



Out of Our Minds...

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Chair's comments
- 1 Psychology's International Exchange Program
- 2 Psi Chi Update
- 2 University 102
- 3 New Year's Day Reflections
- 4 PsychOS News
- 4 Bravo Rising Stars!
- 4 Bravo Kyle Mathewson
- 4 Bravo Cathy Costigan

Out of my mind ...

E. Brimacombe, Dept Chair

Do you remember the old Heinz ketchup ads where people would impatiently bang the bottom of the ketchup bottle hovering over their plate of fries? Carly Simon's *Anticipation* playing in the background, the ketchup would slowly glob down the neck of the bottle, the whacks on the bottom of the ketchup bottle doing little to speed the ketchup's descent. Those ads communicated a sentiment of "hurry, hurry, end this agonizing anticipation, I'm ready, bring it on". Life for me lately has held too little of what I see as the delicious side of anticipation.

In my life version of the Heinz ketchup ad, I am holding the bottle upright, trying to slow life's flow and get the cap back on the bottle. Ah to anticipate, perchance to have time to prepare, think, schedule; to position my plate so the ketchup lands just where I want it. My reality: Urgent! Immediate response required! ASAP! Now! I think I'm caught in a rut of anticipation where, like Bill Murray in the movie *Groundhog Day*, the "anticipation script" plays out each day as it did the day before. The script might be edited to feature a change of scene or new characters stepping into the drama but the phenomenon of anticipation strikes a similar emotional chord each time. This anticipation experience holds none of the happy promise depicted in the Heinz ketchup ads. Instead, I'm reliving variations on this scene that dates back to a few years ago ...

My daughter ran ahead of me as we made our way to the grocery store. She paused in front of the exit door. A customer heading out with a cart full of groceries triggered the automatic door. Anticipation for me in that scene was a brief second of awareness of what was coming next – not enough time to call out or help move my daughter out of the way before the door swung open.

I can roll with a busy pace of life. But I would love to have time to review the script before the curtain goes up. Anticipation. Anticip-a-a-tion.

I'm having fries tonight. I will open a brand new gummed-up bottle of Heinz ketchup. And the woes of my "think fast" life will be forgotten as I patiently, happily wait and anticipate what's coming.

Did you know that our Department has an International Exchange Program with Maastricht University in the Netherlands? The program was established last year. This year 2 UVic undergraduate psychology students are at Maastricht. Eric Lussier has posted a report of his experience at the International and Exchange Student Services: <http://iess.uvic.ca/uvicstudentsonexchange/partneruniversities/maastricht>.

Friday Feb 1st

Dr. Jim Tanaka will discuss recent work on "Featural and configural properties in face perception: Comparing apples and oranges".
Cornett A228, 3:00 pm.
Everyone Welcome!

Tuesday Feb 13th

Dr. Steve Heine from UBC is our Social Seminar Series Speaker
Cornett A228, 3 pm
Everyone Welcome!

Psi Chi Update

“We have recently been awarded an Undergraduate Research Conference Grant in order to hold a student research conference on campus.. April 5.”

With the New Year and semester well underway, our chapter of Psi Chi - the first international chapter in the society - is moving along nicely. We have recently been awarded an Undergraduate Psychology Research Conference Grant in order to hold a student research conference here on campus, which will take place on April 5. Also, yours truly has received an Undergraduate Research Grant to assist with my Honors research project. With these awards and grants, our chapter is becoming visible on an international scale.

After a successful holiday food drive for the University of Victoria Family Center, we are now completing our bi-annual membership drive. Coming up on February 15th at 5:30, we have our induction ceremony at the University Club, with special guest speaker Dr. Daniel Bub. All Psychology Faculty Members are invited to attend. We are also looking forward to a Valentine's Day Bake Sale, as well as both grad school and honors information sessions as the semester moves along.

Best of luck this semester,

Kyle Mathewson
2006/07 Psi Chi University of Victoria Chapter President
<http://web.uvic.ca/~psichi/>



University 102

By Becky Cory, Uni 102 Coordinator

For many adults in Victoria, university is a dream for another life in which classes are free, as are day care and transportation to and from the class; in which there is a solid meal each night to make learning possible; in which real life experience is a valued asset in classroom discussions.

This is where University 102 comes in. It is a project of the University of Victoria, started by a group of professors and community activists who asked why, in a country like Canada, should anyone be excluded from the benefits of a post-secondary education?

University 102 offers a free first year level university class that introduces students to topics in the Social Sciences, such as analytic thinking, sociology, anthropology and psychology. Students and teachers share a meal before each class, and those who need them are offered bus tickets and child care subsidies.

This course is made possible by many people, including the Dean of Social Sciences and Social Science faculty from all of the disciplines, as well as many enthusiastic and dedicated graduate students who volunteer as teaching assistants in class every week.

There is also a Humanities course, called University 101, which has completed two successful terms. And now, with the new University 102 course, students from the first terms are coming back to study a whole new range of topics. Why? Because Uni 101 gave them confidence in themselves. It showed them they could face a university level class and succeed.

To find out more about University 101 or 102 contact Becky Cory, University 101 Project Coordinator at 361-7014 or uni101@uvic.ca. You can also check out the website at www.uvic.ca/uni101 or look in the current Continuing Studies Calendar.

Psychology's Liz Brimacombe, Bram Goldwater, and Janet Stepaniuk are part of the Uni 102 teaching team

New Year's Day Reflections *By Jeffrey Sun*



Jeffrey Sun

I went and plopped myself in a comfy chair at a local coffee house to speak with passers by. A young woman stood by the bar, and our exchange ensued:

“Waiting for a drink?” I asked.

“Café Mocha,” she replied, covering her smile.

