

PsychologiCal



Greetings from sparkling clean Tolman Hall!

If you have walked through Tolman this fall, you probably did a double take, wondering what looked different. Amazing what a fresh coat of paint, repairs on chipped steps, and deep scrubbing of all the nooks and crannies can do. And clean windows! I've reached out a few times to touch the glass in my office this fall, needing to remind myself that the glass is still in place.

Granted, it's just a facelift-- Tolman's seismic problems remain and the University continues to make progress in planning the replacement building. But it's refreshing for the soul to be in such brighter physical quarters.

On the intellectual front, the department continues to shine. Highlights include a number of prestigious awards for our faculty. Tania Lombrozo and Tom Griffiths received early career awards from the APS and APA, respectively, Bob Knight received a distinguished career award from the Cognitive Neuroscience Society, and Dacher Keltner is the recipient of the 2012 Diener Award in Social Psychology. Serena Chen was named the first chaired professor in the department's history and will hold the Marian E. and Daniel E. Koshland, Jr. Distinguished Chair for Innovative Teaching and Research. Our students, past and present are doing wonderfully, making important contributions and landing exciting positions. Paul Piff received the dissertation prize from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues for his work on the relationship between wealth and ethical behavior.

We are also pleased to welcome our newest faculty member, Linda Wilbrecht. Linda comes to us from the distant shores of Mission Bay, where she has been an assistant professor at UCSE. Her work combines behavioral and physiological methods to explore the development of neural circuits for decision making, with a special interest in understanding the changes that occur during adolescence.

Linda will be joining Silvia Bunge as co-director of an exciting new collaboration between UC Berkeley and Children's Hospital in Oakland. The CHILD Research Center (Cognitive Health Impacts Lifelong Development) is a multidisciplinary initiative with a unique focus on the factors that alter the course of brain development – for the better or for the worse. Research

within the center will explore how brain development is affected by a child's environment and experiences, the long-term consequences of brain injury during infancy or childhood, and how we can identify children who are at greatest risk for delayed or impaired brain development. Check out their website (childresearchcenter.org) for upcoming events including public lectures and workshops.

And keep sending us your news and views on our continuing quest to know 'Where does a Psychology degree lead?' We will be featuring these on our website and would love to add your story. New or additional contributions can be emailed to calpsychnews@gmail.com. Regular mail is still delivered-- you can address your notes directly to me.

Best,
Rich

Berkeley Psych Grad wins APF award



Berkeley graduate Dr. Michael Strambler (Ph.D., 2007) recently received the American Psychological Foundation's 2012 Kenneth B. and Mamie P. Clark Grant for his work examining the relationship between social status, self-concept in minority students, and the achievement gap. Dr. Strambler is now an assistant research scientist at Yale University School of Medicine.

This award is a new annual \$10,000 grant that supports research and activities that promote a better understanding of the relationship between self-identity and academic achievement in young students.



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Li Ka Shing Center Provides New Home for Psychology Research

Last fall, a new neighbor moved in next to Tolman Hall. With construction completed in October of 2011, the Li Ka Shing Biomedical and Health Sciences Center is a six-level, 200,000-square-foot facility named after philanthropist Li Ka-Shing, whose \$40 million donation instigated support for the project. Incorporating an open-lab design – meaning that the majority of laboratory spaces are open and team-based – the Li Ka Shing Center unites scientists from a wide range of fields, including cancer biology, stem cell biology, and neuroscience.

Among the facilities finding their new homes in Li Ka Shing is the Henry H. Wheeler, Jr. Brain Imaging Center (BIC), led by Dr. Mark D’Esposito. This past summer, the BIC made its first transition into the new building by moving its 3-Tesla MRI scanner into the Li Ka Shing Center with the help of a construction crane (for videos documenting the move, visit practicalfmri.blogspot.com, a blog run by the BIC’s physicist Ben Inglis). Besides providing room for MRI machinery, the Li Ka Shing Center also contains facilities for the BIC’s transcranial magnetic stimulation and electroencephalogram equipment. Such resources are vital for laboratories within the BIC that are working to uncover the processes underlying a vast range of neuropsychological phenomena, including neurological diseases (Dr. Rich Ivry’s lab), brain damage (Dr. Robert Knight’s Lab), and schizophrenia and depression (Dr. Ann Kring’s lab).

