



Center for the Development of Peace and Well-being

University of California  
 1231 Tolman Hall #1690  
 Berkeley, CA 94720-1690  
 Phone: 510.643.8965  
 Fax: 510.642.7969

**2003-04****Center for the Development of Peace & Well-being**

<b>Undergraduate Fellows – Project Descriptions</b>
---

**Whitney Brechwald, Anthropology/Psychology*****Ambiguous stigma and attribution:******Understanding behavioral and affective responses to eating disorders***

This research will investigate behavioral and affective reactions to stigma, focusing on attributional ambiguity as it relates to eating disorders. The complex social and individual factors which underlie eating disorders suggest that the cause of this stigmatized condition is unclear. Do attributions vary depending on gender, due to the fact that eating disorders affect more women than men? Do these attributions lead to specific social behavior? Understanding the attributions people make for stigmatized conditions - particularly those with decidedly ambiguous causes - can lead to a more complete understanding of social interactions in which stigma plays a role.

**Susan Feizzadeh, Psychology*****Teacher's Perceptions of Cultural Competency******in Association with Teacher Efficacy***

This study is looking at teacher's perceptions of their cultural competency and its relationship with teacher efficacy. This research examines how teachers in two urban high schools, Life Academy and Berkeley High, feel about their cultural knowledge and how having this competency compliments their teaching skills. By focusing on the role that cultural awareness plays in the classroom, we can better understand how to develop environments that encourages cultural skills, knowledge and awareness that will be most conducive to student success and achievement. With teacher interviews and surveys, the hope of this research is to gain more knowledge about prosocial behavior and how we can increase racial harmony. By considering the influence of cultural competency on teacher's classroom performance, various intervention methods can be designed to assist the larger school community in promotion peaceful co-existence.

**Yulia Khouri, Psychology*****Influence of Arab Images on Arab American Identity***

America as a nation is composed of diverse peoples who have come from different lands and cultures, hold different belief systems and practice different religions. Within this diversity, a pluralistic

awareness is growing. Therefore, for both majority and minority group members the task is equally challenging: how does one maintain one's cultural integrity while interacting with diverse others? This question is particularly relevant to the political discourse that frames the mainstream's perspective on ethnic minority groups. This research will examine how the Arab minority group's image has been influenced by media representations related to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, the events of the September 11<sup>th</sup> and most recently the War in Iraq. In particular, the researcher will look at the cognitive –affective responses of Arab Americans to the stereotypes and prejudice that shape the identity of this recently stigmatized group. The goal of this study is to contribute to our understanding of the Arab American minority group, which in turn will help facilitate a peaceful and harmonious social communication.

**Lia Kraemer, Psychology**  
***The Positive Role of Self-Conscious Emotions***

This project is examining the role that self-conscious emotions play in common social interactions. Past research has conceptualized self-conscious emotions negatively by postulating that they serve as a detriment both to one's own psychological well-being as well as to one's social relationships with others. Yet this research has not examined the actual display of self-conscious emotions in real social interactions and how these emotions help guide those interactions. It is the researcher's hypothesis that self-conscious emotions in fact help facilitate social interactions by allowing for the person experiencing those emotions to behave and respond more sensitively to others' needs. Specifically, shame allows a person to respond with more sensitivity to a potentially awkward situation, thereby facilitating that social interaction and allowing for greater social bonding. This project will examine the manifestation of self-conscious emotions in social interactions through both body signals and self-reports in order to examine the full effect those emotions have on social interactions. This research would encourage the newly developing field of human emotion to re-conceptualize the self-conscious emotions as beneficial to one's life and as emotions that, instead of being eradicated, should be cultivated for their positive role in social interactions.

**Golnoush Monfared, Psychology**  
***The Impact of Group Identification on Individual Attitudes  
Toward Socio-political Issues***

The aim of this project is to advance our understanding of the reactions to the “war on terrorism” beyond individuals' political convictions. The principal objective is to gain a better understanding, through social psychological methods, of how individuals' attitudes towards socio-political issues (e.g., war on terrorism) can be affected by their group identification, their unique individual experiences with war and their personalities. According to Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS) theory (Mendoza-Denton et al., 1999; Mischel & Shoda, 1995), an individual's reaction to a particular situation is determined by the interaction between the individual's unique experiences and the culture s/he shares with others. It is the researcher's hypothesis that individuals with a prior personal experience of war will be less likely to endorse the use of military action in the resolution of conflict, and more likely to endorse full use of diplomatic means. However, not all who have experienced war would be in favor of diplomatic solutions; individual differences also play a role. Specifically, the moderating effects of several variables will be examined, including the extent to which an individual identifies her/himself with a specific cultural group (ethnic identity), his/her benevolent emotions/thoughts toward others (empathy), and his/her experience of discrimination.

**Jamie Rowen, Peace & Conflict Studies**  
***Religious and Cultural Enablers of Conflict Transformation***

This project will include a comparative study of Hinduism in India and Buddhism in Vietnam, including analysis of the religious doctrine of these groups in addition to the cultural applications of these doctrines. To address Hinduism, the researcher will analyze Gandhi's freedom struggle and the current manipulation of Hindu identity to foment violence in South Asia. Emphasis will include how Hindu philosophy can transform the current conflict, the role of Buddhism in nationalist resistance to the Vietnam War and how Buddhism relates to the current economic and social influences in Vietnam. The researcher is conducting field research in Vietnam to learn about current social issues in order to identify religious and cultural values that facilitate peaceful societies.