

# Psychology

## 2018-2019



Dr. Tyson Kreiger

Dr. Amy Lindsey



Dr. Arlene Lundquist



Dr. John Schwoebel

## Psychology Department Faculty



Dr. R. Scott Smith



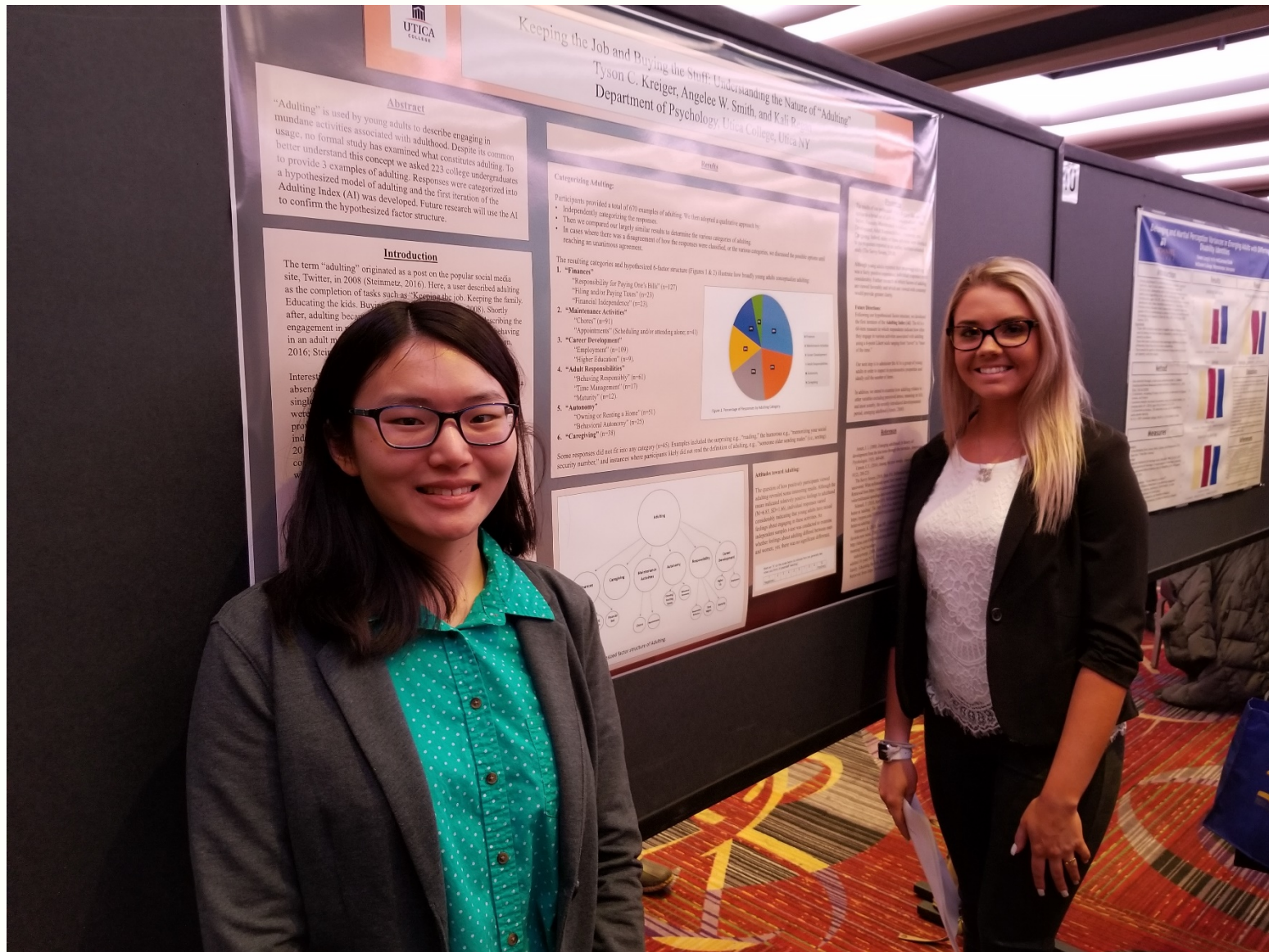
Dr. Steven Specht

Dr. Jennifer Yanowitz



New York City  
2019





Angelee & Kali presenting with Dr. Kreiger







One of Dr. Kreiger's two paper presentations!



