

Center for Attachment Research

THE CENTER FOR ATTACHMENT RESEARCH IS A PLACE FOR psychology students to explore their interests and develop research skills and experience at applying attachment theory to clinical and applied research questions concerning child, parent, and family development. Since its inception in the fall of 2004 following **DRS. MIRIAM AND HOWARD STEELE**'s arrival from England, the lab has experienced remarkable growth, and has invited dialogue and collaboration with a number of other research groups, both within the NSSR and beyond. Research in adoption and foster care is at the forefront of CAR work.

When questioned about current initiatives under way at the lab, Prof. Miriam Steele reports, "Initiatives are sought for vulnerable populations such as foster children, late adopted children, or maltreated children with the ultimate goal of developing and providing appropriate methods for intervention and support. Identification of adopters' states of mind concerning attachment, with the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), is an instrumental part of the intended treatment interventions for high-risk and maltreated children and families in care. This must be our approach given our previous findings of powerful immediate and long-term influences upon children of their parents' responses to the AAI." An example of the research tools employed in the lab is the simple co-construction task where a parent and young school-aged child are asked to build something together with a set of blocks. A five-minute interaction is then filmed and subsequently scrutinized through multiple ratings made in 10-second chunks. Verbal and non-verbal patterns of behavior are identified, and these highlight strengths and



Debbie D'Agostino

weaknesses in the relationship that may then be the focus of clinical intervention. A book chapter has been prepared on this subject for a volume on Clinical Applications of Attachment Theory. **LAURA NAMAN** is completing her research masters on this co-construction task and its relevance to clinical work in the adoption setting. A current adoption research initiative has received funding from Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children, a private nonprofit adoption agency based on the Upper East Side, which awarded the Center for Attachment Research \$40,000 to carry out an evaluation of sponsored services in China and Bulgaria. Specifically, Spence-Chapin is introducing an attachment-inspired program to radically reduce the ratio of caregivers to children (1 to 3 as opposed to 2 to 40). Assisting the Steeles on this work is an incoming faculty member of the Psychology Department, **DR. XIAOCHUN JIN**. As well, a first-year MA student, **BONNIE WONG**, is helping with this research effort. This team will meet in northern China (Xi'an Province) in July 2006 to hire and train research workers to begin data collection. At 65 Fifth Avenue, the center's new facility is complete with interviewing and assessment rooms, sophisticated surveillance technology, and space for students to cooperate on various tasks. Indeed, a range of Eugene Lang College BA and NSSR MA and PhD students cooperate on a number of ongoing research projects, typically overseen by Miriam and Howard Steele and led by PhD students.

BETH MANNING's dissertation will examine the relationship between attachment orientation and post-emancipation quality of life among former foster youth. **DEBBIE D'AGOSTINO** is seeking to identify any differences in parent attachment

News from the Psychology Society

POSTER SESSION Members of the Psychology Society held their 2nd Annual New School Psychology Graduate Student Poster Session, on Thursday, December 8, at the Wolff Conference Room, at 65 Fifth Avenue. In an attempt accommodate students' and faculty members' varied schedules, posters were presented during two exhibition times, 12:00–2:00 p.m. and 7:00–9:00 p.m. The session featured research conducted by current MA and PhD psychology students. The following posters were presented:

Integrating Science and Practice: A Student Operated Journal **DANIEL ANTONIUS, ADAM BROWN**

Proneness to Shame and Guilt and Its Relationship to Mental Health **ALAIN BONACOSSA, JANINE PENMAN, KATHERINE BARBOZA, EMANUEL CASTANO**

The Creation of a Student-Operated Psychology Journal **ADAM BROWN, DANIEL ANTONIUS, CHLOE BLAND**

A Study of Retrospection in Self-Reports **MICHELLE EISENKRAFT**

Perversible Figures: An Ironic Process in Perception **CLARISSA SLESAR, ARIEN MACK**

Warmth Detection: An Alternative Sensory Assessment in Opiate Abuse **MATTHEW STEINFELD, LISA COHEN, JAMES PROSSER, IGOR GALYNKER**

Laterality Effects of Pleasant and Unpleasant Musical Stimuli on Motor Response Priming **BOB STROCK**

Demographics and Motivational Factors in Voice Students at a Major U.S. Conservatory **NEIL WALSH, NATHAN KOGAN**

An Investigation of Coping Styles in a Bereaved Undergraduate Sample **JOY WANG**

FACULTY NEWS

EMANUELE CASTANO has been awarded a three-year research grant from the National Science Foundation. He will be the principal investigator on a project entitled “The Effect of Ingroup Reprehensible Actions: Collective Emotions and Moral Disengagement.” Castano, a social psychologist, says he is particularly pleased about receiving the grant, “as NSF funding in the behavioral sciences has become even more competitive than it used to be.” The \$228,404 grant will fund four series of studies focusing on how individuals react to narratives about their own group—say, their country—that have the potential of inducing collective shame or guilt.

