenge, retribution, retaliation, etc.) emerge over the course of human development.

Legal systems - In examining the nature of ownership concepts, I have discovered that even young children have relatively advanced concepts of what can be owned and who can be an owner. For example, even five year olds believe that original ideas can be owned (e.g., an idea for an invention, story or song), while common knowledge cannot (e.g., the number five, the color red, or the location of a school). These data have led me to consider the degree to which some laws are the products of legal precedent and others are reflections of our own cognitive architecture.

Religion and Knowledge - Individuals practicing different religious ascribe to worldviews that share certain traits (e.g., higher powers, life beyond death, etc.), but many religions also provide conflicting or non-overlapping explanations of the "true" nature of the world. Beyond the dichotomy of belief versus non-belief, there is a more fundamental question about the effects of religion on individuals. One such effect is a suspicion of science and scientists, which may be a modern cultural phenomenon, or which may reflect a broader influence of belief in and thoughts about omniscient agents.
Two New Endowments

The Psychology Department is honored to have recently received two planned, estate gifts:

The Lauren Harris Endowment includes $150,000 to our department, which is part of a $900,000 estate gift divided six ways across MSU. The department is extremely grateful to Lauren for this generosity. Expenditures from the Endowment will be used to support the goal of bringing psychologists and artists together.

The Jane E. Ranney, Ph.D. Endowed Research Enhancement Fund is estimated at $1.1M. Expendable amounts from this endowment will be used to provide support to graduate or undergraduate students as part of a comprehensive research program, including stipends, travel, equipment, supplies, and technology. Thank you, Dr. Ranney!

Check out the College of Social Science Alumni Website

The College of Social Science Office of Advancement has launched a new website geared toward alumni and friends of the College. People can create an account, update their contact information and email preferences, find and communicate with other Social Science alumni, and register for events. Most importantly, this information will be updated in the alumni database nightly, allowing the College to more effectively and efficiently communicate with our alumni. Check out the new website at http://mysocialscience.msu.edu.
The Department of Psychology would like to congratulate the recipients of the Michigan State University Freshman Psychology Kamerschen-Pearson Scholarship. Four $1000 awards were given out for the 2012-2013 academic year. In order to receive the award, students had to be MSU Psychology freshmen earning at least a 3.5 grade point average. Award winners were selected on the basis of academic achievement, leadership skills, and extracurricular activities. This award came about as a result of an endowment established by one of our alumni, Dr. Karen Kamerschen, and her husband, Dr. Robert Pearson. The department is very grateful for their generosity to the students.

Amber Shekoski – Amber plans to double major in Psychology and Human Development and Family Studies with a possible minor in Women and Gender Studies. Her future plans are to go for her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology in order to one day open her own office as a Child and Family Psychologist. Amber’s advice to other students is to “never give up on your goals, no matter how daunting they may seem and to always put your all into everything you do”.

Monique Daignault – After college, Monique plans to go to graduate school and get her Ph.D. and become a research psychologist working as a professor in a college/university. Monique advises other students to “make the most of your college experience in all respects. Join clubs and actively seek out and take advantage of opportunities. Immerse yourself in Psychology and start living and preparing today for your dreams of tomorrow”.

Brianna Jecmen – After undergraduate school, Brianna plans on attending grad school to get her Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology. She is specifically interested in substance abuse, depression, and sexual violence. Brianna suggestions to other students how “it’s important to get involved early on! There are so many opportunities on this campus to make your resume look so much better!”

Jennifer Stickland – Jennifer’s current future plans consist of graduating with a Psychology major and pursuing a job in research. Jennifer’s advice to other Psychology students to help them attain similar accomplishments is “even if financial worries are present, work your hardest to achieve the goals you wish for. Don’t let money get in the way of your personal dreams”.
Farewell to Former Chair Lee Winder

Clarence L. “Lee” Winder, former chair of the Psychology Department, died August 2, 2012, at the age of 91. Lee’s distinguished academic career spanned six decades. He completed his Bachelor’s degree in Psychology at UCLA (1943) and attended graduate school at Stanford University on the GI Bill, receiving his PhD in Psychology in 1949. He began his academic career in the Stanford Psychology Department in 1948 and served as Director of the Psychological Clinic from 1953-61. He held similar positions at Michigan State University and the University of Southern California from 1961-1963, before locating permanently to Michigan State in 1963. Lee continued to be active in clinical psychology throughout his academic career, mentoring students, publishing, and participating in professional societies. He was a Fellow of both the American Psychological Association and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He also consulted with organizations such as the Veterans Administration, the Peace Corps, and the National Institutes of Mental Health. When he arrived at Michigan State, however, he discovered his true calling in university administration.

During 23 years of administrative service to MSU, Lee served as Chairperson of Psychology (1963-67), Dean of the College of Social Science (1967-74), Associate Provost (1974-77), and Provost (1977-1986). Following his service as Provost, Lee returned to his faculty appointment in the Psychology Department. After his retirement in 1991, he continued as a part-time consultant until a few years before his death, and played a significant role in the affiliation between MSU and the Detroit College of Law.

Lee was preceded in death by his parents and sister, Eula Arthur, of Santa Barbara, CA. He is lovingly remembered by his wife Elizabeth of East Lansing, son David (Laurie Sommers) of Okemos, daughter Christina (Russell Chavey) of Grosse Pointe Farms; and granddaughters Elizabeth (Jared) Crane, Sarah Winder-Chavey, and Anna Winder-Chavey; and by friends, colleagues, and former students and colleagues, whose lives he touched.
Psychological Clinic Updates

We have some new developments in our Psychological Clinic to report this fall.

