



Presenting the Honours Class of 2022

***PSYCHOLOGY VIRTUAL
RESEARCH DAY***

April 9th, 2022

Honours Class of 2022



Top Row

Acadia Bunin, Craig McClelland, Abby Kelson, Vincent Salabarría

Second from top

Danielle Dickson, Shannon Reid, Lauren Shaw, Julia Kaufmann, Elizabeth Hebert

Middle Row

Hayley Woodside, Claire Zelcer, Paige Matchett, Amy Thompson, Hannah Landry

Second from bottom

Sophie Landry, Daisy Song, James French, Grace Henri, Hailey Yoon

Bottom Row

Anna Manuel, Ben Mersereau, Colin Daigle, Erin Green

Schedule of Presentations

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

8:30-8:35

Dr. Lisa Dawn Hamilton (Department Head), Dr. Odette Gould (Honour Coordinator), Dr. Geneviève Desmarais (Independent Studies Coordinator)

AMY THOMPSON

8:35-8:50

Investigating the Agreement Between Cognitive Assessments of Neurologically Unhealthy Aging

CRAIG MCCLELLAND

8:50-9:05

The Undermining Effect of Sucrose Reinforcement on Automatically-Reinforced Operant Wheel Running in Rats

HANNAH LANDRY

9:05-9:20

Age-related Differences in Spatial Processing

HAILEY YOON

9:20-9:35

Deathbed visions: Hospice Palliative Care volunteers' experiences, perspectives, and reactions

SOPHIE LANDRY	9:35-9:50
Examining the Influence of Social Barriers and Sexual Scripts on Positive Casual Sexual Experiences in University Students	
LAUREN SHAW	9:50-10:05
Academic Success, Persistence and Satisfaction with Online Learning During a Global Pandemic	
HEALTH BREAK	10:05-10:20
INDEPENDENT STUDIES POSTERS	10:20-10:40
See pages 8, 9, and 10 for poster presentations	
JULIA KAUFMANN	10:40-10:55
Narrative Analysis of Experiences Accessing Care for Long COVID in Canada	
HAYLEY WOODSIDE	10:55-11:10
Easy as ABC? Investigating Storybook Exposure, Invented Spelling and Vocabulary as Predictors of Learning to Read	
PAIGE MATCHETT	11:10-11:25
Individual and Organizational Predictors of Employee Well-Being During the Fourth Wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic	

GRACE HENRI	11:25-11:40
Meritocracy Beliefs and the Psychological Wellbeing of Students	
SHANNON REID	11:40-11:55
Talk to me About Desire: A Qualitative Investigation of Women's Experiences	
VINCENT SALABARRIA	11:55-12:10
The Effect of Reminiscence on Older Adults' Appraisals of COVID-19 Pandemic Disruptions	
LUNCH BREAK	12:20-1:00
ACADIA BUNIN	1:00-1:15
Examining how Self-Compassion Moderates the Relationship between Perfectionism and Mental Health	
COLIN DAIGLE	1:15-1:30
Namaste: The Influence of Meditation on Attentional Focus	
DAISY SONG	1:30-1:45
Visuo-Haptic Memory Representation and the Influence of Verbal Processing	
ANNA MANUEL	1:45-2:00
The Underlying Mechanisms of Sharing Behaviour in Preschool Children	

CLAIRE ZELCER	2:00-2:15
Effect of Sucrose Reinforcement on Operant Wheel Running on a Fixed Ratio Schedule	
ABBY KELSON	2:15-2:30
The Impact of Mobile Use on Academic Performance- Does Choosing When to Use a Cellphone Affect Academic Outcomes?	
HEALTH BREAK	2:30-2:40
INDEPENDENT STUDIES	2:43-3:00
See pages 8, 9, and 10 for poster presentations	
BEN MERSEREAU	3:00-3:15
Exploring the Unique Contributions of Self-Compassion and Growth Mindsets in Academic Success	
ERIN GREEN	3:15-3:30
Visual and Haptic Identification of Simple and Complex Objects	
ELIZABETH HEBERT	3:30-3:45
Exploring the Effects of Imagining the Future Self on Delay of Gratification in Preschoolers	

DANIELLE DICKSON

3:45-4:00

Decomposing Hot Executive Function:
Decision Making under Ambiguity in
Preschoolers

JAMES FRENCH

4:00-4:15

Court Vision: An Attentional Advantage of
Competitive Athletes

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

4:15-4:20

Independent Studies Posters

THE IMPACT OF SIMILARITY ON CROSS-MODAL OBJECT IDENTIFICATION

Student: Aidan Steeves, Supervisor: Dr. Desmarais

THE IMPACT OF CELL PHONE USE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Student: Nicole Doncaster, Supervisor: Dr. Desmarais

OBJECT SIMILARITY MODULATES IDENTIFICATION OF UNFAMILIAR OBJECTS IN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Student: Tayyab Sohail, Supervisor: Dr. Desmarais

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS IN LONG COVID

Student: Mya Milner, Supervisor: Dr. Gould

VALIDITY OF HOT EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING IN PRESCHOOLERS

Student: Bronwyn Inness, Supervisor: Dr. Garon

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORY DURING THE PANDEMIC: THE IMPACT OF STRESS, ANXIETY, AND DEPRESSION

Student: Rachel Binns, Supervisor: Dr. Tomes

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF CONSENT AND SEX EDUCATION PRIOR TO UNIVERSITY

Student: Emma Skelton, Supervisor: Dr. Hamilton

SELF-REPORTED EPISODIC MEMORY IS ASSOCIATED WITH BETTER IMAGERY ABILITY AND POORER SPATIAL PROCESSING IN YOUNGER ADULTS

Student: Laura Paul, Supervisor: Dr. Douglas

AGE RELATED DIFFERENCES IN COGNITIVE PROCESSING

Student: Brittany Ricker, Supervisor: Dr. Douglas

COMPARING YOUNGER AND OLDER ADULTS' SHORT-TERM AND WORKING MEMORY ACROSS SPATIAL PROCESSING TASKS

Student: Adrie Cameron, Supervisor: Dr. Douglas

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS IN MARITIME RESIDENTIAL HOSPICES

Student: Jonah Sheinin, Supervisor: Dr. Claxton-Oldfield

BODY DISPOSITION OPTIONS: A CATALOGUE AND STUDY

Student: Lauren Hennigar, Supervisor: Dr. Claxton-Oldfield

A STUDY OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' EARLIEST DEATH EXPERIENCES

Student: Magela Van der Pluijm, Supervisor: Dr. Claxton-Oldfield

A POST COVID-19 WORKPLACE ERA: EVALUATING EMPLOYEE PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS TO BEST UNDERSTAND MOTIVATION AND WELL-BEING

Student: Kennedy Hunt, Supervisor: Dr. Irak

THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY AND TECHNO FATIGUE IN EMPLOYEE'S SUBJECTIVE PERFORMANCE

Student: Alexia Bierlaire, Supervisor: Dr. Irak

EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF MEDITATION ON ATTENTIONAL FOCUS

Student: Jessica Leblanc, Supervisor: Dr. LaPointe

THE EFFECT OF MEDITATIVE INSTRUCTION ON ATTENTIONAL BLINK TASK PERFORMANCE

Student: Vivian Huang, Supervisor: Dr. LaPointe

Amy Thompson

Supervisor: Dr. Douglas



Research Project:

My project concerns unhealthy cognitive aging in older adults. Mild Cognitive Impairment is believed to be the precursor to Alzheimer's Disease. Nonetheless, recent research suggests that there may be evidence of disordered cognitive aging before an individual meets the criteria for Mild Cognitive Impairment. I am looking at three novel neurocognitive assessments that have shown promising evidence in their ability to detect the subtle cognitive deficits that may suggest that an individual is "at-risk" for Mild Cognitive Impairment. These three assessments include the Face Name Associative Memory Exam, the Mnemonic Similarity Test, and the Short-Term Memory Binding Test. Previous research has found all three of these tasks to be sensitive to MCI; however, no studies have examined all three of these tasks within the same group of participants. As such, the purpose of my honours project is to further investigate the effectiveness of these tasks in screening older adults for unhealthy cognitive aging.

