

## PSYCHOLOGY

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### ABSTRACTS

**An Avoidance Role for Glandular Odors in *Meriones*?** K.A. DUFFEY, R.B. FISCHER, A. FULLENKAMP AND R.A. VANCE, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana 47306.—Territorial defense has been proposed as the primary function of odors associated with specialized glandular structures in small mammals. Unfortunately, there have been few direct tests of this hypothesis. In order to provide such a test, male gerbils were first dominance tested and then presented with conspecific odors. Subordinate males failed to avoid areas saturated with the odors of other males. These animals apparently could distinguish such odors but could not effectively differentiate among odor donors. It is not likely that the message being conveyed is one serving as an olfactory substrate for intermale spacing. Rather, these odors probably serve to familiarize a female with a potential mate.

**Fixed Interval Responding in Old and Young Syrian Hamsters.** THOMAS HOLMES, Department of Psychological Science, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana 47306.—The performance of old (20+ months) and young (6 months) male Syrian hamsters when exposed to fixed-interval (FI) schedules of reinforcement was observed using a single subject, steady state analysis. Some age differences were found in response rate, post reinforcement pause duration and running rate dimensions. Schedule values (30 and 120 seconds) were manipulated in order to determine their effect of the bar pressing rate. The behavior of four hamsters was stable to criterion at the FI-30 seconds level; however, when the schedule was changed to an FI-120 sec., the behavior did not stabilize. Four other subjects never reached stability at the FI-30 sec. level even though they had been run for 60+ sessions. A manipulation was done to attempt to gain control over the behavior; however, it was unsuccessful. When FI patterns of responding were observed on the cumulative record, they were frequently of the pause and run type instead of the typical scalloped pattern which other laboratory rodents generate. These data are interpreted as an inability of the FI schedule to typically control the bar pressing of this study's subjects. It is possible that other behaviors may be more influenced by the FI contingency than bar pressing.

**A Themes Analysis of Excuses Offered by Adults and Late Adolescents.** BARBARA KANE, Department of Educational and School Psychology, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana 47809.—Excuses offered by adults and late adolescents were analyzed for the content of the following proposed adolescent themes: Autonomy, sexuality, control, intensity, extremism, identity, and self-absorption. Subjects were graduate and undergraduate students at Indiana State University. Both groups evidenced great self-absorption. In addition, the adult group emphasized autonomy and control (self-discipline). Although all the themes were found in the excuses of the late adolescents,

extremism (excitability) was noted least. The degree of autonomy (responsibility for self) necessary to resist the suggestion to offer an excuse was indicated by very few students at either level; the adults, however, showed greater autonomy than the late adolescents.

**Gender Stereotyping of Occupations as a Function of Perceivers' Sex, Age and Familiarity with the Occupation.** FREDERIC W. WIDLAK, National College of Education, Chicago, Illinois 60638 and PATRICIA A. SCOFIELD, Rockwell International Corporation, West Hollywood, California 90046.——**Problem:** Public perceptions of particular occupations as “masculine” or “feminine” are of interest as “equal employment opportunity” legislation has led to increased sexual integration of many occupations which were previously held predominantly by either men or women. The present study examines the strength of gender stereotyping for ten occupations chosen to represent the masculinity-femininity spectrum. Based on implicit personality theory and past research on social stereotypes, it is hypothesized that males show stronger gender stereotyping than females, older persons show more gender stereotyping than younger persons, and that greater familiarity with an occupation leads to less gender stereotyping of that occupation.

**Method:** Ten occupations were rated by 227 subjects (98 males) on a 52-adjective Likert-type rating scale designed to indicate gender stereotyping. Subjects ranged in age from 18 to 56 years and were selected to represent a broad range of occupations, including those rated. Subjects' familiarity with each occupation was rated on a Guttman-type scale.

**Results:** Occupations were stereotyped in order from masculine to feminine: Bus Driver, Business Executive, Physician, Computer Programmer, Real Estate Agent, High School Teacher, Librarian, Nurse, Secretary, and Fashion Model. The strength of stereotyping was significantly positively correlated with subjects' age and sex (males showing stronger stereotypes). Greater familiarity with an occupation was associated with significantly less gender stereotyping of that occupation, except for fashion models. This empirical support of the study's hypotheses implies some success of public-policy efforts toward reducing sex-role stereotypes of younger persons, but also indicates the tenacity of these stereotypes, especially for men.