Angier Cooper attends Ursinus College and is doubling majoring in Art and Art History and Psychology. She is a senior and anticipates graduating in May, 2015. She began delving into research as a junior, when she took a course centered on the process of psychology research and through assisting an Ursinus Professor, Kneia DaCosta with her research on adolescents in regards to media literacy. An additional mentor is Brent Mattingly, another psychology professor who publishes fascinating works on relationships and who is the motivating supervisor to our research and to our paper. Angier is a part of Psi Chi: National Honor Society in Psychology and Peer Advocates, a group on campus that educates students about sexual misconduct and provides support and guidance for individuals who have experienced sexual misconduct. After graduation she plans to join the Peace Corps or Americorps and eventually attend graduate school for art therapy.

Emily Pellowe is a senior at Ursinus College in Collegeville, Pennsylvania and anticipates graduating in May, 2015. She is currently pursuing a double major in psychology and neuroscience. Her research experience began in junior year with courses offered at Ursinus regarding research methods and analysis, as well as implementation of these skills. She has been involved in research under Brenda Lederach, psychology professor at Ursinus College, which implemented eye-tracking software to determine how individuals perceive and predict the sexual identity of strangers. The current research was supervised by Brent Mattingly PhD., whom specializes in social psychology and is a professor of psychology at Ursinus College. Emily is part of a campus organization called Peer Advocates; this group works with the Title IX education coordinator to increase campus awareness about sexual misconduct, as well as provides support and guidance to students whom have been effected by sexual, stalking, and relationship violence. She also interned as an advocate with New Beginnings, an organization under the New Hampshire Coalition against Domestic, Sexual, and Stalking Violence and plans on receiving her masters in social work before pursuing a career as an advocate.

Q&A

* How did you get involved in research?

A-I first got involved in research as a Psych100 student, where I participated as a subject for a variety of studies. As an upper class psychology student, I continued to learn about being a researcher through creating hypothetical studies and now through completing small group research project in full and by assisting a professor’s research.

E-I became involved in research to varying degrees throughout my college career, beginning as a freshman. Initially I volunteered as a subject for research conducted by upperclassmen, as a psychology student I knew it was important to participate and help others within the psychology community as well as gain insight through the experimental designs of my peers. My junior year I joined a group of researchers in their ongoing experiment regarding sexual identity prediction, later I created my own hypothetical experiment in order to understand experimental method implementation, and finally a small group of other students and I created and executed the research being submitted today.

* What led you to this topic?

A-As a child, growing up with very minimal technology in comparison to the average American, I have always been intrigued about how technology, for better or worse, affects human development. Therefore, when the opportunity arose to complete research on a topic of our choice, I was excited to begin studying technologies effect on students in an academic setting, where technology can be the most helpful resource and the largest distraction.

E- This topic is relevant to my life and the lives of most college students today, making it an area of interest for myself and others involved in the research. As a college student and a smart phone user, I have had my own experiences with nomophobia, or caught myself using my smart phone in inappropriate settings. Given the distraction caused by smart phones and the research that already exists, my colleagues and I became curious about the intersection of smart phone addiction or anxiety and its effects within a classroom setting.

* What has the process of working on this research/paper been like for you?

A-The process of working on this research paper has been incredibly positive. From the beginning, when a group of four of us students sat down to brain storm how to implement the study, to completing it, and now to working with just one fellow researcher under the close supervision of Dr. Mattingly has been a challenging and rewarding process. I have learned through experience what goes into every aspect of a scientific paper and through this lens have gained a new respect for what keeps the wheels of the academic world running, that being all the important research that is completed in every field.

E-The process of working on this research has been a rewarding one. I am excited by the experimental process and trying to solve the puzzle which arises from trying to create the best design in order to decrease error. Working with a team allows each us to see the theory from different perspectives, and provides us with invaluable skills and knowledge that individual work would not. Writing the paper has been challenging and informative. From the conception of our theory, to the final paper, this experience has been extraordinarily fulfilling and I am grateful to have had an opportunity to be engaged with research to this degree as an undergraduate.

* What advice would you offer to other undergraduates interested in conducting research and publishing their work?

A- My advice for other undergraduate students conducting research and publishing their work is to be extremely thorough and thoughtful about your entire process. Additionally, to be patient, as you might find some steps to take longer than anticipated. Lastly, to continue pursuing your project whether or not it is significant, since you can still learn a lot about what goes into research and about your topic of interest as a whole.

E- I would suggest to any undergraduate who is interested in research and publication that they be proactive. I think it is important to start research early and to seek out a team with similar experimental interests and work ethic. The process is time consuming and difficult, but worth the time and effort upon completion. I suggest that any undergraduate who has not participated in research previously be prepared for the commitment and choose a topic that they find interesting to begin with, since they will inevitably gain an intimate knowledge of their topic and I believe that people are more likely to put the work in if they are actively interested in the outcome.