Brief Biography: I grew up in Cornwall, PEI before coming to Mount Allison. I am currently in my fourth year, pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with honours in psychology and a minor in biology. On campus, I am a part of Navigate MTA and I co-founded the blog *Mounties in the Making* with my friend Lucy. Outside of school, I enjoy cooking, reading, hiking, playing crib, and spending time with friends and family.

Future Plans: After graduating from Mount Allison, I plan to attend graduate school to complete a Masters of Science in Occupational Therapy. After this, I hope to spend some time travelling the world.

Thesis Title: Investigating the Agreement Between Cognitive Assessments of Neurologically Unhealthy Aging

Abstract: Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) is an intermediate state of cognitive functioning between normal cognitive functioning and dementia, but disordered aging may begin before meeting the diagnostic criteria for MCI (i.e., "at-risk" for MCI). I explored the effectiveness of three neurocognitive assessments, and subjective memory complaints, in identifying older adults (OA) at-risk for MCI. Eight younger adults (age: $M = 26.75$ years, $SD = 5.65$) and nine OA (age: $M = 62.67$ years, $SD = 3.08$) completed three online tasks that are sensitive to MCI status: the Face Name Associative Memory Exam, the Mnemonic Similarity Task, and the Short-Term Memory Binding Test. Participants also answered, "*Do you feel you have memory problems greater than those of your peers?*" I found no significant relationship between participants' performance on the tasks, nor differences in performance between OA with and without subjective-memory complaints. Variability in the performance of healthy and MCI OA prevented clear identification of participants at-risk for MCI; however, two OA performed poorly on all three tasks. My findings provide preliminary evidence that these tasks and subjective memory complaints are not effective at identifying OA at-risk for MCI.

Craig McClelland

Supervisor: Dr. Belke



Research Project:

My thesis project is investigating the undermining effect of motivation. The undermining effect is the phenomenon of intrinsic (or internal) motivation decreasing for a task following the introduction and subsequent removal of an extrinsic (or external) reward. My project uses rats as participants; measuring the changes in rates of wheel-running (an intrinsically-motivated behaviour) when sucrose solution is introduced and subsequently removed as a reward for wheel-running behaviour.

Brief Biography:

I am a fourth-year student from Truro, Nova Scotia; completing a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Psychology. My spare time during the pandemic has been spent engaging with the fantasy genre, reading novels, watching movies and TV series, and playing video and tabletop games. I also enjoy spending time with friends and family on the north shore of NS.

Future Plans:

I will be spending the year after graduation working and paying off student loans while I figure out which direction I want to pursue. I am interested in Master's programs in both clinical and counselling psychology.

Thesis title: The Undermining Effect of Sucrose Reinforcement on Automatically-Reinforced Operant Wheel Running in Rats

Abstract: The undermining effect can be defined as a decrease in levels of intrinsic motivation for a behaviour as a consequence of the delivery and subsequent removal of a contingent extrinsically-motivating reward. A well-documented phenomenon in humans, the present study investigated the potential presence of an undermining effect of extrinsic sucrose reinforcement on intrinsically motivated (automatically-reinforced) operant wheel-running in eight female Long-Evans rats. In each session, rats ran for 20 min prior to and following operant wheel running on a fixed interval (FI) 60-s schedule. Across three conditions, water, sucrose, and water were delivered as outcomes for operant wheel running on the FI 60-s schedule. No undermining effect was observed for wheel running on the FI 60-s schedule following the removal of sucrose; nor was there a decrease in running during the 20-min post-operant running period. However, wheel running during the 20 min period prior to operant running significantly decreased. Contrary to previous findings, this result suggests that an undermining effect can occur in rats. Explanations for the presence of this effect as well as suggestions for future research investigating this effect in non-human species are discussed.

Hannah Landry

Supervisor: Dr. Douglas



Research Project:

My project concerns age related differences in spatial processing. Research suggests that older adults have greater difficulty remembering aspects of their life in comparison to their younger peers. However, why older adults experience these memory problems is poorly understood. There is reason to believe that the memory problems older adults experience are linked to spatial perception problems, though this possibility remains largely unexplored. My study presents a novel task that will have older and younger adults compare images of floorplans to virtual rooms and make visuospatial judgments about the objects within them. This task has few mnemonic processing demands and aims to assess one's ability to perceive objects and the spatial relations between them. Previous research suggests that if older adults exhibit a spatial processing deficit, then they should perform worse than younger adults when making judgments about the relationships between items but not when perceiving them. As such, my honours project aims to investigate whether older adults exhibit a spatial processing deficit beyond that of memory.

Brief Biography: I grew up in Moncton, New Brunswick before coming to Mount Allison University. I am currently in my fourth year at Mount Allison, pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with honours in Psychology and a minor in Biology. Outside of school, I enjoy drawing, playing video games, and hanging out with my friends, family, and my puppy Kipper!

Future Plans: After graduating from Mount Allison, I plan to take a year off to spend time with family and start paying off my student loans. In the following year, my goal is to attend graduate school to complete a Masters of Science in Cognition and Perception.

Thesis title: Age-related Differences in Spatial Processing

Abstract: Associative memory, especially episodic memory, declines in old age—an effect ascribed to age-related decline in the hippocampus. The hippocampus also supports some forms spatial processing, and some have suggested that the decline of spatial processing as early as perception could underly episodic memory deficits. However, to date, no one has investigated spatial processing in older adulthood without the confound of memory demands. I therefore examined age-related differences in spatial perception by having 29 participants complete a novel spatial task that minimized memory demands. The sample comprised 15 younger adults with a mean age of 25 ($SD = 5.75$) and 14 older adults with a mean age of 65 ($SD = 3.77$). Participants compared screenshots of 3D virtual rooms to simultaneously presented 2D room layouts and indicated whether the rooms were identical or not. My results indicated no age-related difference in accuracy scores on either location or identity-based trials. However, older adults spent significantly longer on location-based trials than younger adults did. These results suggest that healthy older adults exhibit subtle age-related deficits in spatial processing, even at perception. My findings support theories that propose an age-related deficit in spatial processing may cause episodic memory problems in older adults.

Hailey Yoon

Supervisor: Dr. Claxton-Oldfield



Research Project: I am studying the experiences, reactions, and perspectives of hospice palliative care volunteers on deathbed visions. Deathbed vision is an experience a dying person may experience, where they claim to see or recognize people who are not physically present in the room. The visitors are typically deceased loved ones, spiritual or religious figures. Deathbed vision happens close to death. As hospice-palliative care volunteers also work closely with the dying, they are likely to witness or receive reports about deathbed visions. I plan to conduct semi-structured interviews to get insight into their experiences and the potential influence on the patients, their families, and volunteers themselves.

Brief Biography: I am a 4th year student majoring in psychology. I was born and raised in Seoul, Korea. However, most of my studying was in international schools! I love hanging out with my friends, finding fabulous restaurants and cafes, and giving big hugs to my cat and dog!

Future Plans: After graduating, I plan to continue studying either forensic psychology or criminology. My goal is to join the police force or the justice system and study how to make a safer society.

Thesis Title: Deathbed Visions: Hospice Palliative Care Volunteers' Experiences, Perspectives, and Reactions

Abstract: Eleven hospice palliative care volunteers were interviewed separately about their experiences, perspectives, and reactions to deathbed visions (DBVs). DBVs or visits from deceased loved ones or religious figures are common end-of-life experiences. Because of their unique role at the bedside of the dying, HPC volunteers are well positioned to witness or be told about DBVs. Responding to a series of guiding questions, the volunteers shared 20 stories of their experiences with dying persons' DBVs and talked about, among other things, the impact of these experiences on their patients and themselves. The most reported visitors in the volunteers' stories were the patients' family members (e.g., parents). The volunteers described the visions as having a mostly positive impact (e.g., comforting) on the dying; for themselves, their patients' DBVs had a positive impact on them (e.g., made them less afraid to die). All volunteers provided spiritual explanations for DBVs. Nearly all volunteers said they would not initiate conversations with their patients about DBVs, but would respond to patient reports of DBVs by, for example, asking questions and not being dismissive of them. HPC volunteers have an important role to play in validating and normalizing patients' end-of-life experiences.

