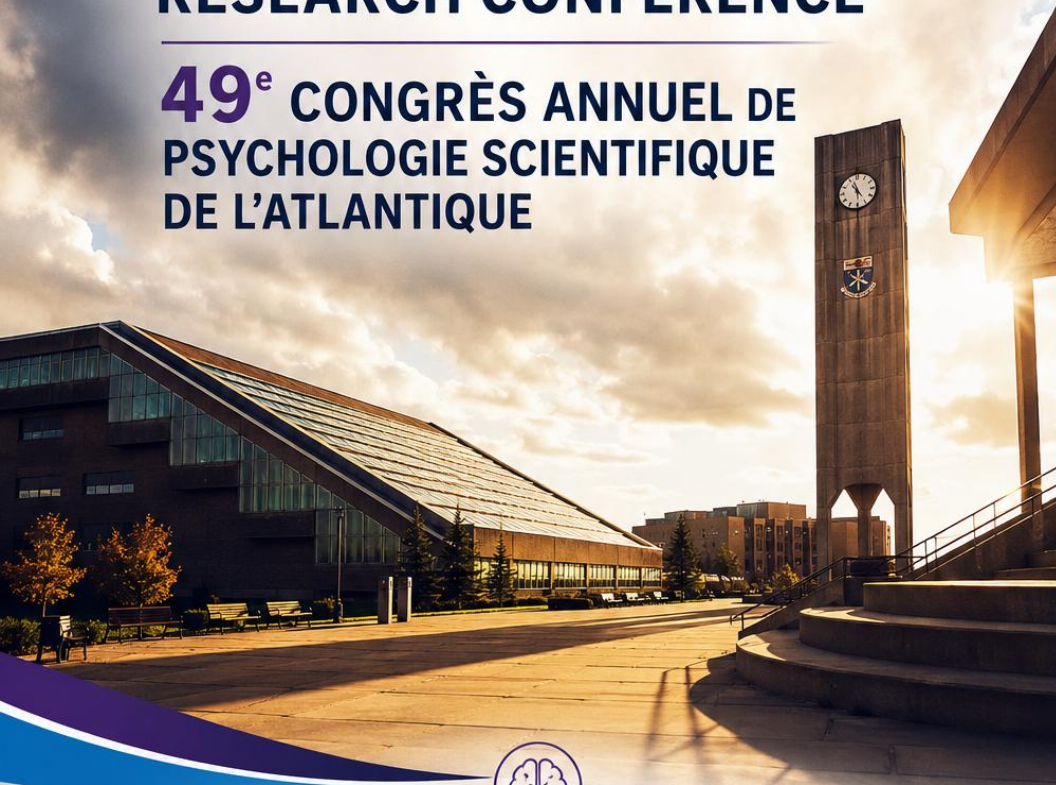




Science | Science
Atlantic | Atlantique
Psychology Conference
Conférence en psychologie

49TH ANNUAL PSYCHOLOGY STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

49^e CONGRÈS ANNUEL DE PSYCHOLOGIE SCIENTIFIQUE DE L'ATLANTIQUE



MAY 21ST – 22ND, 2026

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND



STUDENT RESEARCH
SHAPING TOMORROW



COLLABORATE
DISCOVER
INSPIRE



CONNECTING MINDS
ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

PROGRAM

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WELCOME! / BIENVENUE!

Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Psychology Department are pleased to welcome you all to the 49th annual Science Atlantic Psychology Student Research Conference.

The Science Atlantic Psychology Conference is a platform for undergraduates to showcase their research, network with other students and faculty, and to explore other research and graduate opportunities.

We would like to thank the presenters and faculty representatives from institutions across the Atlantic provinces for making the trip to St. John's for this year's conference. A huge thanks to the student volunteers – without your involvement, much of this event would not have been possible!

Of course, an enormous thank you to our sponsors (see p. xx for sponsor lists) and the members of the Memorial community here in St. John's and our sister campus, Grenfell in Corner Brook.

We hope you enjoy your time at MUN!

Dr. Cheryll Fitzpatrick and Dr. Tyler Pritchard
Conference Organizers

Land Acknowledgement: *We acknowledge that the lands on which Memorial University's campuses are situated are in the traditional territories of diverse Indigenous groups, and we acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and cultures of the Beothuk, Mi'kmaq, Innu, and Inuit of this province.*

L'Université Memorial de Terre-Neuve et le département de psychologie ont le plaisir de vous accueillir à la 49^e édition du Conférence annuelle de recherche en psychologie de Science Atlantic.

La conférence de Science Atlantic en psychologie est une plateforme permettant aux étudiants de premier cycle de présenter leurs travaux de recherche, de réseauter avec d'autres étudiants et des professeurs, et d'explorer d'autres possibilités de recherche et d'études supérieures.

Nous tenons à remercier les présentateurs et les représentants du corps professoral des établissements des provinces de l'Atlantique qui sont venus à St. John's pour la conférence de cette année. Un immense merci aux étudiants bénévoles : sans votre implication, une grande partie de cet événement n'aurait pas été possible !

Bien sûr, un immense merci à nos sponsors (voir p. xx pour la liste des sponsors) et aux membres de la communauté de Memorial ici à St. John's ainsi que de notre campus jumeau, Grenfell à Corner Brook.

Nous espérons que vous apprécierez votre séjour à MUN !

Dr Cheryll Fitzpatrick et Dr Tyler Pritchard
Organisateurs de la conférence

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND (MUN)

Founded in 1925, as Memorial University College, Memorial University of Newfoundland is the province's only university and is celebrating its 100th anniversary. MUN serves over 17,000 students from more than 120 countries across multiple campuses.



MUN, which placed 8th in *Maclean's* 2026 Canadian best comprehensive universities ranking, has seven faculties and seven Schools, offering undergraduate and graduate programs from Anthropology to Visual Arts. In addition, MUN is well-respected as a research university; it's home to over 30 research units, is a member of both the Ocean Frontier Institute and the University of the Arctic, and was ranked 20th in *Research Infosource's* 50 most research-intensive universities in 2016.



MUN is also often used as a setting for the Canadian crime comedy/drama series *Hudson & Rex*, with the Bruneau Centre (see above image) as the headquarters of the fictional St. John's Police Department, and the rest of the campus as the fictional Heritage University of Newfoundland and Labrador.

As an educational and cultural artifact, MUN's blue whale hangs in the atrium of the Core Science Facility. Recovered from the west coast of Newfoundland in 2014 after washing ashore in Bonne Bay, the core funding to acquire and prepare the whale skeleton was donated by Mark and Sandra Dobbin, and Craig and Lisa Dobbin, to display in honour of their mother, the late Eleanor (Penney) Dobbin. In 2023, a vote of more than 5,000 responses, the whale was officially named *Altum* (pronounced *al-tum*), a Latin term meaning "deep." Both the name and the positioning of the whale—where it appears to be swimming—are a nod to Memorial's motto *Provehito in Altum*, which means "launch forth into the deep," and reflect the spirit of discovery that is central to a university.

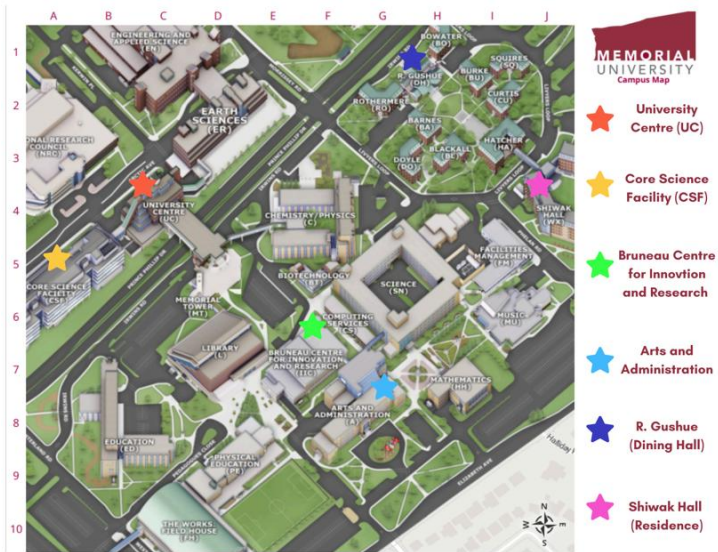
STAY CONNECTED / CONNECTEZ-VOUS FACILEMENT

	<p>Network: @Memorial-Guest</p> <p>To connect re-fresh your Wifi list to access @Memorial-Guest</p> <p>Pour vous connecter, actualisez votre liste Wi-Fi pour accéder à @Memorial-Guest</p>
	<p>Social Media: Tag us @scienceatlantic; or @scienceatlantic2026_mun; or @memorialuniversity</p> <p>And use #Psych2026 in your social media posts!</p> <p>Réseaux sociaux: Mentionnez @scienceatlantic; ou @scienceatlantic2026_mun; ou @memorialuniversity; ou</p> <p>Et ajoutez #Psych2026 à vos posts sur les réseaux sociaux!</p>

CAMPUS MAP / CARTE DE CAMPUS



MUN CAMPUS MAP



Important Locations

Core Science Facility (CSF) – This is where most conference activities will take place. Level 1 is where you will find the registration information table, professional development workshops, career and grad fair, poster sessions, keynote speaker, and banquet.

Arts & Administration (A) – All oral presentations will take place in this building.

Macpherson College Guest Accommodations (Shiwak) – Residence housing

Gushue Dining Hall – Lunch on Thursday will be in the Gushue Dining hall along with Friday morning's breakfast.

Other Quiet Spaces

Want a quiet space to do some work, take a break, or review your presentation? There are many spots on campus:

- ψ Given the off-semester time frame, there are many quiet spaces throughout campus
- ψ There are chair cubicles on Level 1 of the Core Science Facility (CSF)
- ψ CSF, Level 1.5
- ψ There are quiet spaces in the QEII Library – The Jumping Bean
- ψ The food court in the UC
- ψ The common spaces in Shiwak

Autres espaces calmes

Vous cherchez un espace calme pour travailler, faire une pause ou préparer votre présentation ? Il existe de nombreux endroits sur le campus :

- ψ Étant donné que nous sommes en période hors semestre, il y a de nombreux espaces calmes sur tout le campus
- ψ Il y a des cabines avec des chaises au niveau 1 du Core Science Facility (CSF)
- ψ CSF, niveau 1,5
- ψ Il y a des espaces calmes à la bibliothèque QEII – The Jumping Bean
- ψ L'aire de restauration de l'UC
- ψ Les espaces communs de Shiwak

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE / APERÇU DE L'HORAIRE

Thursday, May 21/ Jeudi 21 Mai

9:00 am –
5:30 pm

**Registration kit and badge pick up /
Inscription**

Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1
Whale Atrium

Pick up your conference badge and registration kit when you arrive on campus. Conference staff will be at this desk Thursday and Friday to answer questions and provide support.

Récupérer votre badge et trousse d'enregistrement quand vous arriverez sur le campus. Des employés de la conférence seront à ce bureau jeudi et vendredi pour répondre à vos questions et vous aider.

10:30 – 11:45 am

Faculty Representatives Meeting / Réunion des évaluateurs

Core science Facility, Level 2 / Niveau 2
CSF 2101

10:30 – 11:45 am

Student Professional Development Workshop I / Atelier pour étudiants I

Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1
CSF 1302

Resumes & Cover Letters / Curriculum vitae et letter de motivation
How to Ace an Interview / Comment réussir une entrevue
Job Search Strategies / Stratégie de recherche d'emplois

11:45 am – 1:30 pm	<p>Lunch / Diner Sponsored by Grenfell & St. John’s Student Committees Gushue Dining Hall</p>
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1:30 – 2:30 pm	<p>Student Professional Development Workshop II / Atelier pour étudiants II Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1 CSF 1302</p> <p>What to Expect in Grad School / À quoi s’attendre dans les études supérieures Applying for Research Funding / Obtenir des fonds de recherche Career Planning / Plantification de carrière</p>
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1:30 – 2:45 pm	<p>Faculty Workshop / Atelier des professeurs Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Classroom Core science Facility, Level 2 / Niveau 2 CSF 2101</p>
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3:00 – 4:15 pm	<p>Poster Session 1 / Séance d’affichage 1 Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1 Whale Atrium</p>
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4:30 – 5:30 pm	<p>Student Mingling/Cultural Event – St. Pat’s Dancers The Landing (UC 3015)</p> <p><i>A time and space to relax or meet other students. Use this opportunity to meet others and work on your Bingo cards.</i></p>
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5:45 – 6:00 pm	<p>Welcoming Remarks / Mot de bienvenue Dr. Jacqueline Blundell, Associate Dean of Science, Research & Graduate Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1 CSF 1302</p>
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6:00 – 8:00 pm	Panel Discussion and Pizza Dinner / Sponsored by CPA Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1 CSF 1302 / Whale Atrium
8:30 – 11:00 pm	Social Event at The Breezeway/ Soirée sociale The Breezeway Come and enjoy an evening of live music at The Breezeway – The Universal Key and The Ames Window. Venez profiter d'une soirée de musique live au Breezeway – The Universal Key et The Ames Window.

Friday, May 22 / Vendredi 22 Mai

7:30 – 9:00 am	Breakfast / Déjeuner Sponsored by MUN Office of VP Academic & Research Gushue Dining Hall
8:00 am – 5:00 pm	Registration kit and badge pick up / Inscription Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1 Whale Atrium <i>Pick up your conference badge and registration kit when you arrive on campus. Conference staff will be at this desk Thursday and Friday to answer questions and provide support.</i> <i>Récupérer votre badge et trousse d'enregistrement quand vous arriverez sur le campus. Des employés de la conférence seront à ce bureau jeudi et vendredi pour répondre à vos questions et vous aider.</i>

8:45 – 8:55 am	Opening Remarks / Mot D'Ouverture Bruneau Centre, Level 2 / Niveau 2 IIC2001
9:00 – 10:05 am	Oral presentations Session 1 / Présentations orales Séance 1 Arts & Administration Building, Level 1 / Niveau 1 A1045 (1A), A1046 (1B), A1049 (1C)
10:10 – 11:05 am	Oral presentations Session 2/ Présentations orales Séance 2 Arts & Administration Building, Level 1 / Niveau 1 A1045 (2A), A1046 (2B), A1049 (2C)
11:10 am – 12:05 pm	Oral presentations Session 3/ Présentations orales Séance 3 Arts & Administration Building, Level 1 / Niveau 1 A1045 (3A), A1046 (3B), A1049 (3C)
12:10 – 1:00 pm	Lunch / Diner Sponsored by Grenfell & St. John's Student Committees Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1 Whale Atrium
1:00 – 2:30 pm	Career and Graduate School Fair/ Salon d'emploi et d'études supérieures Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1 CSF1302
2:40 – 3:40 pm	Poster Session 2 / Séance d'affichage 1 Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1 Whale Atrium
3:40 – 3:55 pm	Nutrition Break Sponsored by CSBBCS Core Science Building, Level 1 / Niveau 1

	Whale Atrium
4:00 – 5:00 pm	Keynote: Dr. Martin Day / d'honneur: Dre. Martin Day Core Science Building, Level 1/ Niveau 1 CSF1302
5:10 – 6:10 pm	Faculty Representatives Meeting / Réunion des évaluateurs Core science Facility, Level 2 / Niveau 2 CSF 2101
5:00 – 6:00 pm	Student Downtime / Mingling event The Landing (UC 3015)
6:30 – 8:30 pm	Banquet & Awards Dinner Sponsored by Association of Psychology Newfoundland and Labrador (APNL) & Memory and Anxiety Research Foundation (MARF) Core Science Facility, Level 1 / Niveau 1 Whale Atrium

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS / ATELIERS DE DÉVELOPPEMENT PROFESSIONNEL

The conference includes professional development workshops for both students and faculty. All student workshops will be held in **CSF 1302** on Thursday, May 21.

Student Professional Development Workshops

The first workshop (10:30-11:45 am in CSF 1302) will focus on resume and cover letter writing, interviewing, and job search strategies. Across the time frame, each topic will span roughly 20 mins with short breaks for questions.

The second workshop (1:30-2:30 pm in CSF 1302) will focus on grad school applications, funding applications, and career planning. Unlike the morning workshop, these topics will span 50 mins with time for questions at the end of the session.

Faculty Workshop: Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the classroom

The faculty workshop (1:30-2:45 pm, in CSF 2101) will be hosted by MUN's Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL). This workshop is designed to be engaging and interactive. Be sure to bring your laptop, tablet, or other internet capable device to participate in this workshop.

La conférence comprend des ateliers de développement professionnel destinés à la fois aux étudiants et au corps enseignant. Tous les ateliers destinés aux étudiants auront lieu dans la salle **CSF 1302** le jeudi 21 mai.

Ateliers de développement professionnel pour les étudiants

Le premier atelier (de 10 h 30 à 11 h 45 dans la salle CSF 1302) portera sur la rédaction de CV et de lettres de motivation, les entretiens d'embauche et les stratégies de recherche d'emploi. Au cours de cette période, chaque sujet sera abordé pendant environ 20 minutes, avec de courtes pauses pour les questions.

Le deuxième atelier (de 13 h 30 à 14 h 30 dans la salle CSF 1302) portera sur les candidatures en troisième cycle, les demandes de financement et la planification de carrière. Contrairement à l'atelier du matin, ces sujets seront abordés pendant 50 minutes, avec un temps réservé aux questions à la fin de la session.

Atelier pour les enseignants : L'intelligence artificielle (IA) en classe

L'atelier destiné aux enseignants (de 13 h 30 à 14 h 45, dans la salle CSF 2101) sera organisé par le Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL) de l'Université Memorial de Terre-Neuve (MUN). Cet atelier est conçu pour être captivant et interactif. N'oubliez pas d'apporter votre ordinateur portable, votre tablette ou tout autre appareil connecté à Internet pour participer à cet atelier.

CAREER AND GRADUATE SCHOOL FAIR / SALON D'EMPLOI ET D'ÉTUDES SUPÉRIEURES

Friday, 1:00 – 2:30pm, CSF 1302 / Whale Atrium

At the career and graduate school fair, you can meet with several different types of employers and people who work in different areas (e.g., nonprofit, government, correction, health). This is a great chance to learn about career paths or grad programs you may not have considered before.

Vendredi, 13 h – 14 h 30, CSF 1302 / Whale Atrium

Lors du salon de l'emploi et des études supérieures, vous pourrez rencontrer différents types d'employeurs et de professionnels issus de divers secteurs (par exemple, le secteur à but non lucratif, le gouvernement, le système pénitentiaire, la santé). C'est une excellente occasion de découvrir des parcours professionnels ou des programmes d'études supérieures auxquels vous n'aviez peut-être pas pensé auparavant.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER / CONFÉRENIERS INVITÉS

Martin V. Day is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Director of the Societal Cognition Lab. With his students he researches "societal cognition"—the study of how individuals perceive, rationalize and respond to societal conditions, such as economic inequality and social mobility. He also examines psychological factors that affect people's well-being and environmental behaviours.

Before MUN, Dr. Day taught undergraduates as a College Fellow at Harvard University and taught public policy students as a postdoctoral researcher at Princeton University. He earned his Ph.D. in Social Psychology from the University of Waterloo and completed his BSc. in Psychology at Dalhousie University. He is originally from Halifax, N.S. He now lives in a jellybean house.



The New Psychology of How People Respond to Inequality

The gap between the rich and poor is large and widening in Canada and abroad, fueling a variety of pressing societal problems. This talk reviews recent research, including findings from our lab, that uncovers people's psychological reactions to such inequality. From distorted perceptions of income and wealth to the hidden motivations behind rationalizing disparity, we explore the psychological processes and beliefs that determine whether we accept the status quo or demand a more equal society.

AWARDS / PRIX

Science Communication Award

The prize is awarded to the student who is best able to communicate a science topic to their peers. The award may be split into two prizes (one for an oral and one for a poster presentation) at the discretion of the judging committee. The award consists of a letter of commendation and a cash prize.

Undergraduate Research Award

This award is presented to the student (or students) giving the best research presentation(s) at an annual Science Atlantic conference. The award consists of a cash prize and a letter of commendation and can be split into oral and poster presentation prizes.

CIHR-IGH SGBA+ Award

The Sex and Gender Based Analysis Award is presented to the student (or students) giving the best research presentation (oral or poster) at the MUN hosted Science Atlantic Psychology Conference.

Karen Nicholson Award in Neuropsychology

The Karen Nicholson Award in Neuropsychology (first presented in 2008) is presented for the best Neuropsychology undergraduate presentation (oral or poster) at the Science Atlantic Psychology Conference. Preference will be given to presentations dealing with human neuropsychology

About Dr. Nicholson: Karen Nicholson (1971-2007) was a member of the Science Atlantic Psychology Committee whose research interest was in the neuropsychology of perceptions. Karen grew up in Lethbridge, Alberta where she received her Bachelor's degree from the University of Lethbridge. She then completed her Master's degree in Psychology with Dr. Doreen Kimura at the University of Western Ontario (UWO), followed by doctoral studies of the types of cues (shape, colour) that impact perceptions, supervised by Dr. Keith Humphrey, also at UWO. Karen's interest in the neuropsychology of perceptions was furthered during her postdoctoral work with Keven Munhall at Queen's University. She carried on to her own lab at Mount Allison University in 2002, where she was hired as an Assistant Professor. Karen passed away in November 2007, after a courageous battle with cancer. Karen will be remembered as a committed teacher and a talented and energetic researcher.



Karen Nicholson

Prix de la meilleure communication scientifique de Science Atlantique

Le prix va à l'étudiante ou l'étudiant qui aura été le plus efficace dans la transmission d'une thématique scientifique auprès de ses pairs. Ce prix sera divisé en deux prix (un pour une présentation orale, et un pour une présentation affichée) à la discrétion du comité de sélection. Ce prix consiste d'une lettre de félicitations et d'un prix en argent.

Le prix de la recherche scientifique de 1er cycle de Science Atlantique

Le prix de la recherche scientifique de 1er cycle de Science atlantique va à l'étudiante ou l'étudiant (ou les étudiantes et étudiants) ayant fait la(les) meilleure(s) présentation(s) de recherche scientifique lors d'un congrès annuel de Science Atlantique. Ce prix consiste d'une lettre de félicitations et d'un prix en argent qui peut être divisé en deux, afin d'avoir un prix pour une présentation orale et un prix pour une présentations affichée.

