

Psych Matters

Spring 2014

Editor, Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor of Psychology

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The Newsletter of the University of Mary Washington Department of Psychology

Psychology's Old and New Homes: Goodbye Chandler, Hello Mercer, Eventually...

By Wesley Horton, Psychology Student Representative ('14)

Last year, the UMW Psychology Department bid a fond farewell to Chandler Hall, which was demolished during the summer of 2013. Prior to Chandler Hall's destruction, the Psychology Department moved into temporary housing. Currently, the psychology faculty offices can be found in a temporary structure called Annex A, located behind Custis and Ball Halls and abutting College Avenue, not far from Chandler Hall's former location. The psychology department's classrooms and laboratory spaces are located in another temporary structure called Annex B, located between Westmoreland Hall and campus walk and next to George Washington Hall.

The Psychology Department eagerly awaits a move to its permanent home in a to-be-remodeled Mercer Hall. Currently, it is predicted that they will take up residence in a new Mercer Hall prior to the fall 2015 semester. Here, I present a brief retrospective and remembrance of Chandler Hall, a brief introduction to the temporary spaces, and a vision of the future in Mercer Hall.

According to a report on the history of Chandler Hall written by Dr. Michael Spencer (Assistant Professor, Historic Preservation), Chandler Hall was built in 1928 on a budget of approximately \$65,000 to serve as a student teaching facility. Chandler Hall was the fourth building erected by the college and was left unfinished due to budgetary restraints. Missing was a gymnasium planned for the east side of the former



Chandler Hall (2013)

building, facing Ball Circle.

Despite being incomplete, the building served its purpose as a school for training teachers until 1938, at which time the demand for teaching instruction could not be met by the spaces in the building. So, over the next two years, Chandler Hall was renovated to meet the increased demand for classroom and laboratory space and the two-story

portico with a clock was added to the east façade.

The last renovation of Chandler Hall in 1982 was a renovation of the interior only, according to Dr. Spencer; the only original part of the building that remained was the brick exterior. According to the historical information collected by Dr. Tom Moeller (Emeritus Professor, Psychology), the psychology department moved to Goolrick Hall for one year while the interior of Chandler Hall was renovated. The renovation provided a computer lab, an observation room with a two-way mirror, cubicles to be used for research, and private offices for faculty.

Additional changes to the interior of Chandler Hall began in 1991, including the addition of social/developmental and cognitive/biological psychology lab spaces in the basement. Otherwise, much inside Chandler Hall remained unchanged from the 1990s until its destruction in 2013. Despite a dated interior, many recent students as well as alumni have fond memories of Chandler Hall; many faculty and some alumni snatched a brick from Chandler Hall following its destruction

Continued on page 2

Homes, continued from page 1

as a memento.

At the end of the spring 2013 semester, the psychology department was relocated to Annexes A and B. Looking at the annexes from the outside, it is no surprise to learn that the buildings are actually formed from multiple trailers set side by side. Although unlikely to be described as attractive from the outside, the annexes have proved a pleasant and comfortable fit on the inside. Inside the annexes, the spaces have been configured to fit the needs of the department well.

Annex A was configured to hold as many classroom spaces as possible as well as a physiology lab, a cognitive lab, a social/developmental lab, and spaces for behavioral research with animals. There are enough classrooms to allow for most of the psychology courses to be taught in building. Annex B holds faculty offices and a large computer lab. Annex B also houses a couple collaboration rooms in which faculty meet with small groups of students for academic or other purposes, as well as a kitchenette. Unfortunately, not all faculty offices have a window, so faculty made a loud and clear request that all offices in the renovated Mercer Hall have a window!

The psychology department has been invited to help plan the renovation of Mercer Hall to ensure that the remodeled building meets as many of the departments needs and wants as possible. Dr. Debra Steckler (Chair and Associate Professor, Psychology) and a few other psychology faculty members have met regularly over the last year or so with representatives of the architectural firm designing the remodel. This collaboration has led to a plan for Mercer Hall that includes renovation of the three existing floors as well a large addition to one side of

the building and an enhancement of the existing entrance on the other side of the building.

