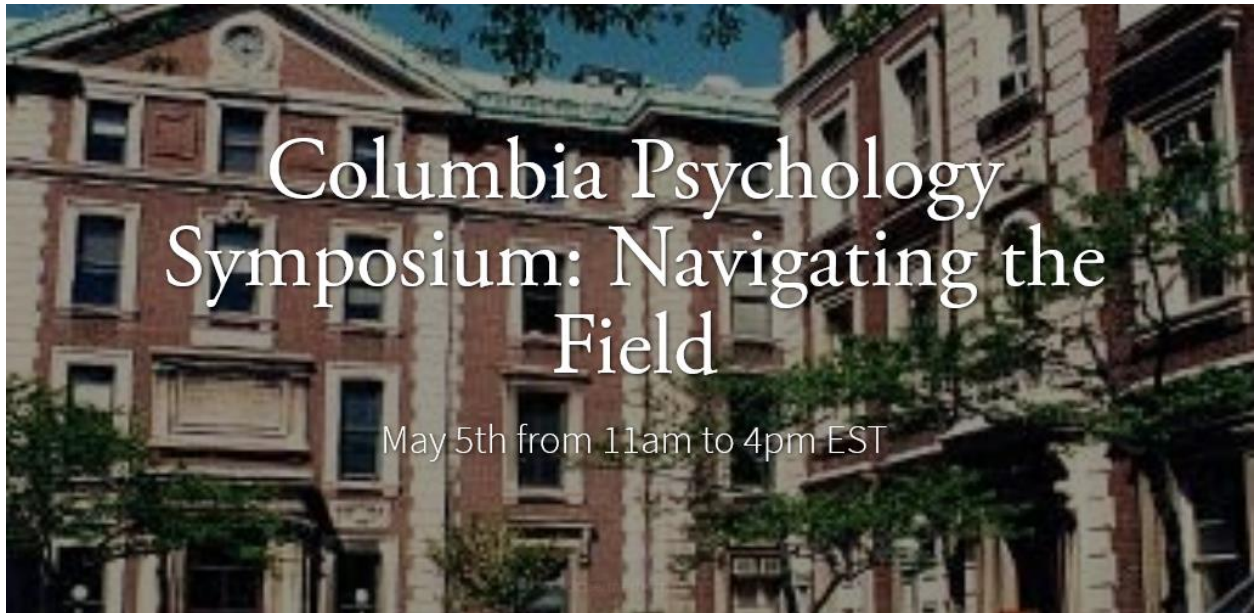


Columbia Psychology Symposium: Navigating the Field

Program of Presenters



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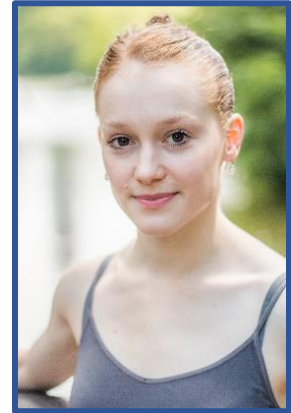
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ALISON BLOCK

Laboratory of Intergroup Relations and the Social Mind (LIRSM)

Ali Block is a senior in the Columbia School of General Studies and a professional ballet dancer. She has been a research assistant for the past two years in the Laboratory of Intergroup Relations and the Social Mind under Dr. Valerie Purdie-Greenaway, and has conducted research on work environments and the effects of these environments on female employees and ballet dancers. She is excited to be sharing her research and findings in the Columbia Psychology Symposium.