Prix SGBA+ des IRSC-IGH

Le prix d'analyse comparative entre les sexes est remis à l'étudiant (ou aux étudiants) ayant présenté la meilleure communication de recherche (orale ou sous forme d'affiche) lors de la conférence Science Atlantic Psychology organisée par l'Université Memorial de Terre-Neuve.

Le prix Karen Nicholson en neuropsychologie

Le comité de psychologie accorde le prix Karen Nicholson (présenté pour la première fois en 2008) en neuropsychologie à la meilleure présentation affichée ou la meilleure présentation orale en neuropsychologie au congrès annuel de Science Atlantique une préférence sera accordée aux présentations axées sur la neuropsychologie humaine.

À propos de Dre. Nicholson: Karen Nicholson (1971-2007) était membre du comité du congrès en Psychologie Science Atlantique dont les recherches portaient sur la neuropsychologie de la perception. Karen a grandi à Lethbridge and Alberta où elle a obtenu son Baccalauréat à l'University of Lethbridge. Elle a ensuite obtenu sa Maîtrise en Psychologie avec Dre. Doreen Kimura à University of Western Ontario (UWO), suivi d'études doctorales sur les types d'indices (couleurs, formes) qui impact la perception, supervisé par Dre. Keith Humphrey également à UWO. L'intérêt de Karen pour la neuropsychologie de la perception a été renforcée durant son travail postdoctorales avec Kevin Munhall à Queen's University. En 2002, elle a rejoint son propre laboratoire à Mount Allison University, où elle a été engagée en tant que professeure adjointe. Karen est décédée en novembre 2007 suite à une bataille courageuse contre le cancer. Nous nous souviendrons de Karen comme étant une professeure dévouée, et une chercheuse talentueuse et enjouée.



Karen Nicholson

POSTER PRESENTATION SCHEDULE / SÉANCE DE PRÉSENTATIONS D’AFFICHAGE

Session 1/Séance 1: Thurs., May 21st 3:00-4:15pm

ID	Presenter	Institution	Title
100	Grace Fitzgerald	MUN	The Neurophysiology of Hidden Hearing Loss
101	Rachel Dean	DAL	Planning for the Unknown: Effects of Target Uncertainty on Grasping
102	Elizabeth Mackenzie-Hiscock	CBU	Examining the Effects of Self-Compassion and Cognitive Reappraisal on Anticipatory Anxiety in Social Anxiety
103	Jasleen Kaur	CBU	Evaluating the Impact of a Brief Cognitive-Behavioral Stress Management (CBSM) Workshop on Cognitive Arousal and Academic Stress in University Students
104	Lauren Roper	StFX	Executive Functioning Differences in Individuals with Specific Learning Disorder: Attributable to Comorbid Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?
105	Megan House	MUN	Modulating Timbre Processing with Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation
106	Julia DuJohn	DAL	Exploring the Link Between Visuo-Spatial Neglect and Spatial Working Memory Through Visual Scanning Training
107	Harshada Sharma	MUN	Quantifying Structural Neurodegeneration Across the Lifespan in an Alzheimer's Disease Mouse Model
108	Keirra Haley	MUN	Tonic Activation of the Locus Coeruleus: Behavioural Insights into Cognitive Function and Aging

109	Ella Gillett	SMU	Cheating With a Conscience? Exploring Moral Emotions, Psychopathy, and AI Use in Academic Offending
110	Trinity Thibault- Lattie	MtA	Triadic Experiences of Barriers to Positive Emergency Care for Adolescents with ASD: A Literature Review
111	Aarushi A	DAL	Resilience Profiles in Chronic Pain: The Role of Trauma Exposure & Symptoms
112	Jiah Bhutani	DAL	The role of trauma history in chronic pain: distinguishing the effects of type, timing, and cumulative exposure
113	Prudence Manson	SMU	Associations Between Parental Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders and Undergraduate Academic Achievement
114	Rhea Mehta	DAL	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Symptom Severity and Coping- Motivated Substance Use Among Canadian Youth with Interpersonal and Non-Interpersonal Trauma
115	Jessica Whelan	MSVU	Predicting Patterns of Alcohol Use in Adults: The Role of Inattentive ADHD Traits and Perseverative Thinking
116	Emma Millward	SMU	Keeping It Blunt: Risk Perceptions as a Predictor of Denial in Problematic Cannabis Use
117	Campbell Trask	MUN	Behind The Label: The Effect of a Self Disclosed ADHD Diagnosis on Perceptions of Eyewitness Credibility
118	Lara Henderson	MSVU	Binge Eating in an Adult Community Sample: The Role of Impulsivity and Negative Affect in the Overconsumption of Food

119	Emma Brauer	SMU	Parental Occupational Stress and Its Effects: Substance Use Patterns in Adult Children of First Responders
120	Nicole San Pedro	MSVU	The Influence of Inattentive and Depressive Symptoms on the Episodic Memory Performance of Children and Youth
121	Aliyah Christie	UNB	Procedural Justice Competencies in Frontline Policing: Analysis of Body Worn Camera Videos
122	Kendall LeDez	MUN	The association between Math Anxiety and Achievement: The Role of Motivation
123	Caitlyn Youngblood	MtA	Focusing on Others: Can it Improve Prosocial Behaviour in Preschoolers?
124	Amelia MacEachen	DAL	Investigating Children's Attitudes towards Homogenous and Diverse Groups
125	Claire Murphy	MUN	Improving Memory Dating Accuracy: Using Landmark Events and Calendars to Improve Recall of Non-Landmark Memories
126	Olivia Negrinotti	SMU	Building Comprehension From the Word Up II
127	Sophie LeBlanc	DAL	Do children use social cues (e.g., race and/or sex/gender) when learning phonological variation?
128	Hannah Smith	StFX	Parents comprehension of bullying
129	Katya Harris	SMU	Do words matter? Examining the impact of Ableist vs Non-Ableist Language in Asynchronous Video Interviews
130	Kyra Battist	StFX	From Bonding to Focus: Examining the Relationship Between Attachment Styles and Networks of Attention
131	Kendra Whitten	MUN	The Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on Adolescents' Evaluations of Lies

132	Amy Fiander	MUN	Adversity on the mind: the impact of mindfulness on relationship mindsets in adults with aces
133	Nicole Hodder	MUN	Wait... What If I'm Missing Something Right Now? The Paradox of Smartphones, Social Media, and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) in Higher Education
134	Rebecca McDonald	MUN	All Work, No Play? Barriers to Participation in Extracurricular Activities Among Undergraduate Students
135	Laura Molokwu	CBU	International Students' Struggles with Belonging and Success in Canadian Higher Education
136	Erin Brennan	StFX	Favourite Teaching and Learning Spaces on Campus

Session 2: Fri., May 22nd 2:50-3:50 pm

ID	Presenter	Institution	Title
200	Jacqueline Moore	SMU	Rebuilding Belonging: Exploring Sense of Community and Mental Health Among Newcomer Gender-Based Violence Survivors
201	Maliha Dew	MUN	The Influence of Emotional Content on Metamemory Accuracy and Judgments of Learning (JOLs) within the Framework of Memory Monitoring in Emoji Recognition
202	Mehar Sharma	MSVU	Distress Tolerance and Alcohol Use in Adolescents: The Role of Biological Sex
203	Grace Murphy	MSVU	Depressive Symptoms and Gender Role Characterization as Predictors of Restrictive Eating
204	Naomi Boudreau	UdeM	Overwhelmed, tired, frustrated: An analysis of TikTok videos on visible domestic labor

205	Alexia Belliveau	UdeM	It shouldn't be like this!: Analysis of Tiktok videos on mental load
206	Steven Power	MUN	Females' and Male's Perceptions of Health Related TikTok Videos
207	Patrick Belgrave	MSVU	Impact of Sex and ASD Symptom Severity on Somatic Complaints in Adolescents
208	Stephanie Pelley	MUN	Placental Trophoblast Androgen Receptor Signalling Is Critical for Fetal Survival
209	Kyra Williams	MUN	BTK Inhibitors decrease TNF and IL-6 cytokine release, but not mRNA transcription
210	Alexa Viau	MUN	Timing of Parental Stress Exposure and its Effect on Offspring Behaviour in Mice
211	Ella Puolitaipale	MtA	A Comparison of Sequential Olfactory Learning to Classical and Operant Conditioning Tasks in Rats
212	Callia Fieldhouse	DAL	Dissociating the Role of Visual and Reward Feedback in a Rapid Aiming Task
213	Blossom-Peneul Abu	MUN	Do Visual Working Memory Intrusions Persist Across Tasks?
214	Steven Nzoyamara	MUN	The Impact of Subliminal Distraction on Representations in Visual Working Memory
215	Gia Samuel	DAL	Exploring the Vigilance Decrement
216	Tristan Godbout	UdeM	Enactment effect interacts with serial positions
217	Rennie Doiron	StFX	Reproducing Sequential Choice Bias in Perceptual Decision Making: A Behavioral and Drift Diffusion Model Analysis
218	Alexander Cronhelm	Acadia	Fine-Tuning Computational Models Of Two-Alternative Forced Choice Learning
219	Jenna Hu	MUN	Can We Suppress Unwanted Memories? A Replication of

			Suppression-Induced Forgetting in the Think/No-Think Paradigm
220	Léa Friolet	UdeM	Le jugement de l'authenticité des sourires: Examen des différences culturelles
221	Dylan Martin	SMU	Awe, Beauty, and Meaning in Life
222	Kiley Roswell	StFX	Empowered Encounters: Self Advocacy and Sexual Autonomy in University Campus Hookup Culture

ORAL PRESENTATION SCHEDULE / SÉANCE DE PRÉSENTATIONS ORALES

SESSION 1 / Séance 1 9:00 – 10:05 am

Session 1A / Séance 1A - Arts & Administration Building (A1045)

Clinical and Counselling / Clinique et Conseil

Presenter	Institution	Title
Krista Gardner	MUN - Grenfell	Comparing the Impacts of Yin-inspired Restorative and Hatha Yogas on Perceived Stress, Sleep Quality, and Cognitive Function
Evan Treffler	DAL	Personality Traits to Emotional and Behavioural Outcomes: Cognitive Mediation in Adolescents
Mellow Hickman	MUN - Grenfell	Self-Comforting and Emotion Regulation in Adults
Erin MacDougall	DAL	Cannabis craving while anticipating a trauma reminder: The roles of cannabis coping motives and anxiety sensitivity
Leah Hicknell	StFX	Exploring Women's Experiences with Autism Spectrum Disorder
Timothy Bu	STU	Small t Trauma and Depression: The Moderation Effect of Cultural Orientation

Session 1B / Séance 1B - Arts & Administration Building (A1046)

Biological and Cognition / Biologie et Cognition

Presenter	Institution	Title
Beatrix Culligan	STU	Individual differences in pupil dilation in relation to working memory capacity
Charmi Pastagiya	MtA	Valenced Stimuli Bias the Content but not the Frequency of Mind-Wandering Episodes
Shannon St. George	MtA	The Impact of Emotional Valence on the Colavita Effect
Kaitlyn Grandy	MUN - St. John's	Objective Robotic Evaluation of Motor and Cognitive Function in Older Adults with Subjective Cognitive Impairment
Lauren West	MtA	Uncertainty in Preschool Decision-Making

Session 1C / Séance 1C - Arts & Administration Building (A1049)**Cognition / Cognition**

Presenter	Institution	Title
Karly Turner	MSVU	The Impact of Nicotine on EEG-Derived Markers of Sustained Attention Across the Human Menstrual Cycle
Sofia Herbert-Forrest	DAL	Intentional Forgetting of Emotional Stimuli
Bailey Stokes	MtA	The Impacts of Brief Meditation on Dual-Task Performance and Recognition Memory
Morgan Lawlor	MUN - Grenfell	Let's Tok About It: TikTok's Emotional Impacts on Decision-making
Daria Ones	DAL	Drug Education through Active Learning: Using 3D-Printed Models for Opioid Education
Mikayla Hanlon	SMU	The role of orthographic regularities in vocabulary learning during story reading in skilled adult readers

SESSION 2 / Séance 2: 10:10 – 11:05 am**Session 2A / Séance 2A - Arts & Administration Building (A1045)****Social and Personality / Social et Personnalité**

Presenter	Institution	Title
Justice Snow-Thompsons	MSVU	A Fathers Bond, A Queer Self: How Paternal Relationships Predict Internalized Homophobia
Anna Penny	CBU	Old Flames, New Feelings: How Do Past Relationships Affect Today's?
Macey Steeves	STU	Left-Wing Authoritarianism and Discrimination: Examining Personality and Hiring Decisions
Tianna Brake	MUN - Grenfell	I Know What You Did Last Summer!

Session 2B / Séance 2B - Arts & Administration Building (A1046)**Health / Santé**

Presenter	Institution	Title
Jenna Hardy	MUN - St. John's	Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation in Multiple Sclerosis: Establishing Feasibility for Neurophysiological Application
Samuel Goodine	StFX	Assistive Technology: Frequency, Satisfaction, and Psychosocial Outcomes in Nova Scotian University Students
Anna Feehanm	MUN - St. John's	Exploring Factor Associated with Sexual Functioning Related Distress in Adolescents and Young Adults with Cancer
Thomas Pelletier	UdeM	Can Performance Anxiety Be Induced in a Laboratory Context? A Same-Different Task
Agnes Grace	MtA	Exploring Associations Among Mild to Moderate Prenatal Maternal Depressive Symptoms, Maternal Serum Inflammatory Biomarkers, and Neonatal Outcomes

Session 2C / Séance 2C - Arts & Administration Building (A1049)**Social / Social**

Presenter	Institution	Title
Carolyn Boyd	StFX	Weapons, Faces, and Attention: Understanding the Cognitive Mechanisms Behind the Weapons Focus Effect
Grace Kirk	SMU	Co-Offending, Substance Use and Intimate Partner Violence: The Rates of Substance Use and Intimate Partner Violence in Co-offending Cases Involving Women Offenders
Alyssa Mason	MUN - St. John's	The Comprehension and Comprehensibility of Police Cautions and Legal Rights: A Scoping Review
Michael Hopkins	MUN - St. John's	Did Video Kill the Radio Star? Exploring the Influence of Beauty and Motion in Subjective Music Appraisal
Rylee Stanford	Crandall	The Experience of Autistic Evangelical Christians Within the Church

SESSION 3 / Séance 3: 11:10 am – 12:05 pm**Session 3A / Séance 3A - Arts & Administration Building (A1045)****Social and Community / Social et Communautaire**

Presenter	Institution	Title
Sarah Janes	MUN - Grenfell	Home Sweet Home: Life Transitions and Housing Decisions
Jenna Boardman	MUN - Grenfell	The Rx. for Connection: Social Prescribing is a Remedy for Loneliness
Drew Laybolt	UPEI	Adolescence as a Sensitive Period for Acquiring Musical and Social Information
Kimberly Brownlee	MUN - Grenfell	The Future Called, It Wants Your Opinion
Ashley Brady	SMU	Canadian Student-Athletes' Perceptions of Institutional Responses to Sexual Violence: Evidence of Institutional Betrayal and Secondary Institutional Betrayal

Session 3B / Séance 3B - Arts & Administration Building (A1046)**Development / Développement**

Presenter	Institution	Title
Kaeleigh Baird	MtA	Connection Falls Short: Testing Perceived Connectedness as a Mediator Between Attachment and Well-Being
Emily Crosby	MtA	Being More Than Your Pain: A Retrospective Qualitative Pilot Study on Navigating, Accepting, and Persevering Through Chronic Pain During Adolescence
Mehar Sharma	MSVU	Echoes of Trauma: Effects of Childhood and Lifetime Trauma on Vocal Outcomes
Michelle Nguyen	MSVU	Exploring Perceived Stress and Cortisol as Predictors of Maternal and Infant Behaviour in the Still Face Paradigm
Ethan Kelloway	MSVU	Looking back on building connection: how does our empathy and compassion in childhood influence our sense of community in adulthood

Session 3C / Séance 3C - Arts & Administration Building (A1049)
 Individual Differences and Psychological Experiences / Différences
 Individuelles et Expériences Psychologiques

Presenter	Institution	Title
Lilia Daiman	MSVU	The Effects of Trauma on Cognitive Processing in Bipolar Disorder: An ERP Investigation of P3a and P3b
Brooke MacKenzie	CBU	Personality, Pressure, and Perceived Social Support: An Examination of How Personality and Social Support Influence Academic Burnout
Elizabeth Ganton	SMU	Night Skies and Meaning in Life: Awe, Social Identity, & Wellbeing in the Astronomy Community
Rennie Doiron	StFX	Disrupted Attentional Functioning in Trauma-Exposed Veterans: A Meta-Analysis of Attention Network Test Performance
Louis Gautreau	UdeM	La fidélité des échelles de réponse du questionnaire d'estime de soi de Rosenberg

PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS / RÉSUMÉS DES PRÉSENTATIONS

Poster presentations / Présentations d'affiches

Session 1 / Séance 1: Thurs., May 21st 3:00-4:15 pm

100. The Neurophysiology of Hidden Hearing Loss

Fitzgerald, G. M.¹ & Zendel, B. R.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

There is a subset of individuals who experience difficulties in understanding speech in noisy environments, despite having relatively normal hearing abilities. There is no clear diagnostic criterion for this condition; accordingly, this phenomenon has been called Hidden Hearing Loss (HHL). Follett et al. (2024) identified a sample of participants who had greater difficulty understanding speech in noisy environments compared to people with similar audiometric thresholds (hearing abilities). This sample of participants likely have HHL. The goal of the current study is to identify neurophysiological biomarkers of HHL. Critically, we still do not know what is causing this difficulty with speech in noise. To identify these putative markers, functional auditory neurophysiology will be compared between the sample of participants with potential HHL and a sample of participants with normal hearing abilities. Specifically, we will compare pitch discrimination, concurrent sound segregation, and speech sound encoding using EEG at the level of the cortex and brainstem. It is expected that differences will emerge in one or all of these processes. The specific pattern of differences will be used to define the underlying neurophysiology of HHL.

101. Planning for the Unknown: Effects of Target Uncertainty on Grasping

Dean, R. M.¹, LeBlanc, K. A.¹, Lacroix, A. T. D., Feltmate, B. T., & Neyedli, H. F.¹

¹Dalhousie University

Motor planning for grasping known objects is well understood, but how we plan grasping movements under uncertainty is less clear. Competing theories propose either an averaging strategy, where multiple possible actions are combined, or an optimization strategy, where the safest or

most demanding movement is prioritized (a maximal-safety approach). Recent research supports the maximal-safety approach, showing larger hand openings when a larger object is present, regardless of the intended target. However, those findings may be influenced by differences in object size and weight. To address this, we used two identical rectangular objects and varied their orientation to change the required grip size while keeping the physical properties the same. Participants ($n = 25$) completed two conditions, a Go-Before-You-Know (GBYK) condition, where the target was revealed after movement onset, and Know-Before-You-Go (KBYG) condition, where the target was specified in advance. Peak grip aperture (PGA), measured using 3D motion capture, was defined as the maximum distance between the thumb and index finger during the reach. Under uncertainty (GBYK), PGA was influenced by both the target and the distractor, consistent with an averaging strategy. When the target was known (KBYG), PGA reflected only the target. Overall, these results suggest that when confounds are controlled, the brain plans grasping movements under uncertainty by averaging possible actions.

102. **Examining the Effects of Self-Compassion and Cognitive Reappraisal on Anticipatory Anxiety in Social Anxiety**

Mackenzie-Hiscock, E. D.¹

¹Cape Breton University

Social anxiety refers to a fear of one or more types of social situations and is characterized by a fear of negative evaluations from others. Social anxiety can be influenced or maintained by several negative processes, including anticipatory processing. Anticipatory processing is the fear of failure in upcoming social situations. Ninety Cape Breton University undergraduate students participated in this online study that focuses on a self-compassion writing task and a cognitive reappraisal writing task (relative to control) as interventions for anticipatory anxiety. However, 45 were excluded due to significant amounts of missing data, leaving the final sample size as $N=45$. The results showed that there was no significant interaction between condition and time (pre- and post-intervention) for both anxiety measures, SUDS $F(2,42) = 1.34, p = .27$, and STAI $F(2, 43) = .15, p = .86$. This finding indicates that the interventions did not have a significant effect on anxiety scores from pre- to post-intervention, compared to a control. The manipulation check also shows no significant difference across conditions. However, one item suggested some participants did not fully comply with their assigned task. This may explain why the interventions were not successful.

Finally, a moderation analysis revealed that baseline social anxiety scores (SPIN) did not significantly moderate the effect of condition on post-intervention anxiety (SUDS Time 2; all $ps > .37$). These results suggest that brief, online, single session, self-compassion and cognitive reappraisal interventions may not be effective in reducing immediate anticipatory anxiety.

103. **Evaluating the Impact of a Brief Cognitive-Behavioral Stress Management (CBSM) Workshop on Cognitive Arousal and Academic Stress in University Students**

Kaur, J.¹, Schmidt, H.¹, & Carre, G.¹

¹Cape Breton University

Academic stress is among the most pervasive challenges facing university students, contributing to impaired cognition, emotional dysregulation, and increased risk of anxiety and dropout. Cognitive-behavioural Stress Management (CBSM) interventions have shown promise in reducing self-reported stress; however, few studies have examined whether brief, single-session workshops produce measurable physiological and cognitive change, and fewer still have integrated qualitative participant perspectives. This mixed-methods pilot study evaluated the impact of a one-hour CBSM workshop on Cape Breton University undergraduates ($N = 19$) using a pre-post design with experimental ($n = 8$) and control ($n = 10$) groups. The assessment protocol captured three levels of evidence: self-report measures (Perceived Stress Scale, Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Questionnaire), physiological indices of arousal (heart rate variability, pupillometry), and cognitive performance (Stroop Color-Word Task, Backward Digit Span). Semi-structured interviews with experimental participants were analyzed using content analysis. Quantitative analyses revealed no significant Group \times Time interactions, likely reflecting the modest sample size and data collection during peak exam season. Qualitative findings, however, offered a different picture: all seven participants endorsed the workshop's value, six reported applying breathing techniques in academic and personal contexts, and four described using cognitive restructuring to reframe negative thinking. These results underscore the value of mixed methods designs when evaluating brief interventions, as meaningful subjective change may occur below the threshold of statistical detection in small samples. Future research should offer this workshop to larger cohorts across the academic year to clarify its effects on stress regulation and cognitive performance at scale.