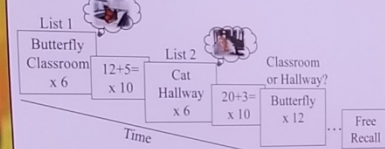


# Imagination: Reinstating Episodic Contexts in Retrieval-Based Learning

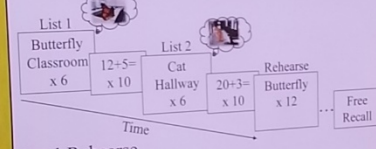
John Schwoebel, Brittney L. Gawel, & David A. Buko  
Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, March 2019, New York City

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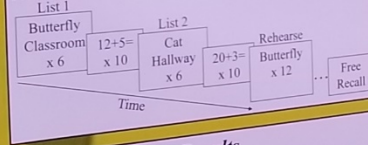
## Imagine-Distinction



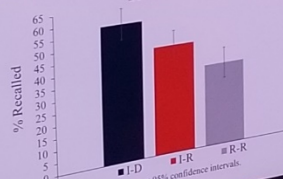
## Imagine-Rehearse



## Read-Rehearse



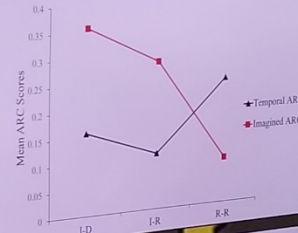
## Results



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

## Results continued

In addition to analyses of overall recall performance, we examined the organization of recall by calculating adjusted ratio of clustering (ARC) scores (Roenker, Thompson, & Brown, 1971). An ARC score of 0 indicates chance clustering around a category, while an ARC score of 1 indicates perfect clustering. We examined both temporal clustering (recall organized around lists) and imagery clustering (recall organized around imagined locations) for each participant and condition and found a significant interaction ( $p < .001$ ).



## Discussion

These findings suggest the need to extend the episodic context account (Whiffen & Karpicke, 2017) to include the reinstatement of both temporal and environmental contexts as factors underlying retrieval-based learning. Further, imagining stimuli in different locations during encoding may have increased reinstatement of these contexts during recall and thus, increased the organization of recall around the imagined locations, consistent with the facilitated-reinstatement hypothesis (Masicampo & Sahakyan, 2014).



Kali presenting with Dr. Schwoebel







Your Decisions Matter! Teaching Intervention Improves Decision Making

Ashley Rohacek<sup>A</sup>, John Schwoebel<sup>B</sup>

<sup>A</sup> Neuroscience, <sup>B</sup> Psychology, Utica College, Utica, NY

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Introduction

Cognitive biases often lead people to misevaluate situations or draw false conclusions. Fortunately, there are initial findings that provide promising support for the idea that decision-making skills can be enhanced by specific training programs (Morewedge *et al.*, 2015). This relatively new line of investigation requires further research to evaluate and identify the relative effectiveness of different training programs. Incorporating retrieval practice into debiasing training methods may be one way of improving upon existing training methods. Retrieval practice has been identified as one of the most effective ways to facilitate long-term retention (Karpicke & Blunt, 2011). This study aimed to further examine whether cognitive biases in decision making can be reduced via training and to determine whether retrieval practice enhances learning relative to traditional study methods. We hypothesized that a teaching intervention that incorporated retrieval practice would result in significantly better decision-making assessment scores than control conditions.

Method

**Participants**  
Sixty-three undergraduate students at Utica College were recruited and randomly assigned to either a control group, a traditional study group, or a retrieval practice group.

**Procedure**  
The lecture used in this study was designed to teach the definition of five common cognitive biases: availability heuristic, bias blind spot, framing effect, fundamental attribution error, and illusory correlates. The lecture consisted of explaining the definition of the bias, providing examples of the bias, and explaining how the bias manifests in everyday life. Definitions, statistics, and video clips were used to exemplify each bias and the relevance of each bias and example was explained in a framework applicable to daily life.

**Decision-making Assessment**  
The decision-making assessment consisted of 20 questions. Each would describe a brief scenario, ask the participant to make a judgment based on the scenario, and identify which cognitive bias would be likely to influence their answer to the question.

Method, continued

**Breakdown of Procedure and Experimental Conditions**

Group	30 minutes	20 minutes	20 minutes
Retrieval Practice Group	Blazes in Decision-making Lecture	Recall of examples and definitions	Decision-making Assessment
Traditional Study Group	Blazes in Decision-making Lecture	Review of materials and definitions	Decision-making Assessment
Control Group			Decision-making Assessment

Results

**Average Scores on Decision-making Assessment**

Group	Score (M)	SD
Retrieval Practice	78.9	8.8
Traditional Study	76.3	9.0
Control	59.2	11.1

Fig. 1. The retrieval practice and traditional study conditions both scored significantly higher ( $p < 0.01$ ) on the decision-making portion of the assessment compared to the control group. The retrieval practice group demonstrated greater ability to make decisions with limited bias compared to the control group ( $M = 59.2$ ,  $SD = 11.1$ ).