Sophie Landry

Supervisor: Dr. Hamilton



Research Project:

My project entails looking into beliefs and perspectives on casual sex in the Mount Allison University student population. Specifically, I am interested in examining the role of social barriers (such as gender norms, peer influence, and miscommunication/misinformation) and sexual scripts on positive versus negative casual sex experiences. Casual sex is very normative on university campuses and past literature has given us a good understanding of the motives, outcomes, and challenges associated with it. For my research, I hope to expand on this by looking into ways in which individuals can challenge negative norms associated with casual sex. I am conducting a qualitative analysis using focus groups. During these focus groups, I have a set of questions to prompt discussions such as “What would be the ideal casual sex relationship?”, and “How do gender stereotypes factor into casual sex?”.

Brief Biography:

I grew up on a Christmas tree farm in a small town in northern New Brunswick called Charlo. Currently, I am a fourth-year student completing a BSc with an Honours in psychology and a minor in biology, and I am a part of the Mountie Women’s Volleyball team. I am also the MTA campus lead for SAMHI (Student Athlete Mental Health Initiative) and am one of the VP academics on the psychology society. Outside of school, I enjoy spending time with my friends and family, cooking, and visiting coffee shops.

Future Plans: After graduation, I plan on applying to a Masters degree in social psychology. As a long-term goal, I would love to become an educator and researcher. Between now and (hopefully) attending grad school, I plan on gaining work experience in research settings, as well as spending time with my family. If Covid permits, I would also love to travel and discover new hobbies and interests.

Thesis Title: Examining the Influence of Social Barriers and Sexual Scripts on Positive Casual Sexual Experiences in University Students

Abstract: Casual sex is a common part of the undergraduate university experience. Past research has identified that casual sex encounters often happen in the context of hookup culture, which has many negative outcomes, particularly for heterosexual women. Literature defines the motives, outcomes, norms, and gender interactions associated with casual sex specifically for university aged individuals, but there is lack of research on identifying barriers to positive experiences and ways to promote more positive experiences. The goal of the current study was to examine beliefs and perceptions on casual sex, whether participants acknowledged barriers associated with casual sex (and what these were), and ways in which individuals can challenge negative norms associated with casual sex. Participants were 9 men, 28 women, and 1 person who was genderqueer/fluid. All participants were from a small undergraduate university who participated in focus groups to discuss casual sex. We found that there was a common understanding that casual sex could be defined as the absence of "normal" relationship components, and that there was a heavy "hookup script" involved in university hookup culture. Participants were aware of key barriers to positive experiences, such as gender double standards, emotional/physical risks, and others. We also identified four strategies to counter negative norms associated with casual sex: communication, learning to deal with rejection, establishing trust and respect, and challenging the Traditional Sexual Script. It was evident that more education around casual sex and the ways it can present itself, as well as more sex education broadly is needed.

Lauren Shaw

Supervisor: Dr. Tomes



Research Project: Academic Success, Persistence and Satisfaction with Online Learning During a Global Pandemic

I am studying the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on undergraduate students' academic success, persistence and satisfaction with online learning. My study is looking at how student's self-efficacy, lifestyle suitability, and preparedness for online learning alters their experiences. Much of the past research focuses on online learning prior to the pandemic, as a result, my study aims to investigate the impacts of the pandemic. With this research, I hope to be able to provide suggestions for future online course design and supports for students for emergency online learning, should it arise again in the future.

Brief Biography: I was born and raised in Sackville, New Brunswick. I am currently in my fourth year at Mount Allison, pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with honours in psychology. Outside of school, I enjoy sports, spending time outdoors, and making memories with family and friends.

Future Plans: After graduating from Mount Allison, I plan to attend graduate school to complete a Masters of Science in Speech-Language Pathology. In the future, I hope to work specifically with children as a Speech-Pathologist. Once things settle down, I also hope to spend some time travelling and visiting family and friends.

Thesis Title: Academic Success, Persistence and Satisfaction with Online Learning During a Global Pandemic

Abstract: Online learning has become more common over the last few years but became particularly prevalent when the COVID-19 pandemic prohibited in person course instruction at universities and colleges. Despite the research on online learning, there is still uncertainty that surrounds the components that contribute to effective online learning. The purpose of the present investigation was to examine the relationship between past predictors of online learning in the context of a global pandemic. A total of 119 undergraduates completed measures on self-efficacy, preparedness for online learning, lifestyle suitability, persistence, satisfaction, and the impact of COVID-19. Correlations and regressions showed that self-efficacy was positively associated with academic success, persistence, and satisfaction. Despite being correlated, preparedness for online learning was not a significant predictor of academic success, however, it was a significant predictor of satisfaction. Similarly, lifestyle suitability did not predict persistence, but did show correlations that suggested trends for future research. Lastly, correlations showed that the impact of COVID-19 was negatively associated with many of the predictors, providing possible trends that require further investigation. This study highlights the importance of further examining the relationship between online learning predictors and the impact of the pandemic, but also suggests directions for institutions, professors, and students to take to improve future online learning outcomes.

Julia Kaufmann

Supervisor: Dr. Gould



Research Project: My honours project is on experiences accessing care for long COVID. While we often hear about COVID case counts, hospitalizations, ICU admissions, deaths, and recoveries, there is also a category of people who survive COVID but experience long-term symptoms - this is often referred to as long COVID. I am going to conduct interviews with people who have reported prolonged COVID symptoms to ask about their experiences accessing health care. Based on past research on other broad, chronic illnesses, I expect that many people will report barriers to accessing care for their long COVID.

Brief Biography: I am from Winnipeg, MB and I also spent a couple of years living on Vancouver Island, BC. This is my third year at Mount Allison pursuing a BSc in Psychology - I started a bio minor, but never finished it! I am also the Co-President of the Psychology Society with my fellow Honours student, Craig. When I'm not focusing on classes or research, I like to bake, go on walks, and randomly select books from the thrift store (it keeps my reading interesting)!

Future Plans: After Mount Allison, I am hoping to attend graduate school to pursue a research-based public health degree. I am particularly interested in using big data to evaluate health systems and mental health programming.

Thesis Title: Narrative Analysis of Experiences Accessing Care for Long COVID in Canada

Abstract: This study explored experiences seeking care for long COVID in the Canadian healthcare system. We randomly sampled participants who completed a Canada-wide survey study on long COVID and conducted eight interviews. Participants varied broadly in age, were mostly female (75%), were all White, and lived in five different provinces. Through narrative analysis of these interviews, we identified five narratives: (1) situation: *this has...*, (2) identity: *I am...*, (3) personal capacity: *I can...*, (4) system capacity: *I think the system...*, and (5) work: *(when) I tried...* Collectively these narratives describe the complex care seeking experience of participants in this study. To make system-level improvements to a healthcare system built for acute illnesses, it is pivotal that we understand the care seeking experiences of chronic illness patients, including the unique experiences of those with long COVID.

Hayley Woodside

Supervisor: Dr. Ouellette



Research Project: Past research has shown that vocabulary connects to reading and can be learned from storybook exposure. In saying this, the main focus of my study this year is whether children, when exposed to words embedded in storybooks, learn to read these words better than those not in the books. I will also be looking at whether the addition of elaborated teaching for vocabulary depth and invented spelling are beneficial conditions in learning to read.

Brief Biography: I was born in England but grew up in Ottawa, Ontario. I am currently in my fifth year, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Psychology and a minor in French. I play on the varsity women's soccer team here at the school and am involved on campus as a team representative for SAMHI (Student Athlete Mental Health Initiative) as well as a member of the Psychology Society Executive. Off campus, I work as a crisis intervener at Crossroads for Women!