Work Culture and Women Employees

Alison Block & Valerie Purdie-Greenaway

According to researcher Michele Gelfand, societies and cultures may exist on a spectrum between cultural tightness and looseness (cultural T-L). Culturally tight societies possess strong norms and low tolerance of deviant behavior from those norms, whereas culturally loose societies possess weaker social norms and higher tolerance for deviant behavior. This research applied the theories of cultural T-L to the contemporary workplace, exploring the effects of cultural T-L in professional ballet companies on women, their use of voice, and their levels of comfort reporting sexual harassment. Through focus groups with female ballet dancers, recurring themes were gathered, analyzed, and used to generate cultural tightness and looseness vignettes. These vignettes were incorporated into a survey, along with measures of use of voice and likelihood to report sexual harassment. All variables and relationships were assessed through regression analyses. Results provide evidence that ballet companies exist on a broad spectrum from culturally tight to loose environments, with a slight overall trend towards cultural tightness. Data indicate a statistically significant negative association between cultural tightness and use of voice. For every 1-unit increase on the tightness scale, there is an associated decrease of, on average, 0.79 units on the use of voice scale, controlling for age, education level, and race. There was no statistically significant relationship between cultural tightness and sexual harassment reporting behavior, although there was a statistically significant relationship between age and reporting behavior, with a positive association between the two variables.

DESMOND YEOH

Couples Lab

Desmond Yeoh is a junior at Columbia College who's interested in understanding how culture affects the way we cognize and understand the world, especially for concepts that have been traditionally viewed as universally applicable. He works as an RA at the Columbia Couples Lab and is currently investigating stress in a cross cultural context.



Understanding Stress Through Language

Desmond Yeoh and Megan Goldring

This comparative study seeks to investigate stress between the United States and East Asia by examining dictionary definitions of stress in those societies. Past research shows that people with collectivist orientations rely more on perceived social support to deal with stress, believe in an external locus of control, and seek to suppress their emotions to preserve group harmony. In contrast, those with an individualistic mindset exhibit the converse (more reliance on personal resources, greater belief in an internal locus of control, and less emotional suppression). We seek to build upon this body of work by investigating whether differences in the language around stress in each culture reflects the often-cited individualist vs. collectivist cognitive framework. Beyond examining differences between Western and Eastern definitions of stress, we are also interested to see how definitions of stress differ within East Asia, but between different languages in that region. Taken together, this research will reveal similarities and differences in stress conceptualizations in East Asia and the USA.

MAYA SHUSTIK

Developmental Affective Neuroscience Laboratory

I am a senior psychology major at Barnard College. Over the past four years, I have been able to gain research experience in several labs and discover a strong passion for working with children. I have also been able to explore my interest in modern dance through the college's department and the city's endless opportunities.



Early life adversity and emotional schema generalization among young adults

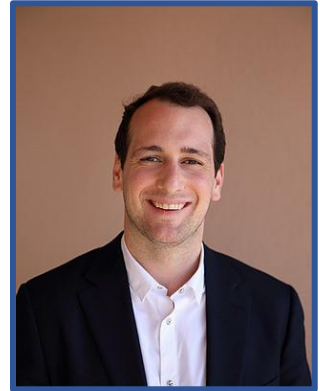
Maya Shustik, Anna Vannucci, Wangjing Yu, Nathan Martin, Medina Shah, Sapna Patel, Ariel Katz, Syntia Hadis & Nim Tottenham

This pilot study sought to characterize the relationship between childhood adversity and emotional schema generalization ability in young adults. Participants were recruited from the Columbia University Sona participant pool ($N=14$, 18-21y, 93% female). On day one, participants completed an emotional schema acquisition task during which they learned “Fribble”-emotional valence associations (negative/positive/neutral). The next day, participants completed an emotional schema generalization task based on the transitive inference paradigm. Accuracy was assessed by the proportion of correct affective inferences about shapes (AC-test) when participants made correct responses about the emotional valence of novel “Fribbles” (AB-test) and the “Fribble”-shape pairs learned on day two (BC-test). Effect sizes were calculated for childhood adversity comparisons between participants who completed the generalization task above chance across all valence conditions (good-GEN; $n=6$) and those who did not perform above chance level in at least one condition (poor-GEN; $n=8$). Poor-GEN participants reported more frequent adverse childhood experiences than good-GEN participants with large effect sizes, including emotional abuse ($g=2.30$, 95%CI=1.33-3.27), physical abuse ($g=1.14$, 95%CI=0.33-1.95), physical neglect ($g=1.13$, 95%CI=0.32-1.95), domestic violence ($g=1.41$, 95%CI=0.57-2.26), neighborhood violence ($g=1.06$, 95%CI=0.26-1.87), and peer victimization ($g=1.62$, 95%CI=0.75-2.49). These findings suggest that childhood adversity may be linked to difficulties with generalizing emotional schemas to novel stimuli and require replication in a larger sample.