Results, continued

**Average Bias Identification Scores**

Group	Score (M)	SD
Retrieval Practice	40.4	31.2
Traditional Study	26.8	27.6
Control	2.1	3.8

Fig. 2. The retrieval practice group ( $M = 40.4$ ,  $SD = 31.2$ ) scored significantly higher on cognitive bias identification ( $p < .05$ ) than the traditional study group ( $M = 26.8$ ,  $SD = 27.6$ ) and the control group ( $M = 2.1$ ,  $SD = 3.8$ ).

Discussion

This study suggests that retrieval practice is a better method to commit material to memory and be able to apply information than more passive study techniques. Furthermore, these results lend support to the claim that cognitive biases can be reduced through teaching interventions (Morewedge *et al.*, 2015). As the overall understanding of cognitive biases increases, techniques can be developed to diminish these errors in reasoning. An enhanced insight on the importance of critical thinking will allow individuals to make more informed choices.

References

Karpicke, J. D., & Blunt, J. R. (2011). Retrieval practice produces more learning than elaborative studying with concept mapping. *Science*, 334(6055), 453-453.

Morewedge, C. K., Yoon, H., Scopelliti, I., Symborski, C., Korris, J., & Kassam, K. S. (2015). Debiasing decisions: Improved decision making with a single training intervention. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 2(1), 129-140.