Future Plans: After graduating from Mount Allison, I am going to attend graduate school in Scotland this coming September where I will obtain my Master's in Counselling (and who knows- maybe play some more soccer!).

Thesis Title: Easy as ABC? Investigating Storybook Exposure, Invented Spelling and Vocabulary as Predictors of Learning to Read

Abstract: It is known that vocabulary connects to reading and can be learned from storybook exposure, yet the question remains: will children learn to read words they are exposed to through storybooks better than words not in those books? Further, would additional teaching for vocabulary depth and/or invented spelling be beneficial? These are the primary goals of the present study. Fifty-nine kindergarten students were recruited from a local elementary school to participate in a pretest, intervention, and posttest experimental designs. They were exposed to 10 nonwords in a storybook, then completed word learning and learn-to-read tasks. Invented spelling was a between-participant variable, semantic enrichment within-participant. Participants correctly identified the nonwords presented in the storybook, showing vocabulary learning via storybook exposure. Extra semantic enrichment improved word learning on tasks measuring semantic depth (i.e., comparison and definition tasks). The participants were then administered a learn-to-read task, and the results showed increased learning across trials; a benefit of word exposure (control words significantly lower); an interaction between spelling and semantic enrichment- indicating a significant advantage provided by extra semantic teaching in the group that did not also spell the words. In sum, this study demonstrates that vocabulary links to learning to read on a word-specific basis, and both spelling practice and semantic enrichment further contribute to learning to read- although their beneficial effects do not appear to be additive at this early age.

Paige Matchett

Supervisor: Dr. Irak



Research Project: My thesis project examines the impact of individual and organizational predictors on employee well-being during the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, I am exploring the role of individual variables such as locus of control and organizational variables such as work-from-home, perceived organizational support, and perceived job insecurity on psychological well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic provides a unique context to examine the impact of these variables, especially when considering the involuntary nature of work-from-home due to the pandemic compared to previous voluntary work-from-home experiences. To examine this, individuals from the Canadian Labour Force who have experienced the workforce before and during the coronavirus pandemic will be asked to complete an online survey. Past literature has found all predictor variables to be significantly correlated with well-being. However, research is limited given the recency of the pandemic. Thus, the current study seeks to further explore these relationships and the extent to which these variables predict employee well-being.

Brief Biography: I am a first-generation university student from Miramichi, New Brunswick. At the current moment, I am in my fourth year at Mount Allison, pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with an Honours in Psychology and a Minor in Commerce. Apart from academia, I enjoy spending quality time with friends and family, playing sports, and dancing at Ducky's!

Future Plans: After graduating from Mount Allison, I plan to attend graduate school to complete a Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) degree. I aspire to return to my hometown of Miramichi, NB upon completing my doctoral degree to provide accessible mental health services for those in need.

Thesis Title: Individual and Organizational Predictors of Employee Well-Being During the Fourth Wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic introduced work-from-home mandates that sent many employees into remote work environments for the first time (Richter, 2020). This transition was suggested to impact the psychological well-being of employees. (Villani et al., 2021). Thus, appropriate organizational features must be implemented as a means of maintaining employee well-being (Azizi et al., 2021). The present study examined the impact of organizational variables including Perceived Organizational Support, Perceived Job Insecurity, and individual variables including Locus of Control on the psychological well-being of employees working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. A sample of 165 remote employees from the Canadian labour force participated, in which the participants' mean age was 44.40 ($SD = 13.34$). Participation occurred online through the LimeSurvey platform. The results indicated that perceived organizational support, perceived job insecurity, and locus of control were significant predictors of employee well-being. In addition, the amount of time spent working from home and aspects of the work-from-home environment were also found to influence well-being. As such, organizational features surrounding increased support and security, individual features such as locus of control, and situational features including work area should be considered in the development of organizational resources for employee well-being, especially within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grace Henri

Supervisor: Dr. Irak



Research Project: I am researching the relationship between one's belief in meritocracy, the idea that hard work leads to success regardless of individual identity, and individual wellbeing. I will also be investigating the potential role that financial stress has in strengthening this relationship. My study will use Mount Allison students as a sample to investigate the relationship between my chosen variables within a university setting. My method is a survey that operationalizes meritocracy on scales of "belief in individual mobility" and "protestant work ethic" as well as measuring my other variables with a financial stress scale, and the DASS-21.

Brief Biography: I grew up in Wolfville, Nova Scotia and have returned to Halifax during the summers of my undergrad at Mount Allison. I am taking a double major in psychology and sociology and have a passion for an interdisciplinary approach to both academics and research. I work as a research assistant with the Birth Justice Research Initiative in New Brunswick. As well, I am a teaching assistant and tutor within the Sociology and Psychology departments. Within Mount Allison I have also held the role of Editor-in-chief of the annual literary and fine-arts journal "Seven Mondays"

Future Plans: I have just completed applications for Masters of Social Work programs upon my graduation at Mount Allison. I have long-term goals of working as a Social Worker in a counselling role. As well, I plan for a career that will encompass a role of addressing homelessness and poverty by working on a community and advocacy level within a Social Work position.

Thesis Title: Meritocracy Beliefs and the Psychological Wellbeing of Students

Thesis Abstract: Meritocracy beliefs describe the amount of emphasis we place on work ethic and our perspectives surrounding economic mobility. The current study adds to the limited literature focusing on the connection between ideology, economic variables and psychological wellbeing. The current study hypothesized that meritocracy beliefs would be significantly correlated to wellbeing, and that financial stress would moderate this relationship. This study used a sample of 207 undergraduate student, taking part in an online questionnaire. Results showed that while meritocracy beliefs are significantly correlated with aspects of wellbeing, financial stress had a stronger correlation across the board. Furthermore, financial stress served as a significant predictor, independent of its influence on meritocracy beliefs. These results show that further work must be done to operationalize meritocracy beliefs, as well as expanding research to a more heterogenous sample. Additionally, this work contributes to evidence arguing the impact of financial stress within university environments, and advocates for the expansion of support and resources for students.

Shannon Reid

Supervisor: Dr. Hamilton



Research Project: My research project explores how women over the age of 25 and in long-term relationships experience sexual desire. This is a qualitative study employing a semi-structured interview asking women to talk about their experience of sexual desire in the context of their relationship and more generally. The goal is to understand the nuances of how desire manifests in women, beyond the traditional measures of frequency and intensity of spontaneous sexual thoughts and fantasies. Data will be analyzed via thematic analysis, whereby the content of the interviews will be coded for emerging themes and patterns. Results may help inform women generally of the variability in desire manifestations as well as aid clinicians working with women experiencing sexual desire and arousal difficulties.

Brief Biography: I am a mature student who returned to school after being in the workforce for 15 years. My experience has been in continuing education in the pharmaceutical industry and instructional design, but I felt a pull toward psychology and thought that it's now or never! I am originally from northern Ontario but have been in the Maritimes for the last 10 years. I have two amazing kids that now think school is the coolest thing because mom still goes, and they both want to come to Mount A. Finally, I am the queen of 1000 hobbies; I love art - both making it and looking at it, knitting, sewing, running, swimming, biking, snowboarding, and reading.

Future Plans: I am hoping to find myself in a clinical psychology program, however, I am exploring more options in instructional design and e-learning.

Thesis Title: Talk to me About Desire: A Qualitative Investigation of Women's Experiences

Abstract: Sexual desire is a complex psychological construct, and there is variability in the extant desire literature around how to define it. However, desire has been generally defined as an urge to engage in sexual activity, either alone or with a partner. Our scientific understanding of desire, like most things, arose from a model of male sexuality; however, there are important, gendered experiences of desire that have been overlooked, pathologized, or reduced to a numerical rating of frequency or intensity. The goal of this study was to explore how women in long-term relationships experience desire. Participants were 14 women who participated in semi-structured interviews about their desire for sex and masturbation. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the recommendations of Braun and Clark (2006). Women's experiences of desire fell into two categories: definitions of desire and manifestations of desire. Within the category of definitions of desire, four themes emerged: urge/wanting, physical sensations, embodiment/presence/mindfulness, and different headspace/alternate reality. In the category of manifestations, two themes emerged. The first, responsive desire, included descriptions of desire manifesting in response to external cues and had two subthemes: response to partner cues and response to environmental cues. The second theme in this category was spontaneous desire, where desire was described as manifesting without an obvious external cue. While desire was described as both spontaneous and responsive, responsive descriptions were more prevalent. Women's desire is more nuanced than measures of frequency and intensity of sexual thoughts can capture, and an understanding of responsive desire is integral to understanding how women experience desire for sexual activity.