104. **Executive Functioning Differences in Individuals with Specific Learning Disorder: Attributable to Comorbid Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?**

Roper, L.¹, Berrigan, L.¹, & Mazerolle, E.¹

¹St. Francis Xavier University

Executive functioning (EF) impairments are well-established in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). It is less clear whether individuals with specific learning disorder (SLD) also experience EF impairments. While comorbidity rates are high for ADHD and SLD and both conditions can persist into adulthood, research considering effects on EF for these groups is lacking. The objective of the present study was to determine whether university students with a SLD experience EF impairments and, if so, whether they are independent of the effects of ADHD. EF impairments, specifically in inhibition, verbal fluency, and set-shifting were examined in a previously collected dataset of university students with ADHD (n = 20), SLD (n = 21), comorbid ADHD plus SLD (n = 20), and in non-clinical controls (n = 21). A mixed analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that there was a significant interaction effect of the group and EF test factors, $F(6, 156) = 3.03, p = .008$. Follow-up pairwise comparisons indicated that the SLD group ($M = 9.95, SD = 5.05$) performed significantly worse than the control group ($M = 42.24, SD = 5.05$) on set-shifting ($p < .001, q = .003, d = 1.40$). The SLD group also performed significantly worse than the ADHD group ($M = 31.10, SD = 5.17$) on set shifting ($p = .005, q = .006, d = 0.91$). These results suggest that university students with SLD experience impaired set-shifting not attributable to comorbid ADHD. These findings may have implications for informing clinical practice and improving daily functioning.

105. **Modulating Timbre Processing with Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation**

House, M. C.¹, & Zendel, B.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

Timbre perception relies on the amplitude envelope (AE) and temporal fine structure (TFS) of a sound wave. Correlational neuroimaging studies suggest that the left auditory cortex is specialized for AE processing and timbral identification, while the right auditory cortex is specialized for TFS processing. However, causal evidence in support of this hemispheric specialization is lacking. This study used anodal transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) over the left and right auditory cortices to investigate

whether modulating cortical excitability would selectively disrupt performance on two tasks. Left tDCS was predicted to disrupt performance on an instrument identification task presumed to rely on the AE, and right tDCS was predicted to disrupt performance on a concurrent sound segregation task presumed to rely on TFS. Four healthy adults with normal hearing completed both tasks at baseline, received 20 minutes of anodal tDCS (1.5 mA) over the left or right auditory cortex, then repeated both tasks. The experiment took place over two sessions so that each participant received both left and right tDCS. Results revealed no significant main effects of stimulation and no significant interactions between stimulation and mistuning or stimulation for reaction time, accuracy, or confidence ratings. Although visual inspection of the data suggested faster reaction times after right stimulation for concurrent sound segregation and slower reaction times after left stimulation on the instrument identification task, these preliminary findings do not support a causal role. Given the very small sample size, these results should be interpreted with caution, and further data collection is needed.

106. Exploring the Link Between Visuo-Spatial Neglect and Spatial Working Memory Through Visual Scanning Training

DuJohn, J.¹, Eskes, G.¹, & Tennen, L.

¹Dalhousie University

Visuo-spatial neglect is a neurological condition characterized by a failure to attend to stimuli on the contralesional side of space, most commonly following right-hemisphere stroke. This condition often co-occurs with deficits in spatial working memory. The present study investigated the relationship between visuo-spatial neglect and spatial working memory in the context of visual scanning training, a recommended intervention for visuo-spatial neglect. Six individuals who have experienced right hemisphere stroke participated in a non-concurrent multiple baseline single-case study. Participants completed baseline assessments followed by a five-week visual scanning training intervention. Visuo-spatial neglect was measured using the Landolt C cancellation task, and spatial working memory was assessed using the Location Sternberg task. It was hypothesized that visual scanning training would improve visuo-spatial neglect, as demonstrated in prior research. It was also hypothesized that visual scanning training would improve spatial working memory. Therefore, a positive correlation between improvements in visuo-spatial neglect and spatial working memory was expected. Results indicated that visuo-spatial neglect was associated with deficits in spatial working

memory. Tau-U analyses showed that visual scanning training significantly improved visuo-spatial neglect, but produced inconsistent and limited improvements in spatial working memory. These findings support the use of visual scanning training for visuo-spatial neglect. However, additional interventions targeting spatial working memory may be necessary for more comprehensive rehabilitation.

107. **Quantifying Structural Neurodegeneration Across the Lifespan in an Alzheimer's Disease Mouse Model**

Sharma, H. B.¹, Greenland, M. L., Parsons, M. P.¹, & Blandford, S. N.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

Alzheimer's Disease (AD) is a progressive neurodegenerative disease causing structural and cellular changes in the brain. The triple transgenic (3xTg) mouse model of AD develops key neuropathological hallmarks of AD; amyloid- β plaques and neurofibrillary tau tangles, in an age-dependent manner. These pathological processes disrupt neuronal function and lead to widespread brain atrophy. While previous studies have examined individual structural or cellular markers at specific time points, this study investigates how multiple indicators of disease progression evolve concurrently across the lifespan of the 3xTg-AD mouse model. Specifically, this study examines ventricular enlargement, cortical thickness, corpus callosum thickness, hippocampal molecular layer thickness, and stratum radiatum cell density in 3xTg-AD mice and wild-type (WT) controls across ages spanning 2-19 months, with equal representation of male and female mice in each genotype group. Coronal brain sections were imaged using fluorescence microscopy, and all measurements were quantified using ImageJ software to examine both genotype differences and age-related trends. Results revealed significantly larger ventricular area, reduced cortical thickness in hippocampal sections, and reduced corpus callosum thickness in striatal sections in 3xTg-AD mice. Interestingly, hippocampal molecular layer thickness was significantly greater in 3xTg-AD mice and increased with age in this genotype. In contrast, no significant differences were observed in stratum radiatum cell density between genotypes. These findings show the region-specific structural changes in the 3xTg-AD mouse model and highlight the potential usage of accessible biomarkers for tracking AD-related neurodegeneration across the lifespan.

108. **Tonic Activation of the Locus Coeruleus: Behavioural Insights into Cognitive Function and Aging**

Haley, K. C.¹, & Walling, S. G.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

As the brain ages, gradual changes can affect memory, attention, and emotional regulation. One of the earliest regions affected by aging is the locus coeruleus, a small but important brain structure that produces norepinephrine. This neurotransmitter helps regulate attention, arousal, learning, and memory. Changes in this system may contribute to cognitive decline and could play an early role in neurodegenerative disease. This study explores how increasing activity in the locus coeruleus influences behaviour and cognitive function in adult rats. Using a targeted brain activation approach, activity in these cells was temporarily increased for behavioural testing. Rats then completed a series of well-established tasks used to measure memory, exploration, and anxiety-related behaviour. By improving our understanding of how this system shapes behaviour, this research aims to clarify how norepinephrine supports cognition. This work may also help identify mechanisms that are important for maintaining cognitive health and resilience during aging.

109. **Cheating With a Conscience? Exploring Moral Emotions, Psychopathy, and AI Use in Academic Offending**

Gillett, E.¹, Turnbull, L., & Ternes, M.¹

¹Saint Mary's University

While extensive research has studied psychopathy, guilt, and shame in forensic populations (e.g., Dandawate et al., 2019), little is known about their role in academic offending. Recently, academic integrity has been threatened by the growing presence of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The present study examined levels of guilt and shame in undergraduate students who reported committing at least one academic offence. Participants (n=57) completed a questionnaire analyzing academic behaviors, AI attitudes, moral emotions, and psychopathic traits. The findings provided partial support for the study's hypotheses. Results showed no association between moral emotions (guilt, shame) and perceived severity of academic misconduct or getting caught cheating. Participants who had a positive attitude towards AI were more likely to use AI to academically offend ($r=.57$, $p<.001$). These results have important implications for academic integrity policies and efforts to prevent cheating.

110. **Triadic Experiences of Barriers to Positive Emergency Care for Adolescents with ASD: A Literature Review**

Azar, R.¹, & Thibault-Lattie, T.¹

¹Mount Allison University

Adolescents diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are subjected to experiencing barriers when accessing pediatric emergency care. Research tends to overlook the direct perspective from adolescents with ASD, relying on parent or healthcare provider (HCP) perspectives. This study aims to explore these barriers in depth, and the specific role of the patient-family centered care model (PFCC) in emergency departments (ED). This literature review aims to: (1) investigate how emergency care environments are perceived by adolescents diagnosed with ASD, (2) how the environment and quality of care is perceived by their parents, and (3) what specific barriers hinder positive experiences. A thorough review of the literature through PsycINFO and PubMed databases, using specific inclusion/exclusion criteria resulted in eleven published articles that were included. Findings revealed that adolescents with ASD were more likely to seek emergency care compared to adolescents without. However, despite seeking emergency care at a higher frequency, adolescents and their families reported lower levels of satisfaction of care. Three main barriers were highlighted in the literature: triadic relationship (adolescent-parent-HCP) complexities, barriers such as behavioural or sensory needs, and communication were determinants of positive experiences. The present body of literature offers vital information for medical practice reform while facilitating the needs of adolescents with ASD and their families. Implications of this review include the need for the integration of PFCC into emergency care settings to limit HCP burnout, the use of hospital resources, and increasing overall satisfaction.

111. **Resilience Profiles in Chronic Pain: The Role of Trauma Exposure & Symptoms**

A., A.¹, & Hashmi, J.¹

¹Dalhousie University

Chronic pain is a prevalent and complex condition associated with significant physical, psychological, and functional challenges. Individuals with chronic pain often report exposure to traumatic events, which are linked to poorer psychological and pain-related outcomes. However, responses to trauma vary widely; some individuals develop post-traumatic stress symptoms (PTSS), whereas others maintain relatively adaptive

functioning. These differences suggest that resilience may play a key role in shaping outcomes following trauma exposure. The present study examined resilience profiles in individuals with chronic pain, focusing on the relationship between trauma exposure, PTSS, and adaptive psychological and pain-related outcomes. Using pre-existing data from a chronic pain cohort, participants were grouped based on trauma exposure and PTSS levels. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to assess group differences across 16 variables, including psychological resilience resources, emotional burden, and clinical pain outcomes, with a non-trauma-exposed group included for comparison. Results indicated that resilient and vulnerable groups differed significantly in psychological resilience resources and emotional burden; however, no significant differences were observed in clinical pain outcomes. These findings suggest that resilience and vulnerability may be more strongly reflected in psychological and emotional domains rather than pain intensity. Overall, this study highlights the importance of incorporating trauma- and resilience-informed approaches into chronic pain assessment and management to support more individualized and comprehensive care strategies.

112. **The role of trauma history in chronic pain: distinguishing the effects of type, timing, and cumulative exposure**

Bhutani, J.¹,

¹Dalhousie University

Introduction: Trauma exposure is highly prevalent among individuals with chronic pain and has been implicated in the maintenance and exacerbation of pain-related symptoms. However, trauma is often treated as a single construct, limiting understanding of how trauma type, developmental timing, and cumulative exposure differentially relate to pain and psychological outcomes. This study examined these trauma dimensions in relation to pain intensity, affect, and trauma symptoms in adults with chronic pain.

Methods: Participants were 149 adults with fibromyalgia, chronic back pain, or both. Lifetime trauma was assessed using the Brief Trauma Questionnaire, and developmental trauma was assessed using the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire and Adverse Childhood Experiences questionnaire; Interpersonal trauma was based on endorsement of relevant items. Outcomes included pain threshold, pain tolerance, pain severity, pain interference, pain catastrophizing, depressive symptoms, state and trait anxiety, post-traumatic stress symptoms, and dissociative symptoms.

Results: Trauma exposure was prevalent and the most frequently reported events were sexual violence (46%), serious accidents (38%), and witnessing trauma (36%). Women reported significantly higher rates of sexual violence, whereas men reported higher rates of combat exposure. Approximately 60% of participants endorsed at least one interpersonal trauma, which was associated with greater depressive symptoms, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress symptom burden. Lifetime trauma exposure was positively associated with pain severity and pain interference, whereas developmental trauma was associated with reduced pain tolerance. Conclusion: Trauma exposure shows strong prevalence and its dimensions showed distinct associations with chronic pain outcomes. These findings support a trauma-informed, multidimensional approach to chronic pain assessment and management.

113. **Associations Between Parental Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders and Undergraduate Academic Achievement**

Mason, P.¹

¹Saint Mary's University

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have been associated with poor academic outcomes and overall negative consequences on child development (Mendel et al., 2021). ACEs refer to negative experiences or stressors before the age of 18 in an individual's life, including such things as child maltreatment, parental neglect, and household dysfunction, which are often seen in homes with parental mental illness and substance abuse (Pilkington et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2017). Overall, some research has examined ACEs and their relationship to academic performance. Still, there is limited research considering parental mental illness and substance abuse on undergraduate academic achievement. The present study aims to address the associations between parental mental health and substance use disorders with undergraduate academic achievement, and discuss environmental differences in academic achievement for students in university residence housing. We hypothesize that participants with high ACE scores in youth will have higher levels of academic achievement and engagement when living in a university residence. Potential implications of this research include adjustments to the Canadian student performance.

114. **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Symptom Severity and Coping-Motivated Substance Use Among Canadian Youth with Interpersonal and Non-Interpersonal Trauma**

Mehta, R.¹, & Wozney, L.¹

¹Dalhousie University

Exposure to potentially traumatic events during childhood and adolescence is common and can contribute to the development of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Trauma type, interpersonal versus non-interpersonal, has been identified as an important predictor of PTSD severity and may also shape patterns of coping-motivated substance use during adolescence and emerging adulthood. The present study examined whether trauma type predicted baseline PTSD symptom severity and coping-motivated alcohol and cannabis use among Canadian youth aged 15 to 25 years with probable PTSD. A cross-sectional complementary analysis of baseline data from a randomized controlled trial was conducted (N = 42). Trauma exposure was assessed using the Life Events Checklist for DSM-5; index traumas were manually coded as interpersonal (n = 36) or non-interpersonal (n = 6). PTSD symptom severity was measured with the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5, and coping motives for alcohol and cannabis use were assessed using the coping subscales of the Brief Alcohol Motives Measure and Brief Cannabis Motives Measure. Mann-Whitney U tests were used to examine group differences. Youth with interpersonal index traumas demonstrated significantly higher PTSD symptom severity than those with non-interpersonal index traumas (U = 173.00, p = .017, r = .36), supporting Hypothesis 1. No significant group differences emerged for coping-motivated alcohol or cannabis use; the cannabis comparison trended contrary to prediction. Findings are discussed in relation to trauma-type frameworks and implications for scalable digital interventions for trauma-exposed youth.

115. **Predicting Patterns of Alcohol Use in Adults: The Role of Inattentive ADHD Traits and Perseverative Thinking**

Beckner, M.¹, Gould, A.¹, Juniper, F.¹, & Whelan, J.¹

¹Mount Saint Vincent University

Previous research has indicated various relationships between ADHD, perseverative thinking (negative repetitive thoughts), and alcohol use - although the connection between all three has limited research. The proposed research used open access data from the NKI Rockland Institute

to investigate how inattentive ADHD traits, perseverative thinking, and problematic alcohol use may be connected. Participants data were selected based on those who have completed all scales used for this research project and are between the ages of 21-45 years old. The inclusion criteria was determined by the age requirements of the scales and the legal drinking age. Three different self-report scales were used to assess the constructs. A multiple regression analysis was run to determine if an association exists. There was no significant association found to support the hypothesis. No evidence was found for inattentive traits of ADHD and perseverative thinking as predictors for pattern of alcohol use.

116. Keeping It Blunt: Risk Perceptions as a Predictor of Denial in Problematic Cannabis Use

Millward, E.¹, & Ternes, M.¹

¹Saint Mary's University

Introduction: Problematic cannabis use has become a growing concern with 1 in 10 individual who have ever used it and 1 in 2 daily users developing Cannabis Use Disorder (CUD). Thus, researchers have investigated factors that may influence problematic use including risk perception of cannabis and denial or acknowledgement of problematic use (DPU/APU). This study sought to 1) determine a relationship between risk perceptions and PCU, and 2) determine a relationship between DPU/APU and risk perceptions. **Methods:** Participants (N = 127) completed self-report measures which assessed attitudes and beliefs regarding personal use and risk perceptions of cannabis. Measures include the Treatment Readiness Scale (CASA), CUDIT-R and RPSUS (a scale created by a former honours student). To assess for impression management and self-deception participants will also complete questions from the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR). **Data Analysis and Results:** Data was analyzed in RStudio using Pearson's correlation and simple linear regression tests. Findings did not support the first hypothesis however, a significant relationship was found between risk perceptions and DPU/APU for the second hypothesis. **Significance:** Most treatment models for PCU focus on motivation to change. The first step to these strategies is acknowledging one has a problem. Knowing this, the lack of research on denial is concerning and must be addressed. Establishing a predictive relationship would inform treatment models and promote discussion of denial as a risk factor among researchers and clinicians.

117. **Behind The Label: The Effect of a Self Disclosed ADHD Diagnosis on Perceptions of Eyewitness Credibility**

Trask, C.¹, Snook, B.¹, & Connolly, R.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

The effect of a self-disclosed ADHD label on perceptions of eyewitness credibility is examined. Participants (N = 66) read one of four transcripts of eyewitness testimony about an armed robbery (ADHD Label: Yes, No x ADHD Symptom Description: Yes, No) and asked to rate their credibility. Results indicated no statistically significant main effects of ADHD label or ADHD-like behavioural symptoms on credibility ratings. However, a consistent pattern emerged across samples, whereby credibility ratings were lowest when ADHD-like behaviours were presented without an accompanying diagnostic label and highest when both the ADHD label and behavioural cues were present. These findings suggest that diagnostic labels may provide contextual information that influences how behavioural cues are interpreted. Implications for perceptions of witnesses with ADHD in legal settings are discussed.

118. **Binge Eating in an Adult Community Sample: The Role of Impulsivity and Negative Affect in the Overconsumption of Food**

Henderson, L. E.¹, Lontok, C. L., Mockler, K. G., Fisher, D.¹, & Thompson, D.¹

¹Mount Saint Vincent University

Existing literature on binge eating suggests its association with ADHD symptoms and negative affect. Among ADHD symptoms, impulsivity has previously been correlated with binge eating at both clinical and subclinical levels. Given that binge eating can increase the risk for adverse health outcomes, it is important to identify factors contributing to this behaviour. Using secondary data from the Nathan Kline Institute (NKI) Rockland Sample, the current study sought to examine whether levels of ADHD impulsivity and negative affect positively predict binge eating in a community sample of adults (n = 180). Participants were aged 20 to 45 and had completed all three scales of interest: the Three-Factor Eating Questionnaire (TFEQ) Disinhibition subscale, the Conners' Adult ADHD Rating Scale - Self-Report: Short Version (CAARS-S:S) Impulsivity/Emotional Lability subscale, and the Positive and Negative Affect schedule (PANAS) Negative Affect subscale. Binge eating, impulsivity, and negative affect scores from these questionnaires, respectively, were analyzed using a multiple linear regression, with binge

eating scores as the outcome variable. The resulting model was significant, and both impulsivity and negative affect are significant, positive predictors of binge eating. This study extends the literature on binge eating by identifying predictors of the behaviour, even at its nonclinical levels. These findings also support the targeting of negative affect and impulsivity as a potential strategy in treating eating disorders with binge eating symptoms. Future research may look into how drug use, other mental disorders, and an individual's sex can affect this relationship between the variables.

119. Parental Occupational Stress and Its Effects: Substance Use Patterns in Adult Children of First Responders

Brauer, E. M. A.¹, & Ternes, M.¹

¹Saint Mary's University

Substance and alcohol use are significant public health concerns, making it important to identify risk factors. First responders experience higher rates of substance and alcohol use than the general population (Gryschuk et al., 2022). Although parental mental health and alcohol use influences alcohol use of children (Haugland et al., 2013), no studies observe first responder parents and their children's substance and alcohol use. This study addressed this gap through an online questionnaire, collecting responses from emerging adults with both first-responder and non first-responder parents (N = 85). We hypothesized that adult children of first responder parents would report riskier substance and alcohol use patterns, and that the severity of parental mental health issues during childhood would predict more severe substance and alcohol use. Analyses were conducted through t-tests and multiple linear regression. Results showed no significant relationship between having a first responder parent and having riskier substance or alcohol use. However, this research may help refine future risk factor research.

120. The Influence of Inattentive and Depressive Symptoms on the Episodic Memory Performance of Children and Youth

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¹Mount Saint Vincent University

Episodic memory is the ability to recall personally experienced events and objects. Deficits in episodic memory have been reported in children and youth with Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and depression. There is limited literature exploring the predictability of

ADHD and depression in children and youth on episodic memory performance. We hypothesized inattentive symptoms and depression would negatively predict episodic memory performance. A secondary data analysis was conducted from a community sample of 321 children and youth ages 7-17 from a sample collected from the Nathan Kline Institute - Rockland Sample. Conners 3 Parent Short Form's inattention subscale assessed inattentive symptoms. Children Depression Inventory-2 assessed depressive symptoms. Three memory tests from the Penn Computerized Neurocognitive Battery assessed episodic memory. A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using inattention and depressive symptoms as predictors and episodic memory performance as the response variable. The overall model was significant with inattentive symptoms being a significant, negative predictor. Depressive symptoms were not a significant predictor. This analysis provided evidence for inattentive symptoms negatively predicting episodic memory performance. Findings were consistent with previous studies discussing episodic memory performance in children and youth with ADHD. Future research should explore comparisons across both clinical and community samples.

