

# PEZ DISPENSER

Winter/Spring Newsletter

2012

## Special points of interest:

- Renew or discover interest in PEZ Projects with seasonal newsletters.
- Reflect with Dr. Sondra Solomon.
- Read about research results.
- Receive updates on PEZ team members and activities.
- Read about and support our current project

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### No Winter Haiku

Bear, badger, frogs, moths  
And hedgehogs are sleepy eyed.  
They yearn for spring's light.

## PEZ Greeting and Reflections from Dr. Sondra

The limited snowfall and slightly warmer winter in the North Country have been unusual. Although there were many dark long days, we now emerge and face the light! March, April and May promise more hours dappled with sunlight as we sprint toward summer.

Our team has been busy. We have added a new member! Victoria Baptiste joins us as a first year doctoral student in the Clinical Program. Many of you will meet her this July at the Annual PWA Retreat in Stowe, VT. Some of you will meet her if you visit our lab on the University of Vermont Campus to participate in our research. Victoria is also working with me on my other stigma projects. Be sure to read Victoria's profile in this newsletter.

Andy and James have been busy traveling across the region to administer the project protocol. Susan has been communicating with all of you and doing a spectacular job answering your questions, managing the project and conducting her own research. Drs. Miller and Bunn and I have been analyzing data and writing papers. We have been struck by your comments, particularly the remarks that you have made regarding the ways in which HIV has shaped your lives. "Resilience" and "engagement with the world" have been the words that many of you have used to convey how you manage your day-to-day experience. As you know, we are still analyzing data from our first project and the data that we continue to collect informs our Phase II research. Your words inform us about the way we understand the complicated tapestry of HIV-related stigma.

Sometimes it is hard for Dr. Carol Miller and me to believe that we started this journey in January 2004. Since then, we have refined our questions and procedures and understand a little more about what you think about yourselves and the communities in which you live. We share what we can and you will hear more about our findings as our understanding becomes clearer.

The *No Winter Haiku* is my attempt to explain what our team has been doing. Like the hibernating frog, moth and hedgehog, we have collected food .....which we think of as the data you have shared with us! However, unlike the bear, we have not been comfortably sleeping in our den. We have been thinking, writing, re-writing, debating, re-writing and sharing our work. Before we can move forward and take what we have learned to develop some culturally grounded interventions we must recruit more participants. **We need 80 of you to step up and participate! Spread the word!!! Tell your friends!!!! We need your cooperation, participation and guidance to pull us through.**

As always, the entire PEZ team is grateful that you continue to work with us. It is your expertise and energy that sustains us during the dark days of hibernation and the burst of productive regeneration that occurs during the spring. Please act with compassion and remember to breathe.

With gratitude,  
*Dr. Sondra*



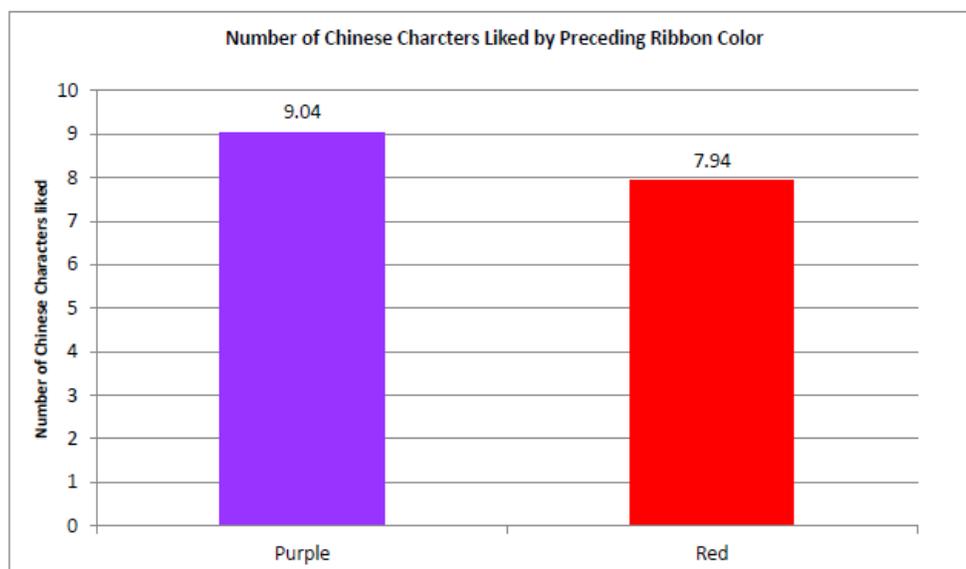
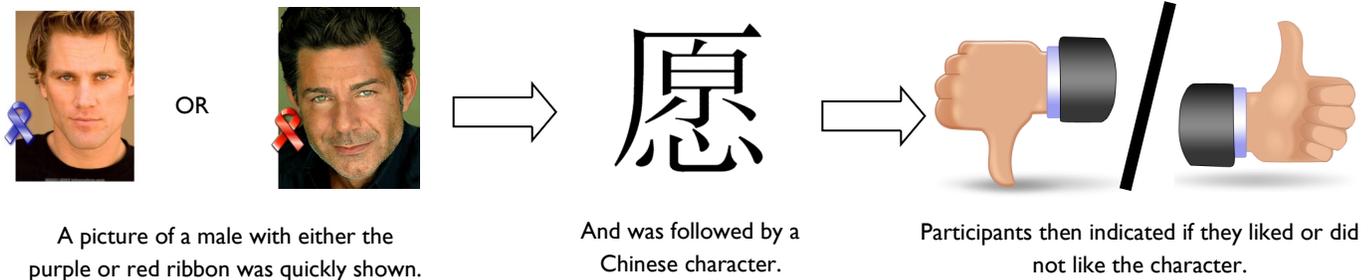
## Research Snapshot