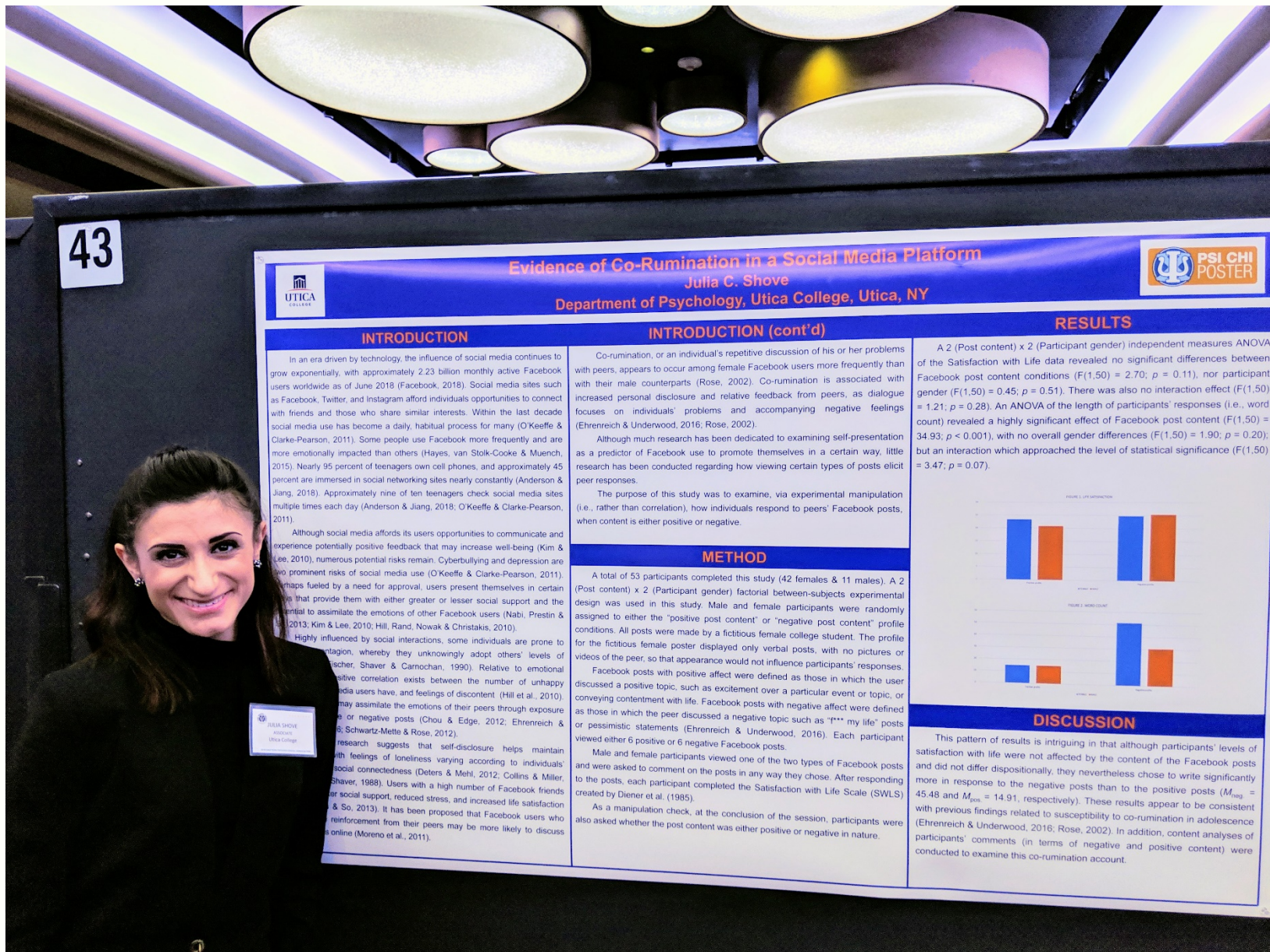
Ashley presenting with Dr. Schwoebel





Dr. Specht's poster presentation  
(and waiting to beam up)





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## Evidence of Co-Rumination in a Social Media Platform

Julia C. Shove

Department of Psychology, Utica College, Utica, NY



### INTRODUCTION

In an era driven by technology, the influence of social media continues to grow exponentially, with approximately 2.23 billion monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of June 2018 (Facebook, 2018). Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram afford individuals opportunities to connect with friends and those who share similar interests. Within the last decade, social media use has become a daily, habitual process for many (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Some people use Facebook more frequently and are more emotionally impacted than others (Hayes, van Stolk-Cooke & Muench, 2015). Nearly 95 percent of teenagers own cell phones, and approximately 45 percent are immersed in social networking sites nearly constantly (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). Approximately nine of ten teenagers check social media sites multiple times each day (Anderson & Jiang, 2018; O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011).

Although social media affords its users opportunities to communicate and experience potentially positive feedback that may increase well-being (Kim & Lee, 2010), numerous potential risks remain. Cyberbullying and depression are two prominent risks of social media use (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Perhaps fueled by a need for approval, users present themselves in certain ways that provide them with either greater or lesser social support and the potential to assimilate the emotions of other Facebook users (Nabi, Prestin & Kim, 2013; Kim & Lee, 2010; Hill, Rand, Nowak & Christakis, 2010).

Highly influenced by social interactions, some individuals are prone to contagion, whereby they unknowingly adopt others' levels of emotion (Festinger, Shaver & Carnochan, 1990). Relative to emotional contagion, a positive correlation exists between the number of unhappy Facebook users one has, and feelings of discontent (Hill et al., 2010). Users may assimilate the emotions of their peers through exposure to positive or negative posts (Chou & Edge, 2012; Ehrenreich & Rose, 2012; Schwartz-Mette & Rose, 2012).

Research suggests that self-disclosure helps maintain positive feelings of loneliness varying according to individuals' levels of social connectedness (Detert & Mehl, 2012; Collins & Miller, 1999; Shaver, 1988). Users with a high number of Facebook friends receive social support, reduced stress, and increased life satisfaction (Detert & Mehl, 2012; So, 2013). It has been proposed that Facebook users who receive reinforcement from their peers may be more likely to discuss their problems online (Moreno et al., 2011).

### INTRODUCTION (cont'd)

Co-rumination, or an individual's repetitive discussion of his or her problems with peers, appears to occur among female Facebook users more frequently than with their male counterparts (Rose, 2002). Co-rumination is associated with increased personal disclosure and relative feedback from peers, as dialogue focuses on individuals' problems and accompanying negative feelings (Ehrenreich & Underwood, 2016; Rose, 2002).

Although much research has been dedicated to examining self-presentation as a predictor of Facebook use to promote themselves in a certain way, little research has been conducted regarding how viewing certain types of posts elicit peer responses.

The purpose of this study was to examine, via experimental manipulation (i.e., rather than correlation), how individuals respond to peers' Facebook posts, when content is either positive or negative.

### METHOD

A total of 53 participants completed this study (42 females & 11 males). A 2 (Post content) x 2 (Participant gender) factorial between-subjects experimental design was used in this study. Male and female participants were randomly assigned to either the "positive post content" or "negative post content" profile conditions. All posts were made by a fictitious female college student. The profile for the fictitious female poster displayed only verbal posts, with no pictures or videos of the peer, so that appearance would not influence participants' responses.

Facebook posts with positive affect were defined as those in which the user discussed a positive topic, such as excitement over a particular event or topic, or conveying contentment with life. Facebook posts with negative affect were defined as those in which the peer discussed a negative topic such as "f--- my life" posts or pessimistic statements (Ehrenreich & Underwood, 2016). Each participant viewed either 6 positive or 6 negative Facebook posts.

Male and female participants viewed one of the two types of Facebook posts and were asked to comment on the posts in any way they chose. After responding to the posts, each participant completed the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) created by Diener et al. (1985).