Vincent Salabarría

Supervisor: Dr. Gould



Research Project: My project examines the relationship between COVID-19 pandemic disruptions, reminiscence, and pandemic appraisals among older adults. Recently published literature has suggested that older adults have reported more positive experiences during this pandemic than have younger adults despite having experienced fears related to negative health outcomes and social isolation. Moreover, past research has established that certain reminiscence functions, or ways of thinking about one's past, consistently predict positive and negative psychological well-being. Thus, my thesis project links the reminiscence and stress-appraisal literatures to evaluate the role reminiscence plays in older adults' perceptions of the pandemic.

Brief Biography: I am a fourth-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Hispanic Studies. I grew up in Wallingford, Connecticut before moving to Prince Edward Island, where I currently reside with my family. Some of my interests include reading Spanish-language literature and promoting the use of the Spanish language, playing board games, and hiking.

Future Plans: I have applied to clinical psychology programs with the hopes of practicing clinical psychology in Prince Edward Island. I have been fortunate to work at Hillsborough Hospital, the island's psychiatric hospital, for three summers, and have developed an interest in providing psychological services to support treatment in inpatient care settings. I am keen to realize the requisite studies and research to achieve this goal assuming a lifespan perspective, when appropriate, because I am especially interested in promoting well-being in older adulthood.

Thesis Title: The Effect of Reminiscence on Older Adults' Appraisals of COVID-19 Pandemic Disruptions

Abstract: Recently published literature has highlighted that many older adults have reported positive experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic despite the daily disruptions they have faced as a consequence of public health measures and the risks of illness. Moreover, past research has established that certain reminiscence functions, or ways of thinking about one's past, consistently predict positive and negative psychological well-being. The current study investigated how reminiscence relates to the relationship between the pandemic disruptions older adults experienced and their current appraisals of the pandemic. This represents a novel application of reminiscence functions to an appraisal process rather than to a personal outcome. Ninety-five participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 74.31$ years, $SD = 5.91$) completed an online survey to measure their experience of pandemic disruptions, use of reminiscence during the pandemic, and current appraisals of the pandemic. Although the results broadly paralleled past reminiscence literature, an unexpected positive relationship between reminiscence functions that typically predict positive well-being outcomes and negative pandemic appraisals emerged. Overall, the results suggest that individuals who reminisced frequently engaged in more appraisal of the situations they encountered than did their counterparts who seldom reminisced, which may partially explain how positive reminiscence functions support well-being.

Acadia Bunin

Supervisor: Dr. Wasylkiw



Research Project: My research project this year examines how self-compassion moderates the relationship between perfectionism and mental health. I am also studying how self-compassion moderates responses to failure. I'm really excited about this project because it explores student well-being. There are so many benefits to practicing self-compassion, and I hope my research can help people see that!

Brief Biography: I grew up in Windsor, NS. I am currently in my fourth and final year of a major in Psychology and a minor in sociology here at Mount Allison. A few of my favourite things beyond psychology are plants, coffee, and my friends!

Future Plans: After graduation, I am hoping to pursue a graduate degree in Clinical Psychology so that I can eventually get my Ph.D. and practice psychology. One thing that I love about psychology is that there are so many different areas to explore, which means things would never get too boring!

Thesis Title: Examining how self-compassion moderates the relationship between perfectionism and mental health.

Abstract: Post-secondary students are six to seven times more likely to be depressed or anxious compared to the general population (Evans et al., 2018), but they may be especially at risk if they are also high in perfectionism. Past research demonstrates that higher perfectionism is associated with increased depression, anxiety, and stress. However, some research suggests that self-compassion may moderate these relationships. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to examine the impact of self-compassion on the relationship between perfectionism and mental health. One hundred and seventy-five undergraduates (71.6% women) completed an online survey which included measures of self-compassion, perfectionism, and mental health. Results provided mixed support for the hypotheses. First, consistent with past research, analyses illustrated that self-compassion was associated with less depression, anxiety, and stress. Second, increased perfectionism was associated with increased depression, anxiety, and stress. Contrary to expectations, the relationship between perfectionism and mental health was the same regardless of self-compassion levels. Given the limitations of the current study, future research should continue to examine these relationships using different measures. Importantly, results corroborate past research which shows the potential for self-compassion in alleviating mental health concerns in students.

Colin Daigle

Supervisor: Dr. LaPointe



Research Project:

My project is to examine how the attentional blink effect can be modulated with the practice of meditation. Most research on meditation and the attentional blink effect has focused more on the temporal demand of attention and has largely ignored its spatial demand. My study will bring in experienced meditators and non-meditators and measure their performance on an attentional blink task and examine the effects of meditation on both spatial and temporal demands of attention. I expect that experienced meditators will perform better than the non-meditators which could support the evidence that meditation does change one's attentional focus.

Brief Biography:

I am originally from Dieppe, New Brunswick, and I am currently a fourth-year student working on my Bachelor of Science with honours in Psychology. An interesting fact about me is that I am a licensed electrician who decided to change career paths at the age of 25. Some of the things I like to do with my free time are to spend it with friends and family, experience new hobbies, and enjoy the outdoors.

Future Plans:

Once graduated, my plan is to attend grad school for either clinical or forensic psychology. Thus far, I am only thinking of doing a Master's, but pursuing a doctorate is also in the back of my mind.

Thesis Title: Namaste: The Influence of Meditation on Attentional Focus

Abstract: The aim of this study was to examine whether meditation and meditative techniques alter attentional focus. To measure attentional focus, the two-target attentional blink task was used to examine the effects of meditation and meditative techniques on both temporal and spatial selective attention. In Experiment 1, it was hypothesized that experienced meditators would perform better than non-meditators. Moreover, two types of meditation—Focus Attention and Open Monitoring—were examined to determine whether type of meditation produces distinct patterns of performance in this task. In contrast to predictions, non-meditators performed better than meditators. Further, the meditators in the sample showed no preference for one meditation type over the other. In Experiment 2, at four points during the task participants were asked to close their eyes and focus their attention based on Open Monitoring meditative techniques or control instructions. It was hypothesized that meditative instructions would lead to improved performance in the two-target task. The results show a pattern in favour of the prediction, but did not reach significance. The current study provides insights into the questions of what type of meditation and what degree of meditative experience is required to alter one's attentional focus.

Daisy Song

Supervisor: Dr. Desmarais



Research Project: For my project, I am looking at the nature of the visual-haptic memory representation and the effects of visual and verbal distractors. In other words, I am looking to see if the representation that's created for objects is task-dependent. In my project, participants will be shown objects visually then shown another object by touch, or vice versa, and they will be asked to determine if the two objects are the same or if the objects are different. Some of the participants will also be doing either visual or verbal distractors as well and depending on which distractor interferes more will help me determine the nature of the visual-haptic memory representation.

Brief Biography: I'm from Amherst, Nova Scotia. When I came to Mount Allison, I wasn't really sure what I wanted to pursue, but I came to become very interested in psychology! I'm currently a fourth-year student, pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with honours in psychology. My hobbies include doing crafts, such as knitting and scrapbooking, art, and gaming.

Future Plans: I am planning to apply to medical school after graduation, and after that, I hope to focus on psychiatry.