ALEXANDER MURESANU

Metacognition and Memory Lab

Alex received his BA in history from Harvard and came to Columbia after working to open the Brownsville Community Culinary Center. Now in his second semester of the psychology post-bac program, Alex serves as an RA in Professor Metcalfe's lab and Professor Oishi's lab and is grateful for the opportunity to pursue his interests in the psychological and societal impacts of wealth inequality.



Agency and Tolerance for Wealth Inequality: A replication and extension

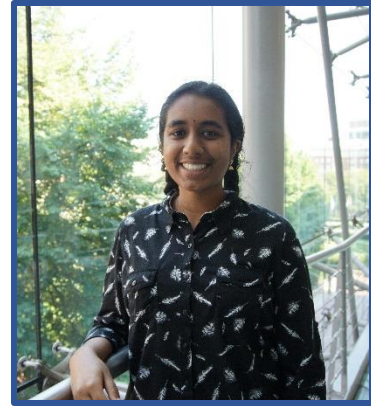
Alexander Muresanu & Zach Bucknoff

Does the concept of agency increase the endorsement of wealth inequality? We will set out to replicate and extend the findings from Savani and Rattan's 2012 paper "A Choice Mind-Set Increases the Acceptance and Maintenance of Wealth Inequality." In said article, the authors conclude that priming the concept of choice leads to an increase in acceptance of wealth inequality. We posit that the concept of choice is a subset of the larger concept of agency. Therefore, we hypothesize that priming a sense of agency in participants will also lead them to exhibit higher levels of tolerance for wealth inequality compared to those participants in the control group. If the results align with those of the initial study and support our additional hypothesis, then the study will contribute to the field's understanding of the psychological mechanisms that underlie attitudes towards wealth inequality in the United States.

CHINMAYI BALUSU

Aly Lab

Chinmayi Balusu is a first-year undergrad student in Columbia College and a research assistant in the Aly Lab. She is greatly interested in exploring neuroscience's interdisciplinary connections.



How Does Attentional State Influence Temporal Organization of Memory?

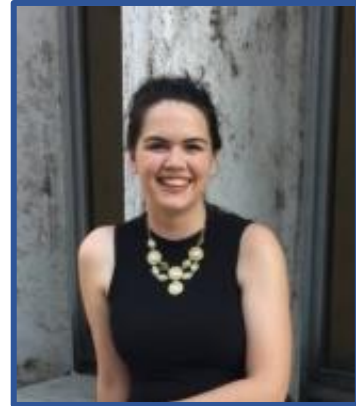
Chinmayi Balusu, Manasi Jayakumar, & Mariam Aly

Attentional fluctuations are inherent to human nature. We all experience periods of intense focus intermixed with periods where our focus is broken by intrusive thoughts, distraction, or fatigue (Esterman et al. 2013). Such attentional fluctuations can occur both during a longer timescale (e.g. during the course of a day, Riley et al. 2017) and in shorter time frames (e.g. during a class period, Wyble et al. 2011; Esterman et al. 2014). Prior research demonstrates that an individual's attentional state during a particular experience can affect their memory of that experience, such that memory is better for experiences that were attended to (Chun and Turk-Browne 2007). However, whether these attentional states also influence the organization of memory--particularly, temporal organization--is unclear. In this poster, we explore this question by conducting a thorough literature review. We then describe the experimental design, hypothesis, and predictions for an ongoing study in our lab that aims to answer this question.