The first floor will house a couple classrooms, the facilities for behavioral research with animals, a cognitive psychology lab, and a social/developmental lab. The second floor will house a classroom, two computer labs, a physiology lab, a few collaboration rooms, and a student lounge and kitchenette. The third floor will house faculty offices as well as a lounge area and kitchenette for faculty. There may even be an open-air deck accessed through the third floor!

Recently, the departmental committee met with the architectural firm members to help select wall colors, flooring, and furnishings. The committee is confident that the building will look tasteful and modern on the inside. Interestingly, the original décor of the corridor met when one enters the building using the main entrance will be retained as a tribute to the uses Mercer Hall has endured over the years. Some type of retrospective is planned for the space, possibly a series of annotated photographs tracing the history of Mercer Hall.

Currently, the renovation of Mercer Hall is scheduled to be complete sometime in the spring of 2015, and the psychology department is expected to relocate to Mercer Hall in time for the beginning of the fall 2015 semester. Although content in the Annexes at the moment, the psychology department is very much looking forward to making Mercer Hall its permanent home.

The Many Directions of Psychology Department Research

By Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor of Psychology

A large part of the mission of the psychology department, as stated in the Psychology Department Brochure, is to provide students with a broad background in academic psychology along with rigorous training in research techniques, statistics, and experimental psychology, which students apply to their own research projects. Ultimately, the goal is to have students present their work at local, regional, and national conferences and perhaps publish their work.

Students work closely with each other and with faculty members to complete original research projects. Formally, this experience is known as the Psychology 491 and 492 courses, which are taken in the fall and spring semesters, respectively. The participating faculty and students will conduct their research then, in April, all the students will present their research at the departmental Psi Chi Symposium; students may present their research at the university-wide Research and Creativity Day as well. Furthermore, all students will present their research at the Virginia Psychological Association (VPA) meeting which will be held in Norfolk this year, and some students will present their research with their faculty advisor at national conferences of professional associations such as the American Psychological Association or the Association for Psychological Science.

The research topics being investigated this year are diverse. Drs. Mindy Erchull (Associate Professor) and Miriam Liss (Professor) are continuing their work on

Continued on page 3

Research, continued from page 2

self-objectification and self-sexualization in women with their students. Self-objectification is looking at one's body as other's may see it, as if it were an object, and self-sexualization is soliciting the sexualized gaze of others. Dr. Steve Hampton (Associate Professor) and his students are investigating the processing of human faces, including processing characteristics such as the age, gender, race, and attractiveness of faces.

Dr. Dave Kolar (Associate Professor) and his students are wondering how people can be persuaded to minimize their impact on the environment, for example, how people can be encouraged to recycle. Dr. Virginia Mackintosh (Assistant Professor) and her students are evaluating the perception of disability by UMW students and faculty. Specifically, they are interested in whether the culture on campus is one that considers disability as contributing to diversity or not.

Dr. Christine McBride (Professor) is continuing her research on stress-related eating. Generally, Dr. McBride and her students are interested in the origins and predictors of stress-related eating in children. Dr. David Rettinger (Associate Professor) is continuing his research on academic integrity. Specifically, he and his students are investigating the characteristics of campus honor codes, which have been shown to reduce but not eliminate cheating, that make some honor codes more effective than others. Dr. W. David Stahlman (Assistant Professor) is conducting work on learning and behavioral processes in non-human animals such as hermit crabs and rats.

Dr. Hilary Stebbins (Assistant Professor) is continuing her research on the processing of emotional faces. This year, Dr. Stebbins and her students are interested in measuring physiological arousal to emotional faces using, for example, skin conductance responses. Dr. Debra Steckler (Associate Professor) has studied the relatively recently characterized developmental stage of

emerging adulthood, existing between adolescence and adulthood, for several years. This year, Dr. Steckler and her students are examining the influence of music on emerging adulthood by analyzing the lyrics of top hits from the 1950's through the 1980's.

Last, my students and I (Dr. Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor) are studying the relationships between sensitivity to internal body sensations (that is, heartbeats), negative interpretations of body sensations, and arousal. Specifically, we are interested in whether sensitivity to internal body sensations interacts with induced catastrophic thinking about body sensations to influence arousal to unpleasant images.

