Message from the Chair of Psychology

Brenda Smith-Chant, Ph.D.

I extend a welcome to all our new and returning students this academic year. As you can see, there are some exciting new changes in Psychology. Geoff Navara is our newly appointed tenure-track professor. Rebecca Nader is now in Oshawa, along with our other recent-comer, Beth Visser. Our graduate program has attracted another cohort, which has doubled the size of the program. We welcome back Teresa DeCicco from her sabbatical. I am now serving as department Chair, replacing our colleague Elaine Scharfe, who has been promoted to Dean of Arts and Sciences - Social Sciences.

To launch this newsletter, we have also included information about this year’s Trent Student Psychology Society—check out their Facebook site for upcoming academic and social activities.

Return from Sabbatical

Teresa DeCicco, Ph.D.

The past 3 years of my research have mainly focused on designing and testing new tools for conducting Dream Therapy in both Italian and English. All dream therapy methods have been scientifically tested in both languages with appropriate samples (For example: DeCicco, 2007, 2009; 2011; DeCicco & Donati, 2009; DeCicco, Donati, Pini, 2010; DeCicco & Schinco, 2010). Once these methods were completed, a book entitled La bussola dei sogni was written and then launched during my sabbatical period in Italy. I was able to lecture on dream therapy methods discussed in the book at universities throughout Tuscany and, for the general public throughout Italy. One of the highlights was a book launch and stimulating discussion with a large audience in a castle in Tuscany overlooking the sea.

The second major research project was conducted during my sabbatical period at the University of Pisa with a research team (Barcaro, Donati, Pini, Tallarico, Salvetti) where we are now investigating dream content and dream interpretation with EEG measures. This work has led to a cognitive model explaining the psychophysiological system responsible for the effectiveness of the Storytelling Method of Dream Interpretation.

Thirdly, my sabbatical was also spent collaborating with a new tenure-track professor. Rebecca Nader is now in Oshawa, Geoffrey S. Navara, Ph.D.

Dr. Geoff earned his Doctorate in Family Relations and Human Development from the University of Guelph. Geoff joined the Department of Psychology faculty at Trent University in the Fall of 2006 on a limited term appointments, but as July 1, 2011 has converted to a tenure-track position. He has numerous years of collaborating with NGOs from Central and South America, Western/Eastern Europe and the Pacific Rim. Geoff’s work often centered upon community-based projects. Geoff’s research focuses primarily upon cultural and cross-cultural issues, specifically as they relate to the family, or parent/child relationship. Geoff is particularly interested in how cultural values and beliefs are transmitted and interpreted at both a family and community level. These cultural values and beliefs can include, but are not limited to, religious/spiritual beliefs and how they influence motivation, attitudes and behaviours. Geoff is also interested in the process of how cultural beliefs and values change because of intercultural contact(s).

Geoff is a co-investigator on a research grant from the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport ($357,000) exploring the impact of community-based recreation programs on health in 15 remote First Nations communities in Ontario. In addition to his work with the Aboriginal communities, Geoff is working on several projects that examine the possible connection between religious orientation and ethnocentric attitudes, social desirability and comfort levels when interacting with other cultural groups. Geoff is also the lead investigator on a project that looks at health, psychological, and family outcomes of people who underwent gastric bypass surgery, especially focusing upon individuals who reside outside of metropolitan centres. Geoff is well versed in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, using both in his research.

Canadian Psychology Association

The Elnor Arn Arnes Award - is given to the best student presentation in the developmental section at our annual convention. To be eligible for the award, students must be a first author of the presentation (oral or poster) and must be a member of the section at the time of the convention. The award is for $500 and a certificate.

The 2011 winner was Austin Sye of Trent University for her poster presentation entitled “Early mathematical development: Processes that lead to higher levels of understanding.” Two students were tied for second place. They are Danielle Labine (who completed her honours Thesis at Trent University and went on to Ryerson University) and Gregory MacLean of St. Francis Xavier University.

Dates to Remember

Open House: Peterborough Oshawa
November 5th, 2011 and March 10th, 2012
November 19th, 2011 and March 17th, 2012
**Returning Graduate Students**

These are our Graduate students who are entering into their second year of their Masters Program:


Front row L-R: Willow Burns, Muniq Anam, Caitlin Higginson and Hilary Fast.

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**Entering Graduate Students**

These are our Graduate students who are entering into their first year of their Masters Program:

Back Row L-R: Katharine Bailey, Kyle Morrissey, Dustin Burt, Joshua Black and Patricia Smith.

Front row L-R: Jessica Taylor, Ashley Booker, Meagan Lacroix and Gillian Tibbetts.

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Josh Black:
Originally from St. Catharines, ON, I completed my undergraduate degree at Brock University. I will be working with Dr. Teresa DeCicco investigating the dreams of the bereaved.

Katharine Bailey:
I recently completed my Undergraduate studies at Trent and am continuing to work with Dr. Nancie Im-Bolter. I have been awarded a SSHRC scholarship for my Masters research project. I will be investigating the social problem solving and mental state understanding in children diagnosed with epilepsy.

Ashley Booker:
Originally from Toronto, ON, I completed my undergraduate degree here at Trent University. I am working with Dr. Hugo Lehmann on a project that analyses the organization of recent and remote memories. I am currently funded by NSERC.