CLARE BRADLEY

Couples Lab

Clare Bradley is a senior in Columbia College majoring in Psychology with a special concentration in Education Studies. She conducts research on social support in dyadic relationships as a Research Assistant for the Couples Lab and is interested in the mixed benefits of social support and the relationship between perceived and received support.



Does Inclusion of the Other in the Self Moderate the Effects of Received Support?

Clare Bradley, Katherine Zee, & Niall Bolger

Perceiving that social support is available from close others is crucial for well-being, yet actually receiving support is not always beneficial. This study examined whether blurring the distinction between the roles of provider and recipient, operationalized as greater inclusion of the other in the self (IOS), mitigates the potential costs of receiving support. We predicted that the effectiveness of practical and emotional support for recipients' appraisals and responses to a laboratory stressor (an impromptu speech) would be greater among those who reported higher (vs. lower) IOS with the provider. Using a dyadic paradigm, we measured levels of received support and recipients' responses to a laboratory stressor. Preregistered analyses revealed that neither emotional nor practical support receipt was significantly related to stressor appraisals or physiological reactivity, nor did IOS interact with either type of support receipt to predict these outcomes. However, higher IOS was marginally significantly related to tempered physiological stress. These results suggest the need for more research on the potential role of self other overlap in mitigating costs of support.

KEVIN HERNANDEZ

Couples Lab

Kevin Hernandez is a second-year student in the School of General Studies, intending to major in psychology, whose research project centers on the work done during his two-year stint as a research assistant in The Columbia Couples Lab.



The Influence of Regulatory Focus on Support Receipt

Kevin Hernandez, Katherine Zee, & Niall Bolger

A large body of research suggests that social support is key to psychological well-being (e.g., Berkman, Glass, Brissette, & Seeman, 2000). However, studies have also shown that receiving support does not always alleviate recipients' distress during stressful situations (Bolger & Amarel, 2007). Previous results have suggested that a key factor in the perception of support is the degree to which the support provider is attuned to the support recipients' specific goal pursuit tendencies (Molden, Lucas, Finkel, Kumashiro, & Rusbult, 2009). In particular, the recipients' regulatory focus may be importantly related to the way that they perceive and respond to support. Regulatory focus theory differentiates between two types of goal pursuit orientations wherein individuals with a promotion focus are "concerned with attaining growth and advancement" in an eager manner, and individuals with a strong prevention focus are "concerned with maintaining security" in a vigilant manner (i.e., promotion focus is concerned with gains, whereas prevention is concerned nonlosses; Higgins, 1997). Moreover, previous research suggested the importance of regulatory focus in the context of support (Winterheld & Simpson, 2016). Therefore, it is plausible that individuals may differentially respond to support receipt as a function of their chronic regulatory focus. Our current analysis sought to evaluate the relationship between an individual's regulatory focus and their response to social support from a friend in preparation for a laboratory stressor (an impromptu speech). Specifically, we hypothesized that promotion-focused individuals would respond to social support in a positive manner, given that promotion-focused individuals tend to focus on opportunities for gains and therefore might construe the support as a way to perform better on the upcoming speech (Winterheld et al., 2016). That is, support might enable promotion-focused individuals as an effective means of achieving a 'gain,' in this case performing well on the speech.

JOHN KERWIN

Developmental Affective Neuroscience Laboratory

John is a post-bacc student in Psychology and is currently a research assistant in the Development Affective Neuroscience Lab. His primary research interests relate to the neuroscience of gender, particularly the neuropsychological outcomes of hormone therapy, and he aims to pursue a PhD in this area.