As a manipulation check, at the conclusion of the session, participants were also asked whether the post content was either positive or negative in nature.

### RESULTS

A 2 (Post content) x 2 (Participant gender) independent measures ANOVA of the Satisfaction with Life data revealed no significant differences between Facebook post content conditions ( $F(1,50) = 2.70; p = 0.11$ ), nor participant gender ( $F(1,50) = 0.45; p = 0.51$ ). There was also no interaction effect ( $F(1,50) = 1.21; p = 0.28$ ). An ANOVA of the length of participants' responses (i.e., word count) revealed a highly significant effect of Facebook post content ( $F(1,50) = 34.93; p < 0.001$ ), with no overall gender differences ( $F(1,50) = 1.90; p = 0.20$ ); but an interaction which approached the level of statistical significance ( $F(1,50) = 3.47; p = 0.07$ ).



### DISCUSSION

This pattern of results is intriguing in that although participants' levels of satisfaction with life were not affected by the content of the Facebook posts and did not differ dispositionally, they nevertheless chose to write significantly more in response to the negative posts than to the positive posts ( $M_{pos} = 45.48$  and  $M_{neg} = 14.91$ , respectively). These results appear to be consistent with previous findings related to susceptibility to co-rumination in adolescence (Ehrenreich & Underwood, 2016; Rose, 2002). In addition, content analyses of participants' comments (in terms of negative and positive content) were conducted to examine this co-rumination account.



JULIA SHOVE  
ASSISTANT  
PROFESSOR  
UTICA COLLEGE

Julia's Psi Chi Award Winning Poster!!!



## Regional Research Awards Presentations

Join us for the presentation of Psi Chi Regional Research Awards and hear about these award-winning projects from the researchers themselves. If you're looking for some of the best graduate and undergraduate research at EPA in one event, this is it!