As a member of a group, Castano explained, we can feel vicarious pride—for example, if our hometown sports team wins a game—but we can also feel vicarious guilt or shame. “We are often confronted with news—like the Abu Ghraib prison or the bombing of civilians in Iraq—that is likely to elicit these kinds of emotions because of our connection to the ingroup.”

In Castano’s experiments, participants will be presented with a story concerning a fictional, but potentially problematic event—one that implicates their group in a negative way—and then asked questions about the event and its victims. Measures of arousal will also be taken, to assess participants’ emotional reactions. Castano expects that participants will use moral disengagement strategies, such as dehumanizing the victims, to defend themselves from the psychological threat that these narratives constitute. He says the most difficult part of the process will not be finding the approximately 1,100 participants the studies will require (he says Craigslist is a good source); the hardest part will be creating the necessary narratives. “It takes an enormous amount of time to plan and build a coherent story,” he said.

In addition to receiving the NSF grant, in April 2006 Dr. Castano participated as part of a team of experts put together by the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva to reflect upon the role of sanctions on respect for International Humanitarian Law. The team was interdisciplinary and was composed of policy-makers and U.N. members in addition to the ICRC members.

DORIS CHANG’s work, which was conducted with David Takeuchi and Biing J. Shen and presented at the 4th Pan-Asian Pacific Conference on Mental Health in Shanghai, China, was recently mentioned in an article on Asian-American mental health in the *American Psychological Association Monitor*, Volume 37, No. 2, February 2006.

In November 2005, **DR. MARCEL KINSBOURNE** was invited to the second international meeting of the Dancing Eyes Society, at Abingdon, Oxford, UK. Dr. Kinsbourne discovered and first reported the “syndrome of the dancing eyes” (Kinsbourne’s Disease/Opsoclonus Myoclonus).

In January 2006, Dr. Kinsbourne was invited to deliver three German-language lectures in Graz, Austria. One was to the University of Graz (“Consciousness”), one was to the medical school (“Delusions”), and one was open to the public (“Free Will”).

In February 2006, at the 31st Annual Meeting of the International Neuropsychological Society in Boston, a symposium was held entitled “Honoring Marcel Kinsbourne, Demolisher of Walls.” The symposium was introduced by Professor Shelley Parlow (Carleton University) and chaired by Professor Merrill Hiscock (University of Houston). The speakers were Professors Endel Tulving (University of Toronto), Daniel Dennett (Tufts University), James Swanson (UCI Irvine), Jacqueline Liederman (Boston University) and Frank Wood (Wake Forest University). Professor Kinsbourne received an award of distinguished achievement from the president of the society and responded to the symposium.

In April 2006, Dr. Kinsbourne gave a talk entitled “How the Brain Becomes Conscious: Evidence from Brain Damage,” to the Psychology Department at Vassar College. In addition, Dr. Kinsbourne gave a college-wide talk entitled “Consciousness and the Brain.”

JOAN MILLER co-authored with Chloe Bland a chapter on Moral Development that will appear in *The Chicago Companion to the Child*. She will give a colloquium on Culture and Motivation this spring at the University of Vermont and was recently elected to the Executive Committee of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development.

JEREMY SAFRAN has recently published two articles in *Psychotherapy*, along with J.C. Muran, L. Samstag, and A. Winston. They are entitled “Evaluating an alliance-focused treatment for potential treatment failures” (2006) and “Evaluating an alliance-focused intervention for personality disorders” (2006).

Dr. Safran has also published two book chapters—“Mindfulness and Enactment in Psychoanalysis” in D. K. Nauriyal (ed.), *Buddhist Thought and Applied Psychological Research: Transcending the Boundaries* (London: Routledge-Curzon 2006); and “Narrative Strands and Cross-Cultural Dialogue” in M. Unno (ed.), *Between Cultures: Buddhism and Psychotherapy in the Twenty-First Century* (Boston: Wisdom Publications 2006).