Neurobehavioral effects of prenatal SSRI exposure

John Kerwin & Andrea Fields

An estimated 10-15% of people will experience depression during pregnancy, and current treatment recommendations vary, with the use of antidepressant medication during pregnancy estimated between 5%-13%. Despite the increasingly widespread use of these medications, namely Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs), there is limited understanding of the long-term effects of these drugs on children's development and behavior. This domain of research is ripe for investigation, considering that work suggests SSRIs can readily cross the placenta and may subsequently increase extracellular concentrations of serotonin in the fetal environment. This may be especially important for areas of the developing brain such as the amygdala and insula, known to contain significant concentrations of serotonin receptors. Although one early study found no differences on key developmental indicators between SSRI-exposed children and controls, more recent literature has documented a number of changes in neurodevelopment associated with prenatal exposure to SSRIs, including possible changes to fear circuitry via an increase in connectivity between the right amygdala and the right insula.

Gaining a greater understanding of the neurodevelopmental outcomes of children who were exposed to SSRIs in the womb is an important objective. More investigation done within this domain may provide critical information to clinicians and patients to help inform decisions regarding care that supports the health of both the pregnant parent and the fetus. Future research should focus on long-term follow-ups with children to assess behaviors influenced by serotonergic processes, such as fear circuitry, to further appreciate how long lasting these effects may be.

DON LAVELLE

The Higgins Lab

Don is a research assistant with the Higgins Lab and aspires to pursue a doctoral degree in psychology.



How Does Regulatory Focus Strength Relate to Regulatory Focus Pride and Goal Pursuit Activity Importance?

Don Lavelle, Emily Nakkawita, & E. Tory Higgins

Regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997) describes two self-regulatory systems. The promotion system is motivated by the fundamental need for nurturance and the prevention system by the fundamental need for security. The literature has distinguished at least three aspects of a person's regulatory focus. One aspect, regulatory focus strength, captures how strongly the person is motivated by promotion or prevention. A second aspect, regulatory focus pride, describes how effective a person reports feeling in each domain (Higgins et al., 2001). Additionally, recent work suggests that different goal pursuit activities are motivated by promotion (knowledge growth, movement and change) versus prevention (careful evaluation, status-quo preservation; Nakkawita & Higgins, 2020).

Although these aspects of regulatory focus are theoretically related, less work has examined their statistical associations. One recent study provides some insight. Participants completed an experimental manipulation that induced promotion versus prevention strength; they then rated the importance of various goal pursuit activities. After a brief distraction, participants were unexpectedly asked to recall as many activities as possible (an accessibility measure) before completing a chronic measure of regulatory focus pride. As predicted, induced regulatory focus strength predicted the accessibility of associated activities.

In the present research, we used the same dataset to test for associations between regulatory focus strength and (a) regulatory focus pride and (b) activity importance ratings. Our analyses revealed no significant associations. This suggests that, although theoretically related, these aspects of regulatory focus are distinct. Scholars should therefore carefully consider which aspects they intend to study when conducting regulatory focus research.

JOHN MILLER

Couples Lab

John is a post-baccalaureate student at Columbia and research assistant in the Bolger Couples Lab. He intends to enter a Clinical Psychology Ph.D program in the next few years.



Gender Differences in Responsiveness in Friendship Social Support Paradigms

John Miller, Katherine Zee, Niall Bolger, & E. Tory Higgins

Prior research indicates that men tend to provide less responsive support to their stressed romantic partners and exhibit more negative support behaviors compared to women. However, such gender differences in support responsiveness have largely been established within the context of romantic relationships. As responsiveness is also relevant to other relationship contexts, it is necessary to understand whether this “gender gap” in social support also extends to other relationships. The present study explored whether men (vs. women) exhibit less responsiveness in their support provision as a friend copes with a stressor. Friend dyads attended a laboratory session and engaged in a support discussion as one friend prepared to give a speech. Recipients’ perceptions of responsiveness were measured after the support discussion. Results of a preregistered analysis plan revealed that men (vs. women) were perceived as less responsive and less effective in their support provision, but these effects did not achieve significance. These findings suggest that gender gaps in support responsiveness may extend to support among friends, but further research is needed to establish such effects.

