Faculty Thoughts: Tim Barth

We are rapidly approaching the end of the semester and there is little doubt that students, faculty and staff are beginning to feel an increase in their stress levels. Final exams, papers, theses, and dissertations are threatening our normally rosy and cheerful demeanors, and the impending renovation of Winton-Scott Hall adds to a feeling of chaos. So how do we cope? An abundance of rather generic advice can be found on a variety of medical web sites but most of it seems almost as out of our control as the stress triggers that currently invade our lives. For example, you might find yourself rolling your eyes at the recommendation that you should “get better sleep”. Likewise, it may seem ridiculous to think you could suddenly find the time for yoga classes (as the Mayo clinic stress relief pages suggest). But all is not lost. Experimental psychologists have suggested that one remedy for stress is laughter, but not just any laughter. Jo-Anne Bachorowski from Vanderbilt University has suggested that voiced laughter (hahaha; hehee; belly laughs; guffaws) can elicit a positive emotional state and reduce stress, whereas non-voiced laughter (grunts; snorts) does not. This might be our ticket to managing stress over the next month. So, when I see you in the halls of Winton-Scott over next few weeks feel free to give me a good hearty belly laugh. But please, no grunts or snorts.

Publications


Conferences


Prokosch, M. (2015). Live fast if you’re going to die young: Decision making shifts as a function of vulnerability to infection. Society for Evolution, Medicine & Public Health, Tempe, AZ.


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Many of you should be in the process of enrolling in classes for the Summer and Fall 2015 terms. If you have any questions about course selection, degree requirements, graduate school in psychology, and/or career options in psychology-related fields, please contact me.