

Analyze This!



PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

Providence College, Department of Psychology

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Analyze This!

Analyze This! is the Providence College Psychology Department's biannual newsletter. It features articles written by psychology majors, as well as faculty announcements and department news. Enjoy as you read the Volume 23: Issue 2, Spring 2022 publication of *Analyze This!*

2021-2022 Psi Chi Executive Board:

President, Marley Herard

Secretary, Allie Eurell

Treasurer, Sam Lewis

Help Helped Me Officer, Kelly Drogan

The Interconnection of Education and Psychology

by **Ava Dussault**



As a senior about to graduate, I am extremely grateful that I decided to double major in Psychology and Elementary/Special Education. I began my Providence College experience as an Elementary and Special Education major only, but I realized how intertwined the two fields are. Education majors must take a few psychology classes, such as Child and Adolescent Development. I personally think Education Majors should major in Psychology too, because the most challenging part of teaching (for me personally) is understanding and dealing with challenging behaviors children exhibit, their traumas, and meeting them where they are developmentally (even if it is not where they are expected to be).

I feel like I have received a fantastic education at my time in Providence College, but the education program pushes to teach inclusive teaching, culturally responsive teaching, pedagogy, and curriculum before addressing these other needs students have. As I entered my student teaching in an inner-city school, I soon realized that everything I learned in my education courses needed to be adapted. Of course, I used the knowledge I had on how to create lessons that are appropriate, culturally relevant, and set my students up for success, but none of this could be accomplished in practice unless I could control my room and address each student's needs.

I feel like three psychology classes really gave me the tools I needed to succeed in the classroom: Child and Adolescent Development, Personality, and my In-Depth Course on Freud.

1. **Child and Adolescent Development:** This course was incredibly engaging and hands on (especially because we got to raise our own child — something I am doing each day with my students). I learned where children should be at different stages in development. For example, children don't understand the idea of abstract ideas until about age 11-12. When teaching, this is important to take into consideration, because math uses many symbols (for example, a cube could stand for something else, like 1 person when teaching students about charts). It was very important for me to teach everything in a very literal and direct manner because I knew my students did not have these skills yet, so if I used symbols, I would be setting them up to fail. We also learned a lot about the number of words children should know by certain milestones. This was very helpful when entering the classroom, so I could help students in crises according to my school and curriculum.
2. **Personality:** This course taught me about the different theories of personality. This has been extremely beneficial since COVID happened because there have been significant changes in behaviors. Many students (as we know) have been stuck at home with their families for the past two years (some even participating in remote learning). Now that the students have come back from school, they have displayed behaviors that they have seen at home. Some of these behaviors have been challenging to handle (such as rolling around on the ground, regressing, and refusing). I have taken what I learned about these theories of personalities and applied them to what is happening in my room right now. It has helped me understand what the students are displaying in my room, and how to address them and work to see what can be reversed, or what may be a disposition of a student.
3. **In Depth:** I was shocked at how relevant this course was for my education career. Every week as we dug into Freud's theory, we reflected on the concept we learned. Each week, I found myself writing about one child in specific that had behavioral challenges. These reflections made me think about how I could help this child and approach him with his behavioral difficulties. I ended up learning a lot about myself and what challenges this student may be facing. It changed my perspective on the situation, and the class inspired me with ways to help this child. I think the deep reflections and conversations we had gave me insight to work with this student.

All these courses have given me significant background knowledge and tools to address my students and work with their needs. Double majoring in Psychology and Elementary/ Special Education has been amazing, because I feel confident teaching now and knowing how to use best teaching practices and adjust to the needs of each student.

Rodent Research in the NAC Lab

by Rachael Layden



My name is Rachael Layden, and I will be Vice President of Psi Chi for the 2022-2023 academic year. I am currently a junior pursuing a B.A. in psychology as well as a certificate in neuroscience. I have always been fascinated by the functions of the brain and how it produces such a wide variety of human behavior. This semester, I was fortunate enough to be involved in hands-on research in Dr. Templer's Neuroscience and Animal Cognition Lab (NAC) as a co-lab manager. In this lab, we use rodent models to understand the evolutionary roots of behavior and determine the mechanisms by which certain cognitive and memory abilities operate.

