

## Message from the Editor

*Spring makes its own statement, so loud and clear that the gardener seems to be only one of the instruments, not the composer.*

*Geoffrey B. Charlesworth*

Welcome to the Department of Psychology spring 2012 newsletter! It is the second issue of a new and exciting venture for our department. We received positive feedback about our inaugural fall 2011 newsletter from several of you — thank you! As editor, I am grateful to receive such feedback. In fact, research shows that “gratitude” as a state or trait has lots of health benefits. In this issue, we remember fondly the dean of our College of Languages, Literature, and Social Sciences who was also a colleague and mentor from our department. We also showcase more of the accomplishments of our students, faculty, alumni and department. For instance, in the Grad Life article, you will read about the research interests of one of our graduate students and her future plans. In the Alumni Re-Connect article, you will read about the goings-on with one of our students who graduated with a B.A. in 2006. You will also have an opportunity to take a peek into the activities of students and faculty in one of our research labs by reading our Lab Gab article. You will “get to know” one of our faculty in the *Profiles* article. This issue also has some other fun things to read, including our Lighter Side section. We hope you will enjoy reading this issue, getting to know what is new in the department since November, 2011, and just catching up with your friends from the Department of Psychology. We would love to hear from you.

*Mojisola F. Tihamiyu*

## A Tribute to Dr. Alice Skeens: May 12, 1936 – Nov 12, 2011

*By: Dr. J. D. Jasper and Dr. Joseph Hovey (current and former chairs, Department of Psychology)*

*If ever there is tomorrow when we're not together ... there is something you must always remember. You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think, but the most important thing is, even if we're apart ... I'll always be with you.*

*Winnie the Pooh*

A friend to our faculty and an inspiration to our students – that describes Dr. Alice Skeens. Her career at UT spanned nearly five decades, and she served the University as a teaching assistant, instructor, professor and administrator – most recently as the founding dean of the College of Languages, Literature and Social Sciences. She was passionate about a number of things including women’s issues and student athletics, but her real love was teaching, and she once said that returning to the classroom after a multi-year absence was “one of the best decisions that I have ever made.” That was in 1997, and

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*Dr. Alice Skeens*

## Grad Life: Jacquelyn N. Pidruzny, M.A.

Jackie is a 5th year doctoral student in the clinical psychology program at The University of Toledo working under Dr. Jeanne H. Brockmyer. She received her bachelor of arts degree in psychology from The University of Michigan – Dearborn in 2007 and her master of arts degree in psychology from The University of Toledo in 2009. Jackie specializes in treating children from birth to 18 years and their families who have experienced trauma, as well as children with pervasive developmental disorders.

### *Research on Children with Autism and the Effects of Media*

For her doctoral dissertation, Jackie is examining how children on the autism spectrum react to cartoons with aggressive images. According to her, “A great deal of research has been conducted on violent media and its negative effects on most children, such as decreasing their sensitivity to others’ pain or suffering. Emerging research is showing that children with autism spectrum disorders have a strong preference for media and become deeply immersed when watching their favorite shows and movies. The symptoms of autism spectrum disorders include challenging and sometimes aggressive behaviors, such as throwing objects, hitting others or hurting themselves when they are frustrated.” All of these findings taken together have led Jackie to believe that it is crucial to better understand how violent media affects children with autism spectrum disorders. Jackie was highly honored to receive the Robert N. Whiteford Memorial Scholarship in April 2011 for her work in this area, and she hopes that her findings will lead to future studies and help inform the media choices of families who have a child with an autism spectrum disorder.

### *Clinical Practice With Children Who Have Experienced Trauma*

Jackie is extremely passionate about working with children who have experienced trauma and their families, when it comes to clinical practice. She currently has an externship at the Cullen Center of the Toledo Children’s Hospital, where she is trained in and uses treatments that have been found to be effective for this population.

She deeply admires the resilience that her child clients demonstrate and the strength their families possess in the face of very frightening and stressful experiences. She has also had the opportunity to work with some exceptional children who both have experienced trauma and have been diagnosed with pervasive developmental disorders. This February, she was accepted for her pre-doctoral internship at Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health in Canton, Ohio, where she will continue to specialize in assessment and treatment of children with these difficulties.

### *Sharing This Work With the Community*

Jackie has taken a great interest in getting involved with the community and making her research and clinical work applicable to everyday life. She has spent the last two years volunteering as a Court Appointed Special Advocate/Guardian Ad Litem for Lucas County children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect. She serves as advisor to The University of Toledo’s chapter of Autism Speaks. She has also taken time to complete three courses of American Sign Language at the Toledo Hearing and Speech Center and volunteers at a summer camp through the center for children who are hard of hearing. In November 2010, she and her advisor, Dr. Brockmyer, gave a short workshop on coping with grief and loss to members of the Sylvania United Church of Christ. In 2008, she was an author and editor for a special edition on video games on the Website Education.com. This Website is a popular resource for parents with children of any age, and provides valuable insight and practical strategies on everything from dealing with bullies to managing children’s time spent engaged with media (*see education.com and education.com/topic/children-video-games*). She genuinely feels that she receives far more from these rich experiences with children and families in the community than she could ever give!

After completing her doctoral training, Jackie plans to pursue an academic career that allows her to balance research, teaching and clinical practice.