Thesis Title: Visuo-Haptic Memory Representation and the Influence of Verbal Processing

Abstract: Recent research suggests that there is a verbal component to the shared visual-haptic memory representation. The current study examined the nature of the visual-haptic memory representation among 45 undergraduate participants. Participants saw novel objects in one modality (visual or haptic) and then presented with another object in a different modality and determined if the two objects were the same or not. Some participants did a visual distractor task, others did a verbal distractor task, and others did no distractor task. The distractor tasks did not affect the performance of participants, which did not support the notion that there is a verbal code for the visual-haptic memory representation, rather the results suggest that there is a strong visual aspect to the shared memory representation.

Anna Manuel

Supervisor: Dr. Garon



Research Project:

My project focuses on the underlying mechanisms of sharing behaviour in preschool aged children. I am examining children's levels of executive function, empathy, and theory of mind, and looking at how these factors influence children's likelihood to express sharing behaviour in a variety of different conditions. In particular, I am interested in how the cool executive functions, inhibition and mental flexibility, influence sharing in an assortment of preschool friendly tasks.

Brief Biography:

I'm originally from Mineville, a small town just outside of Dartmouth Nova Scotia, and I have lived there my entire life until pursuing my studies at Mount A. I am completing a Bachelor of Science, with a major in Psychology and a minor in Biology as well as a certificate in the Foundations of Health. I have been a member of the varsity women's volleyball team for all four of my years here, and through that I have made some unforgettable friendships. Along with volleyball, my interests include snowshoeing through the Tantramar trails in the winter-time and playing ultimate frisbee in the summer-time!

Future Plans:

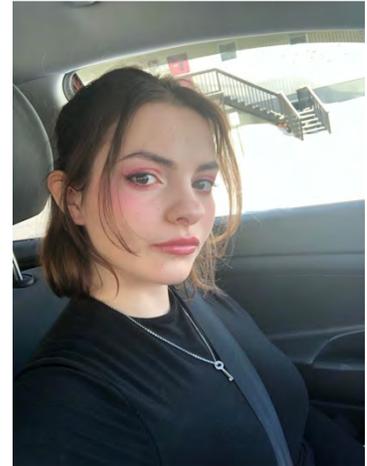
After graduation, I plan on applying to Master's programs in Sport Psychology. I'm interested in continuing to do research, while also working in applied settings directly with competitive athletes and coaches. In the long run, I hope to be able to travel and spend quality time with friends and family, all while pursuing the career I am passionate about.

Thesis Title: The Underlying Mechanisms of Sharing Behaviour in Preschool Children

Abstract: Executive functions (EF) are a set of abilities involved in the regulation of cognition, behavior and emotion (Barkley, 2012). EF is associated with a variety of outcomes, including prosocial behaviour (e.g., Poland et al., 2016). Two studies were conducted to determine the relationship between EF, theory of mind (ToM), and sharing behaviour in preschool aged children. In the first study, 68 participants (36 3-year-olds, 32 4-year-olds) completed an EF task assessing set shifting, a ToM task, and a sharing task. In second study, 66 participants (38 3-year-olds, 48 4-year-olds) completed three EF tasks (working memory, inhibition, and set shifting) and sharing task. Results demonstrated that children with better attention shifting, ToM, and inhibition shared more. The findings suggest that EF abilities and ToM play an important role in prosocial behaviours.

Claire Zelcer

Supervisor: Dr. Belke



Research Project: My research project is on the effect of sucrose reinforcement on operant wheel running on a fixed ratio schedule. In my study, when rats complete 40 revolutions either a drop of water or sugar water will be delivered. I will compare the sucrose condition to the water conditions to determine where sucrose reinforcement affects wheel running on the fixed ratio 40 schedule. Typically, we would expect to see an increase in wheel-running rate toward the end of the FR 40 schedule, because the rats anticipate sucrose reinforcement. However, a recent study by Belke, Pierce, and Sexton (2021) showed the opposite. Wheel running rate increased at the beginning of a fixed interval 180-s reinforcement schedule. My data will show where our rats' wheel-running rate increases on a fixed ratio schedule. These results will either support results from previous studies consistent with the traditional concept of reinforcement, or the novel results from the more recent study that were inconsistent with this concept.

Brief Biography: I was born and raised in Gander, Newfoundland and came to Mount Allison in 2018. I started as a Cognitive Science major but quickly realized that psychology was the direction I was leaning in. The best time I ever had with school was after I switched because I have always been interested in psychology and am a passionate writer. The arts are my other love. I sang competitively since I was 8-years-old and have been paid to act and make props every summer since I was 17 (excluding the summer of Covid-19).

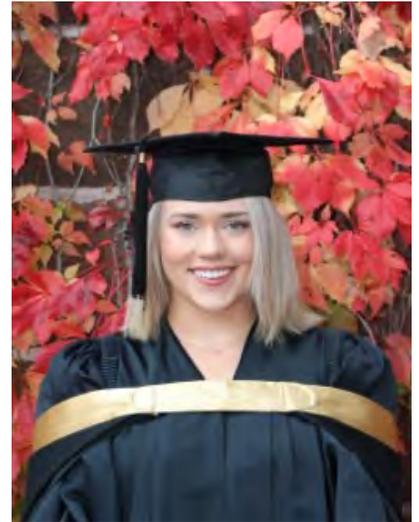
Future Plans: I am planning on completing a Master's program in developmental or forensic psychology as soon as I can. I have applied, and if I don't get in this year, I will work for a year and seek a position volunteering at a lab to build my CV for when I try again. Ultimately, I will pursue my Ph.D. During the winter term, I will continue my experience with rats by serving as TA for Conditioning.

Thesis Title: Effect of Sucrose Reinforcement on Operant Wheel Running on a Fixed Ratio Schedule

Abstract: The current study investigated the effect of sucrose reinforcement on operant wheel-running on a fixed ratio (FR) schedule. Rats responded on a FR-40 schedule in which wheel-running produced the opportunity to consume sucrose solution. Sucrose reinforcement was removed after 25 sessions and rats were returned to baseline (water). Based on the traditional concept of reinforcement, wheel-running rates were expected to increase close in time before sucrose reinforcement was delivered. Alternatively, there could be a marked increase in running at the beginning due to a schedule-induced effect of sucrose presentation. Results were not consistent with either prediction. Sucrose reinforcement systematically increased running over the entire 40 revolutions. Possible explanations for this extended reinforcement effect are that wheel running, unlike other operant behaviors, such as lever pressing, generates its own automatic reinforcement effect and is a continuous, rather than a discrete, behavior. Further research is required to explore these aspects of wheel running.

Abby Kelson

Supervisor: Dr. Desmarais



Research Project: I am studying the impact of cellphones on students' immediate academic performance. My study investigates the impact of using cellphones during and after class. During the study, students may be asked to turn off their cellphone or may be asked to send or receive certain text messages during a lecture presentation on biopsychology. They will then be tested on the material that was presented. Previous research suggests that students who use their cellphone during class or even immediately following class will show worse academic performance. This can be explained by divided attention that impacts encoding and retrieval of newly learned material. Last year, I worked alongside Laura Scheenberger and Dr. Desmarais where we conducted a study to evaluate whether the frequency of cellphone use correlated with student's course grades. We observed that sending out text messages was not predictive of student's course grades, however the number of text messages students received within a day was predictive of student's course grades. We speculated that this may be because one's ability to control when their attention is divided. In the current study, I am hoping to test these findings empirically to see if there are differences on academic performance when attention is divided by either sending or receiving text messages.

Brief Biography: I am a first-generation Canadian, born and raised in Rothesay, New Brunswick. I am currently in my fourth year at Mount Allison, pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with honours in psychology. On campus, I work as the as a teaching assistant in the Psychology Department. I also am president of Health Care Outreach Mount Allison: a club dedicated to local and global health initiatives.

Future Plans: After graduating from Mount Allison, I plan to attend graduate school to complete an Accelerated Advanced Standing Nursing program. I also hope to spend time travelling the world and visiting friends and family.

Thesis Title: The Impact of Mobile Use on Academic Performance- Does Choosing When to Use a Cellphone Affect Academic Outcomes?

