

# Psychology I

**Section Moderator: Dr. Linda Jones**

**Room: Beaman A**

**Time: 7:00-9:00 PM**

**7:00-7:15**

**“The Effect of Mood on Accuracy in Problem Solving”**

Sarah L. Lashley, Kurt J. Niesner, and Shandus B. Valentine

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Lonnie Yandell

Previous research shows that mood affects problem-solving skills. People in a positive mood should perform better on a test of logic than participants in a negative or a neutral mood. In this study, participants in a positive, a negative, and a neutral mood condition will take a problem-solving test that is commonly used in the workforce. Mood will be induced using color and a recorded story that corresponds to the mood condition. Thirty undergraduate volunteers will be tested, with ten students in each mood condition. If the hypothesis is supported, the results will imply that employers should make an effort to create a positive work environment in order to increase workers' efficiency in solving problems.

**7:15-7:30**

**“A Look at How Hindsight Bias is Used in Positive and Negative Situations”**

Molly Smith, Sarah Smith, Kevin Stone, & Kelly Witherbee

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Lonnie Yandell

Hindsight bias is the tendency for people to incorrectly report that they had known the correct outcome of a situation once they had been presented with the correct outcome. This phenomenon has been found to occur in many different types of situations (such as in politics, medicine, sporting events, natural disasters, etc.) and can often occur without a person being aware of what he or she was doing. Past studies have looked at how the hindsight bias is affected by age, when knowledge about the outcome is given, and how strong the bias was when participants were asked to come up with alternative outcomes to a situation. This study seeks to find if the hindsight bias is more likely to occur in a positive (happy) situation or in a negative (sad) situation. For this study, thirty Belmont University student volunteers were divided into two groups. Participants in each group were given the exact same story except for the ending: the first group read the story with a positive ending and the second group read the story with a negative ending. They were then given questions regarding specific details about the story they read and how they thought the story would end. It was predicted that those who read the story with the negative ending will be more likely to show the hindsight bias than those who read the story with the positive ending.

**7:30-7:45**

**“Exploring Social Desirability: Are Athletes More Popular?”**

Margaret Cornwall

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

Past research has examined many aspects of positive stereotypes, halo effects, that occur toward various organizations and groups of people. Little research, however, has been done applying these findings to one group that is often categorized: athletes on a college campus. The current study examined the perceived differences between non-athletes and athletes. It was hypothesized that athletes will be viewed as more socially desirable than non-athletes. Participants viewed a photograph and a brief biography of 3 persons who were identified as either an athlete or non-athlete. Profiles were evaluated along 38 components of social desirability using a 7-point Likert-type. Differences in participants' perceptions were examined according to athlete-status and gender of the individual presented.

**7:45-8:00**

**“A Study of Factors contributing to Career Decisions of College Students”**

Sarah Smith

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

The decision making process of choosing a career and a career path are extremely important for college undergraduates because the decision will affect the individual's course of college study and can effect the perceived quality of the future. This study examined the effect of parental attachment and religious convictions on career indecision. Students completed a 85 item questionnaire including the Career Decision Scale, The Inventory of Parental Attachment, The Daily Spiritual Scale, and The Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status. The results of the study show the importance of addressing awareness of factors related to career decision making and may reveal new or existing areas that should be targeted during career counseling or undergraduate advising.

**8:00-8:15**

**“Situational Factors in Rule-bending”**

Carolyn Currey

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

Many forms of cheating occur more frequently than we even notice. Past research has shown that if somebody else has cheated while completing a task, it is more likely that others will follow. This study attempted to show that after 1 person has exceeded the time limit on a timed test, others are more likely to do so. Participants were given an IQ test and a set time limit in which to complete the task. They were then left alone to complete the task. A confederate-subject was in the room and exceeded the time limit on half of the trials and did not on the other half. The findings of this study are discussed in terms of how much we rely on the actions of others in deciding what we will do in a situation.

**8:15-8:30**

**“The Influence of Media Images of Women on Men's Attitudes”**

Afton Cole

Faculty advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

Individuals in American society are flooded with stereotypical images of hyper sexualized women from magazines, movies, television and other electronic and print media. This study will examine the effect the media has on men's perceptions of women. It is hypothesized that viewing photos of women dressed in sexually suggestive clothing will negatively affect how men perceive women, and also that women will be thought of with less respect by men after the men view interactions involving men disrespecting women. Male students were divided randomly into 4 groups and each group was shown a different combination of a

disrespectful/respectful video paired with pictures of women portrayed as either normal or provocative. Throughout the study the students are also asked to complete 3 questionnaires. This research shows the importance of media in our everyday lives.