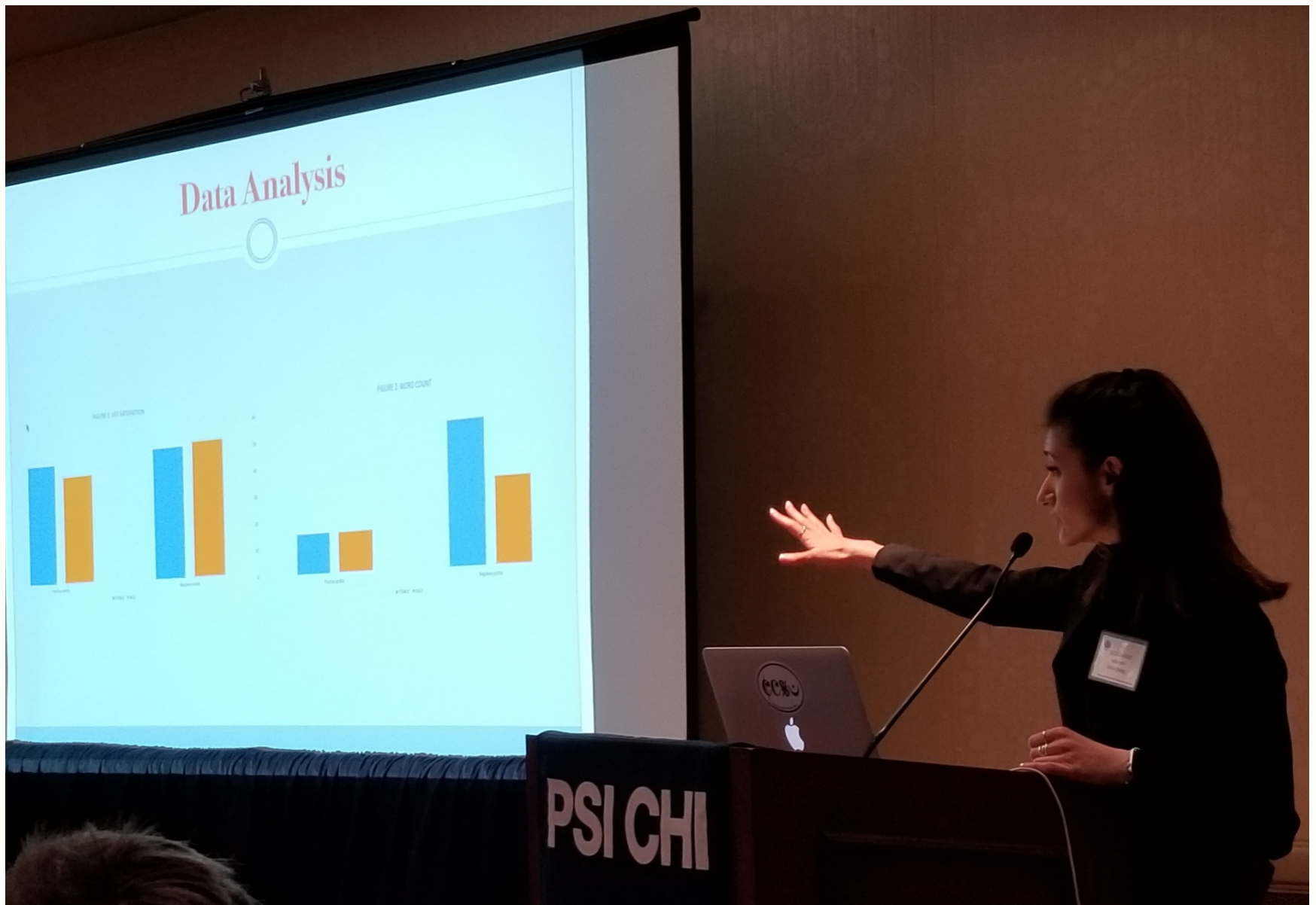


# PSI CHI

THE INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY  
IN PSYCHOLOGY

#PsiChiEPA19

Saturday, March 2, 2019  
8am in Broadhurst/Belasco



Julia’s presentation





Julia and Dr. Specht





EPA Dinner (Faculty Treat)!