The combination of interesting topics and talented student teams promises to produce research that is informative and interesting. As mentioned, all students with present their research at the departmental Psi Chi Symposium. This year, the symposium will take place on April 17 and 18 in Lee Hall, Room 411. It is open to the public, so please feel free to attend. The university-wide Research and Creativity Day is open to the public also, and will take place on April 25. Last, if you are in attendance, check out our students' presentations on April 24 at the VPA meeting.

Graduate in Residence Dr. Brianne Friberg ('01) Discusses Early Childhood Intervention

by Hester Godfrey ('14), Psychology Student Representative

Every year the Psychology Department hosts a former UMW psychology major for a couple days to allow current students to interact with an



Dr. Brianne Friberg ('01)

individual who has a successful career in the field of psychology. This individual is our Graduate in Residence, and he or she typically presents

lectures or guides discussion in a few classes; meets with students for lunch to discuss different topics on the minds of majors, including graduate school and careers; and gives a public talk about the work he or she does.

The department welcomed our 19th Graduate in Residence, Dr. Brianne Friberg, during the fall 2013 semester. Dr. Friberg graduated from UMW in 2001. During her time as a student in the department, Dr. Friberg was very involved and accomplished. She did a research project with Dr. Christine McBride (Professor), she was the Subject Pool and Community Service Learning Coordinator, and a member of Psi Chi. Dr. Friberg was also a student editor for a book titled, *Youth Aggression and Violence: A Psychological Approach* by Dr. Tom Moeller (Emeritus Professor). In addition, she was voted outstanding senior in psychology and was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa national honor society.

After graduating from UMW, Dr. Friberg attended the University of Wisconsin - Madison, where she earned her master's and doctoral degrees in Human Development and Family Studies. Her graduate work emphasized child development, early intervention, and program evaluation. During her time at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, she received two years of advanced training working with families and children with special needs through

Continued on page 4

Graduate in Residence, continued from page

the Waisman Center, the purpose of which is to advance knowledge about human development, developmental disabilities, and neurodegenerative diseases.

While a graduate student, Dr. Friberg was involved in several research projects that helped shape her perspective and career. One of these projects involved working with children of incarcerated mothers. Working with these children helped her understand how risk can be mediated through intervention. Later, Dr. Friberg was involved in a project requiring intervention not only with children, but also with children's families. Through this work, she gained an understanding of family-centered intervention.

Dr. Friberg applied the knowledge she gained while working on these projects to her work on a reservation one summer during graduate school. While on the reservation, she was assigned to child welfare cases, and she was able to directly observe the effect of accumulated risk on

the children with whom she worked. Again, this experience helped shape her perspective and she discussed this career-long evolution at the public talk given during her visit which was titled, "A Change in Perspective: Lessons from the Field of Early Intervention."

She concluded her talk by discussing the need for skilled practitioners committed to child-family intervention to work in the field, directly with children and their parents. She said, "We need more research [on effective intervention], and we need to do more of it."

Although Dr. Friberg enjoyed working directly with children and their families, she decided to enter academia. In graduate school, she had enjoyed teaching and she felt that, through teaching, she could inspire her students to become child-welfare practitioners and "influence 10 students to influence 100 families."

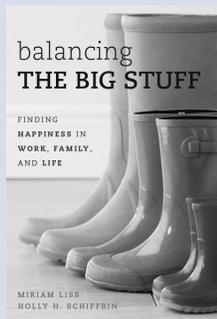
Currently, Dr. Friberg is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia, which happens to be her



Dr. Friberg Beginning her Presentation

hometown. She teaches courses in general psychology, research methods, and exceptional child psychology. Her research interests include the effect of different risk factors and differences in parenting on child development as well as program evaluation. She is married to Brian, who is an Associate Pastor at Gospel Community Church in Lynchburg, they have a son named Keenan, and an energetic miniature schnauzer.

The Psychology Department thanks Dr. Brianne Friberg for sharing her experiences with UMW psychology department students and faculty. Dr. Friberg, we wish you the best in your future endeavors!



Faculty-co-authored Book on Work-family Life Coming Soon!

Drs. Miriam Liss, Professor, and Holly Schiffrin, Associate Professor, will publish a book with the working title, *Balancing the Big Stuff: Finding Happiness in Work, Family, and Life* in 2014.

