

Psyc E-Newsletter

Winthrop University Psychology Department
February 2012



Student Spotlight—Jamie Low

Jamie Low is a non-traditional student here in our Winthrop Psychology Department, but she will be the first to point out that all students can be non-traditional in some way. She always has a smile on her face and is one of the most recognized psychology student faces and Winthrop staff.

When she is not attending Psych classes or caring for her three teenage daughters, Jamie works in the Mass communication office as an administrative specialist.

Having been given the opportunity to further her formal education later in life, Jamie decided to pursue a degree in the subjects she was the most passionate about and because of this Jamie said majoring in psychology and minoring in philosophy and religion was a natural choice for her.

In five years Jamie sees herself continuing to work in the Mass Communication Department at Winthrop while earning a Master's in Education in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. She hopes to one day establish her own private practice.

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Did You Know?

Winthrop offers a program to obtain a master's degree in School Psychology?

Along with this degree, you would receive a specialist in school psychology degree.

These classes include Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine, Advanced Studies in Human Development, and Seminar in Professional School Psychology.

To get more information on the curriculum and degree requirements and how to apply, visit the website at http://www2.winthrop.edu/psychology/SP_Pages/grad_general_info.htm

Faculty Spotlight—Dr. Kathleen Potter

Psyc-E News Caught up with new Psyc Professor Dr. Potter

Who: Dr. Kathleen Potter

Classes Teaching: Introduction to Psychology (101), Psychology as a career and Profession (198), and Statistics (301)

Time at Winthrop: New professor on the block as of last semester

Where you can find Dr. Potter: Kinard 121

Dr. Kathleen Potter may be an unfamiliar face to some upper class psychology students, but fear not because the Psych Newsletter team has the scoop on the new professor on the psych office loop.

Dr. Potter is a graduate of Northwestern High School in Rock Hill so if anyone needs to know the “Thrill” she definitely does. After graduating high school Dr. Potter majored in psychology at Clemson University (Go Tigers!) and then went to the Medical University of SC in Charleston, SC for graduate school.

She started teaching at the College of Charleston in 2006 and started Winthrop last semester. So far, Dr. Potter says she loves it here. “Winthrop is awesome! This is seriously the best school I’ve ever taught! (And I’ve taught at 5 other schools!) I love the support I get from the other Faculty in the Psych Department, and Linda is awesome” said Dr. Potter. (Editor’s side note: who doesn’t love Ms. Linda ☺?)

Very passionate about psychology, Dr. Potter says that her switch of majors from Elementary Education to Psychology at Clemson was due to a series of events, but once everything fell into place she remembered why she loved

psychology so much to begin with: “Human behavior is just so cool!”

When asked where she sees herself in the next five years, Dr. Potter says she hopes to have a permanent position here at Winthrop. Aside from remaining an Eagle, she would also love to have a research lab up and running so that she can teach and mentor students in research which is a big passion for her. In graduate school and in her post-doctoral research, Dr. Potter studied human disorders using mouse models. (Editor fun fact: Winthrop actually used to have a lab where students got to use mice in tests!!)

Anyone wanting to stop in and welcome Dr. Potter should do so. She is a wonderful asset to the Psychology Department and the Psych E-News staff welcomes her!



“I got sent to the principal’s office when I was in the first grade because I wouldn’t be quiet in class... I kept trying to show the other kids how to do their work!” -Dr. Potter

One on One with Dr. Potter

Any pets?

I have a dog, NOC, named for the Nantahala Outdoor Center. I was camping with friends near there when we found him as a puppy. I also have 2 kittens, JJ and Scrappy, that I got from a rescue group in Charlotte.

If you could have one superpower, what would it be?

I would love to be able to teleport myself! How cool would it be to say, “Tonight I’m having dinner in Italy?!”

What was your childhood dream and do you still have it?

My mother tells a story about when I was little and someone asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. I looked at them very seriously and said “I want to be a waitress... or a brain surgeon.” Since then I’ve been a waitress at the Cracker Barrel over by the mall, Anna J’s near Winthrop, and a few other places along the way. I also have a Ph.D. in Neurosciences, so I guess I wasn’t kidding!

Favorite class in college?

I took a class called “Murder, Magic, and Medicine”. It was about the use of plants throughout history for those three purposes. Super cool!