Currently, we are studying the role of the posterior parietal cortex (PPC) in extinction learning and response renewal based on contextual cues using positive and negative stimuli. The PPC is believed to integrate and compare multisensory input and motor signals to aid decision-making during complex tasks. It has previously been shown that negative associations can renew in completely novel contexts, but positive associations have yet to be researched in this type of response renewal paradigm. In our research design, rats were trained to press a lever to receive food. To integrate multisensory information, we trained rats in different contexts that had specific smells and distinct patterned backdrops. For negative stimuli, a tone indicates a food shock, lowering the number of lever presses while the tone is on. For positive stimuli, a light comes on, indicating a lever press will produce a food pellet which should increase the number of lever presses while the light is on.

Rats were trained to associate the light with food and tone with shock in Context A (stripes and peppermint). Next, these associations were extinguished in a different context, Context B (stars and cinnamon). Craniotomies with no PPC injections were performed on the control group and before renewal testing. These subjects still have the ability to integrate sensory, motor, and cognitive functions. These rats were then either placed back in Context A or in a new context, Context C, for response renewal testing. Our hypothesis was that if the PPC is involved in processing all multisensory information, then deactivation of the PPC will cause lower response renewal in Context C than in Context A for both

the positive and negative stimuli. Similarly, both positive and negative stimuli will induce response renewal in the control group, despite the context. We predicted this because the PPC is thought to integrate all sensory information of a context to produce a behavior when exposed to either the positive or negative stimuli.

Currently, we have only collected data for the control group. However, control rats renewed their previous associations for both positive and negative stimuli in both novel and familiar contexts. Our next steps will be to replicate this project with PPC inactivated rats and compare results. Research in non-human models is useful for human research as well because contextual learning can occur in various situations for humans including drug addiction, overeating, phobias, and gambling. The context that an individual has their first drink in, overeats in, gets scared, or gambles in for the first time is more likely to evoke that individual to relapse. However, through our literature review, we found that the context of extinction learning is more relevant than the context of acquisition learning. Direct associations with a context cause weaker responses when the context is changed, explaining why renewal should be stronger in familiar contexts compared to novel contexts. Once taken out of the context where the behavior was extinguished, the response renews, and the PPC is believed to be somehow involved in producing this behavior. For example, with alcoholism, when a recovering addict goes to a new bar, they must evaluate their surroundings. When alcohol is presented, it is easier for someone in recovery to relapse where their alcoholism originally developed. However, if they get treatment for addiction, and go to a new bar, they may still relapse when around alcohol, despite the change in context. These results suggest that a treatment/medication could be made to alter PPC activity in patients who continue to relapse into drug addiction, excessive eating, phobias, and gambling to prevent their response renewal in novel environments after extinction.

This being my first real research project, I have learned a lot. Research is not cut and dry. It takes time, commitment, and patience. Originally, our research project was only supposed to take two weeks. However, data doesn't always come out the way it is expected. After the first two weeks, our lab needed more data to see the project through, so we repeated the project over the next two weeks. This required getting more materials, counterbalancing contexts and stimuli, and putting in more hours outside of class. However, as daunting as it may sound, the hard work is worth it. I find it super interesting to look at raw data as it is being collected to try to figure out what it will mean. Even after all data is collected, it takes time to analyze the data correctly and make sense of the numbers. Once the results are available, we must then try to explain what could have caused our results to come out the way they did.