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our department was blessed to have her. She was the face of our introductory psychology (PSY 1010) course for several years, and taught, mentored and advised thousands of students. In fact, they could often be seen lined up outside her door. She loved her students, and they absolutely loved her. Below are a few comments from some of those same students.

*Dr. Skeens was a great teacher with a mind full of knowledge.*

*I changed my major to psychology because of Dr. Skeens.*

*Dr. Skeens applied class material to daily life, making it more interesting.*

*Dr. Skeens was a great example of a strong, intelligent woman; she also had a great sense of fashion and always looked so nice.*

On behalf of our Department’s faculty, students and staff, we say goodbye Alice. You left the world a better place. We will miss you. Rest in peace.

*A scholarship fund has been established in Alice’s name. If you’re interested in memorializing Dr. Skeens in this way, please contact the UT Foundation. Finally, if you have memories of Dr. Skeens that you would like to share with us, feel free to send an e-mail using the [PsyConnect](#) address.*

## Mind Games: Conjunction Junction

By: Eric Prichard, Graduate Student

Read the following story and then answer the question that follows:

Things are going great for Tom. He just finished an undergraduate honors thesis on the Napoleonic Wars at The University of Toledo, he just received a great job offer, and his relationship with his girlfriend Mary is really blossoming. There were times when he had difficulty balancing all of the responsibilities and social demands that come with college life. It can be difficult to be a successful student, athlete, and socializer all at the same time. But, as Tom has learned, those who learn to find balance in life often reap great rewards.

Now, order the following statements about Tom according to how likely you believe them to be:

- A) Tom is a history major and received an offer to play for the Dallas Cowboys.
- B) Tom will marry Mary within the next two years.
- C) Tom received an offer to play for the Dallas Cowboys.
- D) Tom is a history major and will marry Mary within the next two years.

Tversky and Kahneman (1983) gave undergraduates a similar sort of passage about a fictional political activist named Linda and had them order statements on the basis of how probable they seemed. In their study, 86% of the students reported that it was more likely that Linda was a feminist and a bank teller than just a bank teller. You have fallen into the exact same trap as those students, if you either (1) rated statement A as more likely than statement C or (2) rated statement D as more likely than statement B. Believing that it is more likely a person belongs to two categories (history major and Dallas Cowboys) than just one of the categories (Dallas Cowboys) is called the conjunction fallacy. Probability theory demonstrates why this cannot be the case. Let us say you believe there is an 80% chance Tom is a history major. Then, the probability of him being a history major is .80 (probabilities are always numerically represented as values between 1 and 0). Similarly, if you believe there is a 5% chance Tom is a Cowboy, then the probability can be expressed as .05. If you want to know the probability of both events being true, you multiply .80 by .05 and you get .04 (or 4%). This means it is slightly more likely that Tom is a Dallas Cowboy than a Dallas Cowboy who majored in history. Even if you are 100% certain that he majored in history, the probability of Tom being a Cowboy who majored in history can only be equal to, never greater than, the probability of him being a Cowboy.

People commit the conjunction fallacy because knowing Tom wrote about the Napoleonic wars and knowing that is unlikely he was signed by the Cowboys makes imagining him as a football player with a history degree seem more plausible than imagining him as just a football player. Math, however, proves this is wrong. It is important to study biases and fallacies, as Dr. Jasper's Decision Research lab at Toledo has, because we learn how easily we can come to misjudge people and situations based on what seems like should be true. Once we know how we are biased, we can work to attenuate the effects of these biases and make better judgments about the people and situations with which we interact every day.

*Further Reading: Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1983). Existential versus intuitive reasoning: The conjunction fallacy in probability judgment. Psychological Review, 101, 547-567.*

## The Lighter Side

Dr. Christman, one of the experimental faculty members, conducts research in cognitive psychology, and over the last few years has used strength of handedness as a neurological marker for brain organization, specifically to assess the degree of interhemispheric connectivity. Below is a poem he wrote about the corpus callosum, the bundle of nerve fibers connecting the right and left hemispheres of the brain.

### Ode to the Corpus Callosum

By Dr. Stephen Christman, Professor

left this, right that  
asymmetries here, asymmetries there  
all is lateralized, specialized  
popularized, polarized  
while the middle is forgotten

oh, poor calloused body  
existing only to be neglected  
or bisected  
who will sing thy praises?

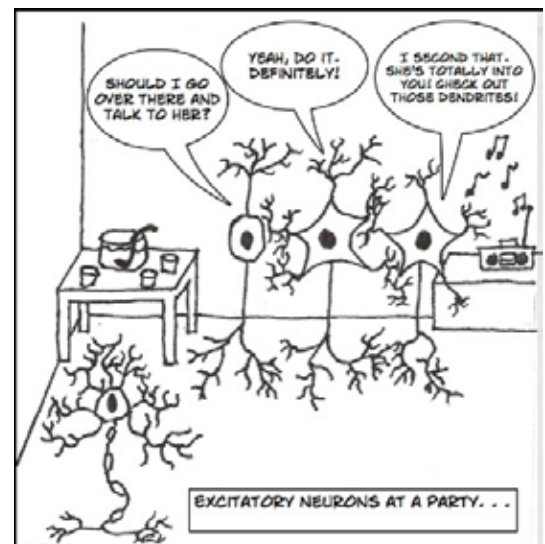
neither lefty nor righty  
but in the middle  
mixed and balanced  
on the point of a riddle

the meeting point  
of the two sides  
of every story  
the indivisible center  
the invisible glory

in this world of all things cyber  
who will take the time  
to count your fibers?