The completion of the center marks a vital step forward not only for brain imaging and biomedical research, but also for educating the next generation of scientists. With a multitude of teaching suites, lecture classrooms, and a large lecture theater in addition to its research facilities, the Li Ka Shing Center embodies Berkeley’s role as a leader in exemplary education and research.



*MRI machinery being installed at the Li Ka Shing Center.
Photo by Dr. Ben Inglis.*

Berkeley’s Own “Fantastic Four” Publish New Book

When you think of the Fantastic Four, you probably think of Mister Fantastic, Human Torch, The Thing, and Invisible Woman, but the Clinical Science department at UC Berkeley boasts its own self-proclaimed version of the popular comic book quartet, forged through the process of collaboration. The seeds of collaboration were planted back in 2009 when now 5th year Clinical Science students Janelle Caponigro and Erica Lee took part in the Mood Disorders Specialty Clinic, co-taught by Professors Ann Kring and Sheri Johnson. Tasked with developing a novel group-based therapy for people diagnosed with bipolar disorder, Janelle and Erica rose to the occasion. Over winter break, they took advantage of their free time and the work-promoting confines of Panera Bread restaurant to collaborate on the project. From these Dr. Pepper-fueled endeavors, they created a 16-week intervention aimed at providing clients with education around the signs, symptoms, and treatments for bipolar disorder.

As the 2010 spring semester wound down, opportunity struck in the form of a book offer for Professor Johnson. The offer was for a book that could take existing knowledge from research and treatment in bipolar disorder and disseminate this information in the form of a guide for newly diagnosed individuals. This book would help bridge the gap between empirically supported intervention research and people whose lives are affected by bipolar disorder. Translating psychological jargon into palatable material for a lay audience can be a challenging feat, but it was no match for the UC Berkeley Fantastic Four.

Work on the book began shortly after the end of that 2010 spring semester, with Janelle and Erica meeting regularly at their bastion of productivity, known to the rest of us as Panera Bread. Each would write a chapter, review what the other had written, send the drafts to Professors Kring and Johnson for additional editing, and



The Berkeley “Fantastic Four.” From left to right: Prof. Ann Kring, Prof. Sheri Johnson, Erica Lee, and Janelle Caponigro.

finally pass them along to the publisher. Though the process sounds easy, writing the book was no small feat. “The beginning was a bit overwhelming,” Janelle admitted, “but once we got into the swing of things, it was a lot of fun.”

Once the ball got rolling, Janelle and Erica hit their stride, producing chapters at a steady pace. The final result is the pocket-sized, 176-page *Bipolar Disorder: A Guide for the Newly Diagnosed*, which is now available at local bookstores and online retailers. This portable companion for people with bipolar disorder succinctly summarizes decades of intervention research in an easy to understand format, providing a much needed service for those people whose daily lives are impacted by this disorder. For students looking to forge their own collaboration of superhero proportions, Professor Kring has some simple advice: “Just ask.”

Department News

Silvia Bunge (CBB) and graduate students **Allyson Mackey** and **Kirstie Whitaker** recently published a study that found pre-law students who underwent intensive preparation for the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) altered their brain structure as they learned. Though it is well known that LSAT performance can improve with practice, Bunge's team found that the prep course focus on reasoning skill training actually strengthened the brain pathways underlying fluid reasoning, or the ability to solve a novel problem. The researchers also found that LSAT training enhanced connectivity between the right and left hemispheres of the brain, potentially improving students' cognitive resources when tackling verbal problems. This ability of cognitive training to change brain connectivity and improve reasoning and thinking skills suggests that the brain remains plastic and accessible to enrichment into adulthood.

Alison Gopnik (CPD) recently found that when young children play and interact with their environments, they learn in ways similar to scientists. In a series of experiments, young children given machines that lit up and played music would test hypotheses to establish which action was more likely to occur. The researchers suggest that toddlers can further develop their scientific thinking skills by being encouraged to spontaneously explore and play in safe, enriched settings. A better understanding of the ways babies learn can also inform the development of artificial intelligence technology, by teaching software to test hypotheses and adapt to change.

Steve Hinshaw (CS), with CS graduate student **Erika Swanson** and others, recently reported that as girls with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) enter adulthood, they are more likely to exhibit self-injurious behavior and attempt suicide than similar girls without ADHD. Drawing from a dataset of racially and socioeconomically diverse girls, Professor Hinshaw and his team examined girls when they were

6-12 years old and again between the ages of 17-24. They found that girls with ADHD were also more likely to have academic and social difficulties, and though many showed a reduction in fidgety and impulsive symptoms over time, other difficulties such as eating disorders and substance abuse emerged. The researchers believe the association between ADHD and self-harm may be due to lower impulse control in girls with ADHD, further suggesting that though ADHD is treatable, it must be carefully monitored for its influence on risk behaviors.

