

The Importance of Research as an Academic and Social Learning Experience

A warm welcome and happy reading of the fourth issue of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology! There have been several transitions in the editorial team of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology for 2023. Raisa Jadavji, who graduated in 2022 from the Social Psychology Program, has stepped down as Editor-in-Chief. Raisa has been an inspirational student leader and alumnus who has made valuable and long-lasting contributions to the Social Psychology Program, taking part in sustainable initiatives that enhance and improve the student learning experience. As a long-term member of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology, Raisa worked as an Assistant Editor before taking on the role as Editor-in-Chief in 2022. Raisa is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Child Study and Education at OSIE. I have witnessed how Raisa creates and facilitates accessible, inclusive, equitable, and safe places for students to learn, develop, and grow both academically and socially. The education system is fortunate to have such an intelligent, dedicated, committed, and passionate individual in their ranks who I know will have a positive and indelible impact on the lives of the students she teaches. Raisa – thank you for your contributions to the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology over the years – you are awesome! You will be greatly missed, but the entire team wishes you success in all your future endeavours.

I am pleased to welcome Linette Sapper to the role of Editor-in-Chief. Linette recently graduated from the Social Psychology Program in June 2023. I had the pleasure of supervising Linette's group thesis in 2022/2023, as well as teaching Linette in several courses during her degree. Linette has been an excellent leader for the editorial team as the incoming Editor-in-Chief. Linette is not new to the journal however, having previously served as co-assistant editor. Linette has taken on the role of Editor-in-Chief with ease, showing commitment, patience, dedication, and professionalism in her role. Linette has been a valuable member of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology for several years. The journal is so lucky to have Linette in the role of Editor-in-Chief this year – thank you for all your hard work over the years, Linette. It has not gone unnoticed – you are incredible!

There have been several other transitions at the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology over the past year. Angelo Marmolejo is continuing to serve as a co-assistant editor (thanks, Angelo!), joined now by Ayma Iqbal, who we warmly welcome to the editorial team. Sarah McBride has continued as Graphic Designer (thanks, Sarah!). Finally, Christina Doan has remained in her role as the layout editor (thanks, Christina!). The entire team sends best wishes and thanks to Raisa as she embarks on new opportunities, continued thanks to returning editorial board members, and extends a

warm welcome to all new editorial members of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology!

The most recent 2022-2023 Social Psychology capstone class consisted of 20 thesis project groups with 106 enrolled students. This year, there were five thesis papers that met the minimum standard of excellence of a grade of 85% or higher on the final thesis paper submitted for the capstone course, as per the publication criteria. The 2023 published papers highlight the socially relevant, interesting, and informative topics under investigation, including (ordered alphabetically by study title): **“Am I a Leader or a Follower?”: Examining Social Media Use Through the Lens of Social Conformity and Individuality** by Rachel Dennison, Yumna Qaisar, Linette Sapper, Melanie Selvaggi, Safaiya Tobala; **Comparing the Psychological Well-being of International and Domestic Students** by Laurie Baker, Shaza Zahir Hassan, Christine Huang, Karolina Kalashnikova, Monserrat Ramirez Ruvalcaba; **Impact of Social Groups on Academic Agency in Lower-Year and Upper-Year Students** by Dana Alnahhar, Maya Mehta, Arielle Ngai, Nayla Pietras, Conrad von Palleske, Vivian Wu; **Rates of Imposter Syndrome Among Female-Identifying Individuals in Undergraduate STEM Programs at McMaster University** by Alyssa Cockburn, Al-Ain Dalisay, Olivia Eakins, Lana Abdul Raheem, Alison Rogers; and, **The Association Between Birth Order & Attachment Style** by Molly Clayton, Cassidy Colalillo, Jaskiran Guraya, Fatima Malik, Margaret Miller, Emily Vieira.

The papers published in this year’s edition of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology explore the diverse lived experiences of university-aged students, including psychological well-being, feelings of mastery, competency and belonging, perceptions of attachment, and the connectedness to and the impact of social connections both in-person and via social media. The published papers highlight the importance of research at the undergraduate level in the capstone course as it provides not only a hands-on experiential learning experience for the enrolled students, but an important platform for the voices, experiences, and lived realities of McMaster University undergraduate students who participate in the research to be heard, recognized, and shared. While only a portion of the thesis papers completed during the 2022-2023 academic year are included in this issue of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology, the work completed by the entire class is commendable and should be recognized. If you would like to know more about the other projects completed during the 2022-2023 academic year, please see this link: <https://socialpsychology.socsci.mcmaster.ca/stories/4zz6-capstone-class-poster-showcase/>

Since the 2022 edition of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology, publication of the abstracts of the presenters from the Social Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference has occurred. I hope you enjoy reading about the interesting papers presented at the second annual Social Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference! Please join me in congratulating all those on the presentation of their work at the conference and the publication of their abstracts! You can read more about the 2022 conference at this link: <https://socialpsychology.socsci.mcmaster.ca/stories/congratulations-presenters-and->

[conference-developers-organizers-of-the-2nd-annual-social-psychology-undergraduate-research-conference/](#)

I hope you enjoy reading the important, interesting, and socially relevant social psychological research studies of the five respective groups featured in the fourth issue of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology, along with the conference abstracts from the second annual Social Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference. The collection of work in this publication showcases the academic excellence and achievements of the students in the Social Psychology Program. The entire editorial board should be commended for their hard work and dedication on the publication of the fourth issue of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology. I continue to be honoured to work, as Faculty Advisor, alongside intelligent, motivated, dedicated, and inspirational students: Angelo, Ayma, Christina, Linette, and Sarah, who serve as editorial board members, along with the five groups who were eligible for publication this year and the individuals and groups with published abstracts from the conference. Congratulations to all involved in the publication of the fourth issue of the McMaster Undergraduate Journal of Social Psychology - your hard work, dedication, and inspiring work is recognized, respected, and appreciated!

Sincerely and with best wishes,

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