121. **Procedural Justice Competencies in Frontline Policing: Analysis of Body Worn Camera Videos**

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¹University of New Brunswick

Procedural justice has been shown to improve police-citizen interactions but has been primarily assessed only in traffic stops. The current study expanded this assessment by examining the quality of procedural justice across traffic as well as dispute call types using body worn camera (BWC) footage of frontline police interactions. The current study also examined the predictors of the quality of procedural justice competencies. BWC videos were randomly drawn from a sample of 50 patrol calls (25 dispute, 25 traffic). Although two procedural justice competencies could not be reliably coded, results indicated that the reliably coded competencies of neutrality and trust were significantly influenced by call type, even after controlling for citizen demographics. Specifically, neutrality occurred at a higher degree in traffic calls, whereas trust was more common in dispute calls. Additionally, trust scores were significantly higher when information was gathered by the officer, when a ticket was given, and when no use of force was used. Neutrality scores were also significantly higher when information was gathered and when

there was no use of force. Regression analyses indicated that the degree of citizen compliance and demeanor were both predicted by call type but not by procedural justice competencies. Collectively, the current findings suggest there is a contextual variation to when officers apply procedural justice competencies and that these competencies may not have consistent impact on citizen demeanor as suggested by the literature. These findings also point to challenges in the measurement of procedural justice competencies.

122. **The association between Math Anxiety and Achievement: The Role of Motivation**

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¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

Math anxiety is an issue that consistently lowers grades in math-based learning assessments in school. It is a challenging and complex problem for students and has the potential to prevent them from pursuing careers of their choice, especially if they are interested in scientific fields that have steep mathematics involvement. To combat this, math anxiety research often investigates factors which can reduce these harmful effects on math performance, with one such factor being motivation for math learning. However, the relationships between motivation, math anxiety, and math performance are not fully understood. Further, it is not definitively apparent if math-anxiety and motivation have a consistent effect on performance in math across age groups. To explore these relationships further, I conducted the current study by creating a Qualtrics survey, which primarily measured math anxiety, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, and performance in math problems among Memorial University undergraduate students ($n = 17$). The results from linear regression analyses were then compared to adolescent data from the PISA 2022 to examine developmental differences. It was found that there was a significant negative correlation between math anxiety and math performance in both groups, and that motivation significantly moderated this relationship. However, the adult sample only saw this effect through significantly with intrinsic motivation, while both forms of motivation moderated the relationship in the adolescent sample. Future studies with greater resources and sample sizes may wish to explore these relationships further to better understand this developmental difference and create effective math anxiety supports for students.

123. **Focusing on Others: Can it Improve Prosocial Behaviour in Preschoolers?**

Carpenter, R.¹, Youngblood, C.¹, & Garon, N.¹

¹Mount Allison University

Prosocial behaviours, voluntary actions intended to benefit others, develop during the preschool years and may be influenced by children's ability to shift attention and consider others' perspectives. Preschoolers (N = 77, Mage = 49.16 months) participated in a sharing task and an attention-shifting task to investigate whether focusing on others and attention-shifting skills could improve prosocial behaviours, such as sharing. Results from multiple mixed ANOVAs indicated that children shared the fewest toys when thinking from their own perspective, the most when thinking about a friend's preferences, and shared more low-rated toys than high-rated ones. Results also showed that whether children failed or passed the attention-shifting task did not affect the amount of toys shared overall, but instead, paired-sample t-tests found they differed in the way they shared, demonstrating more selective sharing in those who passed the attention-shifting task. The study had a limited sample, and future research should include larger samples to produce full effects. This research adds to the existing research on the development of prosocial behaviours in preschool-aged children, and suggests that high attention-shifting abilities impact selectivity in sharing. The study also provides educational implications and suggests adding additional attention-shifting activities to school curricula to develop early empathy and prosocial behaviours, like sharing.

124. **Investigating Children's Attitudes towards Homogenous and Diverse Groups**

MacEachen, A.¹, Witman, M., Reeves, E., Dyack, A., Workye, R., & Weatherhead, D.¹

¹Dalhousie University

Diversity enriches our culture, increases belonging, and enhances learning. Despite these benefits, bias and prejudice prevail and prevent diversity from prospering fully. In children, biases are developed early in life and grow stronger with age, wherein children generally prefer members of their own social groups relative to members of others. Nonetheless, previous work in this area centres around children's judgement of individuals as well as their judgements between homogenous-only groups. However, this is not reflective of Canadian

society or real-world environments. Thus, our study aimed to answer the question: How do children's attitudes differ towards groups that are either homogenous or diverse in terms of race, gender, and accent? These dimensions were chosen as they have all been shown to impact children's choices in social preference tasks. Using a within-subjects design, children were shown images of homogenous and diverse groups, presented in blocks corresponding to each social dimension. We then asked children to rate how much they liked each group using a 5-point visual Likert scale. We hypothesized that children would prefer homogenous groups. Canadian children ($N = 69$) participated in this study virtually. Using a series of one-sample t-tests, we examined whether scores differed between homogenous and diverse groups within each social dimension. Consistent with our hypothesis, we found that ratings were significantly higher for all three homogenous groups. These findings show that children lean towards similarity when evaluating groups and possibly suggests that the early emergence of preferences for similarity could contribute to the development of social biases.

125. Improving Memory Dating Accuracy: Using Landmark Events and Calendars to Improve Recall of Non-Landmark Memories
Murphy, C.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

Accurately dating autobiographical memories is essential for maintaining a coherent sense of personal history and has important implications for developmental and forensic contexts. However, individuals often show systematic errors when estimating when past events occurred, particularly for early childhood memories that lack clear temporal structure and are susceptible to reconstructive biases. The present study examined whether external temporal scaffolds, specifically landmark prompting and a visual childhood calendar, improve the accuracy of dating early autobiographical memories. Fifty-four adults (aged 18-35) recalled early non-landmark memories occurring before age 8 and estimated when each event occurred. Participants were randomly assigned to either a Calendar or Non-Calendar condition, and all received repeated landmark prompting. Parents or guardians provided independent estimates of event timing, allowing dating accuracy to be calculated as the absolute difference between participant and parent estimates. Results indicated that calendar use did not significantly improve dating accuracy compared to landmark prompting alone, and most dating strategies were not associated with improved accuracy. However, the use of special occasion or holiday

cues was associated with significantly greater dating error. Conversely, intrinsic memory properties were related to accuracy, with more vivid and personally significant memories dated more accurately. These findings suggest that autobiographical memory dating is primarily constrained by memory quality rather than external temporal scaffolds, highlighting its reconstructive nature.

126. **Building Comprehension From the Word Up II**

Negrinotti, O. J.¹, Conrad, N. J.¹, MacDonald, A., & Crawford, R.

¹Saint Mary's University

Learning to read in the early elementary years sets the foundation for future academic success. However, the factors that contribute to efficient reading comprehension remain not fully understood. The Reading Systems Framework (RSF; Perfetti & Stafura, 2014) proposes that comprehension begins with individual word representations, which, once efficiently encoded, free working memory resources for constructing meaning from text. Conrad et al. (2008, 2019) provide evidence that spelling, more than reading, may enhance the quality of these word representations. To fully test the RSF, it is necessary to demonstrate that strengthened orthographic representations translate to improvements in reading comprehension. This within-subjects study examined the effects of reading and spelling practice on comprehension and vocabulary in 36 Grade 4 students. No significant effect was found for reading comprehension; however, a main effect was found for vocabulary learning, with both conditions showing marginal trends over control (reading > control; $p = .056$). These findings suggest that while brief practice may not enhance comprehension, both reading and spelling practice support vocabulary learning. This highlights implications of targeted lexical skills practice for enhancing individual word-level knowledge, consistent with prior research. While comprehension was examined independently, future research could refine these methods. For example, semantic understanding (i.e., vocabulary learning) likely depends on baseline text comprehension, and longer consolidation periods may support more robust comprehension outcomes (James et al., 2020). A limitation emerged post-data collection: a material error affected the spelling condition ($n = 16$). Data collection to achieve the required power ($N = 36$) is ongoing.

127. **Do children use social cues (e.g., race and/or sex/gender) when learning phonological variation?**

LeBlanc S.¹, Whitman M., & Weatherhead D.¹

¹Dalhousie University

Previous research has shown that adults tend to prioritize race over another salient social cue (sex/gender) when learning a phonological variant (vowel shift). In contrast, it remains unclear whether children use social cues to predict linguistic variation. The present study uses an artificial language task to investigate whether N=64 5-to-7-year-old children (preliminary data, 150 to be recruited) learned associations between phonological variation (vowel shift) and speaker characteristics (race and/or sex/gender). Participants are randomly assigned to either a race condition or a sex/gender condition, such that the speaker's race or sex/gender determined the correct response. On each of the 32 test trials, participants are exposed to an image of a novel object in the middle of the screen between two images of closed doors. Participants heard two potential variations for labelling the novel object, (e.g., "Someone says [mɛlu], someone says [milu]"). Then, two speakers appeared on the screen in front of images of two open doors and participants were then asked who said one of the variations (e.g., "Who says [mɛlu]). They received immediate corrective feedback after every trial and following the experiment, we asked them if anything helped them decide who said each word. A generalized estimating equation model revealed a significant main effect of condition, Wald $\chi^2 = 4.67$, $p = .031$, with higher accuracy observed in the sex/gender condition relative to the race condition. These findings suggest that sex/gender may be a more particularly salient social cue at this developmental stage when learning phonological variation across different speakers.

128. **Parents comprehension of bullying**

Smith, H.¹, Lambe, L.¹, & Conrad, M.

¹St. Francis Xavier University

The objective of the research is to examine how parents define and conceptualize bullying in comparison to how research defines bullying. Researchers define bullying as aggressive targeted behaviour with emphasis on an imbalance of power, frequency, and perceived emotional/physical/social harm to victim(s), (Stives et al., 2022). The research aims to examine how parents define bullying in comparison. Parental involvement has been recognized as one of the key elements

needed to create effective anti bullying programs in schools (Stives et al., 2021), yet there is a lack of parental perceptions in both scholarly research and in the development of effective bullying prevention programming (Volk et al., 2017). An important consideration for whether these prevention programs are effective involves how bullying is being conceptualized and defined; if there are inconsistencies and confusion it can result in ineffective interventions (Stives et al., 2022). To examine the research question, qualitative data was collected through the Interrupting Victimization in Youth (IVY) lab, through 20 parent interviews in the Antigonish area. Preliminary findings show that parents define bullying differently from that of the researchers, where parents tend to define as perceived negative and harmful interactions, without an emphasis on power imbalance. This project is ongoing and next steps include a formal thematic analysis. Results may better inform bullying prevention efforts that include parents.

129. Do words matter? Examining the impact of Ableist vs Non-Ableist Language in Asynchronous Video Interviews

Harris, K.¹, & Lukacik, E.-R.¹

¹Saint Mary's University

Ableist language refers to expressions that marginalize individuals with disabilities by reinforcing harmful stereotypes and perpetuating inequality and can occur both consciously and unconsciously across various forms of communication (Pike et al., 2026). As asynchronous video interviews (AVIs) become increasingly common, their impersonal nature highlights the importance of communication within these platforms (Ilhan et al., 2025). This study examined how AVI explanation language (ableist, non-ableist, or no explanation) affects interview self-efficacy (Tay et al., 2006), interview anxiety (Powell et al., 2024), interview performance, and perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1997) among applicants with and without disabilities, specifically how the effects of ableist language impact applicants who experience disability. Participants (N = 95) were recruited via Prolific, with disability (n = 49) and non-disability (n = 46) groups roughly equally represented. Results revealed those who experience disability reported greater interview anxiety and performed more poorly on the AVI, with no other significant effects observed. Overall, results indicated that the use of ableist language in AVI explanations did not have a significant impact on the assessed outcomes, however descriptive trends revealed that interviewees with disabilities given the ableist explanation consistently performed less

favourably across all outcomes compared to interviewees without disabilities.

130. **From Bonding to Focus: Examining the Relationship Between Attachment Styles and Networks of Attention**

Battist, K.¹, Haggarty, V., Redden, R.¹, & Byron, J.

¹St. Francis Xavier University

Relationship attachment styles develop throughout childhood, influenced by reliability of caregivers. Attachment styles influence attentional processing, thought to result from increased vigilance to external threats. Attachment avoidance has been found to impact the orienting and executive control attentional network. Attachment anxiety influences the orienting attentional network. The current study was designed to replicate Haggarty and Redden (2024), as the only other study examine the interaction in the alerting attentional network. Similar results are expected in accordance with past findings. The AttentionTrip, an engaging gamified version of the Attentional Network Test was used to get reaction times (RT) for each of the attentional networks. Participants would navigate a spaceship through a tunnel, using temporal and spatial signals to prepare for up coming targets. Targets would be flanked congruently, incongruently or not at all. To calculated attachment styles the Experience in Close Relationships-Revised Questionnaire was used. A total of 63 participants data was used for analysis, 38 from the current study and 29 from the original study. Six separate ANOVAs were conducted to examine the results. Visual analysis revealed impairment in RT across attentional networks regarding avoidant attachment and improvement regarding anxious attachment. Visually results contradicted past findings. Statistically only the interaction between anxious attachment and the alerting attentional network was significant. Contradicting results between studies could result from many variables, sample size being the most notable. Due to the small samples sizes used, a larger sample sizes and further research is needed to increase validity of the findings.

131. **The Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on Adolescents' Evaluations of Lies**

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Adolescence is a developmental period marked by increased engagement in lie-telling and more complex moral reasoning. While prior research has

examined developmental and contextual influences on lie evaluations, less is known about how Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) shape these judgments. The present study investigated whether exposure to adversity is associated with adolescents' evaluations, motivations, and experiences of lie-telling. A sample of 96 adolescents (ages 12-18) participated in semistructured interviews exploring (1) general attitudes toward lying, (2) reasons why others lie, and (3) reasons for their own lie-telling. Responses were coded for general evaluations, contextual factors, and motivations using a coding framework. Mixed-effects models examined the effects of prompt, age, and adversity exposure on motivations for lying. Results indicated that adolescents viewed lying as conditionally acceptable, emphasizing the importance of context, consequences, and relational factors. Contrary to predictions, adversity did not consistently predict greater acceptance of specific self-serving motivations for lying, such as psychological self-protection, conflict avoidance for the self, or responding to unfair circumstances; however, adolescents with adversity exposure more frequently referenced self-oriented motivations. A significant interaction between age and adversity emerged for secrecy-related motivations, such that mentions decreased with age among non-adversity youth but increased among adversity-exposed youth. Age-related differences were also observed in psychological self-protective motivations across prompts. Overall, findings suggest that while many motivations for lying are normative during adolescence, adversity may shape how adolescents reason about specific motivations.

132. **Adversity on the mind: the impact of mindfulness on relationship mindsets in adults with aces**

Fiander, A.¹, Loveless, C., Kilimnik, C., & Quinn-Nilas, C.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

Individuals who have Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) present with a unique set of challenges, both individually and when they enter romantic relationships. Mindfulness has been beneficial in mitigating the negative effects of ACEs on individuals and couples. Little research has looked at the effect relational mindsets have on romantic relationships and how mindfulness affects these mindsets. When studying other mindsets, high mindfulness and growth mindsets have positive outcomes for individuals. The current study examines the effect of mindfulness on relationship mindsets among couples with a history of ACE(s) and who are parents. A simulated sample of 200 Dyads was analyzed from a small

real sample of dyads collected in an online survey. The Actor Partner Interdependence model (APIM) was used to analyze the effect that one's mindfulness has on their own mindset and their partner's mindset. The findings represent a possible 'what if' situation that may happen if patterns continued in this sample and therefore should be taken with caution. The findings indicated that individuals higher in mindfulness tended to have a higher growth mindset in relationships. No effect was found on one's partner's mindset. These findings were discussed in terms of the relevance to mindset theories and mindfulness, current ACE and trauma literature, and possible application if these findings were found to be true.

133. **Wait... What If I'm Missing Something Right Now? The Paradox of Smartphones, Social Media, and Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) in Higher Education**

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¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) is a salient psychological phenomenon in modern society, partly driven by ubiquitous smartphone and social media (SM) use, especially among university students. FoMO's link to excessive smartphone/SM use and academic outcomes is correlational and lacks experimental outcomes. The present in-person study addressed these gaps by examining how smartphone access and context-specific cues influence types of FoMO among university students (N = 83), while exploring associations among academic motivation and performance, SM use and engagement, and a novel barriers measure. Results demonstrated strong associations between FoMO and SM use (e.g., comparison- and consumption-based) and academic motivation (e.g., extrinsic) but not academic performance. Experimental manipulations did not meaningfully influence state-FoMO; however, social scenarios did. Subsequent analyses highlighted the role of specific barriers in shaping FoMO. These findings support an increasingly nuanced, context-dependent understanding of FoMO, influenced by concrete barriers and situational factors. The study extends existing work by integrating experimental design and objective barriers to missing out, highlighting implications for student well-being, higher education contexts, technology design, and clinical practice.

134. **All Work, No Play? Barriers to Participation in Extracurricular Activities Among Undergraduate Students**

McDonald, R.¹, Thorpe, C.¹, & Button, C.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

Extracurricular Activities (ECAs) include clubs, sports and volunteer work. Many benefits are associated with ECA participation among university students, including increased academic performance, employability, well-being, and social connection. However, many factors can impede students' participation in ECAs and reduce the quality of their university experience. This study sought to determine which barriers impact students the most and which are most difficult to overcome. To accomplish this, a survey was distributed to undergraduate students at Memorial University of Newfoundland, including questions on participants' current level of ECA participation and factors which prevented their involvement. A total of 139 students were retained in the final sample. The most common barriers participants had encountered were feeling uncomfortable going to events alone, conflicting school and work obligations and feelings of anxiety. Anxiety-related barriers were also significantly stronger for students who did not participate in ECAs compared to highly active participants. Despite its small sample size, this research provides insight into the experiences of undergraduate students seeking to become involved on campus. Implications for ECA facilitators seeking to recruit new members are discussed.

135. **International Students' Struggles with Belonging and Success in Canadian Higher Education**

Molokwu, L.¹, & Schmidt, H.¹

¹Cape Breton University

International students' sense of belonging has been widely linked to academic motivation, wellbeing, and retention, yet much of the existing research emphasizes individual adaptation rather than institutional influence. This qualitative study examines how international undergraduate students experience belonging within a Canadian university, focusing on how curriculum representation, classroom interactions, and broader campus culture shape their academic and social experiences. Guided by Allen et al.'s integrative framework of belonging, the study uses a systemic and relational perspective to examine how belonging is shaped, limited, and negotiated within institutional settings.

Semi-structured interviews and a focus group were conducted with 10 international undergraduate students from diverse racial, cultural, and national backgrounds. Grounded thematic analysis produced six interconnected themes. Participants described how becoming visible minorities for the first time influenced their classroom engagement, sense of safety, and willingness to participate. Many reported pressures to adjust their accent or behavior to be understood or accepted. Students also highlighted the emotional and practical strain of managing academic demands, employment, and daily responsibilities without familial support, while academic success was often framed as non-negotiable due to the financial sacrifices made by parents. At the same time, students developed belonging through relationships with other international students, shared cultural spaces, and structured communities such as sports and faith groups. Classroom belonging was strengthened when professors treated students as equals, validated contributions, and incorporated culturally relevant content. Finally, participants described shifts in mindset over time, moving from self-censorship and internalized marginalization toward greater self-value and reframing belonging. These findings demonstrate that belonging is highly perceptual and context-dependent, shaped by institutional practices rather than individual deficits. The study highlights the need for universities to move beyond performative inclusion toward structural changes that actively support international students' belonging and academic engagement.

136. Favourite Teaching and Learning Spaces on Campus

Brennan, E.¹

¹St. Francis Xavier University

Research suggests that exposure to nature has positive effects on humans and reduces heart rate and stress, while increasing directed attention and immune functioning (e.g., Kaplan & Berman, 2010; Berman et al., 2008; Nisbet & Zelenski, 2011; Andersen et al., 2021). Given that 83% of university students report moderate to high levels of stress (NCHA, 2022), interventions to increase students' exposure to nature are needed. Biomimicry and biophilic designs in buildings have been associated with stress-reduction and overall benefits for individuals in the workplace and schools (e.g., DeLaurer et al., 2022; Peters & D'Penna, 2020). In this survey study, we examined the relationship between natural elements in our campus classrooms and students' preferred teaching and learning spaces. We also assessed possible links between participants' nature connectedness, stress, and overall well-being. Findings will aim to inform

future classroom design to enhance student well-being and learning experiences.

Session 2 / Séance 2: Fri., May 22nd 2:30-3:30 pm

200. Rebuilding Belonging: Exploring Sense of Community and Mental Health Among Newcomer Gender-Based Violence Survivors

Moore, J.¹, Cormier, V., Alvarez Del Angel, M., Benjelloun Dakhama, K., & Cameranesi, M.¹

¹Saint Mary's University

Newcomer women are at increased risk of experiencing gender-based violence (GBV) during the migration journey, a potentially traumatic experience associated with poor mental health. Although research suggests that sense of belonging may support positive mental health among newcomers, little is known about these associations among newcomer survivors of GBV. Drawing on survey data from 13 young newcomer GBV survivors aged 18-29 resettled in Nova Scotia, this cross-sectional study explored sense of belonging and mental health in this population and examined whether stronger sense of belonging was associated with better mental health. Using IBM SPSS Statistics, we conducted descriptive analyses as well as non-parametric analyses, including Spearman's rank-order correlation and the Mann-Whitney U test, to address the study objectives. Findings indicated that participants reported substantial mental health challenges, often above clinical cut-offs, while also reporting strong connections to their communities and a strong sense of belonging. Statistical tests did not yield significant associations or subgroup differences; however, these null findings should be interpreted cautiously given the very small sample size and limited statistical power and should not be taken as evidence of no association between sense of belonging and mental health in this population. These findings highlight the need for accessible, culturally relevant mental health services in Nova Scotia and the importance of further research examining the potential role of sense of belonging in promoting mental health among newcomer GBV survivors using larger samples.

