Psychology News -- Week of January 18, 2009

PUBLICATIONS


MEDIA MENTIONS

- A New Yorker article by Malcolm Gladwell has a section on work by Bob Pianta from the Curry School Of Education. Joe Allen is a collaborator on the featured project that aims to identify and improve effective teaching. Allen works on and uses the same system described in the article to study secondary school teaching: http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/12/15/081215fa_fact_gladwell?currentPage=all

- Jon Haidt's research on elevation was mentioned by Roger Ebert in his blog. Ebert gives many examples of movie scenes that evoked elevation in him: http://blogs.suntimes.com/ebert/2009/01/i_feel_good_i_knew_that_i_woul.html

INTERVIEW

We interviewed Jamie Morris, who joined the Department this semester as an Assistant Professor.

Where were you born and raised?
I was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, but my family moved to Cincinnati, OH before I was 2. I lived in Cincinnati until I was 23 years old. I still travel back to visit my parents and sisters.

What made you become a psychologists and a neuroscientist?

I think I have always been curious about human behavior. I began college as an education major and also loved to write. I'm not actually sure when it happened, but my curiosity about behavior steered me towards a psychology major. I had a great undergraduate mentor that encouraged me to explore emerging issues in psychology. This led me to my interest in neuroscience as fMRI and other biological measures were starting to gain traction in psych departments.

What is your academic background?

I was an undergraduate at the University of Cincinnati. After discovering my interest in psychology and neuroscience, I went on to graduate school at Stony Brook University on Long Island. During my first few years I tried to explore various issues in cognitive neuroscience including language and memory processes. While I was a bit discouraged after my first 2 years, fortunately I met 2 political scientists who thought that biological measures might help further define human social and political thought. This led me to my interest in Social Neuroscience. After graduate school I took at postdoc at Duke University where I began learning modern brain imaging techniques and applying them to fundamental questions in social perception. During this time I worked with both typical populations as well as folks with autism who have profound deficits in social behavior. Finally, the last year of my postdoc was spent at Yale University where I continued my work in brain imaging and also was afforded the opportunity to collect data directly from the cortex in patients undergoing epilepsy monitoring.

What are your main research interests and some questions you are going to work on here?

I am interested in exploring the biological basis of social behavior. My current work explores social perception. Social perception can be thought of as an analysis of the presence, intentions, and emotions of other humans reflected through eye-gaze, facial expressions and biological motion. I have been studying the activity of the visual system during social perception. It's amazing how well humans are wired for understanding others and how efficiently this is carried out in the human brain. I also have an interest in implicit cognition and how it might impact social behavior. Finally, I should note that I love learning new things and I hope that my new friends in the department will teach me new things and launch new lines of research.

What are some things you enjoy outside working hours?
A few years ago I began running and it has become somewhat of an obsession. It’s a great way to think and spend time outside! I just ran my first marathon this past Fall. While I don’t think I’ll be doing that anytime soon, I will be enjoying a few runs a week around C-Ville. I also like to go hiking with my wife and dogs. When I’m not outside running or at the park with my dogs, you can find me watching football or brushing up on useless information on the internet.

EVENTS of the WEEK

Tuesday, January 20, 2009

- *Inauguration Ceremony Viewing*: 11am-2pm, GIL 130
  Munchies and drinks will be provided by the Department

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

- Cognitive Lunch: 12:30pm-1:45pm, GIL 225
  Sally Linkenauger, *Dynamic rescaling in the perception of size*
- Colloquium: 3:30-5pm, GIL 190
  Paul Harris, Harvard University, *Magic and Miracle*

Friday, January 23, 2009

- Clinical Lunch: 12pm-1pm, GIL 225
  Derek Ford, *Idiographic Regional Profiles of Personality Disorders*