We are excited to have added several new services in the clinic this year. First, our new part-time speech pathologist, Linda Schafer, offers individual and group work for adolescents and adults with language and communication difficulties, consults on developmental assessments in the Autism Clinic, and provides myofunctional therapy – a treatment for individuals with difficulties chewing or swallowing due to improper functioning of the facial muscles or tongue.

We are also conducting some new groups at the Clinic this fall. Linda Schafer is offering a social communications group for adolescents with autism spectrum disorder. Natalie Moser will be offering a group for child victims of bullying and Rod Howard will be leading a social anxiety group for adults with issues related to social phobia. All of these groups will be co-led by practicum students in our clinic, thus providing both a good training opportunity along with an important service to our community.

We have also continued to modernize the clinic. Over the last year we have completed our transition to a paperless scheduling and record-keeping system. This system saves staff time, improves security, and avoids waste, and facilitates potential future clinical research. We have also added cameras to our consulting rooms so that audiovisual data can inform clinical supervision. We hope this change will not only improve care and training but also provide infrastructure for research on clinical issues.

Our interim director, Chris Hopwood, is running the Clinic through August 2013 (with the assistance of Anne Bogat and Emily Durbin) as the clinical faculty discusses a vision for the clinic director position.
Bradley Arsznov’s paper written with Professor Sharleen Sakai was selected as editor's choice and was also the cover illustration for *Brain, Behavior, and Evolution.*


Megan Greeson received Honorable Mention, 2012 Annual Student Prize for Psychological Research on Women and Gender, Association for Women in Psychology/Society for the Psychology of Women.

Zornitsa Kalibatseva received the ICPSR Graduate Research Paper Award (First Place) from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan for her paper "A Symptom Profile Analysis of Depression in a Nationally Representative Sample of Asian Americans." She also received a Health Disparities Research and Minority Populations Workshop Stipend, an APA International Conference Travel Grant, and an International Test Commission Scholarship.

Nkiru Nnawulezi received the APA Division 35: Society for Women in Psychology, Section 1 Graduate Student Award. She also received the King-Chavez-Parks Future Faculty Fellowship, and the Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate Leadership Recognition Award.


Stevie Yap received a *Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Doctoral Fellowship* valued at $60,000.

**Recent Graduate Student Publications**


Reed, S.J., & Valenti, M.T. (2012). 'It ain’t all as bad as it may seem:' Young Black lesbians’ responses to sexual prejudice. *Journal of Homosexuality, 5*, 703-720.


Recent Faculty Honors and Awards

**NiCole Buchanan** was elected Fellow of the American Psychological Association.

**Joe Cesario** became an associate editor at *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.

**Bill Davidson** is the recipient of the 2012 *Michigan State University (MSU) Curricular Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Award*.

**Zach Hambrick** and **Tony Nunez** were elected Fellows of the Association for Psychological Science.

**Lauren Harris** was elected a fellow of Division 26 (History of Psychology) of the American Psychological Association.

**Chris Hopwood** became associate editor for the *Journal of Personality Disorders* and the *Journal of Personality Assessment*.

**Kelly Klump** received the Price Foundation Award for Research Excellence, National Eating Disorders Association, 2012.

**Steve Kozlowski** is Chair of the American Psychological Association’s Council of Editors.

**Frederick Leong** has been appointed to a 3-year term as Associate Editor of the *American Psychologist*. He is currently completing the third year of his 5-year term as Editor of the *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, which he founded.

**Isis Settles** was elected Fellow of the American Psychological Association, Division 35: Society for the Psychology of Women.

**Isis Settles** became Associate Editor of *Psychology of Women Quarterly*. 

### Recent Faculty Grants

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Funding Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kozlowski, S. W. J., Chang, C-H., &amp; Biswas, S.</td>
<td>Developing, maintaining, and restoring team cohesion. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NNX12AR15G). $100,000.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lonstein, J., &amp; Eisthen, H.L.</td>
<td>Integrative Biology of Social Behavior National Science Foundation. $336,000.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liu, T.</td>
<td>Neural mechanisms of attentional priority for features and objects. National Institute of Health R01 grant. $1,250,000.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ravizza, S.</td>
<td>Neural processes that influence the contents of working memory. NSF Early Career Development (CAREER) Award; $725,395</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sakai, S.</td>
<td>Comparative studies of brain size in carnivores. National Science Foundation, $300,000.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wade, J.</td>
<td>Hormonal and Genetic Regulation of Brain Development. NIH R01. $1,860,240.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yan, L.</td>
<td>Neural Basis for SAD: Development of a Diurnal Rodent Model. NIH R03. $147,828.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yan, L.</td>
<td>Persistence, entrainment, and function of circadian rhythms in arctic ground squirrels. National Science Foundation, subaward from University of Alaska; Project Amount: $188,167.</td>
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The Dean’s Assistantship Program provides undergraduate students with the opportunity to conduct social science research in collaboration with a faculty mentor – either through independent research or research that forms part of a faculty member’s own research agenda. The goal of the program is to enhance student learning by integrating classroom knowledge with real world practice to advance knowledge. The following four students were selected because of their high qualifications, the scholarly significance of the project they will undertake, and the strength of the proposed research plan. We congratulate these psychology students for being awarded the 2012-12 College of Social Science Dean’s Assistantship.

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/Alumni/Donate.aspx) 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 ten new funds to support a specific program group.

Thank you for your generosity.