I find it quite amazing that different parts of the brain work together to produce certain behaviors and am curious to learn more about neuropsychology. By using previous literature and conducting research to further knowledge, scientists can explain complex non-human behaviors that can be used in psychology to compare these models to human models. Participating in research on campus has not only furthered my academic knowledge of cognitive neuroscience but has also allowed me to make connections with other lab members whom I have formed friendships with. In the future, I wish to continue research in neuroscience to better understand neurological functioning and abnormalities. Through this, I will be able to apply my knowledge in a pediatric clinical setting and be better able to diagnose and treat human patients. I aspire to get my PhD in Clinical Psychology with a focus in Neuropsychology and eventually work in the field of neuroscience as a pediatric clinical neuropsychologist.

Student Advisory Board

by Anna Breen



As many organizations have done after the COVID-19 pandemic, the Student Advisory Board (SAB) is in the process of rebuilding ourselves. Originally starting out as a student project, the current board is now taking the steps to establish SAB as an official club on campus during the 2022-23 academic year. During this rebuilding process during the 2021-2022 year, SAB has participated in the Fresh Check Day and organized an SAB themed Bingo night. We are eager to continue these events and many more next year. Our mission is to mediate and advocate for student mental health needs on campus through our connection with the Student Counseling Center along with working to destigmatize mental health on campus. If you are a PC student and are interested, please apply and come join us when we send out applications in the fall semester. In the meantime, follow us @mentalhealthpc on Instagram to see more details of our work on campus.

Thank you Dr. Morris!

by Joemari Pulido



During my first year at PC I struggled a lot. I'm from the tiny island of Saipan in Micronesia and so one of the things I had a difficult time getting used to was the New England weather. I also struggled mentally because I felt that I could not relate to anyone at PC and had no sense of what I wanted to do after my undergraduate studies. It was only during the spring semester of my freshman year did I find someone I could relate to about being an islander in the freezing cold. One of my professors was talking about how she was from the island of Trinidad and that she didn't particularly like being cold. "Omg, another islander!" I thought in my head.

Then, one day during class this professor brought up that they were looking for research assistants to join their research lab. I thought that this would be a great opportunity, however, I was too shy to ask to join the lab. However, after realizing that this was too good an opportunity to pass up, I finally reached out and asked Dr. Morris if I could join her lab, and she said that she would be happy to have me.

It was the end of the spring semester and Dr. Morris asked if anyone was interested in working as a research assistant over the summer. I reached out and told her that I would love to. I was able to assist Dr. Morris with her research over the summer with a summer undergraduate research grant from PC and I've been working with her since.

Over the summer, I got to know Dr. Morris more and she instantly became my favorite professor at PC. She was someone I could relate to because she was an international student, from an island, just like me. She was someone I looked up to because of her brilliance. Also, she told great stories and is incredibly funny. Along with her brilliance and great sense of humour, Dr. Morris is also very understanding and compassionate. She was one of the first people who made me feel like I really belonged at PC. Dr. Morris respected my pronouns and made me feel comfortable being myself. Working with Dr. Morris, I felt that I wasn't just a research assistant, but a collaborator, an equal.

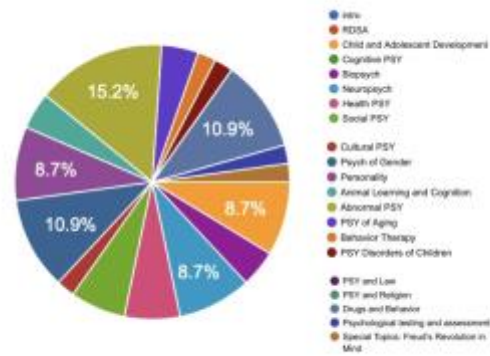
As I continue to work with Dr. Morris, I feel more and more assured of myself. Dr. Morris not only made me feel like I belonged at PC but also made me realize my passion for research and computational social neuroscience. Working at the Human Psychophysiology lab with Dr. Morris has made me think about the event-related potential (ERP) experiments I could run and I realized that I liked doing this kind of stuff. I liked thinking about experiments and the psychological questions I could potentially answer using computational methods. Even though I am still not quite sure what I want to do after college, I do know that I am interested in computational social neuroscience, and that is because I had the chance to work with Dr. Morris.