## Psy Funnies

By Ryan Corser



## Lab Gab: The Social and Affect Lab

How long can you stick your hand in a bucket of ice water? If you are like most people, probably not very long. After a while, the pain becomes too much to bear. Research in the social and affect lab, led by Dr. Andy Geers, centers on the variety of factors contributing to how individuals identify and process (un)pleasant information (like the pain experienced from exposure to cold water) and the effects of such processing and identification for subsequent behavior and decision-making. Specifically, efforts have focused on two primary lines of research. The first regards optimistic and pessimistic expectancies and their relation to particular outcomes such as decision-making and goal pursuit. The second involves the manner in which attitudes, choice and expectations shape treatment decisions, symptom perception and health outcomes.

It is this latter line of research, which is proving to be particularly fruitful for the lab. In 2006, Dr. Geers and his lab were awarded a research grant from the National Institute for Neurological Disorders and Strokes (NINDS). With this funding, the lab examined how expectations for pain relief, as well as the desire for pain relief, alters the perception of a painful stimulus. Three graduate students — Justin Wellman, Stephanie Fowler and Heather Rasinski — along with a wonderful team of undergraduate research assistants were key in seeing this project through. The grant project has recently come to an end and has already resulted in several important findings regarding the psychological processes responsible for pain relief. It is in such findings that the current social and affect grads find their inspiration.

### *Meet the Social and Affect Grads*

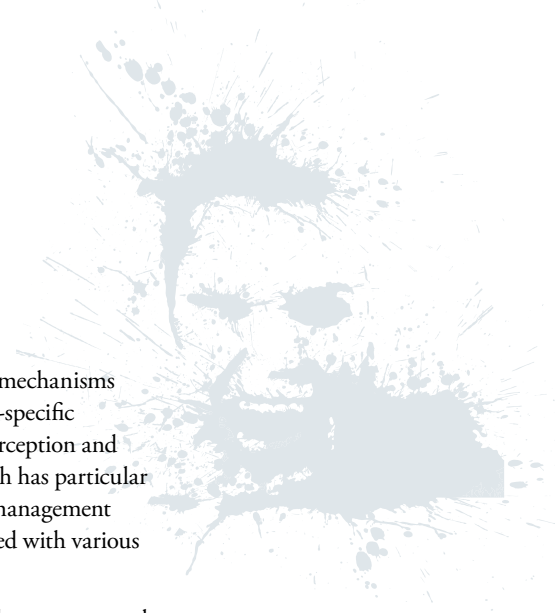
Stephanie Fowler, a senior member of the social and affect lab, examines the mediators and moderators involved in sex-related differences in pain perception. One dominant finding in the pain literature is that men report less pain and exhibit greater pain tolerance than

women. Stephanie works to isolate and manipulate context-dependent gender role cues in an attempt to better understand the causal mechanisms underlying this gender-specific discrepancy in pain perception and tolerance. Such research has particular implications for pain management and reduction associated with various medical treatments.

Similarly, Jill Brown, the newest member of the social and affect lab, has turned her attention toward the medical field. She is interested in identifying optimal decision-making strategies for doctors and their patients. There is a current trend in the medical community for increased patient involvement in treatment selection. Yet, little research has focused on the pros and cons of this approach. Currently, Jill is examining the way in which choice complexity and the number of choice alternatives impacts treatment satisfaction and efficacy.

### *Future Directions*

Recently, Dr. Geers and Dr. Rose (another of the social faculty) submitted a research grant to explore how personal involvement in selecting a medical treatment influences treatment outcomes and satisfaction. A line of research reflected in grad Jill Brown's research interests. The lab is hopeful to have good news about that project to report on in the future.



## Alumni Re-Connect

Jessica Mueller, a 2006 graduate with a double major in German and psychology, was chosen as our featured alumni for our spring issue not only for her exemplary work while an undergraduate at The University of Toledo, but also for her work since her graduation.

While at UT, she worked with Dr. Laura Seligman and Dr. Joe Hovey to combine her two majors through conducting research assessing eating disorder symptoms and social anxiety in college-aged males and females in Tübingen, Germany and in Toledo, Ohio. In addition, she volunteered as a research office assistant for the Center for the Study of Anxiety Disorders and Depression in addition to working in Dr. Fulkerson's lab, studying child language acquisition.

Mueller recalls that her experience at UT was very satisfying, citing specifically that the faculty members were encouraging and flexible "in helping me realize my own goals in the Psychology and German Programs at UT". While obtaining her master's degree at the University of Dayton, Mueller studied eating disorder symptomatology and personality traits, using the Big Five model. After receiving her master's degree, Mueller accepted a position at Nova House Association, Inc., a substance abuse rehabilitation facility in Dayton, Ohio. Upon receipt of her Chemical Dependency Counselor license, she

was promoted to the trainer position in the Halfway House unit of Nova House, through which she worked closely with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction in order to serve clients who have been involved in the criminal justice system.

In the fall of 2009, Mueller was awarded the distinction of being named a Fulbright Scholar and moved to Germany to teach English. The following summer, she was awarded a second Fulbright Scholarship to intern at the Saxon State Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport in Dresden, Germany. By May, Mueller moved to Spain to take a Spanish language course while freelancing as an English tutor and editor.

