

Astronauts see need for mental stability

By Gina Pustovar



Their stories have been covered extensively on television and in newspapers—the seven astronauts who were aboard the ill-fated Space Shuttle Columbia when it was lost upon re-entry on February 1, 2003. Rick Husband, William McCool, Michael Anderson, David

Brown, Kalpana Chawla, Laurel Clark, and Ilan Ramon all lost their lives that day, and they did it in the name of space exploration. All astronauts involved in missions that take them out of Earth's atmosphere suffer much stress physically during their flights, but they also face intense psychological pressure. How are astronauts deemed mentally fit to go into outer space? What kind of psychological pressures do they face during space missions?

The selection process for astronaut hopefuls is long and strenuous. Astronauts must go through extensive psychological testing and psychiatric evaluations before being considered, especially for long-duration missions. NASA built its own facility, the Psychology and Behavior Laboratory, in 1989 in order to, according to the NASA Life-Sciences Page, “identify psychiatric, psychological, psychosocial, and psychophysiological factors that will have a significant impact on extended-duration space missions and develop appropriate countermeasures to facilitate adaptation to the space environment.” The tests that astronauts undergo screen for any personality disorders, assess the ability of the individual to perform job roles, and identify the individuals that will have the mentality needed to perform effectively while in a stressful spaceflight environment.

Astronauts are required to take the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. Some also take clinical tests such as the Rorschach inkblot test. If candidates pass the multiple psychological tests and evaluations that NASA administers, in addition to meeting the physical and educational requirements, they may then be accepted into the space program.

Once an astronaut makes it into space, the true psychological trials begin. Long-duration space missions have been known to cause much stress to crew members. Psychological problems that may occur include anxiety, insomnia, severe irritability, depression, and hypersensitive emotional states. (See *Astronauts*, p. 5)

CSB/SJU Psychology Department

A monthly newsletter created by College of St. Benedict/St. John's University Psychology Department for psychology students and faculty of CSB/SJU

Beneficial Jobs For Psych Majors

By Sue Schulzetenberg

Planning for next fall continues as new employees are being hired for student worker jobs in the psychology department. These positions include office assistant, teaching assistant and animal caretaker jobs.

Interviews are beginning for the office assistant positions. A decision on who the new office assistants will be will be made some time in the near future. Applications are still being taken for teaching assistant and the animal caretaker positions. In the past, these jobs have been helpful for student workers and the psychology department.

Student workers in the psychology department assist the department in tasks relating to teaching and office work, along with necessary tasks. They provide help and assistance to students in psychology classes, the psychology faculty, and the psychology coordinator to provide a more pleasant and effective teaching environment.

Positions in the psychology department also benefit the student employees. Student workers in the psychology department are able to get to know faculty members better as they work with them on a regular basis. They gain experience in working in the field of their major and receive unmatched access to resources for psychology related projects and the opportunity for recommendations for resumes.

The positions now available involve working directly with teaching and research resources. Students interested in working with rats are encouraged to apply for the animal caretaker position. The animal caretaker position includes working with the rats in the New Science Building basement and making sure that they have sufficient food, water and clean bedding.

Those aspiring to be college professors, as well as those who enjoy research and working with class material, are encouraged to apply for the teaching assistant positions. Teaching assistants work directly with a professor through several tasks, which may include in assisting with lesson plans, looking over papers, helping with research, and guiding student understanding.

Students interested in these positions, contact Christina Prom soon at #3314 or #5484. Applications are available at www.csbsju.edu/psychology. See also **Coordinator's Corner**, p. 3, for more information.

Psychology in the News

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Gender Differences in Addictions

By Shannon Rooney

Do females become more addicted to cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol more than males? Joseph A. Califano, Jr., chairman of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, found that females get hooked faster, get hooked using less amounts of alcohol and drugs, and suffer the consequences faster and more severely. The center found that females and males also begin smoking and drinking for different reasons. While females often begin drinking and smoking to relieve stress or alleviate depression, males often do so for thrills or heightened social status.

Researchers determined that females are more likely to abuse substances if they reached puberty at an early age, had experience with an eating disorder, or were physically or sexually abused. Furthermore, her likelihood of using cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs increases if her family moved.

So why are females more likely to become addicted to a cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol? The study showed that females are more likely to compare themselves physically and academically to their peers, increasing the doubts they feel in themselves.