# Vision Sciences Society

*SOCIETY*

MEETING

PROGRAM

ARCHIVE

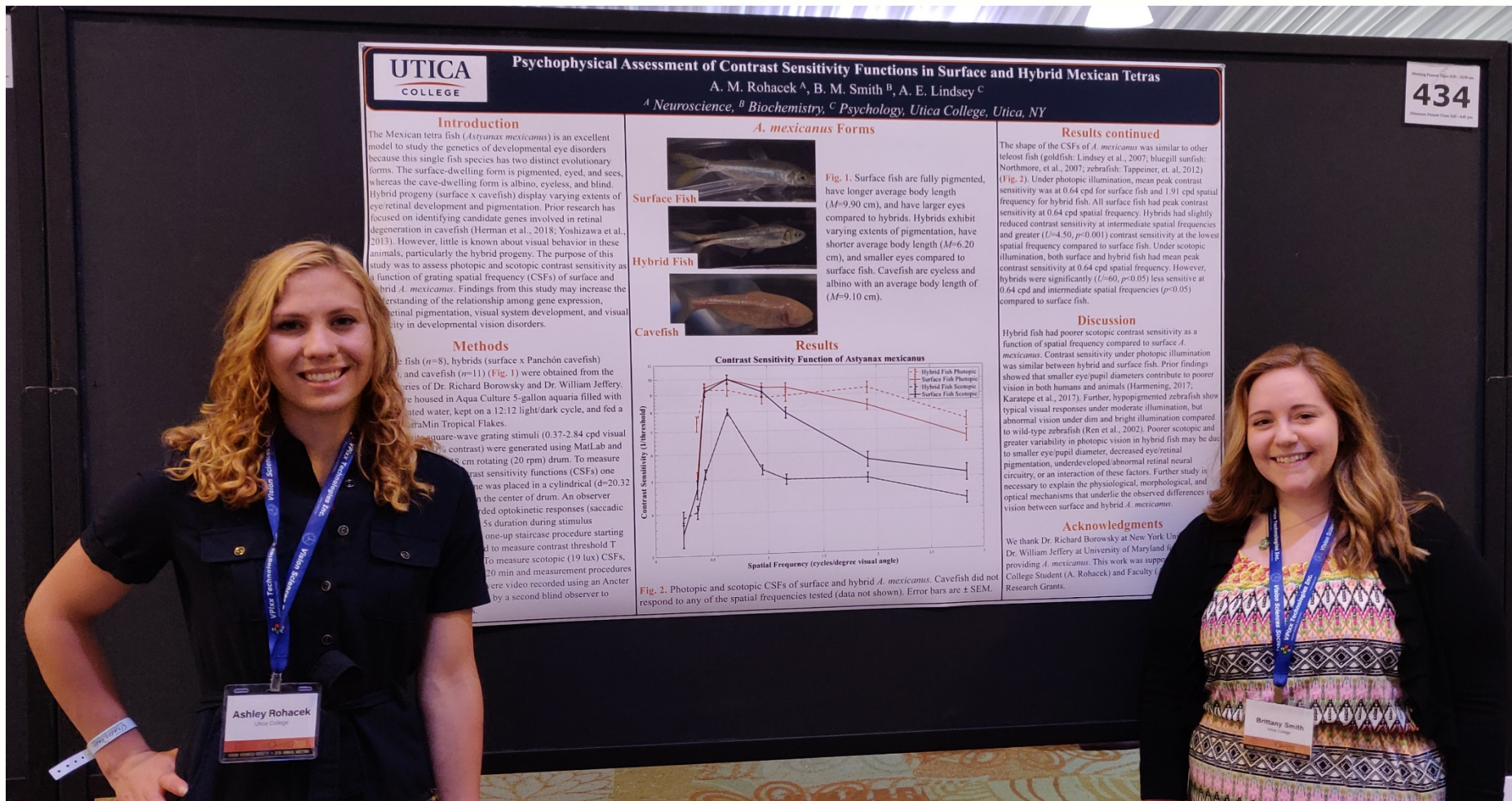
MyVSS

Save the Date

**VSS 2019**

**May 17-22**

**TradeWinds Island Resorts  
St. Pete Beach, Florida**



Ashley and Brittany presenting with Dr. Lindsey





# **Faculty Research Day**

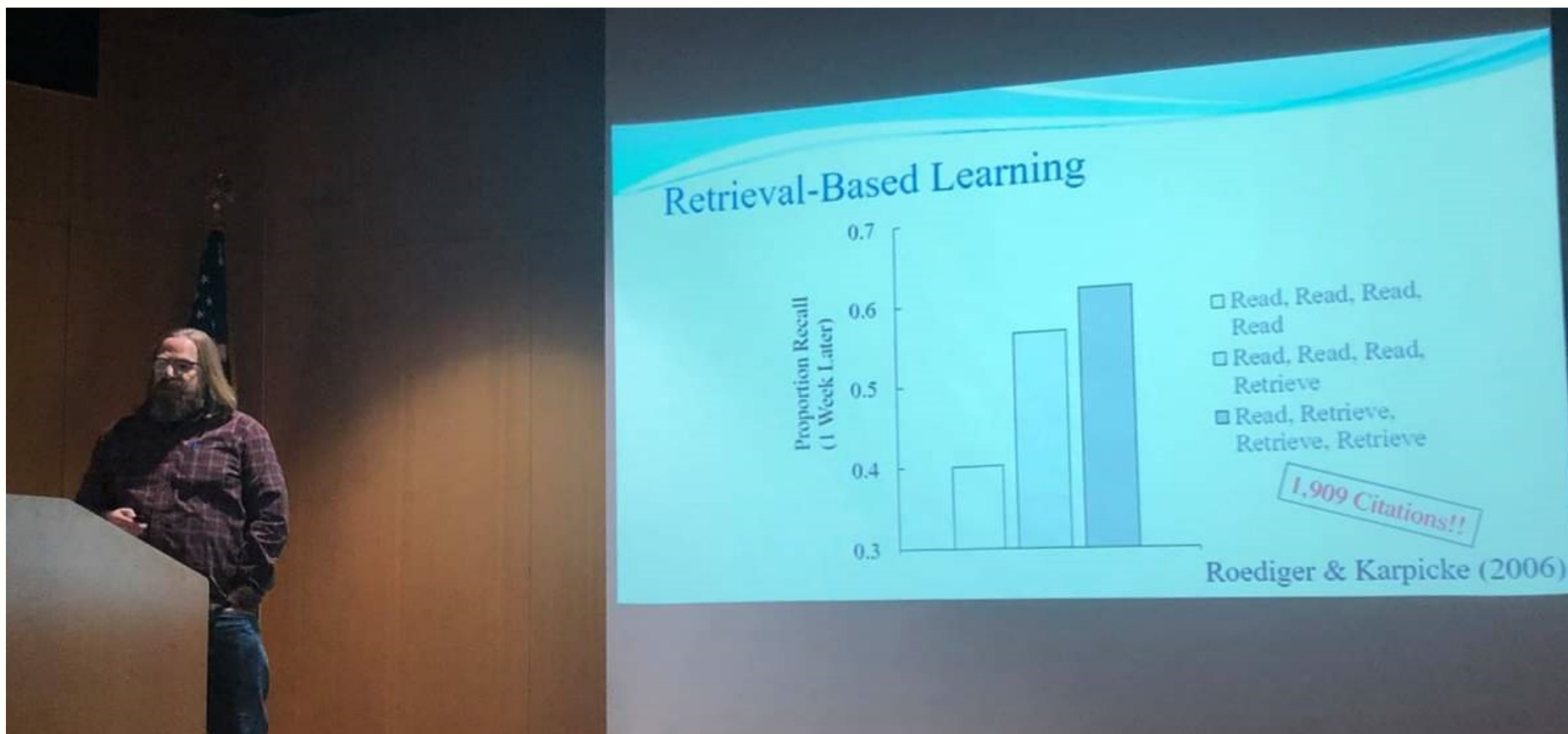
**November 14, 2018**



(Photo credit: Linnea Franits, Assoc. Professor, Occupational Therapy)



