Word from the Head

March in the History of Psychology...

1897  John Ridley Stroop was born. Stroop's 1933 doctoral dissertation research asked participants to name the color of ink in which the name of the same color or a different color is printed. He found much longer response times when the ink color and color name are different than when they are the same. The "Stroop effect" has been the subject of hundreds of studies since Stroop's results were published in 1935, and a mainstay of PSYC122 lab reports!

1981  Gordon Bower's article "Mood and Memory" was published in the American Psychologist.

1990  Peter M. Bentler's article "Comparative Fix Indexes in Structural Models" was published in Psychological Bulletin. The article among the most frequently cited in the early 1990s.

This second issue has been a little delayed... Apologies! We’re now three weeks into teaching, and you don’t need to be told how popular our courses are this year. Labs and lectures are full to bursting and, thanks to S-Cubed, coordinators and senior tutors will never again have to know what it’s like to hand-allocate 700 first years across 40-odd labs, when 120 people want Monday 9-11!

This week in particular has been, um, exciting. Tuesday saw the entirety of Easterfield evacuated to Milk & Honey (who made a killing I imagine), courtesy of a bomb scare. Thanks to everyone for dealing with this in a professional and pragmatic manner. Later on in the day we received a flurry of media queries that I thought must be about the evacuation but, no, narcissism and FaceBook are apparently more important.

I’m sure there’s a bunch of great things happening, but I’ve just heard that (though it has yet to be formally confirmed) three of the top four places(including first place) in the annual IACCP dissertation awards have gone to recent cross-cultural PhD graduates from our School. Great news for them and their supervisors.

Finally, just a quick note to say that we have some visitors in the School to look out for. Professor Ype Poortinga is joining us for a few weeks from Tilburg University, and Professor Stephen Lindsay joins us from the lesser well-known (University of) Victoria. Say hi.

March has been a dodgy month for many people in the School – personal and family health has been an issue and I’d like to wish everybody a more healthy rest-of-2012.

Marc
News in the School

Jason’s Theory of Mind Lab News

Joseph Watts and I just developed and tested a brand new test to measure development of early understanding of belief, and the findings are providing an exciting first look into the degree of integration in children’s early mind-reading ability. Our submission of the manuscript to a demanding journal passed the triage decision round and was judged competitive for review (fingers crossed); the findings have also been invited, approved and selected for presentation at the upcoming Jean Piaget Society Conference.

On another front, I have just finished a 1-year collaboration with Josef Perner (at Salzburg University) where we co-wrote an editorial piece for the British Journal of Developmental Psychology discussing a developmental paradox in the theory of mind field. Josef and I also just finished editing a special issue for the BJDP where a group of infant researchers, linguists, philosophers and animal psychologists came together to discuss, challenge and present new data bearing on the implicit and explicit theory of mind understanding. Getting to work with Josef – the pioneer of theory of mind research – was one of the best experiences of my career: he taught me a great deal about developmental science theorizing and philosophy. The BJDP has also recorded a podcast of us providing a critique of the field and showcasing the uniqueness of our special issue.

All of this has led to an invitation from Psychology Press to write a book on theory of mind and implicit knowledge.

I am also pleased to say that Ian Apperly (Psychology at Birmingham) and Stephen Butterfill (Philosophy at Warwick) are collaborating with me on this year’s Marsden application to test a multiple knowledge systems framework for explaining theory of mind development.

Finally, a warm welcome to the new Honours and SCIE306 students joining the lab: Bill Drummond, John Bell, Jolene Hunter, Pia Baarspul and Andrew Walmsley are working with Jason on testing coherence in preschoolers’ implicit and explicit judgments across a range of false-belief theory of mind tasks.”

Postcard Home - Eryn Newman

I left New Zealand on August 15th 2011 with a mix of excitement, anticipation and a tinge of fear at the experiences that awaited me at the University of California, Irvine. I arrived in San Francisco for an orientation and met about 100 other Fulbright students from all over the world. Over the next few days, they prepared us for academic life in America.

Since then it has been a mix of terrific and terrifying—but fantastic inspiring experiences. These experiences have included: my first thanksgiving, chatting with a federal judge, being a Republican candidate in a simulated US presidential debate in Nashville, having dinner and chatting about research with FBI agents, watching the rugby world cup with a physics professor from NZ and a chef from France, giving talks about research at various US universities and chatting to NASA scientists at a Fulbright dinner at UCLA.
Of course the time spent with Beth Loftus in her lab has been the best experience of all. I remember stepping into Beth’s office for the first time...it was terrifying. But I learned very quickly that she is a down to earth, passionate, wonderful human being as well as being one of the most influential psychological scientists of our time. Nick asked me to send a photo to go with this quick paragraph...but I couldn’t send just one.

This has been a thrilling, inspiring, rewarding experience and I want to encourage other VUW students to give the Fulbright experience a go. Maryanne, thank you for encouraging (making me!) give this a shot. I am looking forward to being back in NZ, I miss the VUW crew! In the meantime I promise to stop sending updates on the horrible winter weather which is only hitting 30 degrees (yes that is celsius) this week.

Take care everyone and see you all in June.

Reminder of Funding Opportunities

James Cook Research Fellowships – Royal Society of New Zealand
The funding package will be $100,000 plus GST per annum and up to $10,000 plus GST in relevant expenses. The normal term of a fellowship is 2 years. Those appointed will be required to take up their fellowships by 1 July 2013. Applications must be received by your portfolio manager by 27 June.

URF – University Research Fund
The URF is an internal fund of around $1,000,000 designed to support research activity that is aligned closely with University strategic priorities. Grants are worth between $10,000 and $50,000. Applications are made online via the Grants Management System (GMS). Funds must be spent in 2013. Applicants must submit their URF application to Head of School/Faculty by 5pm on 18th May 2012.

Psycobabble Deadlines
If you have good news or maybe upcoming events, national or international conferences to talk about, ponderings aka a semi-logical rant, cute pets or just some good recipes then here is your opportunity to share. Write a few paragraphs include a picture or two then send it to me. Please note that Psycobabble comes out once a month and can be found on the 6th floor notice board and on the School website. \n
Here are the deadlines for the rest of the year:
12th April, 12pm 10th May, 12pm
14th June, 12pm 12th July, 12pm
9th August, 12pm 13th September, 12pm
11th October, 12pm 8th November, 12pm
12pm
13 December, 12pm

COLLEEN AND DAVID PROUDLY ANNOUNCE THE ARRIVAL OF RAFA on 11 MARCH, 2012
Don’t forget!
Graduate students, including those up to 2 years post-graduation, whose research falls into the broad areas of cognition and/or memory, are welcomed to submit a presentation or attend this FREE student-led conference. This is too good an opportunity to miss for those of you who are interested in this stuff. It’s a chance to present your work in an environment run by people like you, a chance to connect with people who (in ten years time) will be running the show, and with whom you can share your experiences. For more information visit http://www.kiwicam.org/

Publications