Thus, I want to take this moment to thank Dr. Morris. Thank you Dr. Morris for making me feel like I belong at PC, when I felt like I didn't! Thank you for taking the time to mentor me and teach me about psychological research and computer programming! Thank you for sharing your stories! Thank you for always going above and beyond for your students! Thank you so so much for being not just an amazing teacher and mentor but an extraordinary human being as well! Thank you Dr. Morris!

Psychology Seniors Poll: Favorite Psych Class Taken at PC

We asked psychology seniors here at PC their favorite psych class they have taken across all four years. Here is a list of the top ten most favorite psych courses:

1. Abnormal Psychology
2. Psychology of Gender
3. Drugs and Behavior
4. Child and Adolescent Development
5. Neuropsychology
6. Personality
7. Health Psychology
8. Social Psychology
9. Biopsychology
10. Animal Learning and Cognition

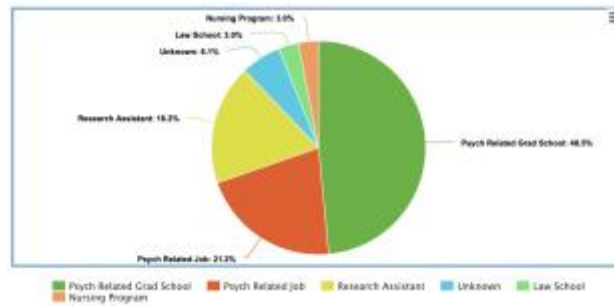


Psychology Seniors Poll: Post-Graduate Plans

We asked psychology seniors here at PC what their post-graduate plans are. We broke them down into six major categories and are ranked in order of popularity. Congratulations to everyone!!

1. Psych Related Graduate Program
2. Psych Related Job
3. Research Assistant
4. Unknown
5. Law School

6. Nursing Program



Psi Chi 2022 Induction Update

by **Kelly Drogan**

On April 22, 2022, Psi Chi executive members inducted the new class of Psi Chi students into the society. Nearly 40 students were inducted after achieving excellence in their psychological and core studies. Moreover, the executive board for the 2022-2023 year was recognized: Sam Lewis, Rachael Layden, Mykala Green, Sydney Diorio, and Sophie Fulghum. The society also had the honor of hearing from Dr. Kelly Holder of Brown University.

Dr. Kelly Holder is the Chief Wellness Officer of the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University. Psi Chi gratefully welcomed Dr. Holder as the keynote speaker at the ceremony.

Dr. Holder discussed her role as the Chief Wellness Officer by emphasizing the importance of individual mental health while also focusing on creating a culture of well-being throughout the Brown University Medical School. She discussed how physicians and medical students are known to be some of the most stressed and burnt out students and employees; therefore, she takes great pride in supporting the most vulnerable.

Psi Chi hopes to be inspired by her work at Brown University and implement a culture of well-being here at PC as well. Psi Chi remains tremendously thankful for Dr. Holder's time and informative speech regarding the promotion of wellness in college students.

Interview with Dr. Warmuth

We decided to conduct a brief interview with Dr. Warmuth in light of her amazing achievement of obtaining tenure in the Psychology Department at PC. Make sure you say congratulations whenever you see her around campus!

1. How long have you been at PC?

Since August 2015

2. What have been your biggest accomplishments as a PC psychology professor? (i.e., research, etc.)

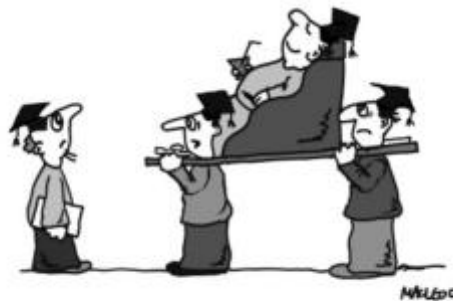
I am genuinely proud of all the work I've done at PC so far, but I think some of my biggest accomplishments have been publishing six first-author peer-reviewed manuscripts and two well-cited invited chapters; presenting 12 conference posters or symposia at regional, national, or international conferences; mentoring 28 students in my lab; overseeing nine independent study projects; and teaching nine different courses (three with lab components)—all while being a parent of a toddler in a pandemic.