### Measuring Attitudes Toward People with HIV Using the Affect Misattribution Procedure

How much do you like ice cream? Given a choice between a day on the beach or a day on the slopes, which would you prefer? Many of the questions we answer every day are easy, and we give our opinions and ideas without a second thought. However, people may be less forthcoming when the topic is sensitive. For example, expressing racist and sexist attitudes has become more socially unacceptable over time, and people may not share their true attitudes for fear of being perceived negatively. This creates an interesting challenge for researchers trying to measure attitudes. How can we measure a person's true attitudes when people guard what they say?

Researchers in psychology have found that when two things are presented at virtually the same time it is difficult for people to separate their thoughts and feelings about them. For example, if you were shown a picture of President Obama and then immediately shown a picture of something neutral that you have no attitude about, like a Chinese language character\* and you were asked how pleasant or unpleasant you think the Chinese character is, your attitude toward the Chinese character will likely be related to your attitude toward the President. Your attitude toward the President "spills over" onto the neutral Chinese character. It is very difficult to keep the "spill over" from happening.

In our work, we used a task called the Affect Misattribution Procedure to look how attitudes toward HIV/AIDS would "spill over" onto a Chinese character, allowing us to measure people's attitudes toward HIV/AIDS without directly asking. In a recent experiment, we trained University of Vermont students to recognize different colored 'remembrance ribbons' and what they represent. We told them that a purple ribbon was for cancer awareness and a red ribbon was for HIV/AIDS awareness. Then, using a computer program and projector system, we showed the participants images of men with either a purple or a red ribbon superimposed on their shoulder. These images were on the screen for under a half second, just long enough to see the color of the ribbon. Immediately after the man's image, we projected a randomly selected Chinese language character. Participants were instructed to indicate if they liked or did not like the Chinese character.



\* Unless you happen to read Chinese, that is.

### Summary of Results

- ◆ People indicated they liked more of the Chinese characters that followed images of men with the purple cancer awareness ribbon than the Chinese characters that followed images of men with the red HIV/AIDS awareness ribbon. Since the Chinese characters are meant to be neutral, this shows how the attitudes toward the ribbons (and what they represent) "spilled over" onto the characters.

## PEZ Projects Profile: Who is... Victoria Baptiste?



Victoria is the newest member of the PEZ team.

Victoria joins the PEZ Lab as a first year Ph.D. student in clinical psychology under the mentorship of Dr. Solomon. She also serves as Project Manager for Dr. Solomon's new research program, the OWL Initiative: Promoting Resilience and Change, which focuses on examining stigma, coping, resilience, and psychosocial well-being among adults with facial distinctions.

Victoria earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and psychology from Middlebury College in 2004. While at Middlebury, she studied abroad in Paris, was a leader in student government, an editor of *Skin Deep Magazine*, and an active advocate for cultural sensitivity and tolerance on campus. Following graduation, she worked as a teacher of children with autism spectrum disorders at the New England Center for Children, and later was the Human Studies Coordinator for the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center and a behavior therapist for Boston ABA, Inc.

