



**GORDON**  
COLLEGE

# Psychology Department Newsletter

Summer 2010



## Greetings from Bryan Auday, Department Chair

Allow me to extend greetings from Gordon's Psychology Department. Our purpose in sending this newsletter is to provide you with an update regarding the latest news from the department. It's our hope to send out a newsletter about once per year. We promise that we won't ask you for money!

This past year has been an exciting one for us. We received permission from the administration to hire another psychologist. After placing ads and looking over dozens of resumes, the department hired Dr. Jonathan Gerber, a social psychologist who currently hails from Australia. You can read the interview that Dr. Phillips conducted with Dr. Gerber in this newsletter to learn more about him.

Our department continues to be one of the most popular majors on campus. We are the second largest single major at Gordon with 36 majors and 32 concentrations. Recently, we set up a Facebook group and a LinkedIn page to help psychology alumni better network and keep in touch with each other. You'll learn more about this as you read on.

Our department is patiently waiting for the third floor (and basement) of the Ken Olsen Science Center wing that lines the quad to be completed (see picture above). Once this space is completed, it will provide all new labs and offices for the Psychology Department. That's right! We will be moving into the new science center that has been built. We don't know when this will be but hopefully in the next two years.

Enjoy the updates! And keep in touch. We love hearing from you!

## Faculty Updates

### **Bryan Auday**

Even though it seems like I just arrived at Gordon for my first “real” job, in reality I just completed my 23<sup>rd</sup> year! In that span, more than 800 psychology majors have graduated. I wish I knew what each of you was up to. This past year has been like most of the others—very rewarding. My daughter, Emily, is now 12 years old and has blossomed into a lovely young girl—one who is compassionate, funny, and a precocious writer. My wife, Debbie, still works as a school teacher but now has her sight set on acquiring certification as a personal trainer. I continue to foster a passion for neuroscience, having completed my eighth year directing our neuroscience minor. My current research interests fall into two different areas. The first is a project on the ethical implications of taking cognitive enhancing drugs. I have just begun a sabbatical leave from Gordon to do some writing in this area. My second interest involves working in the area of neurotheology and looking at biomarkers (essentially EEG brain waves) as a means to assess religious conviction. In my spare time, I’m an avid sea kayaker. This past year I had a blast teaching kayaking at Gordon.



### **Kaye Cook**

Hi. I share my story in hopes that I’ll hear from you. I continue to be extremely busy. (What’s new, you tease.) My daughter Jennie is a junior at Amherst College, majoring in chemistry and French. Caleb is a senior at Ipswich High and measured at 6’4” as of last week. He will be attending Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY in the fall, majoring in electrical engineering. He, Jennie, and I, with my brother’s family, spent Christmas in Sarajevo. On our return from Sarajevo, we spent Caleb’s 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (December 30<sup>th</sup>) somewhere between Paris, London and Boston. I continue to live in Ipswich and attend Christ Church, where I teach the first and second grade Sunday School class, quite a switch from the teenagers whom I used to teach. I continue to carry out interview studies with alumni. And I look forward to another year of teaching (how many years can one teach Developmental Psychology in a row?!).



### **Bert Hodges**

Greetings! I’ve been having a blast the past few years teaching and doing research with students. Currently, I am enjoying my sabbatical as Senior Research Scientist at the University of Connecticut (UConn). The most surprising and fun thing that has happened is a discussion group with grad students who are interested in learning about values-realizing theory. I’m also in the process of completing three projects: an article on weight and time perception with colleagues in China; a special issue on language for a journal with a colleague at UConn; and an article for a social psychology journal testing values-realizing theory’s predictions about agreement and disagreement dilemmas with former students as co-authors. How’s that for being all over the map, both conceptually and geographically?! There are themes in my work: when working with others—even if you barely know them—you’ll become friends; don’t be afraid to work in areas where you lack expertise—just do your homework and help where you can; and what we take for granted at Gordon can be a gift to the rest of the world.



## Faculty Updates



### **Suzanne Phillips**

Greetings! Life at Gordon is good. I've been here 13 years now and have grown so much, thanks to your encouragement. The Community Psychology course which I launched after my first sabbatical is going strong, and I spent my second sabbatical immersing myself in the world of "clubhouses," wonderful, inclusive facilities for adults with severe mental illnesses. I have a book chapter due this summer, which introduces academic community psychologists to "clubhouses." On the home front, I am still in my condo in Ipswich with my son Dexter (now 16 years old and 6'3" tall!). He just finished 10<sup>th</sup> grade at a vocational school in Topsfield, and he still enjoys his work with animals. He and I are gardening more than ever this year, welcoming the summer months.