Charlan Nemeth (S/P) was the featured and opening speaker at the Summer Council meeting of American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), a meeting of approximately 200 state college and university Chancellors and Presidents, where she spoke about "Creative Problem Solving". Professor Nemeth also completed an invited article on "Decision Making" for the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of Strategic Management* (published by Palgrave; early version available from the Berkeley's Institute for Research on Labor and Employment).

In a study covered in the New York Times, post-doctoral student **Paul Piff** (S/P) and professor **Dacher Keltner** (S/P) reported that during uncertain times, the wealthy tend to focus on attaining and holding onto wealth, while those who are less well off prioritize spending time with family and friends. In a series of experiments, Piff and colleagues gathered the reactions of ethnically and socio-demographically diverse adults to different psychological states, such as uncertainty, anxiety, and helplessness, and compared the likelihood that individuals of different social classes would cope by turning to others or to wealth. They found that compared to those from lower socioeconomic classes, those with more financial wealth were less likely to anticipate financial instability in their lifetimes, more likely to strongly agree with statements like "Money is the only thing I can really count on", and more likely to move across the country for a high-paying job rather than stay near loved ones. In several of these experiments, lower class participants reported being more likely to turn to support networks within their communities to cope with perceived distress. The team suggests these differences highlight upper class individuals' tendency to cope with stress in their social environments by turning to material wealth, as well as explain some of the mechanisms underlying polarized responses to socially chaotic occurrences, such as an economic recessions or hurricanes.

Matthew Walker (CBB)'s Sleep and Neuroimaging Laboratory recently presented data on two studies at the 2012 SLEEP conference showing that one night of sleep loss can lead to both increased anxiety and a decreased ability to choose healthy foods. The first, an fMRI study of 18 healthy adults conducted by CBB student **Andrea Goldstein**, found that just one night of sleep deprivation led to heightened anticipatory activity in the amygdala, a brain region linked to negative emotional experience. The study team found that this effect was larger for people who were more naturally anxious, suggesting they are more vulnerable to the negative effects of sleep loss on anxiety. The second study, an MRI study of 23 healthy adults led by CBB student Stephanie Greer, found that a single night of sleep deprivation impaired frontal lobe activity, the brain region responsible for decision-making and behavior control. Rather than simply seeking out desirable foods, the sleep-deprived brain may instead be unable to decide to choose healthy foods over tasty ones. Greer and colleagues suggest this may help explain the link between sleep loss and obesity.



Several professors in the department gathered together at a party at Chair Rich Ivry's house in honor of our former Chair Stephen Hinshaw's 8 years of service to the department.

From left to right: Stephen Hinshaw (chair 2004-2011), Shelly Zedeck (chair from 1993-1998 and 2003-2004), Al Riley (1982-1987), Ero Hafner (chair 1987-1992), and current Chair Rich Ivry.

GASP: A Group for Berkeley PhD Students



GASP members holding a meeting in the new graduate lounge. Photo by Amanda Wang

Psychology graduate students often exist in their own world. Pursuing an individual research program in a specialized subfield of psychology can mean rarely crossing paths with students outside your lab. Luckily, psychology graduate students can stay in touch with one another through the Graduate Assembly of Students in Psychology (GASP). This year, with a new graduate student lounge (Tolman 2311) and fresh leadership, GASP has the resources to provide quality support to graduate students. Here, we answer some frequently asked questions about the group.

What is GASP?

Broadly construed, GASP is a forum for UC Berkeley graduate students in psychology to interact with one another, the department, and the university. GASP brings together psychology graduate students involved in different research areas and gives them a cohesive voice in the department.

What is the purpose of GASP?

The purpose of GASP is to build a unified psychology department community and provide valuable support for psychology graduate students by advocating for student rights and resources, providing departmental news and information to grad students, and promoting the creation of social and academic networks. GASP holds monthly meetings and organizes a variety of social and academic events designed to promote an inclusive, collaborative environment.

Who is involved in GASP?