AIDA MURATI

Couples Lab

Aida is a senior at the City University of New York, majoring in Forensic Psychology. Aida wants to further her academic career with a Ph.D. in clinical psychology.



Stress in a European Context

Aida Murati & Megan Goldring

The word “stress” is widely used; however, cultural values influence the degree to which an individual perceives a stressor to be stressful. For instance, individuals from highly competitive cultures demonstrate lower stress responses to the Trier Social Stress Test than those from non-competitive cultures. As such, a comprehensive understanding of stress perception necessitates cross-cultural consciousness. In the first section of my project, I review the literature concerning stress perception in a European context, which shows that the majority of stress studies in Eastern Europe focus on academic and work-related stress. The second part of my project consists of preliminary data on the definitions of stress in different European languages. To collect this data, I reached out to 42 collaborators from 42 different countries in Europe to extract the definition of the word “stress” in their native language’s canonical dictionary. I will compare and contrast the diverse interpretations of stress across countries in Europe, as well as between European countries and the United States. This research highlights cross-cultural similarities and differences in stress perception, and has the potential to inform culturally sensitive stress-reduction interventions.

SIENA RUMBOUGH

Couples Lab

Siena Rumbough is a post-baccalaureate Pre-med student who's aspiring to be a Psychiatrist. Some previous lab experiences include a senior thesis with NYU's West Lab and a work study at Steinhardt's Center for Health, Identity, Behavior, and Prevention studies.



Regulatory Mode and Performance on a Laboratory Stressor

Siena P. Rumbough, Katherine S. Zee, E. Tory Higgins, & Niall Bolger

Regulatory mode theory proposes two modes of goal pursuit: assessment and locomotion. Assessment involves critically evaluating options in order to select the right one, whereas locomotion involves initiating action and moving from one state to a new state (Higgins, et al., 2003). The present research examined associations between regulatory mode and self-perception in the context of an individual's performance on a socio-evaluative stressor.

During a laboratory session, participants (N=101) were asked to deliver an impromptu speech, a reliable method for inducing stress. Prior to the speech, participants completed the Regulatory Mode Questionnaire and were asked to report how demanding they perceived the speech to be. After the speech, they rated their perceived performance. We hypothesized participants higher (vs. lower) on assessment would (a) appraise the upcoming speech task as more demanding and (b) report they performed more poorly on the speech, given that individuals higher on assessment tend to be more likely to engage in evaluative comparison and self-criticism. We also hypothesized those higher (vs. lower) on locomotion would (a) appraise the upcoming speech as less demanding and (b) report that they performed better on the task, given people higher on locomotion tend to have a "just do it" orientation and positive self-perceptions. Results suggested locomotion predicted lower perceived task demands, whereas assessment predicted higher demands. However, neither locomotion nor assessment was related to perceived speech performance. These results suggest the role that individual differences in self-regulation may have for how people cope with stressors.

SUNJAE SHIM

Dynamic Perception and Memory Lab

Sunjae is an undergraduate student at Columbia University studying psychology. She is interested in combining her interests in psychology and film studies to look into how people perceive naturalistic stimuli. Outside of school work, she likes binge watching TV shows with her hamster, Tiramisu.



Event Perception Based on Working Memory Demand

Sunjae Shim & Chris Baldassano

The way that people divide up an experience into separate events can have long-term impacts on the way that this experience is remembered. According to the event segmentation theory, an event boundary is perceived when an individual makes an error in their prediction about what will happen next. However, recent studies have raised doubts about whether an event boundary is created only when a prediction error occurs. In this study, we plan to test whether event boundaries can be triggered even without prediction error by manipulating working memory demands. In our task, participants will be shown a series of random images, presented in segments, along with an image of a clock. The beginning of a segment is indicated with the clock hand pointing up (12 o'clock position). Participants will be instructed to detect image repetitions within each segment, but to ignore any repetitions across segments. The clock images either have specific ticks that the hand moves along, making the beginning of a new segment predictable (experimental condition) or do not have ticks in between to create a prediction error (control condition). The participants then complete a temporal memory task to indicate which of two images was presented first. Previous research has shown that temporal memory judgments can be used to identify event boundaries in long-term memory, since order judgments can be made with higher accuracy for pairs of items within the same event. We predict that this boundary-related memory effect will be present in both the predictable and unpredictable event boundary conditions, suggesting that event boundaries can be successfully formed by resetting working memory load.

