

# We've Got Issues

## Willamette University Psychology Department Quarterly Newsletter

### From the Chair

Hello everyone,

As many of you may have noticed during pre-registration, a number of our courses for the Fall '03 semester had the instructor listed as "STAFF." This is registration-speak for "instructor to be determined at a later date." Just prior to listing these courses for the fall schedule, we reached verbal agreements to bring two new faculty to campus for Visiting Assistant Professor positions next year. We are delighted to be bringing to Willamette two excellent new faculty members, both of whom are experienced and accomplished teachers with excellent records of scholarship in their respective areas.

Dr. Friderike Heuer will be teaching Psych 210 this fall along with a new offering, Psych 370: Psychology and Law. After many years as a practicing attorney, Dr. Heuer pursued graduate work in psychology, receiving her Ph.D. in cognitive psychology from the New School for Social Research. She has in recent years taught at both Lewis & Clark

College and Portland State University. Dr. Heuer brings a unique blend of legal and psychological expertise to her new topical offering, and she will also be teaching the Psych 350: Cognitive Processes course for us in the spring. Our other new department member, Dr. Keith Herman, has a Ph.D. in counseling psychology from the University of Florida. Keith has recently taught at Reed College in Portland and at the University of Oregon, where he completed certification to work in the school system as a school psychologist. He will be teaching Psych 210 in the fall along with Psych 335: Clinical & Abnormal Psychology. In the spring, Keith will again be teaching both Psych 210 and a 300-level course yet to be determined (a class most likely counting in the Clinical and Applied Psychology category of the major).

And of course, as we mentioned in a previous

newsletter, we will also be joined by Tony Hermann (with two n's!) as our new tenure track person in personality psychology. This fall, he'll be teaching Psych 332 along with Psych 210 and the Senior Thesis/Internship course. A Ph.D. from Ohio State University, Tony comes to us from a year as a visiting professor at Kalamazoo College in Michigan. Obviously, there will be lots of new faces in the department this fall, and we are delighted to be bringing in such talented individuals with teaching experience at institutions like Willamette and topical/research interests that we know students will find most interesting. They are eager to get to know you, and we encourage you to get to know them when they arrive and welcome them to Willamette!

Sincerely,

Jim Friedrich, Ph.D.  
Professor & Chair

April 2003

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### Mark Your Calendar

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events...

**Tuesday, May 6th**

Last Day of Classes!!

**Wednesday, May 7th,  
Thursday, May 8th and  
Sunday, May 11th**

Study Days!

**Friday & Saturday, May  
9th & 10th and Monday**

**thru Wednesday, May  
12th—14th**

FINAL EXAMS!

**Sunday, May 18th**

COMMENCEMENT!



Have a great  
SUMMER!!

# Congratulations to the Class of 2003!!

Congratulations and Best Wishes for a bright and successful future!!

*Courtney Barker*  
*Nereyda Cortes (Dec. '03)*  
*Erin Cox*  
*Crystal DeMello*  
*Angela Doughton*  
*Charles Evans-Claasen (Dec. '03)*  
*Jennifer Harding*  
*Melissa Hill*

*Barbara Hogan*  
*Adam Holbrook*  
*Hayley Kimble*  
*Katy Long*  
*Meghan McNeil*  
*Kelly Mulligan*  
*Allyson Neary*  
*Lindsay Ogle*  
*Jacqueline Ortega*  
*Monica Peyer*

*Ryan Pointer*  
*Leslie Radin*  
*Alisa Ray*  
*Heather Schludermann*  
*Kristin Shimabukuro*  
*Mathew Snodgrass*  
*JoLee Sturgell*  
*Devon Ward-Thommes*  
*Lindsay Washington*  
*Ashley Young*

## Psychology Department Open House

The Psychology Department Open House will take place on **Sunday, May 18th from Noon to 2:15pm** in the Alcove on the second floor of Smullin Hall. Please stop by with your family and

friends, say hello, and share some goodies with us before attending the **Commencement ceremony at 3:30 pm in the Quad**. We look forward to seeing you there!



## Fall Semester Course Offerings

*PSYC 210: Introduction to Psychology*  
*PSYC 252: Research Methods & Analysis I*  
*PSYC 253: Research Methods & Analysis II*  
*PSYC 330: Developmental Psychology: Infancy & Childhood*

*PSYC 332: Theories of Personality*  
*PSYC 335: Clinical/Abnormal Psychology*  
*PSYC 340: Psychology of Learning*  
*PSYC 345: Biopsychology*  
*PSYC 370: Psychology & Law*  
*PSYC 394: Internship*

*PSYC 430: Environmental Biopsychology*  
*PSYC 431: Human Experimental Psychology*  
*PSYC 490: Thesis*

## A First Hand Account of Classical Conditioning

Here is an example of one senior applying the principles of classical conditioning to her thesis paper experience:

*"I'm pretty sure I've experienced Classical Conditioning first hand. My the-*

*sis, a previously neutral stimulus, has become associated with my eye twitch, previously an Unconditioned Response to the Unconditioned Stimulus of stress. Now, working on the thesis is a Conditioned Stimulus that leads to the Conditioned Re-*

*sponse of my eyes twitching, whether or not I actually am experiencing stress about the thesis right now."*

See this stuff is relevant!!