In the book, Drs. Liss and Schiffrin advocate for people to strive for work-family balance and a meaningful and satisfying life. The book involves a systematic review of the research literature in a parent-friendly format that cuts through the oft sensationalized rhetoric on this topic. Drs. Liss and

Schiffrin argue that people must find balance among their roles by doing all things in moderation. Although being engaged in both parenting and work is good for well-being, people should avoid over-parenting and over-working. Drs. Liss and Schiffrin also argue that people should make each social role high quality by making each an opportunity for autonomy, competence, and relatedness - the basic human needs according to self-determination theory. Next, they argue that work-family balance is a goal for men and women rather than solely a women's issue. Men and woman are more similar than they are different and both need to work toward finding balance, happiness, and meaning in their lives. Finally, Drs. Liss and Schiffrin argue that balance is not simply an individual problem. Social issues such as the lack of parental leave, flexible work schedules, and affordable, high-quality child care make balance difficult. People should get involved to advocate for social change that will allow for balance for all. (Summary courtesy of Drs. Liss and Schiffrin.)

The book will be published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers based in Lanham, Maryland. Dr. Liss received a grant from UMW to work on the book extensively over the summer of 2013, and Dr. Schiffrin was awarded a sabbatical, a reprieve from teaching and service appointments, for the fall 2013 semester to work solely on the book.

Announcements

Please consider recognizing the Department of Psychology with a monetary contribution. Please make checks payable to the University of Mary Washington Foundation, and specify that the donation is for the Psychology Department. Please send checks to the following address: University of Mary Washington Foundation, Jepson Alumni Executive Center, 1119 Hanover Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401-5412. Your donation would be used to support student scholarships and student presentations at conferences. We would appreciate your support!



Keep in touch with your psychology department and fellow graduates. Join the **UMW Psychology Majors** group or the **UMW Psychology Department Alumni** group on Facebook!

Faculty News

Dr. Mindy Erchull, Associate Professor, was awarded the status of Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA) by the Society for the Psychology of Women (SPW), a division of the APA. In addition, she was appointed to a three-year term as the program chair for SPW, and she assumed the role of membership coordinator on the board of directors of the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research. Also, Dr. Erchull published a review of a book titled, *An International and Interdisciplinary*

Continued on page 6

Psi Chi Inducts New Members

In the fall of 2013, a number of psychology majors were welcomed into the UMW chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology. The inductees were: **Kathleen Adragna, Margaret Baxter, Dafna Bliss, Kelly Bryant, Jennifer Carroll, Kimberly Flores, Hester Godfrey, Britta Grim, Erin Keener, Celeste Kelly, Katie Lebling, Emma Leheney, Katherine McCarty, Shannon McCloud, Katherine Miller, Hannah Mills, Ileana Perez, Kiersten Pyrtle, Erin Ronayne, Emily Shea, Brittany Simmons, Julia Smith, and Anastasia Sorenson.**

A Moment in the History of the Psychology Department

Historical information courtesy of Dr. Tom Moeller, Emeritus Professor of Psychology

In '87, the psychology department representatives developed a newsletter intended for psychology majors. Today, the *PsychMatters* newsletter is edited by a faculty member, who writes some of the articles and edits the rest; however, the psychology representatives write or contribute in other ways to many of the articles. Dr. Tom Moeller, Emeritus Professor, served as the editor of *PsychMatters* for many years. After his retirement in '08, Dr. Jennifer Mailloux,

Associate Professor, became the editor. Not only have the editors of the newsletter changed over the years, but also the content has surely changed. Today, the newsletter informs its audience of major happenings in the department (such as the hiring and retiring of faculty), regular events occurring in the department (such as the Psychology in Europe experience and the Graduate in Residence event), and faculty and student accomplishments. Although today's audience still includes psychology majors, it has grown to include many alumni and many campus offices and organizations. *PsychMatters* is mailed out to over 3,000 readers each semester! In addition, it is posted on the psychology department web page. If you have any requests or suggestions regarding the newsletter, you are welcome to contact Jennifer Mailloux (jmaillou@umw.edu). I hope you enjoy *PsychMatters*!



Continued on page 2

Faculty News, continued from page 5
Approach to Reproductive Justice for Women, in the journal *Sex Roles*. She presented a structured discussion titled, "Maintaining feminist process while undertaking research with students: Balancing research, teaching, and the goals and needs of all parties," and served as a discussant for a symposium titled, "Being productive and maintaining your sanity as an early career academic" at the Association for Women in Psychology meeting last March. Last, Dr. Erchull presented a paper titled, "Fathers attitudes about and role in educating their children about menstruation" at the meeting of the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research last June.