ALANA SILBER

Couples Lab

Alana Silber is a rising senior at Barnard College majoring in Psychology and minoring in Spanish. She hopes to one day pursue a PhD in Clinical Psychology, and she currently works as a research assistant at the Columbia Couples Lab, Columbia's Center for OCD and Related Disorders at the New York Psychiatric Institute, and NYPSI's School Based Mental Health Program.



Effects of Shared Reality During Negative Experiences: A Literature Review

Alana Silber & Megan Goldring

An old adage states that misery loves company. In this literature review, I examine how shared reality theory can make sense of this phenomenon. Is it really that misery loves all company, or is it that miserable people love the company of those in the same miserable situation as them? According to shared reality theory, humans are unique in their motivation to share and connect their inner mental states with others. When this is achieved, they experience a greater sense of reality and social inclusion. For example, people believe their ideas and sentiments to be more justified when they are shared by others. But what are the specific effects of shared reality for negative emotional experiences, and what compels people to seek out and share these unfavorable inner states? To answer these questions, I first examine the motivations that underlie shared reality. Second, I discern shared reality's emotional impact, both psychologically and physiologically, in the context of stressful experiences. The literature review was conducted online via Google Scholar and PubMed, utilizing a combination of phrases that related to the research such as shared reality, emotional regulation, social support, motivation, social sharing, physiological stress, etc.

CALISTA SMALL

Independent Project

Calista is a budding clinical researcher with a penchant for theater and the arts. This is her fourth semester as a psychology post-bacc student at Columbia. She holds a BA in Humanities from Yale.



HARRIET LAURITSEN-SMITH

Independent Project

Harriet is a post-bacc at Columbia interested in dyads, interpersonal relationship building, and emotion regulation. She has a BA in French Literature from Smith College.

Can harnessing the prosocial power of gratitude help dismantle social privilege?

Calista Small & Harriet Lauritsen-Smith

Independent Project

Gratitude is a positive social emotion that is associated with prosocial behavior at both state and trait levels (McCullough et al., 2001). Researchers have found that people who were manipulated to feel gratitude gave more money to a stranger (Tsang, 2006), and spent more time doing a favor for a stranger (Bartlett & DeSteno, 2006). Recent findings have also shown that higher levels of trait gratitude predict an increase in both charitable donations and returns in an incentivized trust game (Yost-Dubrow & Dunham, 2018).

However, it is unknown if these effects hold when the opportunity for prosocial behavior is framed in a political context. Specifically, we want to examine if the prosocial effect holds when people are presented with the opportunity to redistribute their money after they find out that they are unfairly privileged. Do people with higher levels of trait gratitude redistribute more money than people with low levels of trait gratitude?

Answering this question will be particularly useful for future social privilege research as it offers insight into the kinds of emotions that might motivate an individual's dismantling of privilege, an important issue that is not fully understood (Phillips & Lowery, 2015; Rosette & Zhou Koval, 2018).

RACHEL VELASQUEZ

Couples Lab

Rachel is a post-baccalaureate student in the psychology certificate program at Columbia. She hopes to pursue graduate school to study mental health and coping.