In addition, Dr. Safran has published three articles in *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*—“Before the ass has gone the horse has already arrived” (2006), “Nonduality, acceptance, and surrender in psychoanalysis” (2006), and “The relational unconscious, the American enchanted interior, and the return of the repressed” (in press).

Finally, Dr. Safran, along with J.C. Muran and M. Rothman, has published a chapter entitled “The Therapeutic Alliance: Cultivating and Negotiating the Therapeutic Relationship” in N. Cummings, W. O’Donohy, and J. Cummings (eds.), *The Clinical Strategies of Master Psychotherapists* (New York: Elsevier Inc. 2006).

STUDENT NEWS

CHLOE BLAND wrote a short feature entitled, “When are we morally obligated to help others? Cultural differences in children’s perceptions,” for the undergraduate developmental psychology textbook edited by Robin L. Harwood, *Child Development in a Changing Society*. The feature reviews Dr. Joan Miller and her colleagues’ work on the role of culture in moral development, specifically expanding the Morality of Caring model. The piece is part of a series in the book *Research and Society*, in which important research that has implications for society is highlighted. The textbook is published by Wiley Press and is due out in 2006.

ADAM BROWN, along with Alin Coman and Professor Hirst, are presenting a poster at the upcoming APS conference in May entitled Applying the Post-Misinformation Technique to Social Remembering.

In addition Adam, along with Daniel Antonius, had a poster accepted to the APS Teaching Institute entitled The Relevance of a Student-Operated Journal on Graduate School Training.

BETTINA SPENCER published a book chapter entitled “Everybody Wants Something: Sex, Drugs and Money in Canada and the United States, 1989–1992” in Michele Byers (ed.), *Growing Up Degrossi: Television, Identity, and Youth Cultures* (Sumach Press: Toronto, Canada).

Bettina also presented a poster entitled Dehumanizing the Poor: Attitudes and Implications at the annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology conference in Palm Springs, California, in January 2006. The research was done in collaboration with Michal Bilewicz of Warsaw University, Poland, and Dr. Emanuele Castano of the NSSR psychology department.

MATTHEW STEINFELD, along with Yuli Grebchenko, Mustafa Kaleem, Ken Cullen, Lauren Kunik, Igor I. Galynker, and Lisa J. Cohen, recently published an article entitled "Personality profile across addictive behavior" in *Bridging Eastern and Western Psychiatry*, Volume III, No. 1, 2005.

Matthew, with James Prosser, Lisa J. Cohen, Daniel Eisenberg, Edythe D. London and Igor I. Galynker, also has an article entitled "Neuro-psychological functioning in opiate-dependent subjects receiving and following methadone maintenance treatment," which has been accepted for publication in *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*.

ALUMNI NEWS

MICHAEL EIGEN, PhD '74, has written a new book called *Lust*, which will be published on March 28 by Wesleyan University Press. *Lust* is a "comprehensive and accessible account of a still-taboo subject," which includes "lust's inescapable ties to reproduction and its ultimate resolution in death." Dr. Eigen is in private practice in New York. A noted psychologist and psychoanalyst and author of numerous books, he is also an associate clinical professor of psychology at New York University and a senior member of the National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis.

JONATHAN RAFFES, PhD '98, is an assistant clinical professor of psychology in psychiatry at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University and a therapist in Manhattan. He recently wed Marte Anik Siebenhar, a program associate at Midori & Friends, a nonprofit organization in Manhattan that provides music education to New York City public schools.

MATTHEW GIOBBI, MA '04, is teaching the history of psychology at Rutgers University while working toward a PhD at the European Graduate School under Wolfgang Schirmacher.

ALISON EMEL, PhD '05, is a staff psychologist at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital in New York City.

ANNA ODOM, PhD '05, is a post-doctoral fellow at New York-Presbyterian Hospital.

CAROLE SRINIVASAN, PhD '05, is a psychology fellow at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Medical Center in New York City.

LAURA VAROSCAK, MA '05, is site director at the Washington Market School in New York City.

