

CC Psychology News

Volume 1 Issue 1 January 2008

Inside

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Dept Greetings | 1 |
| Sabine Endowment... | 1 |
| Faculty Research..... | 2 |
| Undergraduate Honors | 2 |
| Graduates: Where are they Now? | 2 |
| Cathey's retirement..... | 3 |
| Student Research | 3 |
| 2008 Graduates..... | 4 |

Send us your email to have this delivered to you electronically

email:
psychology@coloradocollege.edu

Faculty:
Emily Chan
Lori Driscoll
Kristi Erdal
Jay Frye
John Horner
Bob Jacobs
Tomi-Ann Roberts
Tricia Waters
Cathey Weir

Staff:
Ann DeStefano
Kevin Ford
Mandi Medeiros

GREETINGS FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Hello Alumni!

Greetings from the first (ever?) Psychology Department Alumni Newsletter. We're hoping to come to you twice a year (unless we find we don't have much to say!) to keep you updated on the goings-on of the Psychology Department and keep you connected to your alma mater!

For those of you who graduated before the 1990's, the faculty probably won't look very familiar to you, but hopefully you'll get to know us a bit through these missives. For those of you who graduated in the 1990's, we've had a lot of changes – a beautiful new building (no more attic of Palmer Hall!), two wonderful additions to our faculty (Lori Driscoll and Emily Chan), and a renovation of our major.

And to those of you who recently graduated....well, "Hi again!" Hope you all find the newsletter informative and a little fun too. We've had fun putting it together.

Kristi Erdal
Queen Chair of the Psychology Department



THE SABINE ENDOWMENT FOR PSYCHOLOGY

Cornelia Sabine, longtime supporter of Colorado College and the Department of Psychology, died at home in Colorado Springs on August 20, 2004 at the age of 94. Cornelia obtained a B.A. in Psychology from Colorado College in 1949 and an M.A. in Human Behavior in 1950. She had a distinguished career in public service as a psychologist in Colorado Springs for 30 years.

Upon her death, Cornelia made a generous financial gift, now known as the Cornelia M. Sabine Fund, to the Psychology Department. The



Cornelia M. Sabine
1910-2004

income generated from the endowment is used to fund faculty and student research and conference expenses, psychology instrumentation and equipment, two annual Psychology Society speakers (one of whom is typically an alumnus), and two annual departmental awards (see the Awards section for the 2007 winners).

We are indebted to Cornelia and her generosity. She has enhanced our department and the opportunities for our students. She will never be forgotten.

RESEARCH FOCUS: ARE YOU GOOD OR ARE YOU COMPETENT?

When people form impressions of others, the contents of their evaluations can mostly be categorized into two content areas -- the communal theme (characteristics that guide what is acceptable in interpersonal relationships, e.g., honesty, loyalty) and the agency theme (characteristics relevant to task accomplishment and personal attainment, e.g., competence, intelligence).

Chan's research, employing cognitive measures such as reaction times and memory, has shown that people are more sensitive to information about other people's communal than agency characteristics. This is adaptive because communal information allows us to infer whether or not a person can be a trusted member in the social exchange network.

Given that people spend much time and effort monitoring other's communal reputation, an important issue to study is how people monitor their own communal reputation and how reputations are spread in the community. In this line of research, Chan found that people are more interested in maintaining a positive communal reputation than agency reputation. People report being more upset at the prospect that someone might have misperceived them as lacking in communal traits than agency traits.

Her experiments also showed that negative information about a person's communal characteristics has greater potential to damage a person's overall reputation because negative social-moral reputation travel further "along the grapevine" than other types of information, and once established, is more resistant to change.

Chan's current projects focus on applying this communal-agency distinction to other realms of social perception such as perceptions of organizations and of political candidates. Preliminary findings suggest that the same effect may be seen in organizational reputation: Experimental participants made harsher judgments against a utilities company that spilled sewage into the river because of "lack of concern for the community" than one that spilled sewage because of "lack of competence and ability." The upcoming 2008 presidential elections will serve as another promising testing ground to apply this framework to political candidates.



Emily Chan is assistant professor of psychology at CC, where she specializes in social cognition, prejudice, and judgment and decision making

Where are they now?

Kindle Rising (Psychology '96). After qualifying as a speech pathologist, Kindle worked in San Diego and Tucson in rehabilitation hospitals. She is currently a research associate at the University of Arizona examining how behavioral treatments help people with acquired alexia and agraphia. Kindle and her husband Alex have a 1-year old daughter.

Clara Vondrich (Neuroscience '00) received her JD from the University of Virginia School of Law in May 2006, after which she clerked for the Honorable Timothy M. Tymkovich on the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit in Denver, Colorado. Currently she is an associate in the litigation department at Arnold & Porter LLP in Washington, DC.

2007-08 Student Awards

Cornelia Manley Sabine Award
Jennifer Mendoza '07

Cornelia Manley Sabine Scholarship
Jill Bennett '08

William Arthur Blakely Memorial Award
Jessica Bolen '08

Catherine Weir Parker Scholarship in Psychology
Kaitlyn Hyser '08

Robert Silvas (Psychology '03) completed his Masters in Social Work at University of Denver in 2005. Robert then joined the Army, completed Basic Training at Ft. Jackson and Officer Candidate School at Ft. Benning, GA, and subsequently was commissioned as an Infantry Officer (2nd Lieutenant). In May of 2007, Robert was deployed to Arab Jabour, Iraq. He is currently serving as a platoon leader of a 17 Soldier Tank platoon and was recently promoted to 1st Lieutenant.