3. What research are you currently working on in your lab?

In my lab, I am currently finishing up a longitudinal study that I began when I first started at PC, so I'm excited to finally start working with those data. Starting in the Fall, I will be beginning two new projects: a database of developmental psychology videos and writing a book on parenting.

4. What is your favorite thing about being a professor at PC?

There's a lot to love about being a professor at PC, but I think my favorite thing is getting to teach students about child and adolescent development at such a formative time in their lives. Statistically speaking, most students will be parents someday or—at the very least—will know a child, and my hope is that by teaching students about normative development, adaptive parenting, and when to seek help, I can help to create a slightly healthier next generation of children and families. We often parent our children the way we were parented ourselves, but that isn't always what's best for children. My hope is that by exposing students to the developmental literature, they may break any maladaptive cycles and instead we may work to continuously do better than the generation before us. And related to this, I LOVE getting to teach Child and Adolescent Development. Talking about babies and kiddos is my favorite and the fact that it's part of my job makes me one lucky professor.



Meet the New Psych Professors!

Dr. Emily Gentes:

Dr. Emily Gentes grew up in Massachusetts and majored in psychology at Skidmore College. She got her Ph.D. in clinical psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, where she studied anxiety and mood disorders and learned to treat these disorders using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). Her research is on cognitive and behavioral risk factors for the development of anxiety, depression, and trauma-related disorders. In particular, her research aims to identify features that distinguish normal from pathological

experiences of anxiety, as well as features that may be shared by or distinguish between closely related anxiety and mood disorders. She's worked in a variety of different clinical and research settings, but her favorite is teaching and doing research with undergraduates. She's excited to get started at PC!

Dr. Nick Tarantino:

Dr. Nick Tarantino attended St. Lawrence University in upstate NY for my bachelor's degree and earned a PhD in Clinical and Community Psychology from Georgia State University. His primary area of research is the development of HIV prevention interventions for young people in the United States and countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Currently, he lead two studies in Ghana focused on creating game-based text message interventions to engage adolescents and young adults living with HIV in their HIV treatment. He is starting a third study in the US that involves developing an e-health module for parents of sexual minority and gender diverse adolescents to improve family knowledge and communication about HIV prevention strategies such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Central to this work is an examination of how relationships and social contexts shape adolescent health behaviors. At Providence College, he will be teaching Health Psychology and Drugs and Behavior. When he's not in the lab, teaching, or providing therapy to patients at Rhode Island Hospital, you can find him deep in Lincoln Woods, joyfully wandering the trails on my mountain bike (and likely lost).

Dr. Rebecca Babcock Fenerci:

Rebecca Babcock Fenerci is a Clinical Psychologist who received her Bachelor's in Psychology from Northeastern University and her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Denver. Professor Fenerci completed her pre-doctoral internship at the CAARE Diagnostic & Treatment Center at the University of California Davis Children's Hospital, and her post-doctoral fellowship at the Center for the Protection of Children at Penn State Hershey Medical Center. Professor Fenerci enjoys teaching a variety of courses, including but not limited to: Theories of Psychotherapy, Psychology of Abnormal Behavior, Psychological Disorders of Children and Adolescents, Introduction to Psychology, Psychology of Trauma, and Clinical Internship.