In the past, prevention programs have generally geared towards a unisex, one size fits both sexes mentality. Will that need to change? Califano indicated that prevention and treatment centers need to design their programs to deal with the risk factors that lead to female addictions and substance abuse.

Source: *Associated Press, Feb. 6, 2003*

The sum of all fears: what makes people mathphobic?

By Shannon Rooney

We have all heard about spider phobias or fear of heights, but have you ever heard of a phobia of math? Mark Ashcraft, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at Cleveland State University in Ohio, reported that 25 percent of college students he sees have sufficient math anxieties that disrupt their performance. Ashcraft's review of 30 years worth of literature on the subject, published in *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, found more men than women say they are "slightly" mathphobic.

Math phobia can take different forms. Some students become paralyzed by numbers altogether, while others may do fine on overall tests of competence but panic when presented with timed aptitude tests or mental calculations. Ashcraft indicated math anxiety is distinct from anxiety generated by testing situations. However, if a person is math anxious, there is a greater likelihood that he or she is test anxious as well as socially anxious.

It is speculated the American belief of mathematical aptitude being innate, rather than learned, is partly to blame. Teaching styles have also shown to contribute to math anxiety. A study showed how a math teachers' discourse might encourage avoidant behavior in students. Julie Turner, Ph. D., a professor of psychology at the University of Notre Dame, found that students generally were afraid to ask for help or learn new problems solving techniques when a teacher was even slightly negative or giving lacked positive reinforcement.

Source: *Psychology Today, November-December 2002, v35 i6 p(19)1.*

Who said it?



"There is only one meaning of life: the act of living itself."

(Answer on pg. 5)

Psychology Club News

February 23 - March 3rd was National Eating Disorders Awareness week. For the event, there was a booth from 11- 4 on Monday, Feb. 24, in the HCC with general info about eating disorders and healthy body images. On Tuesday night, Feb. 25, there was a movie, *Perfect Illusions: Eating Disorders and the Family*. Following the movie was an informal discussion of the film and eating disorders.

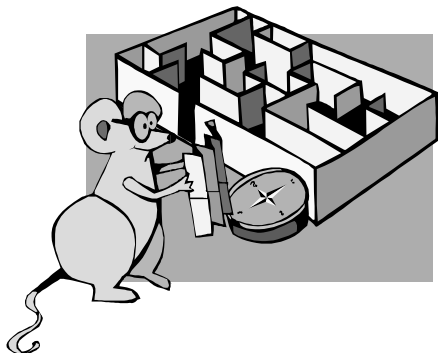
If you are interested in becoming a psychology club officer for 2003-2004, contact Christina Prom.

The Spring 2003 CSB/SJU Celebrating Scholarship and Creativity Days

April 10 (4-7 p.m.), April 11 (4-7 p.m.), and April 12 (9 a.m.-12 p.m. with a luncheon following). Students interested in participating (and anyone is welcome) should contact Linda Tennison or Steve Stelzner.

2003 Student Research Colloquium at St. Cloud State University April 15, 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

For information, refer to: <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/~research/>
Questions or concerns can be directed to 2003 Coordinator, Professor Leeann Jorgensen at (320) 255-4915, e-mail ljorgensen@stcloudstate.edu.



Coordinator's Corner



Christina Prom

A big THANK YOU to everyone who attended our Social Psychology Candidate Interview Presentations!

All three candidates commented on how amazed they were at the turnouts. We had 23 students at the first session, 20 students at the second session, and 25 students at the last session. Your input from the evaluations you filled out was *extremely* valuable to all the psychology professors. They really take what you have to say seriously.

I'd also like to give a big THANK YOU to the students who assisted me with the interview processes by giving tours and taking the candidates to lunch – your time is valuable, and the candidates were all grateful to spend time with some of our majors here at St. Ben's and St. John's.

On behalf of the entire Psychology Department, we greatly appreciate the hospitality and enthusiasm you all displayed to our candidates during their time with us on-campus! We will let you know the results of the interview process ASAP!

Mid-semester is right around the corner...summer & next fall will be here before you know it! Relax & have some (safe!) fun over Spring Break ☺

There are a few exciting opportunities in the psych department you may want to take note of:

2003-2004 Psychology Department Hiring Positions

Wished you worked for us?

We are hiring an Animal Caretaker, and 5 T.A.'s for specific courses.