**8:30-8:45**

**“The Effects of Attention to Relevant Information on Mindless Versus Mindful Processing”**

Jessica Marie Niesner

Faculty advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

The current study sought to examine whether or not relevant contextual information may serve to focus attention and disrupt mindless processing in automatized behaviors. It was predicted that exposure to relevant information would lead to more mindful, less automatized behavior than would occur in the absence of such reminders. Participants were asked to indicate how they would proceed on five questionnaires containing visual representations of situations one might encounter while driving. Participants were chosen randomly to receive either the questionnaires alone, or to additionally receive a one sentence written statement of relevant, noninvasive information pertaining to each situation. Results indicate that attention drawn to relevant information can serve to disrupt automatic behaviors; this may have important implications for pilots, nurses, soldiers, and other professionals for whom mindless behavior may prove life-threatening.

**8:45:900**

**“The Impact of Song Lyrics on Film Interpretation”**

Laura Musten

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

Previous research has shown that differing music has significantly altered the interpretation of visual action in a film. The current study examined whether lyrical content within a song affected the interpretation of a character’s action and perceived plot continuation. It was predicted that songs with differing lyrics would significantly alter the interpretation of a character’s action and plot expectations, and interpretations would also differ between songs with lyrics and songs without lyrics. An ambiguous film clip was paired with three different versions of the same melody having positive lyrics, negative lyrics, or no lyrics. Participants in each condition watched the film, answered a questionnaire regarding their interpretation of the visual action, and were then given a memory recall test on the song lyrics they heard. Results indicated that the lyrical content in the song significantly altered the interpretation of a character’s action and perceived plot continuation in the film.

## **Psychology II**

**Section Moderator: Dr. William Bailey**

**Room: Beaman B**

**Time: 7:00-9:15 PM**

**7:00-7:15**

**“John Watson and Behaviorism: A Conditioned Response to Psychology”**

Gunner Goodlad

Faculty advisor: William N. Bailey

As the Zeitgeist in European psychology focused primarily around Wundt's work, American Psychology began to shift its attention to what is known as behaviorism. Behaviorism, rather than relying on introspection and sensation, primarily focuses on clear-cut and observable behavior that can be described in objective and quantifiable ways. This review of the history of behaviorism attempts to address the many antecedent influences on the popularity of behaviorism in the United States, what conditions led to its dominance in American psychology, and what other schools of thought eventually led to its fall in popularity.

**7:15-7:30**

**“Influence of Packaging on Brand Preference: National and Store Brands”**

Beth Wiener

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

Marketers spend millions of dollars each year on packaging and advertising. The purpose of this study was to determine if packaging has an influence on individuals' food preferences. It was predicted that people would prefer the taste of the national brand over the store brand because of the packaging, not taste. Participants did a taste test of 3 foods items. In one trial, they tasted a national brand and a store brand. With the other two foods they were given two samples of a store brand or two samples of a national brand although they were told the samples were one of each type. Contrary to expectations, it was shown that people did not show a preference toward the national brand unless the national brand was directly pitted against the store brand.

**7:30-7:45**

**“The Effects of Attention and Conformity on Adherence to Instructions”**

Kurt Niesner

Faculty advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

The present study examined participants' adherence to instructions when completing paperwork which contains other people's entries that do not adhere to instructions. It is hypothesized that (1) a greater number of previous entries on a form will distract participants from reading instructions, and (2) a greater number of previous incorrect responses on a form will cause participants to respond incorrectly. Participants received one of five demographic forms containing no previous entries, few previous entries, or many previous entries. Forms also varied as a function of more incorrect previous entries than correct previous entries or more correct previous entries than incorrect entries. Although the results do not support the hypotheses, several post hoc findings suggest the existence of general written conformity, implicating the need to perform more studies in this untapped and possibly robust area of conformity.

**7:45-8:00**

**“EEG Asymmetry during Emotional Face Recognition for Differing Personality Types”**

Eileen S. Marks, Carrie A. Brown, Kurt Niesner, & E. Layne Murphy

Faculty Advisors: Dr. Linda D. Jones and Dr. William N. Bailey

EEG is a non-invasive technique for recording bioelectric brain activity. In this study, EEG will be used to investigate whether or not hemispheric asymmetry is present during emotional face recognition in college students with differing personality types. This study will also attempt to support the past finding that extraverted individuals have greater alpha activity than introverted individuals. Participants will complete the Big Five Inventory and have their alpha and beta EEGs recorded while they relax and as they view 18 pictures of faces from Pictures of Facial Affect (Ekman, 1993), each of which display either a positive or negative emotion. Participants will be asked to identify which emotion each face is displaying. It is expected that extraverts will display greater alpha activity than introverts, stable individuals will display greater right hemisphere activation while viewing a positive affect, and extraverts will display greater right hemisphere activation while viewing a negative affect. If the expected results are found, they will provide further insight into localization of brain function as well as help in understanding the link between physiological responses and personality.