Dustin Burt:
Originally from Owen Sound, ON. I completed my undergraduate degree (BAH) at the University of Guelph. Dr. Michael Chan-Reynolds is my M.Sc supervisor. My research interests are attention, visual search, and emotion.

Kate Bailey:
I recently completed my Undergraduate studies at Trent and am continuing to work with Dr. Nancie Im-Bolter. I have been awarded a SSHRC scholarship for my Masters research project. I will be investigating the social problem solving and mental state understanding in children diagnosed with epilepsy.

Patricia Smith:
Originally from St. Catharines, ON, I completed my undergraduate degree at Brock University. I will be working with Dr. Teresa DeCicco investigating the dreams of the bereaved.

Meagan Lacroix:
Originally from Collingwood, Ontario, I completed my undergraduate degree at Trent University. I am currently working with Dr. Laura Summerfeldt, investigating the relationship between personality traits related to OCD and preferences for symmetry and sameness.

Kyle Morrissey:
Originally from Winnipeg, MB, I completed my Undergraduate at the University of Winnipeg, where I researched cognitive development. I am currently working with Dr. Mowiei Liu, in the area of cultural influence and cognitive development.

Jessica Taylor:
Originally from St. Catharines, ON, I completed my undergraduate degree at Brock University. I will be working with Dr. Teresa DeCicco investigating the dreams of the bereaved.

Gillian Tibbetts:
Originally from Fort Frances, ON, I completed my undergraduate degree at the University of Ottawa. I am currently working with Dr. Elaine Scharfe researching parent education programs and attachment.
Honours Thesis Students

Second Row L-R: Rupdam Singh, Katherine McInnis, Natalie Semkow, Alyssa Arthur, Danielle Brayne, Nicole Miller.
Sitting L-R: Amalia Moir, Olufunmiike Banks-Devonish, Janette Bramley, Ashley Toohey, Melanie Alcock, Colleen Shaw
Absent: Jodi Souch, Sophie Schloffel, Rochelle Rogers and Michelle Hisson

The Trent Student Psychology Society

The Trent Student Psychology Society represents the body of students within the discipline of Psychology at Trent University. Our goal is to provide fellow psychology students with the opportunity to further their learning through the provision of academic information and events, graduate school resources, and a sense of community within the program: this means strengthening communication and partnerships between students, and between students and faculty. Through these services we hope to help students become better prepared for their futures!

Examples of events planned for the near future include an APA workshop, a de-stress psychology themed pub crawl, movie nights, and the annual psychology clothing sale! Further information on all these events is available on our Facebook page.

Members of the 2011-2012
Trent Student Psychology Society so far are:

Brandon Hussey  President
Katlyn Robitaille  Vice President
Nick Halmsay  VP of Finance
Danielle Sage  Public Relations Officer
Erin Hillier  Secretary
Brewster Hatton  Media/Advertising Manager
Open  1st Year Representative
Open  2nd Year Representative
Morgan Stykel  3rd Year Representative
Open  4th Year Representative

The Chair...

Brenda Smith-Chant, opens her doors for an engaging assemble and welcome for our Thesis and Graduate students together with our faculty.

An evening of meeting and greeting and embracing new faces while indulging in a delectable feast.

The Psychology department would like to extend a warm thank you to the chair Brenda Smith-Chant for a engaging and delightful evening.
Meet the Faculty

Hugo Lehmann
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Ph.D (Concordia)
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Mowie Liu
Associate Professor
M.Ed. (Shanghai Normal University)
M.A., Ph.D. (University of Western Ontario)
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Rebecca Nader
Assistant Professor
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My name is Rebecca Nader and I am the new LTA in Oshawa; I am presently teaching Psychology 3015Y: Advanced Statistics. I am currently completing my PhD dissertation through Queen’s University. The focus of my dissertation is on the relationship between sleep and cognition in adolescents. Specifically, I am interested in how sleep variables (such as the sleep spindle) are related to intelligence and also how learning new tasks affects subsequent sleep. My interest in adolescence is because the adolescent period is a time of a great deal of brain development and I am curious about how the changes in the brain affect both the structure of sleep as well as its relationship to our waking activities. I am teaching statistics because I believe that it is a vital part of psychology – we use statistics to make sense of our findings and to organize our results in a way that we can explain them to others. Statistics help us to be confident in our conclusions and our predictions about what our research means for the general population. I am very excited to be teaching here at Trent and to have the opportunity to work with so many great students.

Geoff Navara
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Fergal O’Hagan
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I joined Trent University Oshawa last year in a Limited Term Appointment capacity. I feel very fortunate indeed to have arrived at Trent just in time to take advantage of the spectacular new Thornton Rd. campus in Oshawa. I am truly amazed at the sense of community that exists in this small but mighty campus. I am currently teaching Educational Psychology and Introduction to Abnormal Psychology, and in the winter semester, I will teach Personality Psychology and Social Psychology. Before I came to Trent, I was teaching at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, where I completed my PhD in social/personality psychology. My current research program is focused around psychopathic traits (tendencies to be manipulative, callous, irresponsible, and lacking in empathy), personality, and other individual difference variables. I currently have talented student researchers collaborating with me on projects related to psychopathy and sexual fantasy, and the tendency to enjoy being sexually objectified.

Beth Visser
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