*Must currently be in a work award/work study position to apply.

*Check out our department website & the student employment website for more information.

Spring GRE Prep. Course

Tuesdays from 4:30pm-6:00 p.m.

March 11th – April 15th (6 total classes)

Contact me if you are interested by:

Thursday, February 27

*You will be required to purchase one textbook for this course.

Faculty Spotlight

Interview with Dr. Marty
Andrews
By Gina Pustovar

Q. Where did you go for undergraduate and graduate school?

A. I went to Purdue for both.

Q. What classes do you teach?

A. Currently, I teach perception and cognitive processes, a first-year symposium class, and research methods. I have taught intro and a senior seminar before. I was on the founding committee for what was then called the Freshman Colloquium, when it was just a SJU course. It was later changed to Symposium when it became a CSB and SJU required course.

Q. Are you currently performing any research?

A. Not really. However, I recently published an essay about William Burroughs in *Symposium Magazine*, and I will soon have another essay published in *Symposium Magazine* about creationism and evolution.

Q. What led you to study psychology?

A. I first started out as an English major, then changed to biology. I disliked my zoology and botany courses, however, so I decided that I would go into either philosophy or psychology. When I took career aptitude tests, the results indicated

that I should be in psychology. I was very interested in knowing how the human mind works, which is a concept I focus on in my perception and cognitive processes classes.

Q. Why did you become a professor?

A. I almost always wanted to be a professor. I grew up in a college town, and most of my friends were the children of college professors. I think that you choose a career by what you eliminate: I knew I didn't want to go into business, medicine or law. I didn't have much of an interest in religion, so that eliminated the clergy. I didn't care for teaching at the elementary or high school levels because they seem to focus more on maintaining discipline, so you don't get to get into the material as extensively.

Q. How long have you been teaching at CSB/SJU?

A. I started in 1969-1970. I have the longest tenure in the psychology department; even though a few other faculty members are older than me, I have been teaching here the longest.

Q. Why did you decide to come to CSB/SJU?

A. When I was a graduate student, a guy I knew from Bemidji suggested that I look into Catholic liberal arts colleges. So I did: I attended a Midwestern Psychological Association convention, and I interviewed at CSB/SJU, in addition to a school in Texas and one in Virginia. I liked it here the best, which

was a good thing, because it was the only one of the schools that gave me a proposal!

Q. What advice do you have for psychology majors?

A. Make sure to take statistics, and try to take some biology courses as well. If you are going into clinical psychology, it's a good idea to have people skills.

Q. What is your favorite class to teach, and why?

A. Perception and cognitive processes, because they are most central to my interests. I also think that teaching core classes is interesting because we can read good books and have good discussions.

Q. Can you tell us about your family?

A. I have been married and divorced twice, and I have three children. One lives in Sartell, one in Tampa, and one in Minneapolis. I have a granddaughter who is in her first year year of college.

Q. What do you like to do in your spare time?

A. I enjoy reading and writing. I also try to exercise every day, if possible.

Q. What is your favorite book?

A. In genre fiction, I like to read mysteries and science fiction novels. Some of my favorite authors include Dorothy Sayers, Agatha Christie and John Dickson Carr. I also enjoy Sherlock Holmes stories. I think that everyone who enjoys mysteries should read those classics. As for non-fiction, I enjoyed (See Andrews, p. 5)

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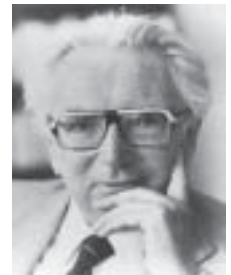
Viktor Frankl, Psychologist to Know by Jeris Sunneberg

Viktor Frankl, (1905-1997) a Viennese neurologist and psychiatrist, made large contributions to existential psychology during the past century. He is most well-known for his book Man's Search for Meaning, which portrays the courageous confrontation and transformation of suffering that is a hallmark of existential psychology. Frankl was a survivor of the Holocaust. In 1942, he and his family were deported to the Nazi's Theresienstadt concentration camp, and Frankl was later in Auschwitz and two other camps. Even after these horrible experiences, Frankl has become an advocate for personal responsibility rather than feelings of victimization. He concludes "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing, the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances—to choose one's own way."

