

COLLOQUIUM SERIES

TITLE: On the Psychology of Passion

Date: January 16, 2009

Location: Somerville House, Room 3345

Time: 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

(Please join us after the talk for light refreshments.)



Dr. Robert J. Vallerand

Laboratoire de Recherche sur le Comportement Social

Département de Psychologie

Université du Québec à Montréal

Abstract:

Passion. For centuries, philosophers and writers have aspired to understand its sources, its ramifications, and its role in our lives. Recently, Vallerand and his colleagues (2003) have proposed a new conceptualization of passion. Passion is defined as a strong inclination or desire for a self-defining activity that we love, value, and spend a considerable amount of time on. Two types of passion are proposed: a harmonious and an obsessive passion. Obsessive passion is involved when people feel that they can't help themselves and have to surrender to their desire to engage in the passionate activity. It is as if the activity controlled the person. Obsessive passion results from a controlled internalization (Deci & Ryan, 2000) of the activity in the person's identity. On the other hand, harmonious passion refers to a strong inclination for the activity that nevertheless remains under the person's control. The person can choose when to and when not to engage in the activity, thus preventing conflict from arising between activity engagement in the passionate activity and other life activities. Harmonious passion results from an autonomous internalization of the activity in identity. In this address, I review research that reveals that harmonious passion is typically associated with adaptive outcomes while obsessive passion is mainly related to less adaptive and at times maladaptive outcomes. These findings have been obtained with respect to a number of affective, cognitive, mental and physical health, relationships, and performance variables with diverse populations. I also address the role of personality and social variables in the development of passion. Finally, some directions for future research are proposed.

Please email: webpsych@uwo.ca if you require information in an alternate format, or if any other arrangements can make this event accessible to you; website: <http://www.psychology.uwo.ca/>



Western