She has recently returned to the states and is hoping to secure a position in the mental health and chemical dependency fields. Additionally, she hopes to pursue her doctorate while working abroad in Germany or Spain and conducting research on eating disorders in an intercultural setting or multilingualism. Looking back on how her experiences at The University of Toledo have prepared her for her career, Mueller states "My time at UT helped me to realize that it is possible to combine seemingly unrelated interests if one is truly dedicated to making it happen."



## Profiles



Meet Dr. Rickye S. Heffner.

Dr. Heffner is a professor in experimental psychology and associate chair of the psychology department. She is married to Dr. Henry Heffner and has two sons, Henry, 44, and Peter, 39. Dr. Heffner also has two granddaughters, 3 and 5 years of age, with whom she enjoys spending time.

Dr. Heffner graduated with a bachelor's of arts in psychology from Vanderbilt University in 1968. She subsequently began her graduate career in psychobiology at Florida State University. Interestingly, Florida State University was one of the two psychobiology programs at the time. Given that this was a new area of interest, the field of psychobiology was wide open during the late 60s and early 70s. Not everyone was acknowledging the extent to which the brain was unknown, however.

In fact, Dr. Heffner recalls a lecture in which her professor asserted that acetylcholine and norepinephrine, the only known neurotransmitters at the time, would be the only ones to ever be discovered. Fortunately, Dr. Heffner and her mentors at the time were embracing the unknown variables in the brain as well as the importance of evolutionary psychobiology that would form the basis of Dr. Heffner's very successful and ongoing research career.

After graduating with her Ph.D. in 1973, Dr. Heffner completed a series of post-doctoral positions at the England Medical School and Johns Hopkins University where she began her own independent research programs studying hearing across species. Some of her most notable work was completed at the University of Kansas. As part of a grant from the National Science Foundation, Dr.

Heffner studied the auditory perception and categorization of sounds among cognitively impaired children. As she studied auditory perception among humans, she began to ask the question: "Why do humans not hear high frequencies?" Given that the predominate theories of the time indicated that humans do not hear high frequencies because of our relatively large size, Dr. Heffner became interested in testing her various hypotheses among other large animals.

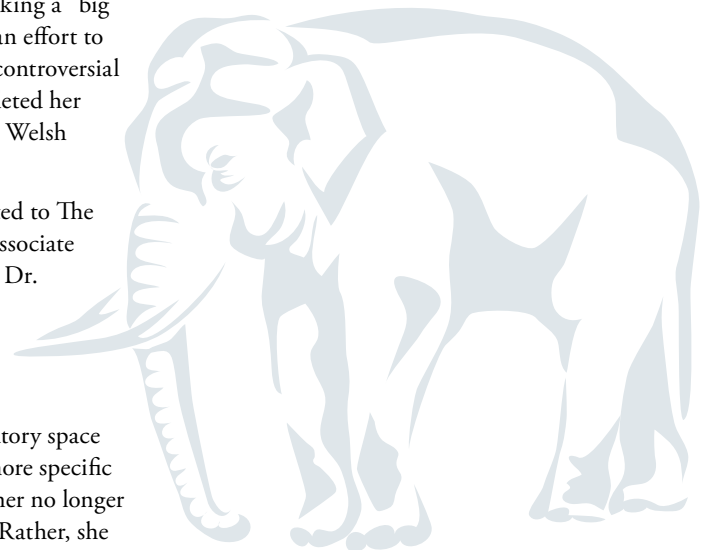
In pursuit of an appropriate place to conduct research with large animals, Dr. Heffner ended up conducting research in the tiny town of Parsons, Kansas, that was located 125 miles from the closest large city. Dr. Heffner recalls having to drive to and from Independence, Kansas, on a regular basis to conduct research on an elephant at the Independence Zoo. Truly a devoted researcher, Dr. Heffner had to begin her drive extremely early in the morning to conduct her research prior to the elephant's morning debut at the zoo. Fortunately, not all of her research with large animals involved long drives; however, she continued to encounter less than ideal conditions in future research endeavors. She moved on to testing the auditory perceptions of horses and cattle in an old dairy barn infested with snakes and wasps. Interestingly enough, Dr. Heffner grew to tolerate the snakes but retained a great dislike for the wasps. Dr. Heffner's discomfort was fortunately not in vain; her research findings with horses and cattle were somewhat inconsistent with previous findings in regard to the auditory perceptions of large animals. Dr. Heffner describes the findings as making a "big splash in a small pond." In an effort to replicate her intriguing yet controversial findings, Dr. Heffner completed her research in Kansas studying Welsh ponies and 300-pound pigs.

In 1987, Dr. Heffner relocated to The University of Toledo as an associate professor with her husband, Dr. Henry Heffner, to continue her program of research studying auditory perceptions across species. Given a more limited laboratory space to conduct research and a more specific research question, Dr. Heffner no longer worked with large animals. Rather, she

became interested in studying the auditory perceptions of smaller animals and how the ability to perceive different sounds may have evolved as a mechanism for prey versus predator animals instead of large versus small animals. Dr. Heffner successfully continued her program of research and has received an impressive amount of federal funding to sustain her endeavors. With this funding and a never-ending number of research questions, Dr. Heffner carried out her research with a variety of small animals including rodents, bats, pocket gophers, and naked mole rats.