Victoria currently serves as a pre-doctoral clinician with the Connecting Cultures team, which provides psychological services to refugees and asylum seekers in Chittenden County. She is committed to under-served populations and groups with multiple risk factors for poor psychosocial functioning, mental health disparities, access to and retention of services, and culturally-appropriate therapeutic methodologies. Of special interest to Victoria are the socio-cultural determinants of low help-seeking behavior among racial/ethnic minorities, with an eye toward increasing that rate.

## Person Environment Zone Projects Questions, Questions, Questions!

As researchers, we ask a lot of questions. For those of you currently enrolled in our research, you know just how many questions we can think of! But we also like being *asked* questions. We try our best to answer questions that you might have about your participation, how your answers to our questions are used, and big-picture questions like, "What is this all for, anyway?" Below are a few questions that have come our way in terms of participation. And if you have a question, let us know! Email us at [pez@uvm.edu](mailto:pez@uvm.edu) or call us at 1-866-532-7183. Maybe your question will be featured in a future newsletter!

### **Q. I remember participating a few years ago; can I participate again?**

**A.** It depends. If you participated between 2004 and 2006, you are eligible for the current study. If you have participated since 2009, you may have already completed this study. The best thing to do is call Susan at 1-866-532-7183 and check.

### **Q. How long does the study take?**

**A.** Each session (there are 3!) takes 1.5-2 hours, on average. You complete 3 sessions over 6 months. There is also a one week telephone diary to complete after your first visit. Each call (you'll make 7!) takes about 5 minutes.

### **Q. I'm uncomfortable making a call to you or I don't have a phone. Is there any other way I can get in touch with you?**

**A.** You can fill out a secure web form on our website, [www.uvm.edu/pez](http://www.uvm.edu/pez). Or, clip the interest form on the back of the newsletter and mail it in, and we'll call you. Also, you can talk with your case manager about the project and give us a call from their office at your next appointment.

**Ready to participate but  
can't get to Burlington, VT?  
Contact us about coming to  
your area!**

**Call us at  
1-866-532-7183**

**Email us at  
pez@uvm.edu**

**We prefer to travel for a  
minimum of two people—  
so sign up with a friend!**

**Want to know more?**

**Look for us on  
the web at**

**[www.uvm.edu/pez](http://www.uvm.edu/pez)**

**"Like" us on Facebook**

**[www.facebook.com/  
PersonEnvironmentZone](http://www.facebook.com/PersonEnvironmentZone)**

**See our TV commercial  
on YouTube**

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PEZUVM](http://www.youtube.com/user/PEZUVM)**

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**Phone: 802-656-8029  
Toll Free: 1-866-532-7183  
E-mail: [pez@uvm.edu](mailto:pez@uvm.edu)**



## **Become a Participant! COPING WITH HIV/AIDS PROJECT**

We are looking for people to participate in our research project  
investigating how people cope with HIV/AIDS.

The Person Environment Zone is continuing its study on coping with HIV/AIDS. The study is supported by a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health. We are interested in finding out the ways in which individuals with HIV and AIDS cope with the stigma of HIV/AIDS. We are currently recruiting adult (18 years old and older) men and women with HIV/AIDS to participate in the study.

To participate, you will:

- \* Come to our research space at the University of Vermont 3 times over 6 months.
- \* Complete a diary of day-to-day experiences living with HIV/AIDS using a telephone call-in system for 7 days.

You will be paid for each of your visits to our project site (\$40 for the first visit, \$50 for the second visit, and \$60 for the third visit). You will also receive \$12.50 for every 50 miles you travel, plus an additional compensation for mileage if you drive. Every day you complete the telephone diary study, you will earn \$10. Completing all seven days in a row will earn you a bonus \$15, for a total compensation of \$85.

In the event you are unable to travel to the UVM project site, arrangements can be made to accommodate you.

The confidentiality of all communications associated with the study will be maintained to the maximum extent allowable by law.

To learn more about the study or if you are interested in participating in the project please call

**1-802-656-8029 or 1-866-532-7183 (toll free)**

YES! I would like to be contacted to participate in your project!

I would like to update my contact information

(Please return this form by mail or visit our website [www.uvm.edu/pez](http://www.uvm.edu/pez))

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

Is it OK to leave a message on your voicemail (circle)?      YES      NO

Email address \_\_\_\_\_