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Abstracts from the 2009 Mary Lou Fulton Mentored Research Conference

The Annual Mary Lou Fulton Mentored Research Conference is a full day event designed to showcase mentored student learning. It is an opportunity for students to present and explain their research to the public and their peers. The fourth annual conference took place on April 3, 2008, and students from all departments in the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences were invited to participate. Abstracts of the presenting undergraduate psychology students are featured here in Intuition.

Moral Conception Differences in Early and Late Adolescence

Jason C. Basinger, Sam A. Hardy, & Lawrence J. Walker
Mentor: Sam A. Hardy, PhD

Abstract: In recent years scholars have argued for the importance of greater understanding of lay or naturalistic conceptions of moral maturity (Walker & Pitts, 1998). However, given the limited work done thus far in this area, we still know very little about how these conceptions of morality develop. Further, most prior studies of lay conceptions of morality have involved adults (e.g., Smith, Smith, & Christopher, 2007; Walker & Pitts, 1998). Thus, the purpose of the present study was to explore age differences in naturalistic conceptions of morality between early and late adolescents. Using cluster analysis we identified four moral person trait clusters for early adolescents and five clusters for late adolescents.

Use of Cognitive Screening Tests to Identify Cognitive Impairments in Survivors of Critical Illness

Callie J. Beck, Fu L. Woon, MA, and Ramona O. Hopkins, PhD
Mentor: Ramona O. Hopkins, PhD

Abstract: Research has consistently demonstrated volume loss in temporal lobe structures, including the hippocampus, following moderate-to-severe traumatic brain injury (TBI). However, the relationship between the entorhinal cortex (EC), a structure with direct hippocampal input, and volume changes following TBI has not been specifically examined in children. This study was conducted to investigate the role of EC volume loss as it relates to cognitive outcomes in children who have suffered TBI. Quantitative magnetic resonance image analysis was used to measure EC volumes in 16 children with TBI and 16 demographically matched controls. Other temporal lobe structures were also measured to examine volumetric relationships. Cognitive outcomes were also analyzed. EC volume was significantly reduced in children with TBI in relation to the control group, and strongly correlated with hippocampal volume. Children with TBI also showed a significant relationship between aspects of cognitive functioning and EC volume. As hypothesized, EC volume loss occurred following moderate-to-severe TBI. This was correlated with other temporal lobe structures and cognitive functioning.

Increase in Female Hispanic Names and Hispanic Population of California

Bruce Brown PhD, Brian Larsen
Mentor: Bruce Brown, PhD

Abstract: This study uses principle component analysis and multivariate graphics to describe patterns in the popularity of with internal comparison of Hispanic female names of the 20th century in California, based on their frequency. The top 100 baby names per year from 1960 to 2007 were obtained from <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/OACT/babynames/>. Name frequency data was transformed logarithmically before cluster analyzing. Twenty-eight clusters were identified and compared using profile plots. The clusters were also compared holistically using

principle component plots, and the number of Hispanic names in each cluster was identified. While comparing the frequency distribution of names, graphed as the logarithm of name popularity against year, we can better understand the pattern and frequency of Hispanic names, and how they have changed throughout the last half of the 20th century. Hispanic names have drastically increased in frequency within the last 47 years in California.

lar expectations or standards. The purpose of this study was to see the effect on participant's level of depression after watching either upward or downward social comparisons in a video regarding the average Brigham Young University student. Depression was measured by the Beck Depression Inventory. No significant results were found but trends were similar to the hypothesis.

Women and Eating: Cognitive Dissonance versus Self-Perception Theory

Brennan Atherton, Karen Call, Kathryn Huff

Mentor: Patrick Steffen, PhD

Abstract: Discrepancies exist between eating attitudes and eating habits in women, leading to poor health. Two explanations are possible: cognitive dissonance or self-perception. A sample of 129 female undergraduates (average age 20.5) was taken to see if what they ate affected their attitude towards food or body image. Participants were divided into three groups. One group was given healthy food, one was given junk food, and the other no food. After eating, the participants completed the EAT and the BIS. There was no difference between groups on the BIS ($p=0.60$). The healthy food group scored significantly lower on the EAT ($p<0.05$), suggesting that cognitive dissonance is the explanation for the discrepancy as participants had prior eating attitudes, assessed using questions about the food pyramid. Implications include the possibility of healthier eating attitudes and behaviors by making healthy food more available.

Effects of Relevant Social Comparisons on Students' Level of Depression

Adrien Carrillo, Aubrey Dillistone, Maya Inoue, and Bobbi Sue Padro

Abstract: Utah was recently ranked as the most depressed state in the country. A previous study shows that social interactions can affect one's perceptions about themselves. Therefore, in areas where people with the same belief or values interact frequently, a norm exists of simi-