Dr. Kreiger's presentation



Dr. Schwoebel's presentation



# **The Utica College Student Conference for Research, Professional Activities, and Creative Arts**

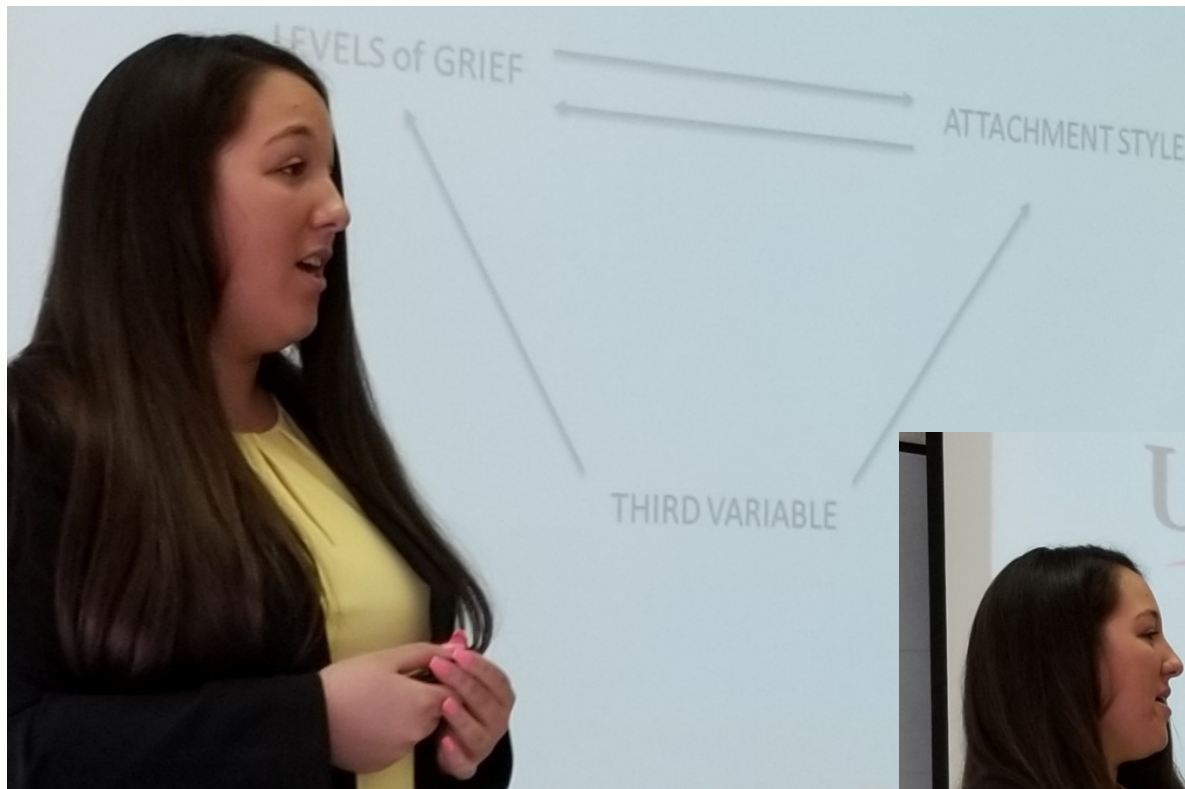
Wednesday, April 17, 2019

*Library Concourse/Utica College Campus*



JoVina's presentation with Dr. Specht





Shannon's presentation with Dr. Specht







2019 Psi Chi Inductees







Psych Society T-Shirt Winner



New 2019 Shirts!



OCTOBER 31ST



JOIN PSYCH SOCIETY FOR A

# MOVIE NIGHT

• 7PM - 9PM •  
BOEHLERT

THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS!

[kakrenz@utica.edu](mailto:kakrenz@utica.edu)

Boo!



Counting seeds after the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Pumpkin Raffle!









One of our Week of Kindness Activities!





Yum!



Winners of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Psych Society Trivia Night!





Senior Seminar with Dr. Schwoebel



Dr. Schwoebel recognized for “unwavering support and guidance” by the class of 2019





Zonta Club  
of Utica  
*Member of Zonta International*

**The Eichler/Fox Award**



Emma's Scholarship!



Emma with Dr. Yanowitz



# *Commencement* *2019*



Congratulations Raeven!





Congratulations Devon, Marina, Emily, & Jennifer!



Congratulations Hayley!





Congratulations Danielle!



Congratulations Brittney!





Congratulations Taylor, Jessica, & Krysta!



Congratulations Emma!





Congratulations Angelee!