201. The Influence of Emotional Content on Metamemory Accuracy and Judgments of Learning (JOLs) within the Framework of Memory Monitoring in Emoji Recognition

Dew, M.¹, & Hourihan, K.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

This research investigates the influence of emotional content on memory predictions and recognition performance, utilizing emojis as symbolic emotional stimuli. A pre-rating study was conducted where participants rated 100 emojis across four dimensions: valence, arousal, familiarity, and frequency of use. Based on these ratings, 90 emojis were categorized into positive, neutral, and negative groups for the subsequent metamemory experiment. During the metamemory task, participants provided Judgments of Learning (JOLs) predicting their likelihood of recognizing emojis, followed by a recognition test to assess actual memory performance. Results suggested that although participants anticipated higher recognition accuracy for positive and negative emojis compared to neutral ones, no significant differences were found in actual recognition performance across emotional categories due to ceiling effects. Numeric trends suggest that emoji may show the same metamemory biases as emotional images, with higher JOLs but lower recognition accuracy for emotional than neutral stimuli. Results are discussed in terms of the cues used to make JOLs for emotional information.

202. Distress Tolerance and Alcohol Use in Adolescents: The Role of Biological Sex

Sharma, M.¹, Moustafa, M., Lefebvre, R. D.

¹Mount Saint Vincent University

Alcohol use (AU) is common among adolescents, yet patterns of problematic use remain a growing concern. Distress tolerance (DT), defined as the ability to withstand stress, has been identified as a potential risk factor for maladaptive coping behaviours, including alcohol use. While previous research in adult populations suggests that lower DT and biological sex differences are associated with increased AU, relatively little work has examined these relationships in adolescents. The present study investigated whether behavioural DT and biological sex predict AU frequency in an adolescent sample. Participants aged 12-24 (N = 80; 61.3% female) were drawn from the NKI-Rockland Sample. DT was assessed using the Behavioural Indicator of Resiliency to Distress (BIRD), operationalized as persistence time on a distress-inducing task.

AU frequency was measured using the alcohol subscale in the Comprehensive Addiction Severity Index for Adolescents (CASI-A), assessing number of drinking days in the past month. A multiple linear regression model was conducted to examine the predictive effects of DT and biological sex on AU frequency. Results indicated that the overall model was not significant, and neither DT nor biological sex significantly predicted AU frequency. These findings suggest that the relationships between biological sex, DT, and AU may be less robust or more variable during adolescence. These results highlight the need for more integrative models that incorporate social and contextual influences. Future research should employ longitudinal designs and multi-method assessments to better understand these relationships.

203. **Depressive Symptoms and Gender Role Characterization as Predictors of Restrictive Eating**

Aghomon, M., Holman, I., Magliaro, N., & Murphy, G.¹

¹Mount Saint Vincent University

This study investigated whether depressive symptoms and gender role characterization predict restrictive eating behaviour. Participants' responses on the Beck Depression Inventory-II, Sex Role Identity Scale, and the Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire were examined. Participants were 115 young adults ages 18 to 25 enrolled in the Nathan Kline Institute-Rockland Sample 1 (NKI-RS). Multiple linear regression was used to assess if depressive symptoms and gender role characterization predicted restrictive eating behaviour. Results revealed that the overall model was significant $F(2, 112) = 4.71, p = .01$, explaining 6.1% of the variance in restrictive eating behaviour (Adj. $R^2 = .06$). Depressive symptoms were a significant positive predictor of restrictive eating behaviours, $\beta = .27, t(112) = 3.00, p = .03$. In contrast, gender role characterization was not a significant predictor of restrictive eating behaviour, $\beta = .05, t(112) = .57, p = .56$. Findings suggest that depressive symptoms predict restrictive eating behaviour, but gender role characterization does not. Future research should further investigate the relationship between gender role characterization and restrictive eating behaviour.

204. Overwhelmed, tired, frustrated: An analysis of TikTok videos on visible domestic labor

Boudreau, N.¹, & Ross-Plourde, M.¹

¹Université de Moncton

In heterosexual couples, the division of visible household tasks remains unequal, with women still assuming most of these responsibilities. This inequality is associated with significant consequences, including reduced well-being and increased fatigue and frustration, which may negatively affect women's mental health. Moreover, recent qualitative studies have examined content shared on social media, particularly TikTok, to explore its influence on attitudes toward gender roles. In this context, the present study aims to analyze the content of TikTok videos addressing the division of visible household tasks. A total of 30 videos focusing on visible household tasks were coded using a coding grid that included sociodemographic variables of the content creator (e.g., gender, family status) as well as elements related to the message conveyed in the videos (e.g., promotion of a traditional or egalitarian model). All videos were coded by two evaluators to ensure data quality. The results indicate that the content of the videos, predominantly produced by women, generally promotes an egalitarian division of household tasks while also highlighting the persistence of inequalities. The emphasis is often placed on the accumulation of responsibilities and its consequences, particularly feelings of fatigue and frustration related to inequality in heterosexual couples. The videos often take the form of discussions or personal testimonies. These findings suggest that social media can play an important role in raising awareness of inequalities related to visible household tasks and confirm the negative effects these inequalities may have on women's mental health.

205. It shouldn't be like this!: Analysis of Tiktok videos on mental load

Belliveau, A.¹, & Lachance-Grzela, M.¹

¹Université de Moncton

In heterosexual couples, the distribution of mental load remains unequal, with women still assuming most invisible responsibilities related to planning, organizing and anticipating daily tasks. This imbalance is associated with consequences, including well-being and emotional exhaustion, which can negatively affect women's health. Despite its impact, mental load is often misunderstood or overlooked. Recent

qualitative studies have examined content shared on social media, especially on TikTok, to better understand how social and interpersonal issues are represented and discussed. In this perspective, the present study aimed to analyze videos posted on TikTok that address mental load. A total of 30 videos were selected and coded using a coding grid that included sociodemographic characteristics of the content creators (e.g., gender, family status) and elements related to the message conveyed (e.g., promotion of traditional versus egalitarian perspectives). All videos were coded by two evaluators to ensure data quality. A thematic analysis was conducted. Results indicate that content is mostly produced by women and promotes a more equal distribution of mental load while highlighting the problematic nature of the current situation. The emphasis is placed on the accumulation of responsibilities and its consequences, particularly feelings of exhaustion and pressure related to inequality within heterosexual couples. These videos often take the form of personal testimonies and include an educational purpose, especially when addressing mental load. These findings suggest that social media can play an important role in raising awareness about inequalities in mental load and confirm the negative impact these imbalances can have on women's mental health.

206. **Females' and Male's Perceptions of Health Related TikTok Videos**

Power, S. E. I.¹, & Fitzpatrick, C. L.¹

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Media has reinforced a body ideal that is unrealistic and affects perceptions of ourselves and others. TikTok, a relatively new social media platform, remains underexplored regarding how body type (and ethnicity) in videos influences cross-gender perceptions, despite its close to 2 billion users worldwide. As such, this study explores how “What I Eat In A Day” (#WIEIAD) featuring females and “Workout With Me” (#WWM) featuring males of ideal (thin in females, muscular in men) or nonideal body types of influence participants' perceptions of various psychological and physical characteristics. Participants recruited from Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) completed an online study through Qualtrics assessing perceptions of individuals in #WIEIAD TikTok videos, if male, or #WWM TikTok videos, if female. Data analysis was conducted with Jamovi. Results demonstrated that both male and female participants rated cross-gender nonideal body types more negatively than ideal body types. When controlling for covariates (e.g., media use,

education) in the male sample, many observed effects were attenuated; however, the female sample demonstrated more stable effects when controlling for covariates (e.g., social desirability). The finding of the present study highlights how body type shapes perceptions of others, while simultaneously emphasizing the influence of other variables on our perception of others.

207. **Impact of Sex and ASD Symptom Severity on Somatic Complaints in Adolescents**

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¹Mount Saint Vincent University

There is a growing movement to address the historical gender bias which pervades the greater body of psychological research, particularly with regards to phenotypic differences between males and females across a wide variety of disorders such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Previous studies have separately shown that both females and individuals on the autism spectrum exhibit increased somatic symptoms (aches, nausea, etc.) compared to the general population. The present study extends the research by examining the interaction between sex (male vs female) and ASD symptom severity group (ASG, high vs low) on somatic symptoms using a 2x2 factorial ANOVA. A significant interaction between sex and ASG was found, $F(1, 123) = 5.706, p = .02, \eta^2 = .044$. A simple effects analysis showed that the effect of ASG grouping was only present for females ($p = .008$), where no effect was found for males ($p = .447$). The findings of this study highlight the need to acknowledge that females with higher degrees of ASD symptoms may have unique challenges and support needs, which should be addressed in order to promote better long-term outcomes.

208. **Placental Trophoblast Androgen Receptor Signalling Is Critical for Fetal Survival**

Pelley, S. H. G.¹, Burry, T. N., MacDonald, A. C., Fowler, L. F., & Swift-Gallant, A.¹

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Androgen signalling at the placenta has been implicated in pregnancy outcomes, with evidence suggesting that both maternal and fetal androgens influence placental function and fetal viability. However, the specific role of trophoblast androgen receptor (AR) signalling in pregnancy maintenance remains unclear. To directly test this, we

generated trophoblast-specific AR loss- and gain-of-function mouse models using a trophoblast-specific Cre driver, producing trophoblast AR knockout (AR⁻) and AR over-expression (AR⁺) lines. Implantation rates were unaffected in either model. However, both lines exhibited a substantial increase in fetal loss during gestation. In control pregnancies, no fetal resorptions were observed at late gestation (E18.5; 0/53 fetuses across 7 litters). In contrast, trophoblast AR manipulation resulted in 27-37% fetal resorption at E18.5, with 14 of 51 fetuses resorbed in the AR⁻ line and 12 of 33 in the AR⁺ line. Resorbed fetuses measured 2-5 mm, suggesting that reabsorption began approximately 2-4 days prior to assessment; therefore, these losses likely represent mid-gestational rather than late-gestational resorptions. Ongoing work aims to quantify resorptions at earlier time points (E13.5). Additionally, trophoblast AR deletion resulted in an increased fetal-to-placental weight ratio, suggesting that fetal growth demands may exceed placental capacity for oxygen and nutrient transfer. Together, these findings indicate that tightly regulated trophoblast AR signaling is critical for pregnancy maintenance and that both loss and excess of AR activity disrupt placental function and fetal viability.

209. BTK Inhibitors decrease TNF and IL-6 cytokine release, but not mRNA transcription

Williams, K. M.¹, Benoit, R. Y., Walling, S. G.¹, & Moore, C. S.¹.

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Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic neuroinflammatory disease characterized by demyelination and neuronal damage resulting in motor, visual, and cognitive impairment. Relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis (RRMS) is a specific type of MS characterized by the sudden worsening of symptoms (i.e. relapse) followed by a period of recovery (i.e. remission). Bruton's tyrosine kinase (BTK) is a crucial enzyme identified as a driver of neuroinflammation in MS patients. BTK inhibitors (BTKis) are emerging drug treatments, including tolebrutinib and evobrutinib, that decrease pro-inflammatory cytokines, and are currently being investigated as novel therapies in MS. Using peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMCs) isolated from healthy and active RRMS patients, and subsequently treated with tolebrutinib or evobrutinib ex vivo, mRNA expression of inflammatory factors were measured to further elucidate the mechanism(s) of action that BTK inhibitors play in mediating MS pathogenesis. Results confirmed that BTKis did not significantly influence inflammatory-related factor mRNA transcription, which

contrasts with published reports noting decreases in protein expression. As such, compensatory mechanisms in which more mRNA is produced when cytokine levels decrease (and less mRNA when cytokine levels increase) are a possible explanation for these results.

210. **Timing of Parental Stress Exposure and its Effect on Offspring Behaviour in Mice**

Blundell, J.¹, Grace, M., & Viau, A.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder affects a large number of the population, and is known to transmit intergenerationally, however the mechanisms are not entirely understood. The present study examined whether the timing of conception following parental stress exposure influences stress-related behavioural outcomes in offspring. Adult C57BL/6 mice were exposed to either a predator stress (Long Evans rat) or a control condition and were subsequently bred either two days or 30 days post-exposure. Behaviour of the offspring (F1) was assessed during adolescence and again in adulthood (following a mild stressor). Results indicated that conception timing had selective effects on offspring behaviour. In adolescence, offspring from the 30-day group spent more time in the centre of the open field, suggesting reduced baseline anxiety-like behaviour. However, during the mild stressor, the 30-day group exhibited significantly greater freezing behaviour compared to the 2-day group, indicating increased stress reactivity. Parental stress exposure alone produced limited effects across behavioural measures, and some sex-dependent differences emerged in social behaviour. Notably, most adult baseline behavioural measures were not significantly affected but this may be due to insufficient power (low numbers of animals per group). These findings suggest that the interval between parental stress and conception may differentially influence offspring stress sensitivity, with effects emerging primarily under acute stress conditions rather than baseline assessments. However, there is not enough evidence to support that conception time alters behaviour specifically in the offspring of stressed parents.

211. A Comparison of Sequential Olfactory Learning to Classical and Operant Conditioning Tasks in Rats

Puolitaipale, E. L.¹, Barnes, S. G.¹, & Roddick, K. M.¹

¹Mount Allison University

Olfactory tasks can be used to demonstrate higher cognitive processes in rodents, such as learning and memory. One such task is sequential odour discrimination, in which rodents have demonstrated the ability to learn to select an odour based on its serial position and history of reinforcement in past studies. The present study attempted to replicate and explore these findings further, and to compare learning on a sequential task to archival conditioning data of classical and operant tasks. Twelve female Long-Evans rats completed trials in which they had to learn to correctly choose between two non-consecutive odours from a set of five previously-presented odours. Correct decisions were defined as digging in the earlier-presented odour from the sequence. Combinations of choice trials varied in the number of presentations between odours, from one (e.g., odour 1 vs odour 3) to three (e.g., odour 1 vs odour 5). The results found that rats were unable to reach criterion and learn the task within 25 (four rats) or 15 sequences (eight rats), and there were no significant differences between lags. Additionally, tests found significant spatial preferences which may have impacted their ability to choose effectively. There was no observed relationship between the sequential and past conditioning tasks, as well as no primacy or recency effects influencing decisions. Possible explanations for the insignificant findings are discussed, including potential methodological limitations and confounding effects.

212. Dissociating the Role of Visual and Reward Feedback in a Rapid Aiming Task

Fieldhouse, C.¹, LeBlanc, K.¹, & Neyedli, H.¹

¹Dalhousie University

This study examined whether reward or visual endpoint feedback is necessary and sufficient to drive strategic aiming toward a model-predicted optimum in a risky aiming task. Nine right-handed participants (M age = 20 years, SD = 5) completed a baseline block and two experimental blocks (2 × 200 trials) in a between-subjects design manipulating feedback (Visual Only vs. Reward Only) with order counterbalanced, individual optimal aim points were computed from a decision-theoretic model using baseline endpoint variability. Behavioural measures included mean horizontal endpoint, distance from

model-predicted optimum, endpoint variability, reaction time, and movement time; data were analyzed with 2-Condition \times 3-Block repeated-measures ANOVAs. Results showed a significant main effect of Condition on mean endpoint, $F(1,7) = 7.47$, $p = .03$, and on distance from the optimum, $F(1,7) = 14.83$, $p = .01$, with Reward participants aiming nearer the model optimum. Endpoint variability was substantially lower with visual feedback, $F(1,7) = 30.74$, $p < .001$, and movement times were faster in the Reward condition, $F(1,7) = 13.66$, $p = .01$, reaction times did not differ reliably. These findings indicate that reward feedback promotes value-directed strategic aiming (with greater exploratory variability and faster movements), whereas visual endpoint feedback sharpens precision without reliably shifting mean aim to the expected-value optimum. Future work should replicate with larger samples, extended training, and neurophysiological measures to clarify mechanisms and consolidation of reward-driven strategies.

213. Do Visual Working Memory Intrusions Persist Across Tasks?

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Abstract Despite being an important cognitive system that allows us to maintain and use visual information to guide behaviour, visual working memory (VWM) is severely capacity-limited. Attention-based filtering plays an important role in determining which information is encoded, but when attention is captured by a salient, task-irrelevant feature, filtering can be disrupted, allowing irrelevant features to intrude into VWM and subsequently bias attentional selection. Previous work has shown that intrusions are robust in VWM across delays, but it is unclear if these intrusive representations persist in VWM when attention is diverted during such delays. The present study evaluated whether VWM intrusions persist across an intervening task that redirects attention away from the intrusion features. Participants completed two sequential visual search tasks: In the first, a salient distractor captured attention, causing an intrusion to enter VWM; in the second, memory intrusions were measured via memory-driven capture (the slowing of response times when an item in the environment matches a feature in memory). Experiment 1 replicated memory intrusions using this paradigm. In Experiment 2, an attention-demanding shape discrimination task was inserted between the searches to occupy attentional resources. Here, memory-driven capture was eliminated in the second search. These findings suggest that intrusive VWM representations do not persist automatically but instead require

sustained attention to remain active and influence behaviour. Keywords: visual working memory, attention, attentional capture, memory-driven capture, distraction.

214. **The Impact of Subliminal Distraction on Representations in Visual Working Memory**

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This project explores whether subliminally presented stimuli (i.e., those we are not consciously aware of) affect the things we are currently holding in memory. Previous studies have shown that consciously presented visual distractors can distort currently held representations in visual working memory (VWM), causing remembered features to blend together with distractors—an effect known as attractive bias. Using a computerized memory task with delay-period distractors presented for variable durations (including 12ms; below the threshold for conscious awareness), the present study suggests that even those distractors presented subliminally can produce attractive bias in a concurrently maintained item in VWM.

215. **Exploring the Vigilance Decrement**

Cueoto, E. M.¹, Samuel, G.¹, Klien, R.¹

¹Dalhousie University

This study examined whether the vigilance decrement is driven by a decline in perceptual sensitivity, a shift in response criterion, or both using the signal detection theory. Participants completed a 40-minute visual discrimination task requiring continuous monitoring of subtle line differences. Participants were asked to assume the role of a radar operator and to treat targets as bomber planes and non-targets as decoy planes. Contrary to our prediction, results showed a gradual increase in sensitivity over time, while response criterion remained relatively stable, indicating that the vigilance decrement did not occur. These findings suggest that under highly engaging and visually demanding task conditions, sustained attention is maintained or improved rather than declining. Overall, this study highlights the importance of task design in understanding the underlying mechanism of the vigilance decrement.

216. **Enactment effect interacts with serial positions**

Tristan, G.¹, Saint-Aubin, J.¹, & Gionet, S.¹

¹Université de Moncton

L'effet de l'exécution consiste à effectuer une action ou un mouvement afin de représenter l'information cible. Cette méthode d'encodage fut étudiée concernant son effet sur des tâches de rappel libre (Schatz et al., 2011; Engelkamp et Dehn, 2000). Toutefois, nous avons très peu de renseignements sur comment s'exprime la courbe de positions sérielles avec une tâche de rappel sériel. Dans la présente étude, les participants doivent effectuer une tâche de rappel sériel immédiat où des mots sont présentés séquentiellement à l'écran. Les participants doivent effectuer une action représentant les mots cibles ou simplement les lire silencieusement. Dans une condition, les participants sont exposés à des listes mixtes (mots encodés avec la condition contrôle et avec l'exécution) ou avec des listes pures (une seule condition par liste). La performance au rappel montre un avantage de l'exécution avec les listes mixtes, mais aucun avec les listes pures. Le modèle révisé des caractéristiques propose que l'exécution permette d'ajouter des caractéristiques qui aident au rappel, mais entravent l'autorépétition (Saint-Aubin et al., 2021).

217. **Reproducing Sequential Choice Bias in Perceptual Decision Making: A Behavioral and Drift Diffusion Model Analysis**

Doiron, R.¹, & Redden, R.¹

¹St. Francis Xavier University

Perceptual decision-making is often assumed to involve independent judgments across trials; however, growing evidence suggests that prior choices systematically influence subsequent decisions. The present study examined sequential choice biases using behavioral data and computational modeling based on a replication of established perceptual decision-making paradigms. The primary research question asked whether sequential dependencies are better explained by shifts in the starting point of decisions or by biases in evidence accumulation. Behavioral data from a two-alternative forced-choice task were analyzed to compute repetition probabilities at the participant level. Sequential bias was operationalized as the likelihood of repeating a previous response, with deviations from chance (0.5) indicating dependence across trials. To investigate underlying mechanisms, parameter estimates from hierarchical drift diffusion modeling were examined, focusing on drift bias and starting

point bias. Results demonstrated a significant deviation from independence, with participants showing a systematic tendency toward alternation rather than repetition. Model-based analyses indicated that this effect was more strongly associated with drift bias, suggesting that prior choices influence how incoming sensory evidence is accumulated rather than simply biasing pre-decision states. These findings support the interpretation that perceptual decisions are dynamically shaped by recent history. Implications include reconsidering assumptions of independence in cognitive tasks and improving the interpretability of behavioral data. Future work will involve preregistered model fitting and experimental manipulation of sequential dependencies.

218. **Fine-Tuning Computational Models Of Two-Alternative Forced Choice Learning**

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¹Acadia University

Individual differences in learning are well-documented in human populations, yet previous computational approaches do not explicitly characterize performance on a trial-by-trial basis and do not separate cognitive bias from learning processes. In this study, participants completed a two-alternative forced-choice (2AFC) task governed by a category rule. We developed a computational model that combines a learning component and a bias component, enabling us to track changes in choice behavior on a trial-by-trial basis. The learning component was modeled using a sigmoid function with parameters amplitude, scale, and delay. The bias component included two types: a cubic spline with differing anchor points ($n = 3, 4, 5$) distributed across trials, and a Markov chain with 2 parameters. Hyperparameter tuning was conducted by comparing how well, chosen hyperparameters for a model's components can fit participant data. Model parameters were optimized using maximum likelihood estimation, and models were evaluated using the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC). Results indicated that the model combining the sigmoid learning curve with the cubic spline bias component of $n = 3$ anchor points provided the best fit. Whereas the sigmoid learning Markov-chain bias model and sigmoid learning curve with cubic spline bias component of $n = 5$ anchor points performed worst on AIC and BIC respectively. Future work could extend this approach to more complex 2AFC tasks to investigate how learning and biases evolve across different types of decision-making contexts.