“Do you have plans for the New Year?” I continued.

“Work evening, then sleep,” again her hand went to cover her smile.

“Good plan, a time honoured tradition. Do you have a new years resolution?” to which she hesitatingly nodded and replied “Many children.”

She was Chinese—bravely speaking her newly learned English—and she had misunderstood my question.

In China, other than perhaps in Hong Kong, the practice of New Years resolution is not observed. Traditional Chinese New Year involves well wishes and red envelopes stuffed with lucky money. Longevity, large families, prosperity, good health, and financial success are examples of common well-wishing sentiments toward others upon the New Year. However, personal or altruistic sacrifice is no more implied now than any other time in the old world of China.

Thus, the woman I was speaking with—not knowing exactly how to answer my question—was attempting to apply the traditional well wish for others to herself. She was accustomed to wishing others prosperity to support a large family, and knew not better than to simply reverse the direction of the sentiment, bestowing it upon herself. This is an example of a cross-cultural faux pas during exchange of greetings. Another example of an easily misunderstood cultural saying is the Chinese phrase “you’ve gained weight” on meeting someone you know. Culturally in China, this phrase has implied that the receiver of the compliment looks prosperous, as they could obviously afford the once sparsely available food. This comment has been fittingly used, by long-standing friends, over the centuries of Chinese cultural evolution. So, if ever you are told you’ve gained weight by someone who has recently arrived from China, it’s a compliment. These traditional New Years wishes are exchanged during visits at that time, amidst the celebration of firecrackers and dragon dances.

This all contrasts with our Canadian resolutions for self-improvement: quit smoking, eat more organically grown flax seed, drink less alcohol and soda-pop but more water, exercise more frequently, spend more time with our significant other(s), or take the bus, walk, or ride a bike to work more often. You see someone at a gathering, wish them well and ask them what their sacrifice this year will be—it’s the toll bridge of holiday greetings. You get to pass through the toll station, but only once you’ve gone by the bucket, to drop in your two bits. The funny thing is that our vastly different cultures have found a common focus to unite societal members at the changing of the calendar year.

I, myself, saw the tradition fall by the wayside some time ago. My first childhood resolution would have been to the effect of “I’ll go to bed on time, or do more dishes after dinner, or something,” as it was simply something I was supposed to do, to get to stay up past bedtime. I have since tried the self-improvement resolution, but found daily choices more powerful than yearly betrothals to change. I have also made party resolutions; to the effect of loud and boasting comments I shan’t repeat here. Honestly it was my puppy that got me out of the party mood—he was afraid of the firecrackers, loud noises, and commotion. I didn’t think it was fair to leave him alone and frightened, nor bring him along to cower amidst the noise. I have, over the years, not uncommonly skipped the partying and ritualistic making of resolutions, which—as Psychology research tells us—a quarter of us abandon within the first week. Instead, I try to live my best, as always, this new day as well.

I explained to the young Chinese woman—in my broken Mandarin—how personal and New Years resolutions were different than well wishes, and how the former is akin to swearing an oat (of shorts). She was embarrassed, but appreciative of the explanation. She said her resolution, then, was to learn more English; her smile went uncovered this time. I wished her success and fortune. We parted, over café mocha, and a reflection of the differences in detail between our common celebrations of an international benchmark of yearly renewal.

Jeffrey Sun is a member of the Psychology Honours Program and UVic’s Chapter of Psi Chi

PsychOS News *By Tom Johnson*

Happy New Year UVic!

January has brought PsychOS some excitement thus far.

Almost immediately after returning from holidays we got busy organizing our first pub crawl of the year, an event with a total of 220 participants!

Despite a few hiccups over the night, it went very well and everyone in PsychOS showed an amazing degree of adaptability and flexibility in dealing with our problems over the course of the night. Feedback has been nothing but positive from the student body, which is exactly what I like to hear.

February is going to bring us another fundraising opportunity for the Vancouver Island Head Injury Society. Every Valentine's Day PsychOS sells and delivers Rose-Grams to students in their classes, professors in their offices, or staff at their various offices, donating all of the profits to a charity. This year is no different. If you have a special someone whose day you would like to brighten, a friend you would like to embarrass, or a colleague you would like to extend a greeting to come talk to us. Rose-Grams will be on sale from Feb 5-9 in the Undergraduate Resource Room (Cornett A175).

March and April look to bring us even more interesting things, so stay tuned for future news about fundraisers and events!

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Psychology Applauds Its 'Rising Stars'!!

January 30th, the Faculty of Social Sciences celebrates the accomplishments of 3rd and 4th year students who won scholarships and awards last spring and summer! Watch for photos in next month's newsletter!



Congratulations to Psi Chi President, Kyle Mathewson!

-Janet Stepaniuk reports

President of the University of Victoria chapter of Psi Chi, Kyle Mathewson, received an undergraduate research grant from the National Organization of Psi Chi for his research investigating the role of “Medial Frontal Cortex in Motor Sequence Learning using Event-Related Potentials”. Kyle’s research supervisor is Dr. Clay Holroyd. Kyle is one of Psychology’s ‘Rising Stars’!

Kyle is picture at left with Steve Lindsay, Psi Chi faculty advisor and Janet Stepaniuk, past president of Psi Chi

Dr. Cathy Costigan reaches out to our local community

Cathy Costigan recently delivered an engaging talk, “Challenges and Opportunities for Parents and Their Children Following Immigration to Canada” at UVic’s Downtown Campus as part of the Dean’s Lecture Series.

“Cathy did a wonderful job of reaching out to a non-academic audience, creating an accessible, interesting talk that generated lots of great discussion among audience members.”

-Liz Brimacombe