Abstract: Cellphone use is ubiquitous in peoples' daily lives. Students are using their cellphone multiple times throughout the day, extending into the classroom. It has been suggested that using a cellphone during class time divides attention resulting in deficits of the encoding and retention of academic material. However, cellphones do not always interfere with academic performance. Last year, we conducted a study to evaluate whether the frequency of cellphone use correlated with student's course grades. We observed that sending out text messages was not predictive of student's course grades, however the number of text messages a student received within a day was predictive of student's course grades. We speculated that this may be because one's ability to have control to when their attention is divided. I aimed to examine this difference empirically on immediate testing performance. Students were divided into three conditions: No texting condition, sending text messages 'controlled texting condition', or receiving test messages, 'uncontrolled texting condition', where they were required to watch a lecture presentation. After which, participants were tested on the material that was presented. A between subjects ANOVA revealed that participants who did not use their cellphone performed better on the test than students who used a cellphone. However, there was no difference in test scores between the controlled texting condition and uncontrolled texting condition. Given past success in finding evidence for these differences, the absence of these differences in the current study is likely attributable to both the distractor task complexity and differences in memory performance between immediate testing and overall GPA.

Benjamin Mersereau

Supervisor: Dr. Wasyliw



Research Project: For my thesis, I am examining how self-compassion and growth mindsets about intelligence (the belief that one can improve their own intelligence through effort) uniquely contribute towards various outcomes of academic success in Mount Allison undergraduate students. Previous research has found self-compassion and growth mindsets to be associated with positive mental health outcomes, and more recent studies indicate that they can be beneficial in coping with academic stressors. Some of the outcomes I am measuring include grades, satisfaction with academics, and commitment to continuing one's studies, and I am examining these relationships through both a correlational and an experimental study.

Brief Biography: I am from Fredericton, New Brunswick, which is only a two-hour drive from Sackville! I been working in the fields of coaching and tutoring throughout my life, and currently work as an early childhood educator. Here at Mount Allison, outside of finishing up my Bachelor of Arts in psychology, I work at the Writing Resource Centre and as a teaching assistant in the psychology department.

Future Plans: My lifelong dream is to become an elementary school teacher! Working with and experiencing the world with children has always been my greatest passion, and I currently have the privilege of working as a preschool teacher in Fredericton. After graduating from Mount Allison, I plan to complete a Bachelor of Education and eventually a Masters of Education.

Thesis Title: Exploring the Unique Contributions of Self-Compassion and Growth Mindsets in Academic Success

Abstract: Self-compassion is associated with positive mental health and emotional wellbeing, whereas growth mindsets contribute to behaviours that promote self-improvement. Given the limited research on these constructs within the academic context, the purpose of this study was to examine the relative contributions of self-compassion and growth mindsets towards outcomes of academic success. A sample of 175 undergraduates completed an online survey measuring self-compassion, growth mindsets, self-esteem, and academic outcomes including satisfaction, commitment, confidence, and effort. Correlations and results from multiple regression analyses provided mixed support for the hypotheses. First, self-compassion predicted emotional academic outcomes but failed to do so when controlling for self-esteem. Contrary to expectations, growth mindsets did not contribute to the prediction of behavioural academic outcomes. Finally, exploratory analyses suggest a benefit to matching predictors and outcomes in terms of specificity. These findings suggest that self-esteem may matter more in this context because of the evaluative nature of the academic setting. Given the limitations associated with the present study, future research should continue to examine the potential benefits of self-compassion and growth mindsets for undergraduates.

Erin Green

Supervisor: Dr. Desmarais



Research Project: The Impact of Verbal and Visuospatial Distractors on the Identification of Simple and Complex Objects

My research project focuses on the different types of representations that we create in our memory when we learn to recognize objects.

Specifically, I am investigating whether these representations differ based on the complexity of the objects (simple or complex), based on the modality in which we learn the objects (by sight or by touch), and based on individuals' cognitive styles (e.g., visual imagery preferences, verbal preferences, etc.). In general, I hope to discover under what circumstances various types of representations are created.

Brief Biography: I grew up in a small community in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia. I am currently a fourth-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in Psychology and minoring in Biology. Outside of school, you can probably find me crocheting Harry Potter characters, making scrunchies, or baking banana bread!

Future Plans: After graduating from Mount Allison, I plan to attend graduate school to complete a Master of Public Health. At some point in the near future, I would also love to travel, specifically to Australia if possible!

Thesis Title: Visual and Haptic Identification of Simple and Complex Objects

Abstract: Encoding specificity is a well-established phenomenon that applies to object recognition. However, recent research has found a violation of encoding specificity for individuals who learn to recognize objects by touch. The current study aimed to examine the types of representations that are created when we learn to recognize objects by sight or by touch, and how these representations may differ based on the complexity of objects. Participants learned to recognize simple or complex objects by sight or by touch (some also completed a distraction task) and later recognized them in both modalities. Results showed that participants who learned to recognize simple objects required fewer blocks to reach criterion and produced fewer errors compared to participants who learned to recognize complex objects. Participants who learned to recognize objects by sight produced less errors than participants who learned to recognize objects by touch. Participants who learned to recognize objects by touch produced fewer errors during visual identification than haptic identification, replicating the violation of encoding specificity. Potential memory representations for objects will be discussed.

Elizabeth Hebert

Supervisor: Dr. Garon



Research Project: My project is examining the impact of engaging in future-oriented thinking on delay of gratification performance in preschoolers. I will be using pre-collected data from preschoolers partaking in tasks assessing delay of gratification while encouraged to imagine their future selves. The project consists of two studies: the first examining whether imagining the self in the future improves delay of gratification performance (more choices to delay a reward) and the second investigating whether it is thinking of the future self rather than the self in general that improves delay of gratification, which we hypothesize to be the case. If the findings support these hypotheses, this may have significant implications for how parents, clinicians, teachers and others help encourage delay of gratification in children, thus equipping them with tools and skills they can use to find success academically, emotionally and socially.

Brief Biography: I grew up here in Sackville, NB and always knew I wanted to attend Mount Allison. Currently, I'm a fifth-year student majoring in Psychology and minoring in French. I have a passion for working with children and try to spend as much time with kids as I can, whether this be childcare, tutoring, working in daycares or leading children's programs. In my free time I love to spend time with my family and friends, read and partake in creative activities.

Future Plans: Following graduation, I plan to pursue a Bachelor of Education in order to become an elementary school teacher. I believe that my experience learning psychology will be extremely useful in helping young children learn, develop and overcome challenges while nurturing their talents and strengths.

Thesis Title: Exploring the Effects of Imagining the Future Self on Delay of Gratification in Preschoolers

Abstract: The ability to delay gratification in childhood is predictive of positive academic, emotional and social outcomes later in life. As the support for the link between delaying gratification and success is paramount, it is essential to explore ways in which children can be taught to delay gratification. The present study examined whether prompting preschoolers to engage in future oriented thinking about the self is one such way to improve delay of gratification performance. Three- and four-year-old participants completed tasks where they were instructed to either choose to receive an immediate, less-preferred reward, or a delayed, preferred reward. While completing this task, children were prompted with pictures that primed imagining their present and future selves or not imagining their selves at all, depending on the condition they were in at the time. Results indicated that future oriented thinking about the self did increase the preschooler's choices to delay receiving a reward. While further research must be conducted to replicate and expand upon these findings, there is potential to use this research to implement programs and strategies in clinical settings and classrooms to improve children's ability to delay gratification, and consequently achieve more positive outcomes.

Danielle Dickson

Supervisor: Dr. Garon



Research Project: I am studying the development of hot executive function (EF) in preschoolers, specifically concerning decision making under ambiguity. Furthermore, I am exploring innovative measures of hot EF and their associations, internal reliability, and sensitivity to age. My study will examine the strategies employed by three- and four-year-old preschoolers across three hot EF tasks: a hybrid wait-choice Delay of Gratification paradigm, the Preschool Gambling Task, and the Trash to Treasure task. It is my hope that this research will help us build a robust battery of hot EF measures for younger children to be used in future studies.