After the loss of his wife in the Holocaust, Frankl remarried, wrote another twenty-five books, established the Viktor Frankl Institute of Logotherapy in Vienna, and lectured around the world. Because of his idea that people are responsible for what they make of themselves, he brings a message of hope.

Sources: Viktor Frankl, 1905-1997. (Viennese neurologist and psychiatrist). *Tom Greening. The Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Wntr 1998 v38 n1 p10(2).

Viktor Frankl, the Champion of Humanness. *Jeannette Lowen. Free Inquiry*, Winter 2000 v21 i1 p55.



Andrews, continued from p.4

Julian Jaynes' book The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind--I found it to be mind-blowing. Also, Heidigger's Being And Time was excellent and well worthwhile. This books deal with the concept of phenomenology, which is something that I believe would be profitable for all psychology people to know something about. The psychological books The Ecological Theory of Visual Perception by James Gibson and Wind and Fire and Dangerous Things by George Lakoff have been important professional influences on me. With the advent of television and computer, I believe that people don't read as much as they should.

Q. What are you going to miss most about CSB/SJU when you retire?

A. Probably the interactions with my colleagues. I will miss the opportunity to bat ideas back and forth with my colleagues as well as students, and I'll miss being able to talk to people and hear what they think about things.

Q. Anything else you would like to add?

A. The psychology department was founded in 1967, just two years before I came to CSB/SJU, by a man by the name of Walt Varnum. At that time, 80% of the psychology majors were men. Since then, the major has grown considerably. We are now the third largest major at this school. I also think that CSB/SJU does a better job with the undergraduate program than the school I went to did: we do a decent job here. By and large, this is a good place to work.

Astronauts, continued from p.1

Psychological stress can cause intergroup conflict between shuttle crew members; some crew members have been known to refuse to speak to one another for periods of time, and other crews have become so upset with ground control that they cut off communication with Earth. Missions have even been aborted due to reasons that are at least, in part, psychological. Psychological problems can be prevented by cosmonaut and crew selection, proper crew training, and psychological support while the crews are up in space.

Suggested reads for psychology studies and interests

By Norma Dickau, CSB/SJU Librarian

International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences

Edited by Smelser and Baltes

This new encyclopedia replaces the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences which was a standard but woefully out of date. "This new multivolume encyclopedia ...organizes and highlights knowledge, theories and methodologies of a new generation of scholars in the social sciences and related fields" (Choice, 6/02). Available electronically for the year to our institutions and bound volumes are in the Clemens Reference Collection. Electronically (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/referenceworks/0080430767>), it is available off of the library home page under Quick Reference and then Encyclopedias. Highlights in recent periodicals.

"U.S. Rates of Self-Inflicted Injuries and Suicide, 1992-1999" appears in the February issue of Psychiatric Services: a Journal of the American Psychiatric Association. Trends seem to indicate that suicide in those years declined while self-inflicted injuries increased. However, an editorial in the same issue is entitled "Large Data Sets Can Be Dangerous!"

Two articles in the Psychology of Women Quarterly, Dec. 2002 are of interest: "Ambivalent Sexism and the Dumb Blond: Men's and Women's Reactions to Sexist Jokes" by D. Greenwood and L. Isbell and "Why Some Women Consent to Unwanted Sex with a Dating Partner: Insights from Attachment Theory" by E. Impett and L. Peplau.

Psychology Humor :)

"Participants" Wanted

A Stanford Medical research group advertised for participants in a study of the obsessive-compulsive disorder. They were looking for therapy clients who had been diagnosed with this disorder. The response was gratifying; they got 3,000 responses about three days after the ad came out...all from the same person.

Pavlov's Birds

An MIT student spent an entire summer going to the Harvard football field every day wearing a black and white striped shirt, walking up and down the field for ten or fifteen minutes throwing birdseed all over the field, blowing a whistle and then walking off the field. At the end of the summer, it came time for the first Harvard home football game. When the referee walked onto the field and blew the whistle, the game had to be delayed for a half hour to wait for the flock of birds to get off of the field. The student wrote his thesis on this and graduated.

Who said it?



Answer:
Erich Fromm
(1900-1980)

Psych News

Look for these upcoming articles in our next issue!

Alumni: Where are they now? What are they doing with their psychology majors?

New psych professor: Update on the hiring process!

Internships Available: Low down on who's offering internships and where.



Have a safe and relaxing spring break!!

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If you know of any news for upcoming issues of Psych News

OR

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