Although Dr. Heffner's research is fascinating, it is not the only contribution she has made to The University of Toledo. In particular, Dr. Heffner has been an integral part of the psychology department's undergraduate honors program, serving as the director of the program beginning in 1987. Dr. Heffner states that the sensitive nature of her research (i.e., working with animals) does not allow her as much time as most faculty members to mentor students; however, she does have words of wisdom for undergraduate and graduate students alike. More specifically, Dr. Heffner holds students to high standards and expects students to do whatever is necessary to receive the education and training that allows them to succeed in their given career trajectories. As Dr. Heffner talks about higher education, she frequently references the importance of persistence and resilience. She also tries to instill in students the importance of humility, as she believes "humility is a good thing in science." This humility, she says, can be in regard to professional interactions but also general

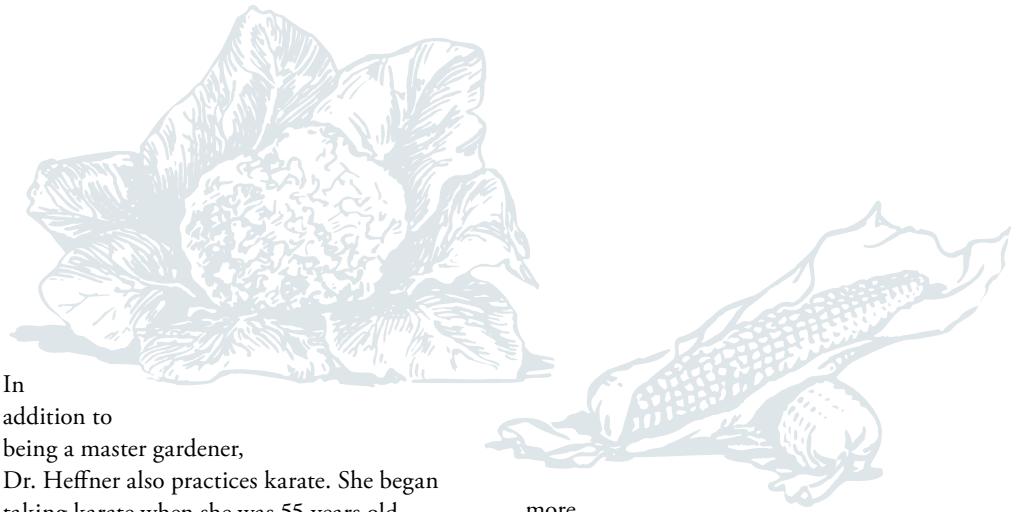
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humility to the extent to which anyone can really “know” anything. According to Dr. Heffner, part of being a successful scientist is realizing how much is unknown and which questions to ask about the unknown.

Research and academic study are a large part of Dr. Heffner’s life, but she also has several interesting hobbies. More specifically, she describes herself as a master gardener. Dr. Heffner grows a variety of vegetables and also has several fruit trees from which she harvests apples, pears, peaches and plums. Dr. Heffner’s garden is so well developed that she rarely buys vegetables or fruit. To maximize the utility of her garden, Dr. Heffner often dries or cans extra fruit for later use. In addition to growing fruits and vegetables, Dr. Heffner has continued to expand her homegrown production of food; she has more recently acquired seven hens and is quite excited about integrating them into her lifestyle.



In addition to being a master gardener, Dr. Heffner also practices karate. She began taking karate when she was 55 years old and currently holds a black belt. Although she has reached the highest level, she continues to practice karate regularly. Dr. Heffner says that gardening and karate have taught her quite a bit about life. Gardening further reinforces Dr. Heffner’s belief that perseverance and resilience are important characteristics to maintain in life, and she states that karate has taught her that excuses are relatively unacceptable. In particular, she faces young males in the ring that may have

more agility or strength, but Dr. Heffner learns ways in which she can win despite their advantages. For instance, she makes sure to have them dancing around her in order to reduce their energy instead of explicitly fighting against them.

Overall, Dr. Heffner serves as a great model for a faculty member who is devoted to her work and maintains high expectations, but has also developed a rich life outside the lab!

## Ask a Psychologist: Questions About Employment

*By Brittany Tenbarge, Graduate Student*

Psychology is a popular college major. In our department alone, we have well over 500 undergraduate majors, 150 undergraduate minors and 40 graduate students. Below are a couple of the questions we get on a regular basis, and they center around employment. In a tough economy like this one, it’s important to be knowledgeable and systematically plan for one’s future. It just might give you the competitive edge you need to land your next job!

### How can I find a job with an undergraduate degree in psychology?

Finding a job in today’s market can be challenging; however, the good news is that employers of all stripes, in areas such as human resource departments, want and need your communication and interpersonal skills; your ability to collect, organize, analyze and interpret data; and, perhaps most importantly, your strong understanding of human behavior. The following are tips on how to find a job that fits your interests and talents:

- **Plan early.** As early as your freshman year, meet with your academic adviser to discuss your career interests and options. Continue to hone your career choice by the end of your sophomore year so that you have identified the unique constellation of knowledge, skills and characteristics you need to enter the career of your choice — and also have time to take the classes and engage in the activities you will need by the time you graduate.
- **Assess yourself.** Figure out who you are and what you want from a job. Consider your answers to these questions: What are the 10 traits that describe you best? What working conditions must you have? How much money do you need to make? What are your long-term goals? What skills do you have and which do you most enjoy using? Your answers will provide a foundation for your job search and enable you to pinpoint the opportunities best suited to you.
- **Capitalize on your connections.** Networking is critical. Think about the people you have met who could give you job leads — perhaps you completed an internship, participated in a service-learning event or volunteered at a school. Also, be sure to stay in touch with your professors since local agencies may contact them looking for “good” graduates to fill a job. And do not forget, even after you graduate, you will need references or letters of recommendation, so staying connected with faculty is a smart choice.
- **Look beyond Internet job postings.** The Internet is a wonderful tool for finding jobs, but it is limited because

many corporations do not list their jobs there. To find those and other opportunities, read the newspaper, visit companies that interest you and network.