GASP has a group of core organizers – Bryan Alvarez (CBB), Matt Goren (S/P), Kaja Johnson (CS), and Craig Anderson (S/P) – but all registered psychology graduate students are automatically GASP members. “In my view,” Goren says, “Anyone who gets involved at the campus, department, or program level is doing GASP’s work.” Many students have been involved in such efforts: for example, Ben Wolfe (CBB) created a California residency checklist that is now the gold standard for incoming students; Kim Russo (BN) and Minxuan He (CPD) have been involved with the Graduate Student Instructor Union and Graduate Assembly; and Tchiki Davis (S/P) is creating a peer-review program for psychology graduate students to review each other’s papers before they are submitted to academic journals.

What kind of events does GASP host?

GASP plans a variety of academic and social events throughout the year. In the past, GASP has arranged the department chair’s State of the Department meeting and workshops for grant and fellowship writing. Recently, Bryan Alvarez has created a series of meetings called Grad Anon, an open forum for psychology graduate students to voice their opinions and feelings and lend support with the goal of improving students’ overall graduate school experience. Finally, GASP organizes social events outside of Tolman. GASP has a tradition of hosting an annual welcome picnic for new and returning students, Halloween and St. Patrick’s Day parties, movie nights, and even paintball excursions.

Berkeley Bloggers Bring Psychology to the Internet

The peer review process can be arduous, but it is not the only way to disseminate psychological science to the general public. Embracing the freedom and fast delivery of blogging, a group of current and past Social/Personality graduate students created *Psych Your Mind* (psych-your-mind.blogspot.com). Blog posts are equal parts informative and topical, seamlessly applying psychological science to everyday life. Regular blog contributors include current UC Berkeley Social/Personality graduate students Amie Gordon, Maya Kuehn, Olga Antonenko, and Anna Luerssen, as well as NYU student Kate Reilly. We were fortunate to interview a pair of recent UC Berkeley alumni and active contributors about their experiences with Psych Your Mind: Michael Kraus (MK), now an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois, and Juliana Breines (JB), a Postdoctoral Fellow at Brandeis University.

What motivated you to start your own blog?

JB: As social-personality psychologists, so much of what we study is relevant to current events, social issues, relationships, and other aspects of our everyday lives, and we were excited to have an opportunity to share interesting and useful findings with a broader audience than we typically write for when we publish research papers. Also, academic writing can take years to finally hit the presses. There's something very satisfying about writing a post, publishing it the same day, and getting immediate feedback and commentary.

Does blogging change the way you think about your own research?

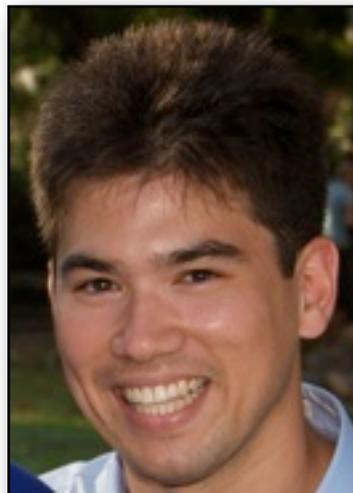
MK: It helps me write. One of my goals with blogging is to try to construct simpler, concise arguments. This is very similar to the goals in writing a research paper.

JB: Blogging has given me new research ideas, since it exposes me to different areas of research and encourages me to keep up with new findings. I think it has also improved my academic writing, making it more clear and accessible.

Which blog post was the most fun to work on?

MK: For me, I had fun recently blogging about how research on oxytocin helps explain the behavior of individuals in my favorite TV show *The Walking Dead* ("[Oxytocin and the Zombie Apocalypse](#)").

JB: Some of the most fun posts were those that were least related to my own research, but were just my way of answering a question I was curious about. For example, why are some people night owls, and can/should they change their ways? ("[The After Hours Mutants](#)"). I also loved making a list of psychology songs ("Psychology Songs") and comparing the TV show *The Bachelor* to the Stanford Prison Experiment ("[The Bachelor: A Modern-Day Replication of the Stanford Prison Experiment?](#)").



Michael Kraus, a blogger at Psych Your Mind.

Some of my posts are more serious, and I enjoy writing those as well, but they're a little less fun.

Have you received any feedback from people outside the Berkeley community who follow the blog?

JB: We've been lucky to get a lot of outside recognition for the blog -- many posts have been selected for Editor's Selections by various ResearchBlogging.com editors, and re-posted in places like the Huffington Post, the front page of Digg.com, and other high-traffic sources. But it's especially exciting when we randomly meet someone who has somehow heard about the blog. Michael in particular has been great about getting the word out through Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, and other outlets, and our readership has been growing. We're almost at half a million page views! A few of us are also blogging at Psychology Today now.