Zina Mercil (Neuroscience '03) received the Marie Clough Gillis Award for Excellence in Vocal Music by the Dept of Music. She has subsequently pursued her dreams of being a working performer in shows and reviews. Zina's most recent performance was in "La Cage aux Folles", having spent the previous 18 months as a showgirl / principal understudy for "Jubilee!" at Bally's Las Vegas. Previous shows in the Denver Metro area include "Cats," "Chicago," "Oklahoma," and "Shenandoah." Following the run of "La Cage," Zina plans to return to New York and possibly Paris to audition for other musical theater shows and reviews.

Brooke Vick (Psychology '97) earned her Ph.D. from University of California at Santa Barbara in 2006. She is now an Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department at Whitman College.

Nina Kaiser (Psychology '01) is a postdoctoral researcher at University of California, San Francisco working with Linda Pffiffer on issues connected with ADHD children, especially parenting and school-based training programs. She completed her PhD in 2007 -- originally at Purdue University and then at the University of Vermont.

RETIREMENT: CATHEY GRANT WEIR CELEBRATES 39 YEARS

Cathey Grant Weir, Class of 1965 and beloved CC Psychology Professor from 1991-2007, retired in May of 2007 after 39 years of teaching in University College London, Rockford College, Illinois, and at Colorado College.

Cathey's rousing retirement celebration at Adam's Mountain Café was attended by current members of the department, including one former student of Cathey's who is now a professor (Lori Larsen Driscoll '94), and by Doug Freed, Don Shearn, and Carl Roberts, who taught Cathey as an undergraduate.

Cathey's recent research interests have included newborn hearing and infant learning/attention. She has also written papers about teaching statistics and how strategies for reading change from younger to older adulthood.

Now-Professor Emerita Cathey is currently living in Virginia with her husband Ed Parker and is keeping busy with family visits to 8 grandchildren, civic activities, and catching up on writing experimental papers. A Perception and the Fine Arts book is also in the works.

On her years in teaching, Cathey says "Over the years that I've been privileged to study and teach experimental psychology, it has been both exciting and satisfying to see many questions answered, many students learn about these answers., and many new questions asked."

Cathey would love to hear from alumni: her email address remains cweir@coloradocollege.edu.



(from left) Don Shearn, Alan Campbell, Cathey Weir, Carl Roberts, and Doug Freed

We want your stories.

Be featured in the next issue of our newsletter. We want to know how you are doing. Send us a one- or two-sentence description of "where you are now"; please include your full name and graduation year. We are also seeking short (25-45 word) "Words of Wisdom" for our current students, if you have advice to share. Send your submissions to psychology@coloradocollege.edu.

STUDENT RESEARCH: JESSICA BOLEN '08



Jessica, who is working with Kristi Erdal, is investigating how children with Asperger's Syndrome (AS) narrate stories in order to determine whether their ability to form a 'gestalt', or integrated interpretation, of a story correlates with their level of emotional understanding.

AS children and typically developing children are asked to arrange simple picture cards in sequence so as to create a logical story. They are then asked to explain the story that they create with the cards. Jessica expects that the children's emotional understanding, as measured by their capacity to correctly identify the emotional expression of each of the picture card characters, and their ability to define particular emotions, will correlate with their scores on the narrative task.

She also hypothesizes that the typically developing children will score higher than children with AS on both the narrative task and the emotional understanding task. Jessica is hoping to demonstrate that AS children's inability to narrate coherent storylines (and thus think in an integrated, global fashion) contributes to their striking emotional understanding impairments.

CONGRATS TO OUR 2008 GRADUATES

Psychology 2007 Graduates

Margaret E. Beck
Clayton, NM

Laura Snow Benoit
Lake Oswego, OR

Arlis Merle Brown
Rio Ranch, NM

Lindsey Brown
Boulder, CO
Distinction in Psychology

Betsy Noelle Burkett
Union City, TN

Brian Braun Donohue
Rochester, MN

Rachel Falkenstein
New York, NY

Amanda Margaret Hieb
Centennial, CO

Leah Teresa Johnston
Anacortes, WA

Molly Anne Long
Portland, OR

Sarah Elizabeth McKellar
Dallas, TX

Miles Kenneth Meason
Grand Junction, CO

Mandi Lee Medeiros
Colorado Springs, CO

Kaye Alice Miller
Anacortes, WA

Elizabeth Erin Mullings
Castle Rock, CO

Menesis Steve Navarro
Bronx, NY

Jessica Richardson
Alamogordo, NM

Ryan Segal
Sandy, UT

Ryan Kyle Shepherd
Mancos, CO

Liana Ganit Singer
Boulder, CO

Kathleen Steinberg
Wayland, MA
Distinction in Psychology

Rosemary Tracy
Newton, MA

Nathalie Warren
Billings, MT

Neuroscience 2007 Graduates

Brittany Bishop
St. Louis, MO

Ashley Ellen Boynton
Tucson, AZ
Distinction in Neuroscience;
cum laude

Freedom Cheteni
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Kelly Catherine Greengard
Denver, CO

Colorado College
The Department of Psychology
14 E Cache la Poudre
Colorado Springs CO 80903
(719) 389 - 6593

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
P A I D
Colo Springs CO
Permit No. 105