- **Take advantage of campus services, even after you graduate.** Campus career centers and alumni offices are

both interested in your long-term success. Many even host training, job fairs and other events for graduates.

*This is a modified version of a document titled "How to find a job with an undergraduate degree in psychology: Some little-known tips on securing your first job" written by Sara Martin for an APA Web Exclusive available at [apa.org/gradpsych/features/2009/first-job.aspx](http://apa.org/gradpsych/features/2009/first-job.aspx)*

## What are some occupations that may be of interest to psychology majors?

1. Academic Counselor\*
2. Activities Director
3. Admissions Evaluator
4. Advertising Sales Representative
5. Alumni Director
6. Animal Trainer
7. Applied Statistician
8. Art Therapist\*
9. Benefits Manager
10. Career Information Specialist
11. Caseworker
12. Chief Psychologist\*
13. Child Development Specialist
14. Child Psychologist\*
15. Child Welfare/Placement Caseworker
16. Claims Supervisor
17. Clinical Psychologist\*
18. Coach
19. College/University Professor\*
20. Community Organization Worker
21. Community Worker
22. Comparative Psychologist\*
23. Computer Programmer
24. Conservation Officer
25. Correctional Treatment Specialist
26. Corrections Officer
27. Counseling Psychologist\*
28. Criminal Investigator (FBI and other)
29. Customer Service Representative Supervisor
30. Data Base Administrator
31. Data Base Design Analyst
32. Delinquency Prevention Social Worker
33. Department Manager
34. Developmental Psychologist\*
35. Dietician
36. Educational Psychologist\*
37. Elementary School Teacher
38. Employee Health Maintenance Program Specialist
39. Employee Relations Specialist
40. Employment Counselor
41. Employment Interviewer
42. Engineering Psychologist\*
43. Experimental Psychologist\*
44. Family Counselor/Caseworker\*
45. Financial Aid Counselor
46. Fund Raiser I
47. Fund Raiser II
48. Group Worker
49. Guidance Counselor\*
50. Health Care Facility Administrator
51. High School Teacher
52. Human Resource Advisor
53. Industrial/Organizational Psychologist\*
54. Information Specialist
55. Job Analyst
56. Labor Relations Manager
57. Lawyer\*
58. Loan Officer
59. Management Analyst
60. Market Research Analyst
63. Mental Retardation Aide
64. Military Psychologist\*
65. Minister, Priest, Rabbi, Chaplain, etc.\*
66. Music Therapist\*
67. Neurologist\*
68. Neuropathologist\*
69. Neurosurgeon\*
70. News Writer
71. Nurse
72. Occupational Analyst
73. Occupational Therapist\*
74. Optometrist\*
75. Patient Resources and Reimbursement Agent
76. Pediatrician\*
77. Penologist\*
78. Personnel Psychologist\*
79. Personnel Recruiter
80. Pharmacologist\*
81. Psychiatrist\*
82. Physical Therapist\*
83. Physician\*
84. Police Officer
85. Polygraph Examiner
86. Preschool Teacher
87. Probation/Parole Officer
88. Psychiatric Aide/Attendant
89. Psychiatric Social Worker\*
90. Psychiatric Technician
91. Psychiatrist\*
92. Psychological Anthropologist\*
93. Psychological Stress Evaluator
94. Psychometrist\*
95. Public Health Director
96. Public Relations Representative
97. Purchasing Agent
98. Real Estate Agent
99. Recreation Leader
100. Recreation Supervisor
101. Recreational Therapist
102. Research Assistant
103. Retail Salesperson
104. School Psychologist\*
105. School Social Worker\*
106. Social Group Worker
107. Social Psychologist\*
108. Social Services Aide
109. Speech Pathologist\*
110. Substance Abuse Counselor
111. Systems Analyst
112. Teacher for the Emotionally Impaired
113. Teacher for the Hearing Impaired
114. Teacher for the Learning Disabled
115. Teacher for the Mentally Impaired
116. Teacher for the Visually Impaired
117. Technical Writer
118. Therapist for the Blind\*
119. Veterans Contact Representative
120. Veterinarian\*
121. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

### \*Occupations requiring a graduate degree

*This is a modified version of a document entitled "Occupations of Interest to Psychology Majors from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles" written by Drew C. Appleby for an Eye on Psi Chi available at [psichi.org/Pubs/Articles/Article\\_567.aspx](http://psichi.org/Pubs/Articles/Article_567.aspx)*