Brief Biography: Originally from Perth-Andover, NB, I am currently completing my fourth and final year at Mount Allison, pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with honours in psychology and a minor in biology, as well as certificates in biopsychology and foundations of health. I'm involved at Mount Allison as a campus ambassador, a teaching assistant, a literacy tutor for Salem Elementary students, and, this past summer, as the University Orientation Chair. Outside of class, I enjoy reading, cooking, competitive Yahtzee, and spending time with family and friends.

Future Plans: After graduating from Mount Allison, I plan to pursue a career in either child clinical psychology or teaching. I aspire to one day work with children, publish a novel, and successfully solve at least one side of a Rubik's cube.

Thesis Title: Decomposing Hot Executive Function: Decision Making under Ambiguity in Preschoolers

Abstract: Hot executive function (EF) is a critical skillset involving the ability to make decisions when there are motivational or emotional influences present. The present study examined three- and four-year-old preschooler performance across three hot EF tasks. Associations between the measures, which included the Preschool Gambling Task (PGT), a Delay of Gratification (DoG) hybrid wait-choice paradigm, and the Trash to Treasure passive avoidance task, were also explored. A sample of 144 preschoolers (including 85 four-year-old children) completed the three hot EF tasks. The results revealed age differences on all three tasks. Furthermore, performance on the Trash to Treasure and the DOG were associated with different stages of decision making in the PGT, supporting the idea of differences in decision making when preschoolers have no knowledge of the task contingencies versus decision making when they have some knowledge. These findings suggest that age sensitive hot EF tasks have the potential to contribute to the assessment of developmental disorders that include EF impairments, such as autism or conduct disorder. Future studies should consider individual differences in EF development, increase the Trash to Treasure task sensitivity to age, and incorporate a larger sample.

James French

Supervisor: Dr. LaPointe



Research Project:

My research project looks to explore attentional advantages in competitive athletes. Essentially, we are testing to see if experienced athletes can identify a change in an image relating to their sport faster and more accurately than an individual who has experience in another sport or no sporting experience at all. To conduct our experiment, we will be using a flicker task to evaluate the participants ability to detect changes in the images presented. Furthermore, we are also interested to see if an athlete's experience would translate to an attentional advantage in other sports or if it is only sport specific.

Brief Biography:

I work to complete a Bachelor of Science degree, with an honours in Psychology and a minor in Sociology as well as a certificate in Research Methodologies. I am originally from Moncton, New Brunswick and I am in my fifth year at Mount Allison. One of my hobbies includes playing basketball for the Mounties, but I also enjoy trading card games and spending time outside

Future Plans:

After graduation, I plan on pursuing a bachelors of education, specifically working with elementary children. Following this, I hope to continue my studies in clinical psychology with the hopes of becoming a guidance counsellor. Ideally, I would like to have a career where I can work with the youth while also having a positive impact on their development.

Thesis Title: Court Vision: An Attentional Advantage of Competitive Athletes

Abstract: University athletes spend a considerable amount of time immersed in their sport environment. This study investigated whether time spent playing a sport would offer an attentional advantage over non-athletes in a sports environment. To test this, university basketball and soccer players, and non-athletes were shown photographs of basketball, soccer, and non-sports contexts using a change detection paradigm. Across repeated presentations of a photograph, participants were tasked with detecting which object was changing. It was hypothesized that athletes would be more efficient at detecting changes to sports contexts than non-athletes. Further, it was predicted that basketball players would produce the most efficient performance for basketball images and soccer players would produce the most efficient performance for soccer images (i.e., a sport-specific attentional advantage). In a second part of the experiment, the same images were presented inverted. It was predicted that inverting the images would disrupt any expertise related attentional advantage. Contrary to the predictions, basketball players were slowest to detect changes to basketball images, but made the fewest errors for these images. The speed difference was eliminated when the images were inverted, but the basketball players continued to show an accuracy advantage across image type.

Department Faculty & Staff



Dr. Rima Azar



Dr. Terry Belke



Dr. Claxton-Oldfield



Dr. Genevieve Desmarais

Department Faculty & Staff



Dr. Odette Gould



Dr. Lisa Dawn Hamilton



Dr. Nancy Garon



Dr. Gene Ouellette

Department Faculty & Staff



Dr. Jennifer Tomes



Dr. Louise Wasylkiw



Jackie Jacob-Vogels



Monique LeBlanc

Department Faculty & Staff



Greg Tracy



Dr. Danielle Douglas



Dr. Mitchell LaPointe



Dr. Doruk Uysal Irak

Research Day Playlist

Please click the link or scan the QR code below to open our Research Day playlist on Spotify.

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/05OFZehva3Y1kQTLxcMaAp?si=0e9aaf7cf20e4766>



Steps to scan a QR code:

1. Open the camera app on your device
2. Position your device so that the QR code appears in the camera app's viewfinder
3. Tap the notification to open the link associated with the QR code

Song Selection

Acadia Bunin

I Love Me - Demi Lovato

"I chose this because my thesis is based on self-compassion"

Danielle Dickson

Sitting, Waiting, Wishing - Jack Johnson

"For the kids in my research impatiently waiting for their prize, for the grads awaiting graduation, & for the pros waiting for our grad class to hit the road :)"

James French

By the Way - Red Hot Chili Peppers

"A song that has helped keep me relaxed writing my thesis as it reminds me of good times."

Erin Green

Vienna - Billy Joel

"I chose this song is because it reminds me to slow down and enjoy every moment."

Elizabeth Hebert

Delayed Gratification - LPX

I chose this song because its title is the topic of my thesis! Also, I think receiving our degrees at the end of this semester is the perfect example of delayed gratification!

Grace Henri

9 to 5 - Dolly Parton

"Choosing this song to represent the themes of work ethic and beliefs in economic success that my project focuses on. Also, a fair representation of the ins and outs of thesis work this year, which truly was a full-time job for us all, or as Dolly says, "enough to drive you crazy if you let it"."

Abby Kelson

Peaches - Justin Bieber

Hannah Landry

Kilby Girl - The Backseat Lovers

Sophie Landry

Drew Barrymore - SZA

"I picked this song because it emphasizes vulnerability, which is something I learned (and am still learning) to embrace during my time here at MTA."

Anna Manuel

Knowing Me, Knowing You - ABBA

"I chose this song is because of my thesis research topic discussing self-other differentiation."

Paige Matchett

Memories (feat. Kid Cudi) - David Guetta

"I chose this song because I believe it encompasses our time at Mount Allison, both throughout our Honours thesis journey, as well as across our four years as undergraduate students. There have been so many memories (good and bad!) that I hope we all carry forward as we enter new, unique paths!"

Craig McClelland

Dead Man's Party - Oingo Boingo

"It has been playing on loop during my thesis-writing sessions."

Shannon Reid

Let's Talk About Sex - Salt-N-Peppa

"I spent the last 8 months talking and thinking about sex. Maybe it's a bit too obvious, but I kept singing this song in my head whenever I would work on my thesis!"

Vincent Salabarría

Cómo Han Pasado Los Años - Los Panchos

"The words to this song narrate the reminiscences of a couple. Aside from its references to self-memories, the song also highlights the unchanging nature of the couple's love for one another despite all of the changes that have occurred around them through the years. Thus, in relation to my thesis topic, the lyrics exemplify how reminiscing can portray the development of a genuine and loving identity."

Lauren Shaw

Rise Up - Andra Day

Daisy Song

All Too Well - Taylor Swift

"It's one of my favorite songs for 2021/2022."

Amy Thompson

**Levitating - Dua Lipa, Dancing Queen - ABBA,
Unwritten - Natasha Bedingfield**

Hayley Woodside

Motion Sickness - Phoebe Bridgers

"I have played it over 100 times while writing my thesis"

Hailey Yoon

Spring is not like spring - YEGNY

Claire Zelcer

Runnin' with the Devil - Van Halen

"I chose this song because my thesis is on operant wheel-running rats."

Dr. Gould

I Need You - Jon Batiste

"I chose this song because it talks about needing each other when we're working overtime - which a lot of students have been doing lately (and I think it's a great song)"