**8:00-8:15**

**“The Effects of Distorted Words and Non-Distorted Words on the Stroop Task”**

Chey Korvandi-Geledar, Emily Kane, Jessica Niesner, and Robert Fernandez  
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Lonnie Yandell

Humans recognize words using an automatic process, while other kinds of recognition, such as identifying colors, may not and therefore may take longer to identify. The Stroop task indicates that this is so when participants are asked to read the name of a specific color when paired in a congruent or incongruent font color (i.e. the word blue displayed in blue ink or the word blue displayed in red ink). Reaction times are usually faster when a word is paired with a congruent color. The font and case size of a word may also affect our speed of automaticity when performing the Stroop test. Vertical representation theory explains we encode distinct visual details to create word models aiding automaticity in reading. However, the theory of abstract representation states that the mind creates abstract templates of words that aid in recognition. This study tests these two theories by altering the font and case size of words in the Stroop test. Ten participants from Belmont University Introduction to Psychological Science classes will participate in this study. Participants will be shown a series of word colors such as “BLUE”, “GREEN”, “RED”, and “YELLOW”, alternating between uppercase words and mixed case, and also paired with a congruent or incongruent color. If the vertical representation theory is supported slower reaction times will result for the incongruent mixed case words. However, if the theory of abstract representation is correct identification of incongruent words with mixed case will result in identical reaction times for congruent lowercase words.

**8:15-8:30**

**“Multi-tasking and Memory Recall”**

Ashley Wilkins  
Faculty advisor: Dr. Michael Sullivan

Multi-tasking has become a prominent aspect of individuals’ daily lives. Many people assume were that they can multi-task with effective productivity; or at least they believe that the multi-tasking they regularly do does not negatively affect their performances. This study attempted to show that multi-tasking negatively influences memory recall associated with conducting simple tasks typical of students in classroom settings. All participants were asked to listen to 10 words read aloud and to recall the words 3 minutes later. Some participants also completed a 15-square slider puzzle while listening to 10-words

being read aloud. A third group completed the puzzle and ate snacks while listening to the ten words. These findings have implications of multi tasking while at the office, at home and in the classroom.

**8:30-8:45**

**“The Rorschach Test and other Projective Personality Measures”**

Beth Wiener, Rosemary Harris, Hilary Goulart, and Clayton Rothwell  
Faculty advisor: William N. Bailey

The famous ink blot figures from the Rorschach test have been at the center of a long controversy in the psychological community. Over the years, the Rorschach test, a projective personality measure, has been the subject of much discussion and harsh critique by some theorists. We will introduce and explain projective personality measures in order to distinguish them from more objective and structured personality measures. The advent of the Rorschach test and the history of its clinical use will be examined. We hope to bring insight into this debate and to clarify the positions of support and opposition. Other projective personality measures will also be discussed in comparison and contrast to the Rorschach test.

**8:45-9:00**

**“Women in Psychology”**

Emily Kane, Chey Korvandi-Geledar, Sarah Lashley, and Molly Smith  
Faculty advisor: William N. Bailey

Over the years, many women have significantly contributed to the growth and development of psychology as we know it today. Four early female psychologists and their contributions will be described along with a background of their struggles of inequality that they faced in psychology. Anna Freud, the sixth daughter of the well known Sigmund Freud, performed insightful research on child development and the treatment of disorders in children. Mary Whiton Calkins, the first female president of the American Psychological Association, is well-known for her innovative research and contributions to the field of psychology, despite not being awarded her proper degree from Harvard. Helen Bradford Thompson Woolley and Leta Stetter Hollingworth are both known for their work with the variability hypothesis describing male and female capabilities. Woolley contributed to the first nursery school that would train teachers and study child development while Hollingworth did research on the development and education for “gifted” children.

**9:00-9:15**

**“EEG Asymmetry, Personality, and Math and Verbal Working Memory Tasks”**

Eileen S. Marks  
Faculty Advisors: Dr. William N. Bailey and Dr. Lonnie R. Yandell

EEG is a non-invasive technique for recording bioelectric brain activity. In this study, EEG will be used to investigate whether or not hemispheric asymmetry is present in college students with math-oriented and language-oriented majors during two computer-based working memory tasks, one of which is a verbal task and the other of which is a math task. In addition, the study will attempt to support the past finding that extroverted individuals have greater alpha activity than introverted individuals. Participants will take the Big Five Inventory and then complete both working memory tasks while their alpha and beta wave EEGs are recorded. It is expected that there will be more activity in the left hemisphere during the verbal working memory task for math-oriented majors and no asymmetry for language-oriented majors, while there will be more activity in the left hemisphere during the math working memory task for language-oriented majors and no asymmetry for math oriented majors. It is also expected that extroverts will have greater alpha activity than introverts. If the expected results are found, they will provide further insight into localization of brain function as well as help in understanding the link between physiological responses and personality.