Favorite TV show/movie?

How I Met Your Mother – I LOVE Barney Stinson!



EYE ON IT

Psyc Club / Psi Chi

WU's Psi Chi/Psyc Club is in full swing with tons of exciting events!

Applications for both organizations are available at meetings and posted on the Psi Chi/Psyc Club bulletin board.

Applications are accepted any time before March 2nd at 1:00 pm.

Meetings include free food, door prizes, and information to share.



Psyc Club / Psi Chi Upcoming Events

- Psi Chi/Psyc Club will also be hosting two cultural events. Please come out and take advantage of these events to receive your cultural event credit!
- The first is “The Gospel According to John”, a one-man theatrical performance about a young man's relationship with his father and his father's subsequent suicide. The event will be held on February 21st at Dina's Place during common time.
- The second is “A Sister's Call” is March 20th at 7:00 p.m. at Dina's Place. This is a documentary that follows a family's search for their mentally ill and homeless son and showcases the family dynamics of a family struggling with mental illness.
- Psi Chi/Psyc Club will also be holding the Psychology Bowl during common time on April 10th. Please sign up with a partner to compete in a Jeopardy-style (multiple-choice) quiz game based on psychology. The top three teams win cash prizes!! Teams sign up with Dr. Ritzer.
- The Psi Chi induction ceremony will be held near the end of the semester. All Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 inductees will be honored at the ceremony. Family and friends are invited.
- The Big South Undergraduate Research Symposium (Big SURS) will be held at WU, and the registration cost for WU students will only be about \$30.
- Lastly, if any members have ideas about a service project for the semester, please contact Dr. Sleigh, Dr. Ritzer, or any officer. All ideas are welcome!

Psi Chi—International Honor Society in Psychology

Psi Chi, the International Honor Society in Psychology, is a well-known organization that serves to motivate, inspire, and sustain excellence in scholarship, as well as, improve the science of psychology.

To be eligible for Psi Chi, you must:

- Be a psychology major or minor
- Complete at least 3 semesters of college, (at least 1 semester at WU)
- Complete at least 9 hours of psychology classes
- Be in the top 35% of one's class (these cut-offs vary from year to year and are higher for upperclassmen – usually the cut off is an overall GPA around 3.2)
- Have a GPA of at least 3.2 in all psychology classes taken

Book Review—Manic by Terri Cheney

Assistant Editor Sarah Barton gives her review on this compelling book—(class recommendation: if you are in abnormal psychology)

Terri Cheney has struggled with bipolar disorder and she explains this struggle in her memoir titled “Manic.” Terri focuses on the struggles she went through in an interesting way by mirroring her disorder so the book is chaotic and unpredictable.

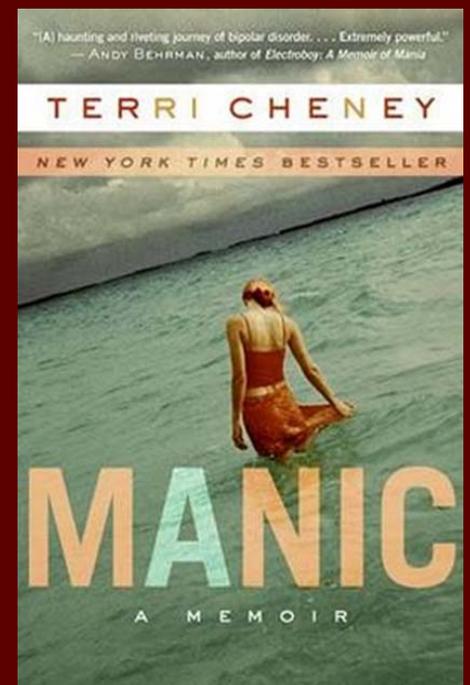
Most of the struggles that she describes were struggles with men. Intimate and unstable, her relationships with men always gave her anxiety and forced her disorder into mania. The men she was with never understood her disorder and judged her and this led to even more anxiety in her relationships.

With her disorder she also had problems with suicide and overdosing. When Terri was in a manic state, she acted on her desire to kill herself. There were many times that she described near death experiences, but she was always pulled out of them. She described her journey into mania as the same as getting goose bumps or chills.