219. Can We Suppress Unwanted Memories? A Replication of Suppression-Induced Forgetting in the Think/No-Think Paradigm

Hu, J.¹, LaSaga, M. S., Hiscock, B. B., Whitridge, J. W., Fawcett, J. M.¹

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The Think/No-Think (TNT) paradigm is commonly used to study how individuals control unwanted memories. In this task, participants learn cue-target word pairs (e.g., PENCIL-GLUE) until they can reliably recall the target when given its cue. Next, a subset of cues is presented, and participants are instructed to either retrieve the associated target (Think trials) or suppress it (No-Think trials). Suppressed items are typically harder to recall on a later test compared to baseline items, an effect known as Suppression-Induced Forgetting (SIF), but this effect has not consistently replicated. Therefore, the present study (N = 50) aimed to replicate the SIF effect using two common instructions (Thought Avoidance and Thought Substitution) and test types (Same Probe and Independent Probe) as part of a larger international replication effort. The results showed a significant SIF effect when collapsed across instruction type for Same Probe trials, but not for Independent Probe trials, indicating successful replication of the SIF effect for Same Probe trials in the local dataset. The results also revealed a significant SIF effect for the Thought Substitution instruction, but not for Thought Avoidance, in Same Probe trials, suggesting a potential difference between instruction types.

220. Le jugement de l'authenticité des sourires: Examen des différences culturelles

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Le sourire étant l'expression faciale la plus fréquente, il joue un rôle central dans les interactions sociales. Toutefois, il est bien établi que les individus peuvent volontairement reproduire certains aspects d'un sourire authentique sans ressentir réellement de joie, ce qui rend leur identification difficile. La littérature indique d'ailleurs que les humains sont généralement peu précis pour distinguer les sourires authentiques des sourires simulés ou masquant une émotion négative. Dans ce contexte, un débat persiste quant au caractère universel ou culturellement spécifique des expressions faciales. L'objectif de l'étude est d'examiner si les différences culturelles observées dans le jugement de l'authenticité des

sourires s'expliquent par des différences dans le traitement visuel. Les participants visionnent des vidéos de sourires authentiques, simulés et de masquage produits par des individus canadiens et ouest-africains pendant que les mouvements de leurs yeux sont mesurés. Les résultats montrent que les participants reconnaissent globalement les sourires authentiques comme étant plus joyeux que les sourires simulés ou masqués. Un effet d'endogroupe est également observé : les Canadiens jugent les sourires de leur propre groupe comme plus joyeux. De plus, ils prennent plus de temps à identifier les sourires simulés, suggérant une plus grande difficulté.

221. **Awe, Beauty, and Meaning in Life**

Martin, D. A.¹, & Patry, M.¹

¹Saint Mary's University

This study examined the relationship between awe, perceived beauty, and meaning in life using a three-condition between-subjects experiment. Despite widespread theoretical claims that awe is a "meaning-making emotion," empirical support remains sparse and methodologically limited. The present study addressed this gap using validated, multidimensional measures of both awe and meaning in life. Ninety participants were randomly assigned to view one of three videos: a nature documentary of Yosemite National Park (positive awe), a National Geographic tornado clip (negative awe), or a workplace safety video (neutral control). Following exposure, participants completed a two-item experienced-beauty measure, the Awe Experience Scale (AWE-S; Yaden et al., 2019), and the Multidimensional Existential Meaning Scale (MEMS; George & Park, 2017). The awe induction was highly successful ($\eta^2 = .43$), and beauty ratings differed significantly across all three conditions ($\eta^2 = .62$). However, awe condition had no significant effect on MEMS total scores or any subscale ($\eta^2 = .02$), and awe and meaning in life were essentially uncorrelated at the individual level ($r = -.01$). Notably, the two awe conditions produced equivalent awe scores yet differed significantly on beauty ratings, providing novel empirical support for a distinction between aesthetic and threat-based awe. These findings challenge claims that awe reliably promotes meaning in life and suggest that prior positive findings may reflect dispositional confounds or weak measurement. Future research should employ stronger inductions and longitudinal designs to clarify this relationship.

222. **Empowered Encounters: Self Advocacy and Sexual Autonomy in University Campus Hookup Culture**

Rowse, K.¹, & Prusaczyk, E.¹

¹St. Francis Xavier University

University hookup culture is a well-established part of undergraduate life, yet many students begin university with little preparation, mixed peer messages, and uneven understandings of consent, boundaries, and emotional safety. Early experiences in this culture shape students' well-being, agency, and confidence in navigating intimate relationships, but campus resources often provide only broad consent education rather than practical, student-informed guidance on navigating hookup culture. This study addressed that gap by interviewing senior students at St. Francis Xavier University (N = 15). Semi-structured interviews were analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Results identified four key themes: a) concerns, with codes of sexually transmitted infection (STI) concerns and other safety risks; b) enabling factors, like living in residence or the effects of alcohol; c) empowerment, such as enjoyment or confidence increase; and d) motivations of participation, with codes of seeking fun, craving attention, or wanting a no-strings-attached hookup. Moreover, participants provided feedback on a resource created to support the formation of a peer-guided toolkit for first-year sexual health programming. Senior students' reflections include advice they would offer to students in their first year, such as warnings about STIs, setting boundaries, and placing higher value on intimate interactions. These findings highlight specific challenges first-year students struggle to anticipate and the gaps in institutional messaging. Findings suggest that interactive workshops would be beneficial in teaching first-year students about hookup culture, with sexual health programming that provides realistic, actionable, and emotionally grounded guidance for navigating the culture on the StFX campus.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS / PRÉSENTATIONS ORALES

SESSION 1 / SÉANCE 1: 9:00 – 10:05 am

Session 1A / Séance 1A – Clinical and Counselling / Clinique et Conseil

Comparing the Impacts of Yin-inspired Restorative and Hatha Yogas on Perceived Stress, Sleep Quality, and Cognitive Function

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Comparing the Impacts of Yin-inspired Restorative and Hatha Yogas on Perceived Stress, Sleep Quality, and Cognitive Function Recent research has shown that practicing yoga seems to produce benefits across a number of domains including perceived stress levels, sleep quality, and cognition. However, attempts to compare various forms of yoga (e.g., Hatha, Yin, and Restorative yogas) for any specific differential benefits have produced largely inconclusive findings. In a repeated measures design (i.e., 4 weekly yoga sessions) and using simple, novel assessment tools, this study compared two yoga groups (i.e., a Hatha group - an active form of yoga which flows through poses in standing, seated, and supine poses; and a Yin-Influenced Restorative group - a passive form of yoga in which participants hold poses for 3-7 minutes) on levels of perceived stress, overall sleep quality, and working memory. Significant improvements across all dependent variables were observed for both groups, with these changes being experienced at similar rates. Thus, participants engaging in an active form of yoga, like Hatha, experience the same benefits in perceived stress reduction, better overall sleep quality, and improved working memory as those who practice passive forms of yoga, like Yin and Restorative. These results have potential implications for specific populations such as older adults and/or those with mobility or cognitive impairments. Avenues for future research is discussed.

Personality Traits to Emotional and Behavioural Outcomes: Cognitive Mediation in Adolescents

Treffler, E.¹, Snooks, T., McAlister, S., Le, B., Hamilton, H., Krank, M., Conrod, P., & Stewart, S.¹

¹Dalhousie University

Depression and conduct problems are common mental health difficulties in adolescence, associated with significant impairment and long-term risk. Personality-based prevention models propose traits such as hopelessness and impulsivity increase vulnerability to specific psychological difficulties through intermediate cognitive processes, including negatively biased automatic thoughts. This project involved secondary analysis of baseline data from the Canadian Underage Substance Use Prevention (CUSP) trial to examine whether personal failure and hostile automatic thoughts mediated the associations between personality traits and emotional and behavioural outcomes in adolescents. CUSP is a multi-site school-based study including 2,834 secondary school students from 27 schools across Canada. Self-report measures assessed hopelessness, impulsivity, automatic thoughts, depressive symptoms, and conduct problems. Two parallel mediation models were tested using the PROCESS macro for SPSS with bias-corrected bootstrapped confidence intervals to evaluate indirect effects. Results generally supported the hypothesized mediational framework. Personal failure thoughts significantly mediated the association between hopelessness and depressive symptoms, while hostile thoughts also played a significant but smaller mediational role. Similarly, hostile thoughts significantly mediated the association between impulsivity and conduct problems, with personal failure thoughts also playing a significant but smaller mediational role. In both models, direct effects remained significant after accounting for the mediators, indicating partial cognitive mediation. Findings are consistent with personality-based prevention models and suggest personality risk traits are associated with adolescent mental health outcomes through multiple cognitive pathways, with stronger indirect effects observed for the theoretically predicted mechanisms. Results support the relevance of targeting cognitive processes within selective personality-based prevention programs such as PreVenture.

Self-Comforting and Emotion Regulation in Adults

Hickman, M.¹, & Hutchings, V. M. M.¹

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Emotion regulation and self-comforting are important aspects of coping with emotions. Despite this, the overlap between these concepts is yet to be unraveled. This study sought to investigate the relationship between difficulties in emotion regulation and the use of self-comforting behaviours, as well as how age relates to them. It was hypothesized that problems in emotion regulation (as measured by the Difficulties in

Emotion Regulation Scale [DERS; Gratz & Roemer, 2004]) would be correlated with both age and the use of self-comforting behaviours (as measured by the Self-Comforting and Coping Scale [SCCS; Obohwemu, 2025]), as well as predict the use of self-comforting behaviours. A sample of 90 adults (aged 18-85 years old) completed the SCCS and the DERS online or on paper. It was found that age, total DERS scores, and total SCCS scores were all significantly correlated. DERS total score also significantly predicted SCCS total score, $r_{2\text{part}} = .13$, $p < .001$. Further analysis on the factors of the DERS revealed that the awareness factor significantly predicted 22% SCCS total score, $p < .001$. These findings suggest that awareness plays an important role in self-comforting. In this way, interventions aimed at increasing awareness may be effective at improving one's ability to self comfort thereby increasing their overall ability to cope.

Cannabis craving while anticipating a trauma reminder: The roles of cannabis coping motives and anxiety sensitivity

MacDougall, E.¹, DeGrace, S.¹, Rostampour, R., & Stewart, S. H.¹

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Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is associated with increased cannabis use, often as a means of coping with trauma-related distress. Atasoy et al. (2023) found that PTSD symptom severity predicted trauma cue-elicited cannabis craving via coping motives. However, trauma-exposed individuals may also experience heightened craving in anticipation of potentially needing to recall a traumatic event. We expand on Atasoy's model by investigating whether cannabis coping motives serve as a mediator between PTSD symptom severity and three aspects of negative anticipation elicited (NAE) cannabis craving: relief, reward, and compulsivity, along with overall craving. We then examine whether anxiety sensitivity (AS) moderates this model. A sample of 202 trauma-exposed, cannabis-using adults completed validated measures of PTSD symptoms, cannabis coping motives, AS, and cannabis craving after being warned they might be asked to recall a distressing personal trauma. Structural equation modelling was used to test the hypotheses. Coping motives mediated the association between PTSD symptom severity and all components of NAE cannabis craving, replicating and extending prior findings. The mediation model accounted for more variance in relief-oriented craving (43%) than in reward (10%) or compulsivity (27%). AS was positively correlated with PTSD symptom severity and coping motives, but did not moderate the indirect effect on total cannabis

craving. Post hoc analyses indicated that AS predicted overall NAE cannabis craving indirectly via PTSD symptom severity and cannabis coping motives. These findings suggest that coping-motivated craving may be particularly relevant to anticipatory, relief-oriented cannabis craving among trauma-exposed individuals, with AS serving as a transdiagnostic risk factor.

Exploring Women's Experiences with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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This research explores Canadian women's experiences with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), focusing on both those who have received a diagnosis in adulthood and those who suspect ASD but do not yet have a diagnosis. Women are often under diagnosed, misdiagnosed, or diagnosed later in life compared to men, leading to negative mental health outcomes, reduced sense of belonging, and limited access to supports. According to Hull's (2020) female autism phenotype theory, autistic girls and women often display traits, such as stronger social communication and masking behaviours, that differ from the traditional male-based presentation, contributing to diagnostic delays and missed recognition. Using a cross-sectional online survey of Canadian women aged 18 and older, with and without formal diagnoses in adulthood, this study examined women's diagnostic journeys, their perceptions of belonging and self-stigma, and the types of supports they felt would be most beneficial. Similarities and differences between the diagnosed and suspecting groups will be discussed. The findings from this study highlight a need for more inclusive diagnostic practices, support systems, and knowledge of ASD in women.

Small t Trauma and Depression: The Moderation Effect of Cultural Orientation

Bu, T.¹

¹St. Thomas University

Trauma research has predominantly focused on Big "T" traumas (BTT), referring to events meeting the DSM-5 criterion of actual or threatened death. Comparatively less attention has been given to small "t" traumas (StT), which are subjectively distressing but non-life-threatening experiences like emotional neglect and ongoing family conflict. Literature suggests that self-construal may shape how individuals appraise and

respond to such experiences, yet its moderating role in the StT-depression relationship has received limited attention. The present study examined (a) the relationship between StT and depressive symptoms, (b) whether the StT-depression association exceeded BTT-depression relationships reported in meta-analyses, and (c) whether independent and interdependent self-construal moderated this relationship. A cross-sectional online survey was administered to 190 eligible undergraduate participants. For the main analyses, StT was assessed using the Small "t" Traumatic Experiences Identification Scale, depression was measured using the Beck Depression Inventory-II, and cultural orientation was measured using the Self-Construal Scale. Correlational analyses demonstrated a large, significant positive association between StT and depression ($r = .57, p < .001$), which significantly exceeded pooled meta-analytic BTT-depression estimates ($z = 5.7, p < .001$). Moderation analyses showed null results for both self-construal dimensions. However, independent self-construal showed a significant direct negative effect on depressive symptoms ($b = -.20, p = .016$). These findings underscore StT's clinical relevance as a contributor to depression, challenge the field's disproportionate focus on life-threatening events, and suggest independent self-construal may serve as a protective factor. Limitations include the cross-sectional design, self-report reliance, and restricted cultural variability.

Session 1B / Séance 1B – Biological and Cognition / Biologie et Cognition

Individual differences in pupil dilation in relation to working memory capacity

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Despite being involuntary, pupil size can be influenced by cognitive processes, such as the number of items maintained in one's working memory (WM). Furthermore, individuals with higher WM capacity show higher baseline pupil size and lower pupil size variability, suggesting that pupil size may serve as an objective indicator of individual differences in cognitive capacity. To replicate and extend these findings, we manipulated WM load in an eye-tracking task and measured self-reported WM capacity using the Cognitive Failures Questionnaire 2.0. We hypothesized that (1) a larger pupil diameter would be observed when participants engaged in a difficult WM task, (2) baseline pupil size would be positively correlated with WM capacity, and (3) variability in pupil

size would be negatively correlated with WM capacity. Forty participants performed high- and low-load WM tasks, while pupil diameter was recorded using a video-based eye tracker. In the high-load task, participants were asked to remember the order of six numbers; in the low-load task, they were asked to remember the colour. After, a probe was shown, and participants responded if it was the same or different order/colour from what was remembered. Results showed that WM task accuracy was higher, and reaction times were faster in the low-load task. Consistent with the response measures, pupil size was also smaller during a low-load task. Baseline pupil size did not correlate with WM capacity, whereas variability in pupil size did as expected. These findings support that pupillary responses can serve as a sensitive index of cognitive processing capacities.

Valenced Stimuli Bias the Content but not the Frequency of Mind-Wandering Episodes

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¹Mount Allison University

Mind-wandering (MW) refers to thoughts that are unrelated to the task at hand. It is linked to increased activity in the brain's default mode network, while the locus coeruleus norepinephrine system helps maintain focus on tasks. MW can occur either intentionally or unintentionally, but what determines the content of unintentional MW is still unclear. This study examined whether environmental cues could influence the content of MW. Participants first rated images based on their emotional tone: positive, negative, or neutral, with each type linked to a specific colour. Then, they completed the Sustained Attention to Response Task (SART), where each block was outlined with a previously learned colour. Thought probes were randomly introduced to measure how often MW occurred and what it involved. The findings showed that the overall frequency of MW did not vary across conditions. However, negative MW was more common during trials associated with emotionally valenced colours compared to neutral ones. These results suggest that while such cues do not change how often MW happens, they do shape its emotional content

The Impact of Emotional Valence on the Colavita Effect

St George, S.¹, LaPointe, M.¹, & Desmarais, G.¹

¹Mount Allison University

The Colavita effect is a perceptual phenomenon in which participants fail to report the auditory component of an audiovisual stimulus more frequently than they fail to report the visual component. Stimuli semantics were recently shown to influence Colavita effect size: presenting incongruent animal and musical stimuli (concrete neutral objects) weakened the effect. This study investigated the effect of emotional congruence, as valence is a stimulus characteristic inferred by the observer. Participants were presented with visual, auditory, and audiovisual stimuli and asked to report the stimulus modality. Crucially, bimodal stimuli were 50% congruent (e.g., happy face, happy sound) and 50% incongruent (e.g., happy face, sad sound). Given evidence that negative affect can influence perception through biased attention, the DASS-21 was administered to evaluate the predictive ability of mental health. As expected, participant responses to bimodal trials were slower than responses to unimodal auditory and visual trials. A significant Colavita effect was observed for incongruent trials but not congruent trials. Interestingly, participants' anxiety levels also impacted responding. This unusual error pattern may reflect the impact of emotional content or stimulus duration on audiovisual integration. Results will be discussed in the context of anxious arousal and sensory perception.

Objective Robotic Evaluation of Motor and Cognitive Function in Older Adults with Subjective Cognitive Impairment

Grandy K. V.¹, Orbasli E. A.¹, Blaney A. E.¹, Mohamed B. O.¹, Dube B.¹, Ploughman M.¹, & Bray N.W.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland – St. John's

While research has linked gait or walking to dementia, few studies have examined the relationship with upper-limb function, which is interesting given its involvement in gross (i.e., carrying groceries or using a walker) and fine (i.e., buttoning a shirt) motor movements. Subjective cognitive impairment (SCI) is characterized by self-reported decline in memory or thinking, despite performing “normal” on standardized, objective clinical tests. This study aimed to determine if motor-cognitive upper-limb tasks administered via a robotic tool (i.e., KINARM) can differentiate between older adults living with and without SCI. We classified participants as SCI-present and SCI-absent based on their response to: “Do you feel that your memory or thinking skills have got worse recently?” Using the KINARM, participants completed the following four tasks: Visually Guided Reaching, Trail Making Parts A & B, Spatial Span, and Paired-Associates Learning. We collected data in a single session and analyzed it

using an independent-samples t-, Welch's t- or Mann-Whitney U tests, as appropriate. This study included 29 participants: We classified 12 as SCI-present (7 females; mean age 68.67 ± 4.96 years) and the remaining 17 (14 females) as SCI-absent (mean age 69.24 ± 6.12 years). We observed no statistically significant between-group differences in any of the KINARM outcomes. In conclusion, the KINARM cannot distinguish between SCI-present and SCI-absent. Therefore, and in alignment with standardized clinical assessments, performance on the KINARM is not yet sensitive enough to early cognitive-motor change.

Uncertainty in Preschool Decision-Making

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Intolerance of uncertainty (IU) is characterized by negative responses to ambiguous situations and has been associated with maladaptive decision-making in older populations. However, little research has examined IU in early childhood due to the limited availability of developmentally appropriate measures. The present study aimed to develop and evaluate a novel Preschool Intolerance of Uncertainty (PIU) task and examine its relationship with decision-making strategies in preschool-aged children. A particular decision-making style marked by excessive switching and indecisiveness was hypothesised to be related to IU. Participants (N = 84; ages 3-6 years) completed the Preschool Gambling Task (PGT), the PIU task, and two probability learning tasks with 100% and 86% reward contingencies. The PIU task was found to have internal reliability, but validity is still unclear. Additionally, analyses further demonstrated that children's strategy use during the probability learning task was influenced by the reliability of feedback, with greater uncertainty potentially reducing the use of simple reinforcement-based strategies. Together, these findings contribute to a growing understanding of how young children learn to navigate uncertain environments.

Session 1C / Séance 1C – Cognition / Cognition

The Impact of Nicotine on EEG-Derived Markers of Sustained Attention Across the Human Menstrual Cycle

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¹Mount Saint Vincent University

The hormonal fluctuations seen across the human menstrual cycle (HMC) have been shown to have varying effects on cognitive performance. Nicotine is a psychoactive stimulant that can temporarily improve cognitive performance (e.g., sustained attention) at mild to moderate doses. This double-blind, placebo-controlled study examined the effects of nicotine on event-related potential markers of sustained attention (P3b) across the menstrual and luteal phases of the HMC. Participants (N = 16) underwent two testing sessions (one during the luteal and one during the menstrual phase), in which they received either a 6mg dose of nicotine gum or a placebo. They completed the AX version of the continuous performance task (AX-CPT) as a measure of sustained attention, while EEG data was recorded. This study found that P3b amplitude was higher in the menstrual phase than it was in the luteal phase, only in the placebo drug condition. Nicotine appeared to reduce cortical effort to engage in a sustained attention task during the menstrual phase, therefore improving cortical efficiency; however, nicotine also increased reaction times. Nicotine also only impacted false alarm rates in the menstrual phase, indicating that hormonal fluctuations between HMC phases may interact with nicotine to affect behavioural measures of sustained attention. This study highlights the need for further investigation of how hormonal fluctuations throughout the HMC may affect cognition.

Intentional Forgetting of Emotional Stimuli

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¹Dalhousie University

Forgetting serves an adaptive function by preventing irrelevant information from consuming limited cognitive resources. While intentional forgetting has been well-established for neutral stimuli using directed forgetting (DF) paradigm, emotional material receives preferential and automatic processing that may resist cognitive control. The current study used an item-method DF paradigm embedded within rapid serial visual presentation (RSVP) to determine whether negative valence reduces the DF effect when slower encoding processes are eliminated. During the study phase, negative or neutral words (embedded in a stream of nonsense strings) were each presented for only 100ms before an instruction to Remember or to Forget. This brief exposure permits early automatic emotional processing but limits slower processes that might otherwise be engaged during the pre-instruction interval. Following the presentation of all study words, participants performed a yes-no recognition test. Results showed a robust overall DF effect, with

better recognition of to-be-remembered words than to-be-forgotten words. Critically, this DF effect was smaller for negative words than for neutral words. These findings suggest that early automatic processing is sufficient to interfere with directed forgetting, even when later pre-instruction elaborative encoding is constrained. The results are consistent with a resource competition account in which emotionally salient stimuli draw on the limited attentional resources needed to implement both remember and forget intentions.