American Psychological Association Site Visit

The American Psychological Association site visit of the clinical psychology program took place on March 13 and 14, 2006. At the end of the site visit the clinical program received verbal feedback from the site-visit team. This feedback was extremely positive and it was clear that they were pleased with the program and our responsiveness to the concerns that were raised at the last site visit. They were particularly impressed with the progress we continue to make in improving the quality of our clinical and research training, integrating research

and practice and attending to diversity concerns within the curriculum. They were also particularly impressed with the quality of the students they met. We thus have every reason to be optimistic about the final outcome. At the time this newsletter went to press, however, their formal, written report had not yet been received. After the formal written report is filed, the final report and recommendations will be made sometime at the end of the summer or the beginning of the fall by the APA Committee on Accreditation.

Tell us what you've
been up to!
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CONFERENCE They also sponsored an all-day conference Saturday, April 15, addressing the technological advance being made in the field of linguistics. The conference was entitled "Technological Advances in the Understanding of Human Behavior."

FILM SERIES In response to psychology graduate students' interests in sociocultural issues such as racial and ethnic identity, social class, gender identity, and oppression, the Psychology Department's Diversity Committee, headed by Dr. Doris Chang, has been working closely with the student-run Psychology Society this semester to organize a spring film forum that has provided a setting for students to exchange their ideas and questions regarding these issues. Each month students are invited to watch a film that directly addresses a particular socio-cultural issue. The film is followed by a student-led discussion and refreshments that have been generously financed by the APA and the University Diversity Committee. Each discussion has been facilitated by a distinguished faculty member.

On February 22, *Blue Eyed*, a documentary about Jane Eliot's controversial workshop addressing racism in the United States, was

screened. The post-film discussion was facilitated by Drs. Doris Chang and McWelling Todman. The film *Daddy and Papa*, which explores the growing phenomenon of gay fatherhood and its impact on American culture, was screened on March 30. Dr. Miriam Steele facilitated the post-film discussion.

If you are interested in learning more about the films that will be screened, contact Katherine Barboza, barbk846@newschool.edu.

The Psychology Society is a graduate student-run organization that provides a social milieu to help students become acquainted with the psychology department faculty. It also provides information regarding the most current trends and research in psychology, as well as a forum for New School psychology students to express their concerns. The members of the Psychology Society work together to foster a sense of community in the thriving, fast-paced academic environment The New School offers in the center of New York City.

For more information, visit the website at www.socialresearch.newschool.edu/psy/psych-society.htm.

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patterns, emotion regulation, identity, peer relation, and familial relations through a comparative study between late-adopted children placed with gay and lesbian couples and those placed with heterosexual couples. Bringing together attachment, foster care/adoption and psycholinguistics, **MAILE O'HARA** will assess Adult Attachment Interviews using two psycholinguistic analysis computer programs—Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count, and Coh-Metrix.

Having secured access to Margaret Mahler's films of toddler development from 40 years ago, through the help of Mahler's close colleague Anni Bergman, **INGA BLOM** will have the opportunity to follow-up with Adult Attachment Interviews of some of these first experimental/observational subjects in



Inga Blom

psychology—now in their adult years. This work will permit a fresh and detailed look at the long-term effects of early experience, a vital question in research and clinical work.

Dr. Howard Steele points out that the center's focus expands beyond adoption and foster care. "Emotion regulation is not an easily definable concept because it is intertwined with cognition, perception, and dynamic phenomena. The center is concentrating on measures in this forum which look at the impact of factors such as parenting patterns, atypical family environments, attachment relationships, and temperament on the development of different emotion regulation styles or the development of different response patterns to specific kinds of emotionally salient experiences." In this connection, there is an ongoing research effort to create a fully digital



Inside the Child Assessment Room

form of the Affect Task (a set of laminated cartoons depicting social and moral dilemmas and involving line-drawn emotion faces). The Affect Task was developed and applied in the Steeles' prior work to examine individual differences in children's understanding of emotion, a develop-

mental skill closely linked to emotional intelligence. **PATRICK RAFFERTY**, who is completing his MA studies and will begin work on a clinical PhD in September, is working closely with the Steeles to co-ordinate this digitization effort, which has enormous possible uses in educational and clinical settings.

Students are welcome to volunteer their time and ideas at the Center for Attachment Research. Interested students should contact Miriam Steele, steelem@newschool.edu, or Howard Steele, steeleh@newschool.edu, for more information.