Being able to read about the disorder and learn about it first hand is a great experience. This book is a great way to learn about bipolar disorder and what victims really deal with in daily life. In relation to a psychology class, this book would be good for abnormal psychology fanatics.

In my review of this book I found it shocking to witness what really went on in Terri’s life. From electro shock therapy to waking up strapped to a gurney, they were all experiences that she had to go through as a result of her disorder.

Her symptoms were a huge impact to her daily life and the reader will be able to see that when he or she reads the memoir. Terri does an excellent job of putting bipolar disorder into words for people with a desire to understand. It is hard to grasp a real life disorder in a classroom, but after reading this book, the reader will have a much better understanding of life with bipolar disorder.



“I didn’t tell anyone that I was going to Santa Fe to kill myself. I figured that was more information than people needed, plus it might interfere with my travel plans if anyone found out the truth. People always mean well, but they don’t understand that when you’re seriously depressed, suicidal ideation can be the only thing that keeps you alive. Just knowing there’s an out—even if it’s bloody, even if it’s permanent —makes the pain almost bearable for one more day.”

Excerpt from Manic by Terri Cheney

Got ideas for the next newsletter?

Contact Kat Scott

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Career Corner—Funeral Director By Trisha Honeycutt

Riding alongside a funeral director in a van transporting two bodies to the crematorium was not something I could have foreseen as part of my 2011 fall semester. I had waited until school began to start looking for a site for my internship even though I had been advised by the career center to start the process over the summer. Due to my procrastination, other interns had already filled most sites. So, three weeks into the semester in a state of panic I found myself in Dr. Sleigh's office. After brainstorming ideas and using some creative thinking, I would be doing my internship at a funeral home.

Initially, I thought the experience at the funeral home would be centered on observing the behaviors of grieving families. However, I never imagined how personal it would become and that I would end up the main subject of my own observations. Being in an environment revolving around death forced me on a daily basis to constantly be aware of my own mortality. I began asking questions about what death truly means to me as well as others. I became obsessively curious about why we have the funeral practices that we do and wondering where they came from. I noticed that every funeral was different and unique in its own way.

It was difficult to avoid morbid thoughts while working at the funeral home. It was in my life at every moment, even if I wasn't at work. I would receive texts at home or in class informing me that I was needed the next day because a body had just arrived. And there were times when business was slow, that I admittedly hoped that we would get a call to come pick up a body. During this internship each day was unlike the day before.

A list of my daily activities was unusual compared to internship standards. Any given day I could be learning various topics from the differences about coffins to how to prepare a body for viewing. I also learned that bodies were transported to the crematorium in a simple cardboard box with 'head this way' printed on the top, that cremation remains are not ashes but in fact they are ground up bones, an embalming room is neither creepy nor scary, and that the hardest thing for the funeral directors is dealing with families fighting (which happens more than you would think).

The area I found myself most interested in was the burial traditions of different religions. I began exploring how these traditions came about, and what they symbolize to the individual. I have become very passionate and eager to learn as much as I can about this topic and that passion would not have been known without this internship.

I am truly grateful to the funeral home staff for kindly giving me the opportunity to learn more about the human experience of death and dying. The internship was a truly life changing experience that introduced many new areas for me to consider in the field of psychology. You can find psychology everywhere, so I encourage students to and take advantage of the many options that are out there.



Newsletter Staff



Advisor: Dr. Mary McKemy

Favorite Quote:

"Be careful how you speak to your children, one day it will become their inner voice."

~ Peggy O'Mara



Editor: Kathryn Scott (Senior)

Favorite Quote:

"Some stories don't always have a clear beginning, middle, and end. Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best out of it without knowing what's going to happen next. Delicious ambiguity." -Gilda Radner



Asst. Editor: Sarah Barton (Sophomore)

Favorite Quote:

"In life everybody trips, some people fall and others turn that trip into a very beautiful dance."

-John Mayer

Reporter/Photographer: Trisha Honeycutt (Senior)

Favorite Quote:

"Our chief want is someone who will inspire us to be what we know we could be." -Ralph Waldo Emerson



Reporter: Jessica Hatchell (Graduate Student)

Favorite Quote:

"Be more concerned with your character than your reputation because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are." -John Wooden