# A few words from Professor Solomon...

At the end of this semester, I will be leaving Willamette University. Like many of you seniors, I have ambivalent feelings about leaving. On the one hand, I feel very sad about leaving the community that has become my second family and second home. On the other hand, I feel excited to start my new life as a full-time mother of my three wonderful kids (Beatrice, age 5; Eleanor, age 3; and Abraham, age 1).

Over the years, many students have asked me what is my favorite course to teach. Interestingly, my favorite course at this point in my career was my least favorite course when I started teaching—Introduction to Psychology. I think this course was particularly challenging for me initially because there is such a broad range of topics to cover, and no one can be an expert on all of them. Also, when I arrived at Willamette, my Northwestern and University of Chicago models of teaching suggested to me that lectures should involve cramming as much information into class time as possible. (Sorry, to those of you who took my very first Introduction to Psychology course). I now believe that how much students learn is often inversely related to how much information they are given. If an instructor presents too much information, the students absorb less. I now try to pepper all my Introductory Psychology lectures with interesting examples and demonstrations so that the students can have some time to digest and process the information that they are learning. I also try to make connections between classes whenever I can, so that they can see related themes that appear across areas of Psychology.

While I have derived considerable satisfaction working through the pedagogical challenges of teaching an Introduction to Psychology course, I believe I have gained the most satisfaction from the emotional side of teaching this course. There is nothing better than seeing a student shake their head in disbelief after hearing about counterintuitive psychological effects such as cognitive dissonance or blindsight. I also have loved the times when students have spontaneously made connections between the psychological constructs

that we are learning in class and outside political and social issues.

A few years ago, I came across an essay by Henry Gleitman about his experience teaching Introduction to Psychology. I found the essay inspiring, and have tried to incorporate many of his ideas into my own teaching. In re-reading the essay, I believe that it describes many of the thoughts and feelings that I have had about teaching Introduction to Psychology, so I thought I would share a segment of it with you.

“...I believe that teaching is not just an intellectual process; it is an emotional one. This point brings me to the relationship between the psychology of the teacher and that of the actor. When giving a lecture, the teacher’s job is not just a matter of getting students to understand the subject, no more than the actor’s job task is merely to have an audience follow the playwright’s lines. It’s also a personal business of bringing it across. I believe that, to accomplish this, the teacher has to show his or her own personal involvement. I have a lecture, and out there are 300 freshman and sophomores sitting on uncomfortable seats, in a hall that on most days is badly ventilated and is not too well lit. They’re there because Psych 1 fulfills a distribution requirement or because they need an extra elective. If it’s a nice spring day (and even if it isn’t), these eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds might prefer to do all sorts of things other than listen to a lecture on the ins and outs of dissonance theory. How can I make them listen? I am sure of one thing. They won’t care, if they don’t feel that I care. Somehow my caring has to be part of the course, and the odd thing is that it can not be faked. It has to be for real. But worse, it must be for real every time I teach the course. It’s easy enough to convey the excitement I feel about a topic the very first time I talk about it. But what about the next semester and the next after that? I’ve discovered that the way I try to keep the subject fresh is similar to what actors do in a long-run show. To keep from going stale, they try to revive the emotion they felt on opening night and during rehearsal. I see my job as much the same. I have to recreate my original excitement as a

lecturer. The only way I can manage—and I’m afraid, I don’t always succeed—is by thinking about the subject again before a lecture, no matter how often I’ve lectured on the subject previously. By now, I’ve taught fifty-four semesters of introductory psychology, but even so, I wouldn’t think of *not* preparing for a lecture. The fact that I’ve given a particular lecture before doesn’t matter; I still need another couple of hours just to freshen my mind, to give it a new emotional sense.

To speak more broadly, I believe that teaching is, in part, a sort of libidinal enterprise. It conveys some passion, and this helps to involve the student. Again, the analogy to the actor may be relevant. Actors want an audience to become involved. If the actors are good, they will not be too narcissistic. They will want the involvement to be not so much with them as through them with the play and the characters they portray. I think that much of the same goes on in teaching. Somehow, the teacher must get the students interested in him or her. Here too, the narcissistic temptations have to be resisted. The trick is (and I don’t know how it’s done) to somehow stand off to the side so that whatever emotion was directed at the teacher ends up where it belongs—with psychology.

I said that I want the student to become involved with psychology, but I want to amend that statement. What I really want is for students to become involved with the intellectual life, with the process of learning. Personally, I don’t really care whether they end up loving psychology, philosophy or biology. I want them to love learning. If it turns out that this love is for psychology, then fine. If it’s for some other discipline, that’s fine too.”

Finally, I just want to say that I have loved teaching all of you and I am sure I will miss you greatly. I will not say goodbye because I will be doing some research at Willamette as an Independent Scholar. Who knows? I may even be back teaching a course here and there.

I wish you all the best.

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**Willamette University  
Psychology Department  
Quarterly Newsletter**

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**Please deliver to:**

*How NOT to deal with the end of term stress...*

[www.willamette.edu/cla/psychology](http://www.willamette.edu/cla/psychology)

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