## Psych Talk: News about our Students, Faculty and Alumni

By Sean Walsh, Graduate Student

- Dr. James Hoelzle, a graduate from the clinical psychology program, was recently awarded the Samuel J. and Anne G. Beck award from the Society for Personality Assessment. This award is given annually for outstanding early career research in the field of personality assessment. Dr. Hoelzle's research focuses on the core constructs evaluated by neuropsychological and personality assessment as well as identification of individuals at risk of experiencing persisting post concussive symptoms. He is currently a faculty member at Marquette University where he teaches courses in clinical assessment, cognitive psychology and research methodology. Congratulations, Jim!
- Dr. Stephen Christman, professor of psychology, had an article published recently in the journal *Psychology of Music* titled *Handedness and Earedness*, which showed how mixed-handed individuals tend to show a greater liking of obscure music genres. His article was also discussed on MSNBC's health blog, *The Body Odd*. Another article of his, *The Poetry of Handedness* in which he compiled poems which focused on themes of handedness in general and left-handedness in particular, was published in the journal *Laterality*. He ended the article with an original poem of his titled *Ode to the Corpus Callusom*, which is his first piece of published poetry! (See poem in the Lighter Side section.)
- Dr. Jon Elhai, associate professor of psychology, and students in the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) lab published the first test of the proposed PTSD symptom criteria for the 5th Edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM-V). Published this year in the *Journal of Anxiety Disorders* with current graduate student Tracey Biehn and former UT undergraduate Megan Miller, they found slightly higher rates of PTSD in undergraduate students at UT using the revised diagnostic criteria from the DSM-V as compared to the DSM-IV. The lab's earlier findings regarding the identification of a distinct subset of PTSD symptoms they call "dysphoric arousal" has also been replicated by independent research labs, providing further evidence for their model. Dr. Elhai also travelled to Europe in February to collaborate with PTSD researchers at the University of Denmark.
- The 19th Annual Symposium on Research in Psychiatry, Psychology and Behavioral Science will be held on Thursday, April 19, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Mulford Library Café on The University of Toledo Health Science Campus. This event is a collaboration among Bowling Green State University Department of Psychology, The University of Toledo Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry, and the University of Michigan-Dearborn Department of Psychology. The goal is to provide an opportunity for faculty members and graduate students at each respective program to showcase their current research projects. Many faculty members and students from UT will have poster presentations of research projects that will also be presented at other regional or national conferences.
- A number of graduate students will be presenting their research projects at upcoming scientific and professional conventions. Wilson Hsaio, Josh Eblin, Rob Graceffo, Dan Charek, David Marino, Andrea Kiss and Sean Walsh from Dr. Meyer and Dr. Mihura's Psychological Assessment Lab will be presenting their current research projects in a symposium at the upcoming Annual Conference of the Society for Personality Assessment in mid-March. Gabriela Hurtado will be presenting a poster at the American Association for Suicidology Conference in Baltimore this April. Finally, Apyy Sahu, Doug Lanning and Eric Prichard, students in Dr. Christman's Cognitive Neuropsychology lab, will be presenting their research projects at the upcoming meeting of the Association for Psychological Science to be held in Chicago at the end of May. Many other students will be disseminating their research at different conventions across the country, as well.
- Congratulations to all of the clinical graduate students who took part in the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) National Pre-doctoral Internship Match Day on February 24. The much anticipated results of the first phase are in, and we are excited to announce that Megan Bodine will be completing her internship at Wilford Hall Medical Center and Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas; Kristine Brown will be completing an internship in behavioral medicine at the Federal Medical Center-Lexington in Lexington, Kentucky; and Jackie Pidruzny will be interning at Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health in Canton, Ohio. Match day is the culmination of years of hard work on the part of these students and all of the faculty members who helped to prepare them. Congratulations to all — we wish our interns the best of luck as they begin the next phase of their careers!





## Recommended Reading in Psychology

*Book Review by: Travis W. Conradt, Graduate Student*

In his book, “The essential difference: Male and female brains and the truth about Autism,” Simon Baron-Cohen, one of the leading minds in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) research, puts forth an intriguing theory about a fundamental difference between males and females and explains how this theory may account for the thought and behavioral patterns in individuals diagnosed with ASD. Simply put, Baron-Cohen contends that, on average, males tend to have a brain more hard-wired for systemizing or understanding and building systems, whereas, on average, females tend to have a brain more hard-wired for empathizing or understanding and relating to people. Furthermore, he puts forth the idea that ASD is an extreme form of the male brain, such that these individuals are extremely talented systemizers while simultaneously being less than proficient empathizers. Throughout the book, Baron-Cohen provides an abundance of empirical support laced with witty and insightful anecdotes as evidence for the proposed sex differences and extreme male brain hypothesis of Autism.

Initially, Baron-Cohen is careful to preface his theory by acknowledging the sensitive and controversial issue of studying sex differences and how such an undertaking may resurface political issues of sexism and inequality. He is quick to point out that his theory does not speak of absolute differences between males and females, but rather relative differences between males and females as groups. Thus, while the male brain is characterized by systemizing, it is quite possible for a female individual to have a male systemizing brain and be a much better systemizer than many males. Alternatively, it is possible for a male individual to have a female empathizing brain and be a better empathizer than many females. Baron-Cohen describes himself in this fashion, as his higher empathizing abilities prompted him to seek a career in the caring profession of clinical psychology. Importantly, the claim that males are better at systemizing and females are better at empathizing does not imply that one sex is more intelligent than the other (i.e., that one brain type is more intelligent). On the surface, it may appear that systemizing skills more closely relate to traditional measures of intelligence. However, as Baron-Cohen contends, those with systemizing brains

tend to be more proficient in analytical domains of intelligence (e.g., math) whereas those with empathizing brains tend to be more proficient in language-based domains (e.g., English).