The Impacts of Brief Meditation on Dual-Task Performance and Recognition Memory

Stokes, B. E.¹, & LaPointe, M.R.P.¹

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Attention is known to operate with limited resources. Yet, researchers have shown that when simultaneously memorizing words and engaging in a detection task, recognition memory is best for words paired with target signals, a phenomenon known as the attentional boost effect (ABE). When the word list is comprised of low and high frequency words, the ABE is larger for high than low frequency words, which suggests the mechanism that typically produces better recognition memory for low than high frequency words is redundant with the mechanism underlying the ABE. The current study extends these findings by introducing a meditation manipulation, with half of participants exposed to brief meditation training and half exposed to a control condition. Participants then completed a recognition memory task for high and low frequency words that also included a detection component. The results show that in this divided attention task, recognition memory was best on trials in which a target signal was detected, low frequency words were better remembered than high frequency words, and the meditation group showed better memory than the control group. However, these factors did not interact, suggesting attentional enhancements due to detecting targets, encountering low frequency words, and meditating involve separate mechanisms.

Let's Tok About It: TikTok's Emotional Impacts on Decision-making

Lawlor, M.¹, & Stewart, P.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland – Grenfell

Emotions play a large role in decision making, with research finding that incidental emotions (i.e., choice-unrelated, carry-over emotions) can

positively or negatively impact decision-making depending on the type of content observed (e.g., happy or sad videos). The use of audiovisual materials can effectively induce emotions. Popular social media applications (i.e., TikTok) are designed to present a constant stream of videos and, thus, emotional materials. Despite this, the impact of such use has not been studied. The current study examined how inducing emotions through TikTok videos affected individuals' decision making in different situations. Seventy-nine participants (68 women, 9 men, and 2 individuals identifying as other genders) were randomly assigned to one of three video groups (i.e., happy, sad, or neutral). After viewing the video, participants completed the trolley and footbridge dilemmas and a measure of risk-taking (the Domain-Specific Risk-Taking scale). Data were analyzed using ANOVA and chi-square models. Overall, the hypotheses were not supported. All participants, regardless of video group assignment, responded and scored similarly across dilemmas and risk-taking measurements. Several limitations and implications of the current study will be discussed to place its findings in the context of the extant literature. Regardless, this study is one of the first to explore how social media platforms may alter one's emotional experience and subsequent decision-making processes.

Drug Education through Active Learning: Using 3D-Printed Models for Opioid Education

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¹Dalhousie University

The opioid crisis has damaged tens of thousands of Canadian lives over the past decade. Many initiatives aim to prevent harmful opioid use, yet overdoses from misuse remain a significant public health concern. Early education using effective and engaging methods should be at the forefront of healthcare efforts aiming to prevent opioid misuse. This study sought to assess a hands-on, neuroscience activity about opioid receptors with undergraduate students. We compared passive learning (lecture video) to active learning (collaborative group task using 3D models) on measures of objective performance and self-perceived knowledge gains about opioid drugs. Twenty-eight undergraduate students were block randomly assigned to one of two conditions: the control group watched a recorded lecture video on opioid mechanisms and overdose, while the experimental group participated in a guided, hands-on group activity using 3D models of receptors, neurotransmitters, and drugs. Using a paired samples t-test, we found both educational materials significantly increased post-activity

test scores compared to pre-activity values, showing increased knowledge of opioids. Participants in the active learning condition reported higher perceived knowledge gains, but not a significantly higher interest gain. Lastly, given the small sample size collected to date, our ANCOVA analysis found no significant difference between conditions for objective knowledge gain, with active and passive methods showing similar impacts. The across-conditions improvement in knowledge of opioids provides support for the use of neuroscience and virtual resources in drug prevention programs.

The role of orthographic regularities in vocabulary learning during story reading in skilled adult readers

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¹Saint Mary's University

There is substantial evidence that seeing a written word can have beneficial effects for learning the word's spelling and pronunciation, referred to as the orthographic facilitation effect. However, results of studies examining the orthographic facilitation effect for vocabulary learning are mixed, potentially due to over-simplified assessment tasks. This study addresses these gaps by exploring potential mechanisms underlying the orthographic facilitation effect for vocabulary learning. We hypothesize that it will be easier to learn meanings of words with high-frequency vs. low-frequency orthographic regularities. To test this prediction, participants will be asked to read stories containing nonwords with high (e.g., ss) or low frequency (e.g., kk) doublets in initial or medial positions, and to write definitions that clearly demonstrate the nonwords' meanings (e.g., "a haffem is..."). This design tests whether awareness of orthographic regularities underlies the orthographic facilitation effect when learning new vocabulary during story reading. Data collection is currently underway.

SESSION 2 / SÉANCE 2: 10:10 – 11:05 am

Session 2A / Séance 2A – Social and Personality / Social et
Personnalité

A Fathers Bond, A Queer Self: How Paternal Relationships Predict Internalized Homophobia

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Meyers Minority Stress Model is a theoretical framework emphasizing how individuals from disadvantaged social positions tend to experience higher rates of unique stressors. Focusing primarily on internalized homophobia in 2SLGBTQIA+ adults as a minority stressor, our research aimed to analyze the influence of paternal acceptance of sexual orientation, paternal anxious attachment, and individuals' level of neuroticism on higher self-reported minority stress. We hypothesized that: lower paternal acceptance will predict higher internalized homophobia, higher anxious attachment will predict higher internalized homophobia, higher neuroticism will predict higher internalized homophobia, and that the combination of the three independent variables will predict higher internalized homophobia. All four of our hypotheses were not supported. Using Lime Survey to collect 87 participants, and IBM SPSS Statistics for our analysis, we found a significant negative correlation between low paternal acceptance and high paternal anxious attachment, suggesting that as perceived paternal support decreases, higher feelings of anxious attachment towards the paternal figure will emerge. Additionally, results revealed a trend of paternal acceptance predicting higher rates of internalized homophobia. Overall, low rates of internalized homophobia among the sample were recorded, suggesting further research in what predicts internalized homophobia in 2SLGBTQIA+ adults should be explored.

Old Flames, New Feelings: How Do Past Relationships Affect Today's?

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¹Cape Breton University

Retroactive jealousy, defined as distress regarding a partner's past romantic or sexual relationships, has received growing attention in contemporary relationships, particularly as social media increases access to partners' histories. Despite its potential impact on relationship functioning, it remains understudied relative to present-focused jealousy. The present study had two aims: first, to develop and validate a revised measure of retroactive jealousy, and second, to examine how retroactive jealousy relates to relationship satisfaction through key relational processes. Adults in monogamous romantic relationships completed an online self-report survey assessing retroactive jealousy, attachment anxiety, trust, conflict, social media jealousy, and relationship satisfaction. Factor analytic procedures supported a three-factor structure of the revised retroactive jealousy scale, providing evidence for its

psychometric utility. Structural equation modelling tested a path model in which trust and conflict mediated associations between retroactive jealousy and relationship satisfaction, while attachment anxiety and social media jealousy were examined as moderators. Results indicated that retroactive jealousy was not consistently associated with relationship satisfaction directly; however, significant indirect effects emerged through trust and conflict. Higher retroactive jealousy was associated with lower trust and greater conflict, which predicted lower relationship satisfaction. Behavioural retroactive jealousy demonstrated direct and indirect associations, whereas emotional retroactive jealousy did not. Limited evidence was found for moderation by attachment anxiety and social media jealousy. These findings suggest that retroactive jealousy influences relationship satisfaction primarily through relational processes rather than direct pathways. Further, the revised three-factor measure offers a useful tool for future research on retroactive jealousy and romantic relationships.

Left-Wing Authoritarianism and Discrimination: Examining Personality and Hiring Decisions

Steeves, M.¹, Perunovic, M.¹, & Perunovic, W. Q. E.

¹St. Thomas University

Authoritarianism involves a preference for social conformity, punishment of norm violators, and submission to authority. While most research has focused on Right-Wing Authoritarianism, recent work has examined Left-Wing Authoritarianism (LWA), which reflects similar psychological processes applied to progressive ideology. LWA consists of three subdimensions: anti-hierarchical aggression (AHA; wanting to punish and/or harm groups in power), top-down censorship, and anticonventionalism. Although LWA has been associated with negative attitudes toward ideologically nonconforming groups, little research has examined whether it predicts discrimination. The present study investigated whether LWA predicts subtle hiring discrimination against applicants with Jewish identities. Undergraduate participants (N = 58) were randomly assigned to evaluate either a neutral resume or an equivalent resume containing subtle Jewish identity cues. Participants also completed self-report measures of LWA and other personality variables. It was hypothesized that higher LWA would predict discrimination with more negative evaluations of the Jewish applicant. Data was analyzed using univariate analyses of covariance with interaction terms and simple slopes analyses. Results indicated that AHA

significantly interacted with condition to predict discrimination. That is, although AHA did not correlate with a decision to hire the applicant in the control condition, it did so negatively in the Jewish-applicant condition. This effect was mediated by self-reported dislike rather than perceived qualifications, which did not differ across conditions. These findings suggest that ideology combined with anti-hierarchical aggression may predict discrimination driven by prejudicial dislike rather than objective evaluation. As such, the findings demonstrate that subtle antisemitic bias can persist even in self-identified egalitarian spaces, despite the absence of explicit political cues.

I Know What You Did Last Summer!

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Despite the popularity of parasocial research, there are notable gaps in the literature regarding the prevalence among other fundamental components of parasocial relationships (PSRs). Social media is believed to play a large role in facilitating PSRs, however social media use has been associated with negative outcomes for interpersonal relationships. More research is needed to establish the association between PSRs and social media, and the potential impacts for interpersonal relationships. The current study addressed these gaps in the literature by examining: 1) the prevalence and components of PSRs; 2) how the intensity and type of social media use, specifically PSR strength (interest-in, knowledge-of, and interaction-with) and social media use (passive, active, intensity) were associated with relationship outcomes (interpersonal relationship satisfaction and social connectedness); and 3) whether social interaction anxiety moderated these associations. Participants were 183 ($M_{age} = 26.80$, $SD_{age} = 10.66$) predominantly female (79.8%) and Caucasian (68.9%) adults who completed an online questionnaire. Overall, 43.7% of participants had knowledge of a PSR while 25.1% reported having a PSR that was carried out primarily through a social media platform. Results from bivariate correlations showed a positive association between passive social media use and interpersonal relationship satisfaction. Findings from hierarchical regression models showed that higher levels of social interaction anxiety predicted poorer social connectedness and interpersonal relationship satisfaction. It may be that social media provides an outlet for individuals with interpersonal difficulties, such as social interaction anxiety, to meet their social needs in a more controlled setting.

Session 2B / Séance 2B – Health / Santé

Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation in Multiple Sclerosis: Establishing Feasibility for Neurophysiological Application

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Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic autoimmune disorder characterized by demyelination in the central nervous system. Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) can measure the functional integrity of the corticospinal tract, a key motor pathway commonly damaged in MS. However, there remains insufficient evidence regarding the practicality and tolerability of TMS as a neurophysiological measurement technique in MS. As such, we aimed to determine TMS feasibility and safety. We performed a retrospective cross-sectional analysis using data from HITMS, an ongoing longitudinal study of clinical, neuroimmune, and blood-based outcomes in individuals with MS in Newfoundland and Labrador. Eligibility was assessed using an international consensus TMS safety screening form. Adverse events were classified by severity. Our sample included 316 TMS sessions. Twenty-one participants were ineligible due to: seizure history ($n = 9$), medication contraindications ($n = 8$), potential pregnancy ($n = 2$), recent head trauma ($n = 1$), and metal implants ($n = 1$). An additional 12 participants did not complete TMS despite being eligible. Of the 283 remaining TMS sessions, seven involved a mild adverse event, including: fatigue ($n = 4$) and discomfort ($n = 3$). Peak TMS intensity, but not session time or the number of TMS pulses, was higher in those who experienced an adverse event ($74.57\% \pm 13.8$ vs. $61.25\% \pm 17.7$; $p = .038$). TMS is feasible (90% of planned sessions proceeded) and safe (2.5% mild adverse events) in MS if the proper screening procedures are followed, supporting its broader usage as a neurophysiological biomarker of corticospinal function.

Assistive Technology: Frequency, Satisfaction, and Psychosocial Outcomes in Nova Scotian University Students

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¹St. Francis Xavier University

Assistive Technologies (AT) are “any product whose primary function is to maintain or improve an individual’s functioning and independence and thereby promote their well-being”. There is evidence to suggest that ATs improve functioning, reduce activity limitations, promote social inclusion,

and self-efficacy, an important trait for development in early adulthood. This study investigated the differences in self-efficacy, academic outcomes, depression, and anxiety symptoms between students with disabilities and without disabilities and their associations with AT frequency of use and satisfaction by using an anonymous online survey. Students with disabilities scored significantly lower on all self-efficacy measures than students without disabilities, indicating a need for additional self-efficacy supports. Moreover, students with disabilities who used organization and task management tools often had higher self-efficacy than students who barely used the AT. This result is consistent with theoretical knowledge on general AT use, which has previously been associated with academic self-efficacy. Highly satisfied students without disabilities who used notetaking & studying, organizational & time management, and productivity & distraction management ATs frequently had a higher level of anxiety. These findings help to inform future policies for institutions to provide additional self-efficacy support for students with disabilities. Future research should focus on the important factors associated with reducing stigma to AT use, as this remains one of the most prevalent challenges that plagues students with disabilities.

Exploring Factor Associated with Sexual Functioning Related Distress in Adolescents and Young Adults with Cancer

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A cancer diagnosis can profoundly impact adolescents and young adults (AYAs; 15-39 years). Sexual dysfunction is reported in about 50% of AYAs. This study investigates factors associated with sexual functioning related distress in AYAs with cancer using baseline data from the Young Adult Cancer Canadas (YACC)RECOVER study. Canadian AYAs with cancer, aged 18-39 (N=538, 76% women), completed an online survey. Univariable and multivariable logistic regressions were used to explore demographic, cancer-related, and psychological variables associated with the question “In the PAST WEEK, how much DISTRESS have you experienced as a result of the following: - Sexual Issues (e.g., Pain, sex Drive?)” from the CDS-AYA scale. Responses of “none” were coded as “no distress”; all others were coded “distressed”. Participants with gynecological, breast and gastrointestinal cancers reported the greatest distress. At the multivariable level, compared to those who are single, AYAs in a relationship endorsed more distress regarding sexual functioning (AOR = 3.045, $p < .001$). Compared to those who reported no

depressive symptoms, having mild depressive symptoms was associated with greater sexual distress (AOR = 2.094, $p = 0.003$). Compared to those completed treatment, not having received (AOR = 0.184, $p < .001$) or not having completed treatment (AOR = 0.399 $p < .001$), were associated with less sexual functioning distress. Perceived social support (AOR = 0.843, $p < .001$) was associated with less sexual functioning distress.

Understanding which factors are associated with sexual functioning related distress in AYAs can help inform proper interventions and supports.

Can Performance Anxiety Be Induced in a Laboratory Context? A Same-Different Task

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¹ Université de Moncton

L'anxiété de performance demeure très peu présente dans la littérature malgré son importance. Elle peut se déconstruire en cinq composantes, soit (1) la menace sociale, (2) la perception de la situation, (3) la cognition, (4) le contrôle attentionnel et (5) la motivation. Nous avons alors développé un scénario expérimental incluant de la duperie qui met en vigueur ces cinq composantes et évalué s'il est possible d'induire l'anxiété de performance en laboratoire. Les participants, répartis aléatoirement en deux groupes, soit le groupe non-anxiogène et anxigène, ont rempli une mesure de l'anxiété pré/post-tâche et un questionnaire sociodémographique avant d'effectuer une tâche Same-Different, puis terminé avec une échelle de motivation situationnelle. Nous avons prédit que (1) le groupe anxigène devrait avoir un score plus élevé sur l'échelle d'anxiété après avoir effectué la tâche cognitive et que (2) leur performance à la tâche cognitive serait meilleure grâce à une motivation et un engagement plus élevés à la tâche. Les résultats montrent que (1) les participants du groupe expérimental sont plus anxieux après avoir effectué la tâche et que (2) la performance à la tâche était significativement meilleure que ceux du groupe contrôle au niveau du temps de réponse, mais ne diffèrent pas au niveau de la précision des réponses. Étant donné que l'anxiété de performance est un sujet particulièrement délicat à mesurer en laboratoire, notre expérience constitue une alternative éthique de l'induire, constituant un premier pas dans l'avancement de la recherche dans ce domaine.

Exploring Associations Among Mild to Moderate Prenatal Maternal Depressive Symptoms, Maternal Serum Inflammatory Biomarkers, and Neonatal Outcomes

Grace, A.¹

¹Mount Allison University

Pregnancy is associated with a range of physiological and psychological changes that requires coping. Depressive symptoms are common during pregnancy and have been associated with poor neonatal outcomes. This study sought to examine the associations among mild-to-moderate prenatal maternal depressive symptoms, maternal serum inflammatory biomarkers (C-reactive protein (CRP), interleukin-6 (IL-6) and tumor necrosis factor- α (TNF- α)), and neonatal outcomes (APGAR scores and birth weight). The current study was a secondary analysis of a multi-hospital-site prospective study with 170 nulliparous women. Depressive symptoms were measured using Patient Health Questionnaire -9 (PHQ-9). PHQ-9, CRP, IL-6 and TNF- α were measured at both early (T1) and mid-gestation (T2). APGAR scores and birth weight were extracted from delivery charts. Inflammatory biomarkers were not significantly associated with PHQ-9 at either time points. There were no significant prospective association between depressive symptoms and inflammatory biomarkers when controlled for the covariates. CRP at T2 was positively correlated with APGAR scores at five minutes yet it did not reach significance in multiple regression analysis. IL-6 and TNF- α were not significantly associated with neonatal outcomes. Depressive symptoms were neither significantly associated with APGAR scores nor with birth weight. Despite valid measures and relatively strong statistical power, findings did not confirm the hypotheses. Sub-clinical levels of depressive symptoms might partly explain this. Furthermore, mid-gestation is characterized by an anti-inflammatory state in healthy pregnancies. This would explain the positive correlation between CRP and APGAR scores.

Session 2C / Séance 2C – Social / Social

Weapons, Faces, and Attention: Understanding the Cognitive Mechanisms Behind the Weapons Focus Effect

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Eyewitness testimony is critical in legal contexts but is often compromised by attentional and emotional biases. The Weapons Focus Effect (WFE) occurs when a weapon captures attention and reduces memory for peripheral details, such as a perpetrator's face. This Registered Report study investigated the cognitive mechanisms underlying this effect, and moreover whether individual differences in

social avoidance intensify attentional disruption. Using a within-subjects visual search paradigm, participants detected a neutral target (a butterfly) among distractors that vary in salience: neutral objects, faces, and weapons. Reaction time and accuracy indexed attentional capture, and a subsequent surprise face-recognition test measured memory encoding. Participants also completed the Social Avoidance and Distress Scale (SADS) to examine how trait social avoidance predicts performance costs in weapon-present trials. Results indicated that both faces and weapons independently slowed visual search, suggesting that each type of stimulus captured attention. Face recognition accuracy was significantly lower for faces encoded alongside weapons compared to faces encoded alone, consistent with the Weapon Focus Effect. Additionally, higher SADS scores were associated with improved face memory. These findings suggest that weapon presence disrupts memory for faces, even when attentional effects during visual search are not strongly pronounced.

Co-Offending, Substance Use and Intimate Partner Violence: The Rates of Substance Use and Intimate Partner Violence in Co-offending Cases Involving Women Offenders

Kirk, G.¹, & Summersby, E.

¹Saint Mary's University

Research suggests that substance use, trauma, and intimate partner violence (IPV) play an inter-connected role when it comes to female offenders committing crime generally, but also when it comes to co-offending. Co-offending relationships are commonly abusive and obtaining substances is often the motivation for commission of the offence. The majority of the literature has examined these three variables separately, and currently there are no studies looking at them simultaneously. This study seeks to find the rates of Canadian co-offending cases where IPV and/or substance use were present. This goal is being carried out by coding Canadian court records on the online archive CANLII for relevant variables. 33 cases from Ontario that involve a woman co-offending make up this sample. It was found that 14 of the women experienced at least one Adverse Childhood Experience, which fits with research on female offenders and trauma. Contrary to what past research would suggest about co-offending cases involving female offenders, only five cases coded contained IPV and four had coercive control present. Rates of substance use ($n = 5$) and mental illness ($n = 11$) were also lower than expected. Although this study is high in ecological validity due to its archival nature, using court records is also a limitation

of this study as some information is not included, and this may explain why the current results don't reflect past research. Future studies should use other ways of collecting data such as interviews to get a fuller understanding of female offenders, IPV and substance use.

The Comprehension and Comprehensibility of Police Cautions and Legal Rights: A Scoping Review

Mason, A.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland – St. John's

Understanding legal rights is essential for ensuring procedural fairness and protecting individuals within the criminal justice system; however, many people do not fully comprehend police cautions when they are delivered. This study aimed to determine what factors influence this understanding. A scoping review was conducted, examining 117 studies identified through systematic searches of PsycINFO, Web of Science, Sociological Abstracts, ProQuest Criminology Collection, and PsycArticles, supplemented by grey literature and reference list screening. Studies involving diverse participant groups, including adults and youth across various legal contexts, were included. Data were analyzed using a Searchable Systematic Map (SSM) and Evidence and Gap Map (EGM) to categorize system variables (e.g., wording, modality, reading complexity) and estimator variables (e.g., cognitive ability, age, academic skills). Results indicated a strong emphasis on estimator variables, suggesting that comprehension difficulties are often attributed to individual characteristics, while comparatively fewer studies examined system-level factors related to how rights are communicated. Additionally, most research was conducted in the United States and focused on Miranda rights, limiting generalizability to other jurisdictions, including Canada. Vulnerable populations and people who have communication and language disabilities were underrepresented. These findings highlight the need for greater focus on system-level modifications to improve accessibility, as well as more inclusive research across diverse populations, informing future research and policy development.