### **Robert Joss**

I have been at Gordon for 35 years now, and I'm still enjoying shepherding the internship program, which many students have said was one of the most important experiences they had as psychology majors at Gordon. Several years ago, I moved into a part-time position in the department, but I still offer a variety of popular courses, including Law and Psychology as well as Counseling Theories and Practice. I also serve as a pre-law advisor, and I am frequently called to testify in court as an expert witness.

## **Interview with our Newest Member of the Psychology Department conducted by Suzanne Phillips**



*Jonathan Gerber (Social Psychology Ph.D., Macquarie University, 2008) will join the department in August. He is moving to Massachusetts from Sydney, Australia with his wife, Alison, and their new baby, Ralph. At Gordon, Jonathan will teach Research Methods, Social Psychology and Personality Theories.*

SMP: What aspect of social psychology do you study? What research do you plan to do at Gordon?

JG: My main research is experimental work on interpersonal rejection, particularly looking at how control is affected by rejection. I also do meta-analyses of various social psychological phenomenon. At the moment we're meta-analysing 50 years of social comparison research.

SMP: Why did you decide to come to Gordon?

JG: I felt extremely welcomed by the staff and students at Gordon during my job visit. I've been looking for the right liberal arts college to work at for some time as I enjoy thinking outside my discipline. I benefitted from attending an integrative Christian school during my formative years, hence the mission of Gordon College sits well with me. Beyond this, the campus is great and there are great opportunities for Alison and Ralph.

*(Continued on the following page.)*



## Alumni Connections and Student Research

### Interview with Jonathan Gerber (cont.)

SMP: What will you miss most about Sydney?

JG: The metric system. Walking barefoot in 110 degree heat to the Persian store on our corner to buy pomegranate juice and freshly roasted almonds before sitting down and watching test cricket, a game that goes on for five days and often ends in a draw. Sitting on our balcony and watching rainbow lorikeets, cockatoos and galahs coming in for the night.

SMP: I can't offer sightings of rainbow lorikeets, but we'll see if we can arrange some hot weather to celebrate your arrival in August. What are you looking forward to about living on the North Shore?

JG: Exploring the woods, being somewhere a little quieter (I currently have a library being built outside my office window and a new set of apartments being built just over the road from my house), meeting new people, eating American donuts, following the Red Sox, holidays to visit the Adirondacks and Niagara Falls, snow and American politics.

SMP: How do you enjoy spending your free time?

JG: Playing music, trying to beat my nephews at Pokemon, reading historical theology, swimming and cooking.

SMP: Thanks for taking the time to chat, Jonathan. Good luck with the move!



### Student Research

by Kristen Burke '12

I've always been curious about social networking sites and why they're so popular. This year I had the opportunity to do a study on the motivation for using Facebook. I found that status updates are driven by a need to compare yourself to others, and that wall posts are driven by a need for positive stimulation online. So think about it —why do you use Facebook?

### Gordon Psychology Alumni Unite!

by Kaye Cook

Last summer, Suzanne asked if we could explore ways to connect with more psychology alumni. I was already engaged in interviews with alumni (see <http://www.gordon.edu/faculty/kayecook>) and together we began meeting with various administrative leaders on campus. As a result, we have set up a Facebook group and a LinkedIn page. We are also channeling people to the Career Office websites. We've found Facebook works better for pictures and social contacts and LinkedIn works well for resumes and job-searching. The Career Office websites are much broader, with many more jobs and opportunities. Please get in touch. We love to hear from you!

- **To join the Facebook group**  
Search for Gordon Psychology Alumni, or friend or email [kaye.cook@gordon.edu](mailto:kaye.cook@gordon.edu).
- **To join the LinkedIn subgroup**  
Search for Gordon College Psychology Alumni, or email [suzanne.phillips@gordon.edu](mailto:suzanne.phillips@gordon.edu).
- **To explore the career development sites**  
Sign on to <http://gordon.experience.com> or <http://gordonlink.experience.com> to find a job, mentor others or post jobs. Or email [pam.lazarakis@gordon.edu](mailto:pam.lazarakis@gordon.edu) for more information on how to get involved.