MK: We get more than 1,500 page views daily at Psych Your Mind, so it's grown fast in the last 16 months or so.

What are your future plans for science writing and research?

JB: I hope to continue blogging throughout my career. It complements my other work so well, and I could see the two converging at some point -- for example, if I were to someday write a book for a general audience.

MK: Probably too many to list here. Do good, ethical science is probably the biggest.

Spotlight on 1st year PhD Students

Jocelyn
Meza



Area: Clinical Science

Advisor: Steve Hinshaw

Hometown: Los Angeles, CA

Research interests: Positive parenting, executive functioning and positive adjustment in girls with ADHD

What would you be doing if you weren't in grad school? Traveling around the world!

When I'm not in Tolman, you'll find me... Playing softball or in the batting cages!

Tchiki
Davis



Area: Social-Personality

Advisor: Iris Mauss

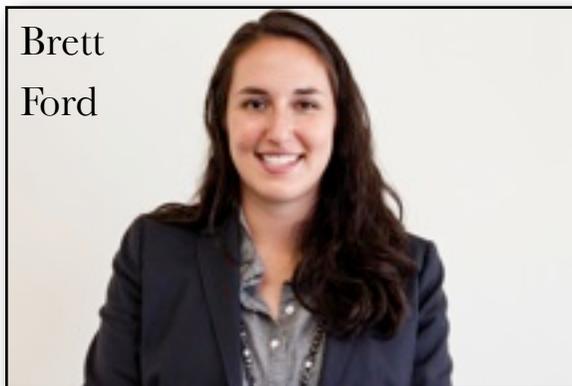
Hometown: Boulder, CO

Research interests: Emotion, emotion regulation, and psychological health

What would you be doing if you weren't in grad school? It's hard to even imagine anymore.

When I'm not in Tolman, you'll find me... Eating vegetarian food and carving pumpkins.

Brett
Ford



Area: Social-Personality

Advisor: Iris Mauss

Hometown: Portland, OR

Research interests: Emotion, emotion regulation, and how people can optimize their psychological health and well-being.

What would you be doing if you weren't in grad school? Regretting not being in grad school.

When I'm not in Tolman, you'll find me... Luxuriating and/or calculating how many degrees of separation I am from Kevin Bacon.

Stephan
Meylan



Area: Cognition, Brain, and Behavior

Advisors: Tom Griffiths & Mike Frank (Stanford)

Hometown: St. Petersburg, Florida

Research interests: The relationship between human cognition and the structure of natural languages-- that is, what aspects of the world's languages make them learnable?

What would you be doing if you weren't in grad school? I'd be a grad student in the Department of Rhetoric.

When I'm not in Tolman, you'll find me... Hiking in Marin or brewing beer.

Belén

Guerra-Carillo



Area: Cognition, Brain, and Behavior

Advisor: Silvia Bunge

Hometown: Quito, Ecuador

Research interests: Malleability of cognitive processes and associated neural changes following training

What would you be doing if you weren't in grad school? Furniture restorer.

When I'm not in Tolman, you'll find me... Smelling the flowers.

David

Bourgin



Area: Social-Personality

Advisors: Kaiping Peng and Serena Chen

Hometown: Savage, MD

Research Interests: Cultural cognition - naive epistemologies, semiology, culture and self, socio-historical analysis

What would you be doing if you weren't in grad school? Eating ice cream in bed.

When I'm not in Tolman, you'll find me... Eating ice cream in bed.

Jessica

Hamrick



Area: Cognition, Brain, and Behavior

Advisor: Tom Griffiths

Hometown: Charlottesville, VA

Research interests: Computational modeling, simulation, imagination, mental imagery, and intuitive theories

What would you be doing if you weren't in grad school? Doing AI research for a tech company.

When I'm not in Tolman, you'll find me... Cooking or reading.

Christopher

Adalio



Area: Clinical Science

Advisor: Steve Hinshaw

Hometown: Saint Cloud, FL

Research interests: Parenting practices in families of children with ADHD

What would you be doing if you weren't in grad school? Teaching high school history.

When I'm not in Tolman, you'll find me... On Skype with my family and friends on the East Coast.

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FALL 2012



Psychology department Chair Rich Ivry prepares a cone for undergraduate psychology major Meher Raza at the undergraduate ice cream social on October 18. CPD Professor Frederick Theunissen also pitched in to provide students with their scoops.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

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