Cultural and Etymological Factors of Stress in Latin America

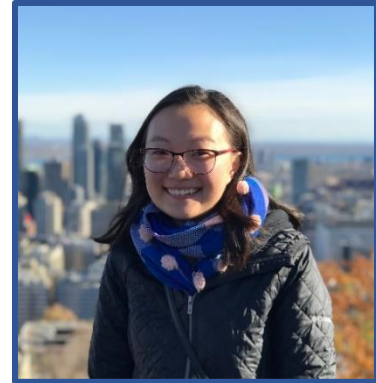
Rachel Velasquez & Megan Goldring

The purpose of the current study is to gain an understanding of how stress is experienced in a cross-cultural context, with a particular focus on Latin America. Part 1 consisted of a literature review that examined stress as a culture-bound experience. Traditional expectations, including strong emphasis on the family unit and gender roles, and today's challenges of increasing competition and higher cost of living, create a unique stress climate in Latin America. Part 2 of this research consists of analysis of an ongoing collection of dictionary definitions of the word "stress" across Latin American countries and is expected to reveal themes of "tension" and "pressure" across definitions. This exploration into Latin American experiences and terms for stress can shed light on cross-cultural differences in stress and mental health.

ALICE XUE

Shohamy Lab

Alice Xue is graduating from Columbia College in May with a BA in Neuroscience and Behavior and a concentration in Computer Science.



Memory accessibility affects choice behavior in value-based decision making

Alice M. Xue, Akram Bakkour, & Daphna Shohamy

Adaptive decision making is guided by past experiences, which can provide useful information for evaluating different choice options. In value-based decision making, the difference in the subjective value between choice options (choice difficulty) is associated with the time needed to make a decision. Choices between equally-liked familiar items (more difficult choices) require more time for deliberation than choices between a well-liked and a much less liked item (easier choices). Recent research has shown that deliberation time is correlated with BOLD activity in the hippocampus, a brain region that supports memory retrieval and prospection. However, the effects of manipulations of hippocampal memory mechanisms remain unknown. In this study, we manipulated the memory accessibility of choice options using an adapted version of the think/no-think paradigm. Healthy young participants (N=34) repeatedly recalled (think condition) or suppressed (no-think condition) memories associated with familiar snacks. Prior findings have shown that 'think' items are better remembered than 'no-think' items. Participants later made choices between pairs of snacks. Choices between 'think' items were more stochastic (i.e., were less consistent with initial stated preferences) than control choices ($p=0.04$) and took marginally longer for the most difficult choices. Choices between 'no-think' items were marginally more stochastic than control choices ($p=0.07$) but took marginally less time for the most difficult choices. These findings indicate that manipulations known to affect item memory also affect decisions about those items, and further characterize the role of memory retrieval in value-based decision making.

JAMIE ZHANG

Couples Lab

Jamie is a freshman at Columbia studying biomedical engineering and pre-medicine.



Attachment Style Predicts Self-Disclosure and Trust In Dyadic Relationships

Jamie Zhang & Ana DiGiovanni

According to attachment theory, relationships with parents that are formed during infancy create “internal working models,” which function to influence the ways in which we interact with individuals, including romantic partners, well into adulthood (Bowlby, 1969). Attachment styles play a fundamental role in shaping the way people think, feel, and behave in close relationships, as they are implicated in how we negotiate a mutually desirable amount of closeness or distance (Mikulincer & Shaver 2007). This study examines how attachment styles moderate peoples’ propensity for self-disclosure and trust after an experimental generation of interpersonal closeness with a previously unacquainted individual (Aron et. Al, 1991). Participants will first be asked to complete the Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read 1990). They will then be paired into dyads and carry out a self-disclosure and relationship-building task that gradually escalates in intensity (Aron et. Al 1991). After, participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire reporting their perceived partner responsiveness; relatedness and liking of their partner; and their subjective degree of self-disclosure during the task. It is hypothesized that avoidantly attached participants will report less self-disclosure with their study partner, while anxiously attached participants will report feeling as though their study partner is less trustful, as is consistent with previous work on attachment theory (Ainsworth 1978). Findings from the study will have implications for understanding how attachment styles influence the formation and dynamics of new relationships, even when they are not in the context of romantic relationships.

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