Drs. Mindy Erchull and **Miriam Liss**, Professor, published a few papers together recently, including: "Differences in beliefs and behaviors between feminist actual and anticipated mothers" in *Psychology of Women Quarterly*; "Exploring the concept of female sexual empowerment: Development and validation of the Sex is Power Scale" in *Gender Issues*; "Extending the negative consequences of media internalization and self-objectification to dissociation and self-harm" in *Sex Roles*; and "Feminists who flaunt it: Exploring the enjoyment of sexualization among young feminist women" in the *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*. In addition, Drs. Erchull and Liss presented a few posters together recently. Two were presented at the Association for Psychological Science meeting last May and were titled, "Believing that jealousy is good: Scale development and validation" and "Conceptualizing objectification as a source of insidious trauma." Last, Drs. Erchull and Liss presented a poster titled, "Exploring female sexual empowerment: Developing the Sex is Power Scale" at the meeting of the American Psychological Association

last May.

Dr. Jennifer Mailloux, Associate Professor, and **Dr. W. David Stahlman**, Assistant Professor, presented a poster titled, "Facilitation versus overshadowing: Does multimodal input help or hinder object recognition?" at the Association for Psychological Science meeting last May.

Dr. Christine McBride, Professor, gave a presentation titled, "Independent Research Projects and Internships: A Comparison of Outcomes" at the National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology last January. In addition, Dr. McBride gave a presentation titled, "Guilt Impacts the Relationship between Dietary Restraint and Disinhibited Eating" at the Eastern Psychological Society meeting last March.

Dr. Holly Schiffrin, Associate Professor, published a paper titled, "Positive psychology and attachment: Affect as a mediator of attachment and developmental outcomes" in the *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, and she gave a presentation titled, "Positive Psychology: The Science behind Being Happier" to the Fredericksburg Academy Parent-Faculty Association.

Drs. Holly Schiffrin and **Miriam Liss** published a paper titled, "Mother, father, or parent? College students' intensive parenting attitudes differ by referent" in *The Journal of Child and Family Studies*. Also, Drs. Schiffrin and Liss gave a presentation titled, "Parenting in Moderation" to the Fredericksburg Academy Parent-Faculty Association.

Drs. Holly Schiffrin, **Miriam Liss**, and **Mindy Erchull** presented a poster titled, "Helping or hovering? The detrimental effects of helicopter parenting on college students' mental health" at the Association for Psychological Science meeting last May.

Dr. Debra Steckler, Associate Professor, presented two posters at the Conference on Emerging Adulthood last October. One was titled, "Emerging adulthood: A study of three generations"

and the other was titled, "The prerequisites of emerging adulthood: The profile of the 'Forgotten Half.'" In addition, Dr. Steckler presented a poster titled, "Information-seeking and SES: Components of emerging adulthood" at the Association for Psychological Science meeting last May.

Dr. Hilary Stebbins, Assistant Professor, presented a poster titled, "The interaction between gender and emotional face expression on the attentional blink" at the Association for Psychological Science meeting last May.

Dr. Laura Wilson, Assistant Professor, participated in a number of activities at the Association for Psychological Science meeting last May. She was chair of a symposium titled, "Coping with trauma, abuse, and adverse events," a discussant for a panel titled, "The Naked Truth Part II: Surviving Graduate School," and presented two posters titled, "Child abuse status and sensation seeking as predictors of adult sexual victimization: A prospective study" and "Child abuse and parental bonding as predictors of military sexual trauma." In addition, she published three journal articles and a book chapter. In *Encyclopedia of Media Violence*, Dr. Wilson co-authored a chapter titled, "Aggression and brain functioning." Two of her papers appeared in *Aggressive Behavior*. One was titled, "Aggressive behavior: An alternative model of resting heart rate and sensation seeking" and the other was titled, "Baseline heart rate, sensation seeking and aggression in young adult women: A two-sample examination." Dr. Wilson also co-authored a paper titled, "Childhood abuse, perceived social support, and psychological symptoms: A moderation model" in *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*.



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