Professor Fenerci's research focuses on understanding the cognitive and interpersonal consequences of child maltreatment with the goal of elucidating mechanisms that increase risk or protect against the intergenerational transmission of maltreatment and associated mental health outcomes. Professor Fenerci is interested in identifying posttrauma cognitive processes and interpersonal schemas that influence parenting behavior and attachment among adult survivors of maltreatment and their children. Professor Fenerci looks forward to mentoring and collaborating with undergraduate students at Providence College to conduct a multi-method study to better understand how child maltreatment and posttrauma appraisals may influence survivors' attitudes towards parenting and attachment behavior. In addition to her scholarly interests, Professor Fenerci is a Licensed Psychologist in Rhode Island and Massachusetts who specializes in cognitive-behavioral and acceptance-based treatments for posttraumatic stress, depression, and anxiety across the lifespan as well as attachment-informed behavioral parenting interventions. Professor Fenerci is the Founder and CEO of Compassionate Healing,

a psychotherapy practice in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, and Clinical Psychologist/Captain in the U.S. Army Reserves.



Providence College's Newest Outstanding Faculty Scholar: Dr. Templer

Dr. Victoria Templer, Associate Professor of Psychology and newly appointed director of the Neuroscience program was awarded Providence College's Outstanding Faculty Scholar Award for 2022. The honor, which is awarded annually, is given to a tenured faculty member who demonstrates the highest standards in research, scholarship, and contributions to their field. Dr. Templer was selected by a provost-appointed committee of tenured faculty members who reviewed nominations from the campus community, statements from finalists, samples of scholarly work, and letters of recommendation. This is an amazing recognition and we cannot be more proud to have her as a part of the psychology community here at PC!

Update from the President

Marley Herard writes: I am a senior psychology major and mathematics and sociology double minor, and cannot believe this is my last semester at PC. After entering PC as undeclared I quickly found my home in psychology. Soon after, I discovered social psychology, taught by Dr. Mendoza, which has put me on a path to graduate work in a similar field. In my time here at PC I was able to conduct social psychological research with a small group of students on the topic of sexual harassment in the workplace. That experience not only gave me a new group of friends, but also developed my interest in research. As a result of the many courses I have taken at PC, I am able to attend a graduate program at the University of New Haven in Community Psychology with a research concentration starting this fall. A few months ago I had absolutely no post-grad plans and had little clue as to where I would end up, so just a reminder that not knowing your next step is completely normal. I am forever grateful to my Psi Chi Exec Board, Allie, Sam, and Kelly, our fall semester president Sophie, our faculty advisors, Dr. Lawrie and Dr. Morris, and Mrs. Mullen. I wish the graduating class of 2022 the best of luck and cannot wait to see what Psi Chi has in store for the future.

Letter from the Editor

We hope you enjoyed reading the creative articles and psychology department updates in this semester's issue of *Analyze This*. We decided to create a theme to this issue of *Analyze This!* that included topics relating to mental health, well-being, mindfulness, resilience, positive psychology. We would like to thank all of the student writers who took the time to create such compelling, one-of-a-kind

articles and our faculty advisors, Drs. Lawrie and Morris, for their advice and assistance. We hope finals goes well for everyone and that you all continue your love for psychology outside of the classroom this upcoming summer vacation!

Have a very happy and summer vacation!

From your editor: Sam Lewis

Helpful Mental Health Resources



On-Campus Resources:

Personal Counseling Center

Lower Bedford Hall

401-865-2343

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm

After-Hours Mental Health Support (through Personal Counseling Center)

401-865-2343

Dial "2" for a Crisis Counselor

Public Safety/On-Campus Emergency

401-865-2222

Off-Campus Resources:

Off-Campus Emergency

911 or local emergency contact

National Suicide Hotline

1-800-273-8255

Free and available 24/7

Day One Helpline (Sexual Assault and Trauma Resource)

1-800-494-8100

Free and available 24/7

Crisis Textline

Text "Hello" to 741-741

Free and available 24/7

Trevor Project Helplines (for LGBTQ+ mental health concerns)

TrevorLifeline: Call 1-866-488-7386

TrevorText: Text START to 678-678

Please contact Kelly Drogan, the Psi Chi "Help Helped Me" Officer for Mental Health Outreach, at kdrogan@friars.providence.edu with any questions or to learn more about any of the above resources, as well as to learn about potential alternative resources.