Now you may be wondering, “What exactly does it mean to have a male or female brain and what type of brain do I have?” According to Baron-Cohen, there are three main brain types that a person can possess. And while most individuals have some degree of both systemizing and empathizing skills, the relative balance of these skills determines an individual’s brain type. Those individuals who have higher empathizing skills relative to systemizing skills possess what Baron-Cohen calls the female or empathizing brain. A person with high empathizing skills can put him or herself “in another person’s shoes,” so to speak, and can effortlessly connect, resonate and respond appropriately to that individual’s situation. Thus, empathizing involves both a cognitive (i.e., being able to read the other person’s mental state) and affective (i.e., truly feeling that individual’s feelings and reacting intuitively) component. On average, females are much more natural empathizers than males, leading Baron-Cohen to refer to this as the female brain. The second brain type, the male or systemizing brain, consists of individuals who have higher systemizing skills relative to empathizing skills. Strong systemizers are able to quickly grasp, construct or even invent finite, deterministic and lawful systems (e.g., car engines, computers, math, etc.). Systems, unlike human beings, if precisely understood, are completely predictable. On average, males are much more natural systemizers than females. The final common brain type proposed by Baron-Cohen is the balanced brain type. These individuals have roughly equivalent propensities in both empathizing and systemizing. By reading the descriptions of these different brain types, you may get the sense of where you might fall. Yet to truly understand where one stands, it depends on your score on different measures of these skills (you can get a good idea by reading the definitions and examples in this book, as well).

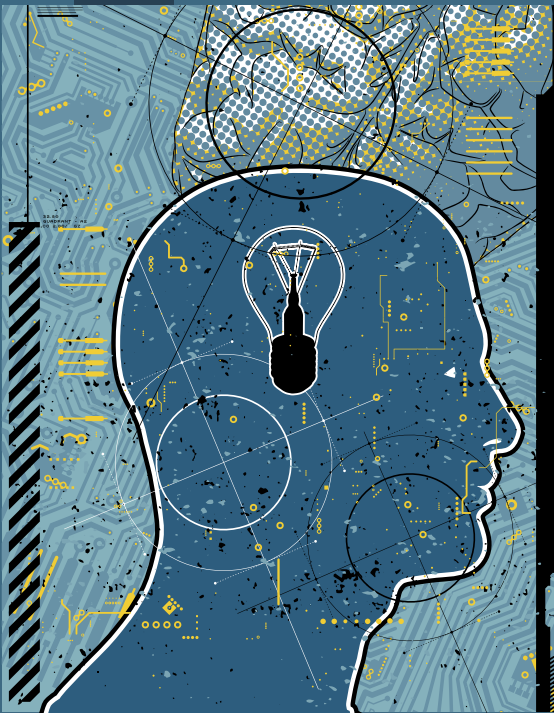
Baron-Cohen goes beyond providing empirical support for the male and female brain and goes about explaining the causes for these differences.

Many explanations of sex differences are typically attributed to cultural transmission or environmental causes. However, an explanation relying solely on environmental causes is too simplistic. Baron-Cohen provides evidence for biological contributors to the development of a male or female brain. Specifically, he shows that small differences in exposure to prenatal androgens (e.g., testosterone) play a large role in whether an individual will develop a male or female brain. Additionally, he provides compelling support for how evolutionary pressures resulted in it being more common for males to be systemizers and females to be empathizers.

Baron-Cohen concludes his book by explaining atypical brain types. In particular, he proposes that Autism Spectrum Disorder is actually an extreme form of the male brain, in which these individuals can be very skilled systemizers, but may display degrees of “mindblindness” (i.e., a diminished ability in attributing mental states to others) when it comes to understanding people’s emotions and mental states. Autism Spectrum Disorders are much more prevalent in males, and, as Baron-Cohen indicates, are much more common in families with a history of systemizers, such as engineers, physicists and mathematicians. Much of his support comes from individuals diagnosed with high-functioning autism, specifically Asperger Syndrome. Also, Baron-Cohen dabbles with what the extreme female brain individual would be like, but does not provide much support for this person.

Overall, Baron-Cohen’s “The Essential Difference” is a highly recommended psychology read for anyone interested in learning more about one-self, different-minded human beings, individuals with ASD, and dare I say it, the opposite sex. Personally, I learned about who I am as a male with a systemizing brain, but more importantly, insight and appreciation for others with an empathizing brain. Feel free to challenge Baron-Cohen’s ideas, but in the end you might find his case quite compelling.

*Baron-Cohen, S. (2003). The essential difference: Male and female brains and the truth about Autism. New York: Basic Books.*



### Featured Funding Need

One of the things we strongly encourage our graduate students to do is to attend national and international conferences. Here, they can present their research findings, and stay abreast of what's going on in their field of expertise. It is also a great way to network with other faculty and students (for future employment and collaboration opportunities) and to expand their own scientific thinking. With airfare, lodging, meals and registration, these conferences can easily cost \$500-\$1,000 each. Some of our students choose not to attend because of the expense. We would like to change that, but we can only do it with your help. If you would like to contribute to this worthy endeavor, please use the donation form on the last page or donate online to the Scholarly Development & Engagement Fund at [give2ut.utoledo.edu](http://give2ut.utoledo.edu). Thank you.



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