Did Video Kill the Radio Star? Exploring the Influence of Beauty and Motion in Subjective Music Appraisal

Hopkins, M.¹, & Matheson, H.¹

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What makes us enjoy the music? Research within neuroscience and musicology has attempted to uncover what musical elements predict enjoyment. However, music requires a creator. Thus, the features of an artist may play a role in the reception and appraisal of music. In the present study we attempt to explore the influence the artist has on the reception of their art. Participants (n=29) were shown a set of 10 musicians unfamiliar to them and were asked to judge their music on 3 metrics, liking, aesthetic value, and involvement. Each participant was shown ten different songs with one of four photos being presented while listening. Each photo depicted the musician as either active or still, and was edited or unedited to reduce attractiveness. We hypothesized that participants shown an edited photo will appraise the music more negatively than those presented with unedited photos of the artists, and that depictions of active musicians would increase ratings. Preliminary results show that unedited still photos are rated more positively than those in the other condition groups; further edited active photos outperform edited still photos. This suggests that attractiveness and the activity of musicians shape the appraisal of a given piece of music.

The Experience of Autistic Evangelical Christians Within the Church
Stanford, R. R.¹, & Schriver, J.¹

¹Crandall University

This study explores the experiences of autistic Evangelical Christians within church environments, with a focus on identifying barriers to engagement and opportunities for inclusion. The primary research question examined how autistic individuals experience participation in Evangelical church settings and what factors influence their sense of belonging. A qualitative research design was employed, involving semi-structured interviews with autistic Evangelical Christians in New Brunswick. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes within participants' lived experiences. Findings revealed that participants commonly encountered interconnected sensory and social barriers, including overstimulation, difficulty navigating unstructured social expectations, and challenges with communication norms. Despite these barriers, participants reported meaningful and individualized expressions of faith, often outside traditional modes of engagement. Results further emphasized the importance of intentional, flexible, and respectful practices within church communities to foster inclusion. The study concludes that while traditional church environments may present challenges, inclusive

adaptations can significantly enhance engagement for autistic individuals. These findings have implications for church leadership and community members, highlighting the need for increased awareness and accommodation of neurodiversity. Future research may explore the perspectives of church leaders and evaluate the effectiveness of specific inclusion strategies in diverse congregational settings.

SESSION 3 / SÉANCE 3: 11:10 am – 12:10 pm

Session 3A / Séance 3A – Social and Community / Social et Communautaire

Home Sweet Home: Life Transitions and Housing Decisions

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As people age, they experience many major life transitions, which can significantly impact their housing situation. Other people often make choices for older adults, giving them less decision-making power, and they are frequently presented with limited options compared to those in similar life situations who are in younger age brackets. The present study examined whether ageism could play a role in the housing decisions made for older adults by comparing people's opinions about housing options across three scenarios (i.e., a stroke, an absent partner, and a financial scam) and three different age groups (i.e., 20s, 40s, and 70s). A sample of 114 participants (88 women, 13 men, and 12 gender diverse or preferred not to say) ranging from 18-74 years old ($M = 27.46$, $SD = 14.16$) completed an online survey that assessed their perception of what was important in making housing decisions based on the physical place, the emotions attached to a home, and an individual's characteristics. Results showed that participants' opinions differed depending on whether the person in the scenario was in their 20s, 40s, or 70s, and that ageism was present when evaluating housing decisions. These findings suggest that there needs to be more education about existing ageism and the role it plays in decision-making regarding older adults. They also suggest that the public should be made more aware of the availability of housing options for older adults.

The Rx. for Connection: Social Prescribing is a Remedy for Loneliness

Boardman, J. C.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland – Grenfell

Loneliness and social isolation pose a similar mortality risk to physical inactivity, obesity, alcohol consumption, and cigarette smoking (Taylor et al., 2023). Yet traditional healthcare often ignores these, focusing primarily on physical health and how that affects individuals. A practice called social prescribing was developed to help reduce anxiety and depression and improve physical and mental well-being, but it has been mostly used with older adults (Hayes et al., 2023). Little is known about younger people's knowledge of social prescribing, when they think it should be used, and the characteristics they think those providing social prescribing should have. In the current study, 156 participants (Mage = 30.39) completed an online questionnaire and were randomly assigned to read a scenario where a person was okay or not okay spending time alone. An equal number of participants were told the person was 20, 50, or 70 years old. Participants in the study believed social prescribing can be beneficial across all ages and regardless of perceived loneliness or isolation. Characteristics seen as important for those providing social prescribing were also similar across ages, as were the risk and protective factors perceived as affecting an individual. There was no difference in the perceptions of the benefit of social prescribing for extraverted or introverted individuals. Findings suggest that social prescribing can be effective for all age groups and for a wide range of issues individuals face. Healthcare systems should consider the implementation of social prescribing.

Adolescence as a Sensitive Period for Acquiring Musical and Social Information

Laybolt, D.¹

¹University of Prince Edward Island

Blakemore and Mills (2014) proposed that adolescence is a sensitive period for acquiring social knowledge. The present research explored this question from a musical perspective. It examines whether adolescence is a time of brain plasticity when musical knowledge is both rapidly acquired and has high social significance. It was predicted that if adolescence is a sensitive period for acquiring musical information, then (1) music popular during adolescence, as compared to music of other decades, should be more familiar and lead to greater knowledge of title, artist, and year of popularity, (2) memory retention of music written in popular styles of different decades should be greatest for music popular in one's adolescence, and (3) adolescents will report listening to music with friends and will also express the social significance they attach to music.

To address these hypotheses, two experiments, one quantitative, one qualitative, were conducted. The quantitative experiment examined familiarity and retention of popular music among 59 participants 13-27 years old. The study obtained familiarity ratings and knowledge of artist, title, and year of popularity for 42 songs popular from 1957 to 2025, followed by a surprise retention task. Data analysis of familiarity, retention, and confidence in retention judgments as a function of decade of popularity and age group is in progress. The qualitative investigation involved semi-structured interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of 6 younger and older university students regarding socioemotional aspects of music. Emerging themes emphasized music and emotion regulation, identity, and group belonging.

The Future Called, It Wants Your Opinion

Brownlee, K. J.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland – Grenfell

Planning for the future is often associated with older or terminally ill populations. Younger individuals, however, also face unpredictable risks that highlight the need to understand their attitudes towards factors such as health status, financial circumstances, and family dynamics. Importantly, these attitudes likely impact one's engagement in future life planning. In this study, seventy-three participants read three vignettes about hypothetical individuals; vignettes differed based on health, financial, and family dynamics. Participants then indicated when they believed each individual should engage in eight future life planning activities: save money for three months bills, schedule regular medical checkups, save for retirement, have a will, have life insurance, have an advance healthcare directive, appoint a power of attorney, and speak to a financial advisor. Multiple multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were conducted to address research questions. Results indicated that, generally, participants did not think that future life planning was needed before age 25. No difference was seen in perceptions according to assumed good versus bad life experiences or due to participant age. Interestingly, regardless of vignette condition, participants believed that others should be older when planning for death-related activities than other types of activities (e.g., saving for retirement). Findings suggest a need for further education and awareness concerning future life planning. Additionally, stakeholders should give special attention towards wills, advance healthcare directives, and appointing a power of attorney.

Canadian Student-Athletes' Perceptions of Institutional Responses to Sexual Violence: Evidence of Institutional Betrayal and Secondary Institutional Betrayal

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¹Saint Mary's University

Sexual violence (SV) remains a pervasive issue on university campuses, and student-athletes are at heightened risk. Research has begun to examine the relationship between SV and institutional betrayal (IB), when a person's trust in an institution is violated by institutional actions or inactions related to their sexual violence complaint, thereby exacerbating victim suffering. The impact on observers of IB that is experienced by others, known as secondary institutional betrayal (SIB), is unclear. This novel study investigated the prevalence of both IB and SIB among Canadian student-athletes who have been exposed to SV. This study sought to answer the following questions, 1) what is the prevalence of SV among Canadian student-athletes? 2) to what extent do Canadian student-athletes experience IB and SIB? and 3) is there a relationship between experiencing SV as a student-athlete and IB? A survey of Nova Scotia varsity student-athletes (N= 32) revealed that 26% experienced SV: 60% of them experienced IB. Among participants who knew a student-athlete who had experienced SV, 73% experienced SIB. These findings underscore the prevalence of SV within student-athlete populations and the broader institutional harms that extend beyond survivors.

Session 3B / Séance 3B – Development / Développement

Connection Falls Short: Testing Perceived Connectedness as a Mediator Between Attachment and Well-Being

Baird, K. I.¹, & Pritchard, T. R.¹

¹Memorial University of Newfoundland – Grenfell

Background: A person's attachment—the lasting socio-emotional bond between child and caregiver—significantly impacts later functioning. People with a secure attachment style or characteristics (e.g., closeness), typically have higher overall well-being compared to those with an insecure attachment style or characteristics (e.g., dependency and anxiousness). However, less is known about factors that may promote, inhibit, or explain this relationship such as someone's perceived levels of connectedness. The current study tested whether adults' perceived connectedness mediated the relationship between attachment characteristics (AC)—closeness, dependency, and anxiousness—and

well-being. It was hypothesized that: 1) insecure AC (i.e., dependency and anxiousness) will be negatively associated with well-being, whereas secure AC (i.e., closeness) will be positively associated with well-being, 2) insecure AC will also be negatively associated with connectedness, whereas secure AC will be positively associated with connectedness, and 3) connectedness will mediate the relationship described in hypothesis 1. Method: Participants ($n = 225$) completed an online survey that measured their AC, connectedness, and well-being. Multiple regressions were used to model the data. Results: Dependency and anxiousness were negatively associated with well-being, but closeness was not. Additionally, dependency was negatively associated with connectedness, but anxiousness and closeness were not. Lastly, connectedness did not mediate the relationship between AC and well-being. Discussion: There is a nuanced relationship between attachment, connectedness, and well-being. Overall, attachment affects well-being in more ways than just through someone's current perceived connectedness. Researchers, the general public, and clinicians should focus on methods to nurture caregiver-child relationships to improve attachment relationships.

Being More Than Your Pain: A Retrospective Qualitative Pilot Study on Navigating, Accepting, and Persevering Through Chronic Pain During Adolescence

Crosby, E.¹, & Azar, R.¹

¹Mount Allison University

During adolescence, a critical developmental period, chronic pain can alter physical functioning, emotional well-being, identity development, and social relationships. Despite increasing attention to the impact of chronic pain in the literature, little is understood about how adolescents cope with stress stemming from chronic pain. Using a qualitative design, this pilot study explored how emerging adults who had experienced chronic pain during adolescence, coped in terms of meaning making, radical acceptance, and resilience. Interviews were conducted with seven female participants, with a mean age of 21.7 years ($SD = 1.0$). Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's inductive thematic analysis. Three main themes emerged: learning to live alongside pain and unpredictability, forming identity and perceived peer isolation during adolescence, and building resilience through support and understanding. Participants described chronic pain as an ongoing process of learning to live with uncertainty, loss, and changing expectations. Experiences of feeling different from peers, incorporating pain into identity, and

navigating perceived social isolation were balanced by the development of coping strategies, supportive relationships, and personal growth through adversity. Findings suggest that chronic pain is not only a physical experience, but also a deeply emotional, social, and developmental one, shaping how adolescents understand themselves and how they consider future opportunities and possibilities. In addition to successfully pilot testing the developed qualitative interview guide, this study highlights the importance of adolescents' emotional and social experiences alongside symptom management. This has clinical implications, namely the creation of developmentally sensitive and relational approaches to chronic pain care.

Echoes of Trauma: Effects of Childhood and Lifetime Trauma on Vocal Outcomes

Sharma, M.¹

¹Mount Saint Vincent University

This study examined whether childhood and lifetime trauma are associated with voice-related quality of life and stress-linked voice responses in adults. Building on preliminary work, we tested whether specific forms of childhood trauma and broader lifetime trauma exposure would differentially predict voice outcomes. Participants were 152 adults (Mage = 25; 77.4% female; 64.9% White) from a screening survey who completed self-report measures of childhood trauma, lifetime trauma exposure, voice-related quality of life, and questions about stress-linked voice responses. A stress-linked voice response index was created combining three items assessing voice changes when upset, tension in the neck or throat, and temporary voice loss or vocal strain after stress. Replicating and extending previous findings, greater childhood trauma was associated with poorer voice-related quality of life. Across multivariable models, childhood emotional abuse was identified as the most consistent unique predictor of poorer overall voice-related quality of life and poorer vocal physical-functioning scores. For the social-emotional aspect of vocal functioning, both emotional abuse and physical neglect were significant unique predictors. Adding lifetime traumatic experiences did not meaningfully improve prediction of voice-related quality of life. In contrast, the stress-linked voice response index showed a somewhat different pattern: childhood emotional abuse remained a significant unique predictor, and lifetime sexual trauma exposure also accounted for unique variance. These findings suggest that childhood emotional abuse may be especially relevant to both general voice-related

difficulties and stress-linked voice responding, while lifetime sexual trauma may be more specifically associated with acute stress-related voice effects.

Exploring Perceived Stress and Cortisol as Predictors of Maternal and Infant Behaviour in the Still Face Paradigm

Nguyen, M.¹

¹Mount Saint Vincent University

Prenatal stress has consistently been linked to maternal and infant outcomes, however research has typically examined either subjective or biological indicators of prenatal stress in isolation. The present study investigated how maternal perceived stress and hair cortisol concentrations (HCC) during pregnancy independently and interactively predict maternal and infant behaviour and affect at 6 months postpartum. Data was collected from 128 pregnant individuals from Nova Scotia as part of a longitudinal study. During the third trimester, perceived stress was assessed using the Perceived Stress Scale, and hair samples were collected to index chronic cortisol levels across late pregnancy. At 6 months postpartum, mother-infant dyads (n = 95) completed the Still Face Paradigm and behaviours were coded using the MACY Infant-Parent Coding System. Principal component analyses identified two infant and four maternal behavioural factors. Regression analyses revealed that higher maternal HCC predicted greater maternal sensitivity and warmth, while higher perceived stress predicted greater shared positive affect between mothers and their infants. Importantly, a significant interaction between perceived stress and HCC was found in predicting shared negative affect, such that higher cortisol was associated with greater negative affect only among mothers reporting high perceived stress. A marginal interaction effect was also observed in predicting infant solicitation. These findings suggest that when psychological and biological stress systems operate in tandem, their combined effect can negatively shape early mother-infant interactions. Overall, the current study highlights the importance of integrating both psychological and physiological measures of stress to better understand behavioural outcomes and informs potential targets for early intervention.

Looking back on building connection: how does our empathy and compassion in childhood influence our sense of community in adulthood

Kelloway, E.¹, & Séguin, D.¹

¹Mount Saint Vincent University

The need to belong is a fundamental aspect of being human, and being part of a community is an important aspect of belonging. Our sense of community seems to be influenced by our social and emotional development, such as empathy and compassion. In the present study, I sought to investigate whether adults' sense of community can be predicted from their childhood empathy and compassion. I hypothesized that higher levels of affective empathy, cognitive empathy, and compassion towards others in childhood would predict higher levels of sense of community in adulthood. In my study, 130 adult participants ($M_{age}=24.38$ and $SD=7.80$) responded to the Perth Empathy Scale and the Sussex-Oxford Compassion for Others Scale from the perspective of their younger self. I then asked participants to respond to an open-ended question that states, "Provide the community that you feel most a part of". Participants then answered the Psychological Sense of Community Scale using the responses that they gave to this open-ended question from the perspective of their current self. The results of the questionnaires were then analyzed using a linear multiple regression. I found that cognitive empathy in childhood predicted lower levels of sense of community in adulthood. Affective empathy and compassion towards others in childhood also did not predict sense of community in adulthood, with all results going against what I had hypothesized. These findings challenge the assumption that empathy and compassion towards others universally promote social connection.

Session 3C / Séance 3C – Individual Differences and Psychological Experiences / Différences Individuelles et Expériences Psychologiques

The Effects of Trauma on Cognitive Processing in Bipolar Disorder: An ERP Investigation of P3a and P3b

Daiman, L.¹, Francis, A. M., Hackett, K., Olmstead, L. P., MacIntyre, J., Connors, K., Turner, K., Jaworska, N., & Fisher, D.¹

¹Mount Saint Vincent University

Trauma history has been shown to play a significant role in shaping the clinical course and cognitive functioning across psychiatric disorders. In bipolar disorder (BD), cognitive processes such as attention and working memory may remain impaired even during periods of clinical stability; however, little is known about how trauma may contribute to these differences at the neurophysiological level. The present study examined

whether trauma load (low versus high) and trauma subtype were associated with distinct event-related potential (ERP) profiles in BD. A total of 41 participants (20 with BD; 21 healthy controls) completed an EEG session during a three-stimulus auditory oddball task. P3a and P3b amplitudes and latencies were examined as indices of early attentional orienting and later context-updating processes. Results provided partial support for group differences, with the BD group showing reduced P3a amplitude relative to healthy controls (HC), but no significant group differences in P3b amplitude or latency. Trauma load did not significantly differentiate ERP profiles within the BD group. In contrast, psychosis-related trauma emerged as a meaningful predictor of P3a and P3b amplitude, suggesting that trauma type may be more informative than trauma load alone when examining neurophysiological variation in BD. These findings provide preliminary evidence that trauma-related differences in BD may be selective rather than global and highlight the importance of more trauma-informed ERP research in understanding cognitive and clinical heterogeneity in BD.

Personality, Pressure, and Perceived Social Support: An Examination of How Personality and Social Support Influence Academic Burnout

MacKenzie, B.¹

¹Mount Saint Vincent University

Academic burnout is a prolonged exposure to academic stress experienced by students. This is a prevalent issue among university students, leading to feelings of exhaustion and cynicism towards their studies as well as reduced academic efficacy. Furthermore, academic burnout is associated with a variety of negative outcomes, including poor academic performance, reduced psychological well-being, and negative mood. Certain personality traits, including conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism, have been linked to higher levels of academic burnout. Additionally, social support has been found to be negatively associated with academic burnout. This suggests that social support could play an important role in the relationship between some aspects of personality and academic burnout. However, limited research has been done in this area. The current study aimed to address this gap by examining the relationships between personality, social support, and academic burnout, with a specific focus on the moderating role that social support plays in the relationship between extraversion and neuroticism and academic burnout. A total of 172 undergraduate students from Cape Breton University (ages 18-41, $M = 20.7$) completed an online survey

assessing the Big Five Personality traits (IPIP-NEO- 120 item), academic burnout (MBI-SS), and interpersonal social support (ISEL). Results show that three personality traits can be predictive of academic burnout: conscientiousness (-), openness to experience (-), and neuroticism (+). Social support was not found to moderate the relationship between extraversion/neuroticism and academic burnout. Findings suggest that while social support is important, academic burnout may be more strongly influenced by individual differences.

Night Skies and Meaning in Life: Awe, Social Identity, & Wellbeing in the Astronomy Community

Ganton, E. L.¹, & Cameron, J. E.¹

¹Saint Mary's University

Awe is an emotion we feel when we behold something too vast or complex to comprehend. How does someone who experiences awe regularly, like an astronomer, alongside an astronomy community, view life in the grand scheme of the universe? Through an online survey, we asked approximately 100 participants to describe a time they felt in awe of the night sky. Several scales assessed participants' feelings of awe in that moment, their connectedness to the night sky, identification with the astronomy community, sense of meaning in life, and overall wellbeing. We expected that awe and night sky connectedness would be positively correlated with meaning in life and social identification with the astronomy community, and that meaning in life and social identity would be positively correlated with wellbeing, hope and life satisfaction. We also analyzed common phrases in participants' awe experience descriptions, and how they relate to the various facets of awe in current research. This research aims to show the potential psychological benefits of being in awe and connection to an awe-based community.

Disrupted Attentional Functioning in Trauma-Exposed Veterans: A Meta-Analysis of Attention Network Test Performance

Doiron, R.¹, Larochelle, E., Carleton, A., Strickland, T., & Redden, R.¹

¹St. Francis Xavier University

This study synthesized evidence on attentional functioning in trauma-exposed veterans through a meta-analysis of studies using the Attention Network Test (ANT). The primary objective was to determine whether post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is associated with selective impairments across the alerting, orienting, and executive control networks

of attention. It was predicted that executive control deficits would be most consistently observed, with more variable effects in alerting and orienting processes. Data were drawn from four studies involving veteran populations, integrating both behavioral performance and neuroimaging findings. Attentional network efficiency was assessed using reaction time differences across cueing and flanker conditions, and results were synthesized using qualitative comparison due to methodological heterogeneity across studies. Across studies, executive control impairments emerged as the most consistent finding, reflected in increased difficulty resolving conflict during incongruent trials. In contrast, alerting and orienting effects were less consistent, with evidence suggesting both heightened vigilance and slowed attentional disengagement. Neuroimaging findings converged with behavioral results, indicating altered connectivity within large-scale networks implicated in attentional control, including interactions between salience and default mode systems. These findings support the interpretation that trauma-related attentional disruptions are selective rather than global, primarily affecting higher-order control processes. This pattern has important implications for cognitive models of PTSD and suggests that interventions targeting executive control and attentional flexibility may be particularly effective in improving attentional functioning.

La fidélité des échelles de réponse du questionnaire d'estime de soi de Rosenberg

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¹Université de Moncton

Cette étude examine la structure factorielle et la fidélité de la version française à quatre points du questionnaire d'estime de soi de Rosenberg (Vallières & Vallerand, 1990) auprès d'un échantillon de 553 étudiants universitaires (135 hommes, 418 femmes ; $M = 21,0$ ans). Les résultats indiquent un coefficient alpha de Cronbach de 0,87, cohérent avec les données normatives existantes. L'analyse en composantes principales révèle une structure à deux facteurs ($VP_1 = 4,60$; $VP_2 = 1,32$), probablement attribuable à la polarité des items plutôt qu'à une réelle bidimensionnalité du construit. Ces résultats appuient le modèle unidimensionnel original de Rosenberg et s'accordent avec ceux de Vallières et Vallerand (1990). En comparaison, les versions de Leung (2011) présentent des fidélités plus faibles, possiblement dues aux effets de la traduction en chinois. Les coefficients de bissection suggèrent par

ailleurs que l'alpha de Cronbach pourrait surestimer légèrement la fidélité réelle du questionnaire.

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