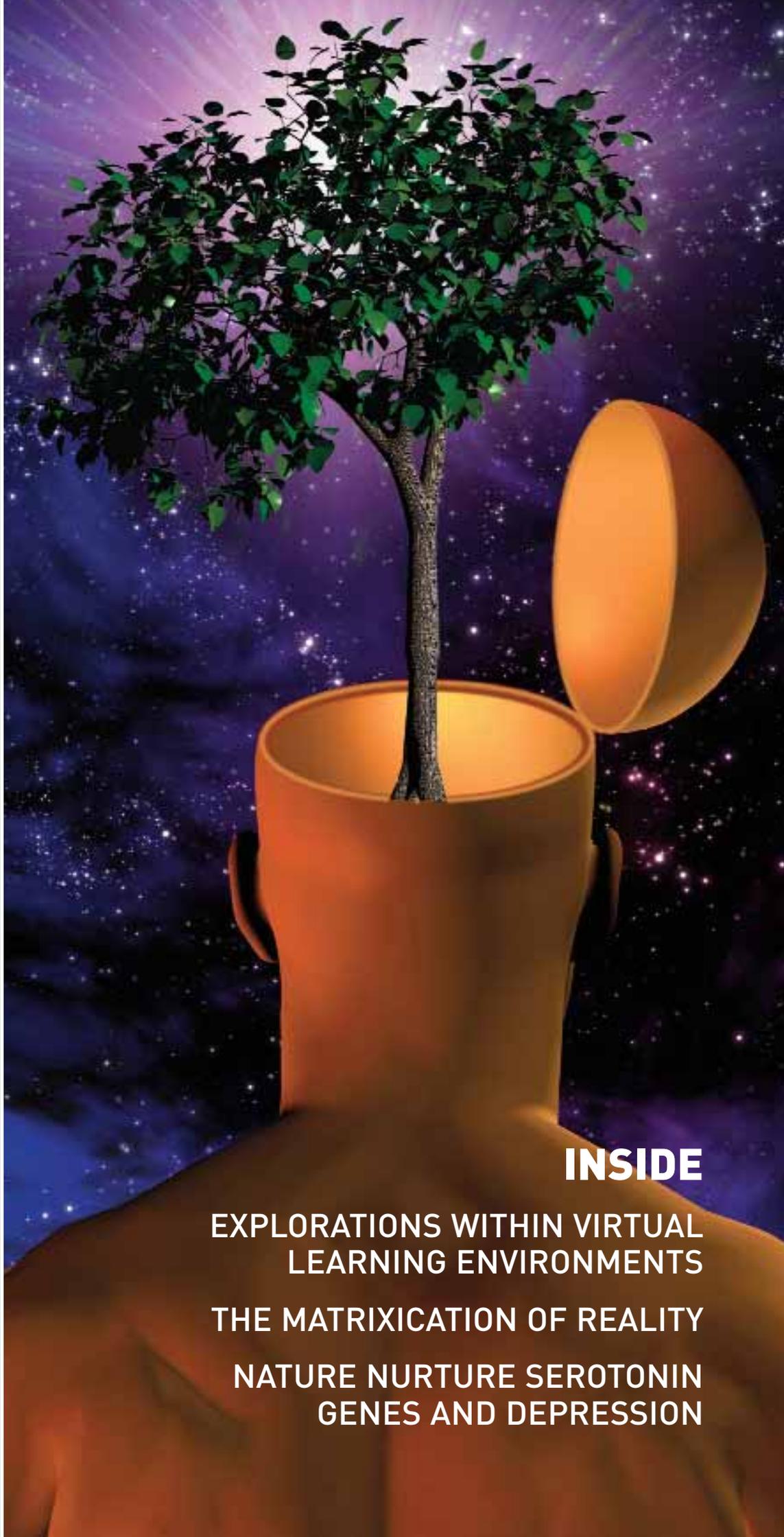


ATP TODAY

The Magazine of the Association for the Teaching of Psychology

June 2011



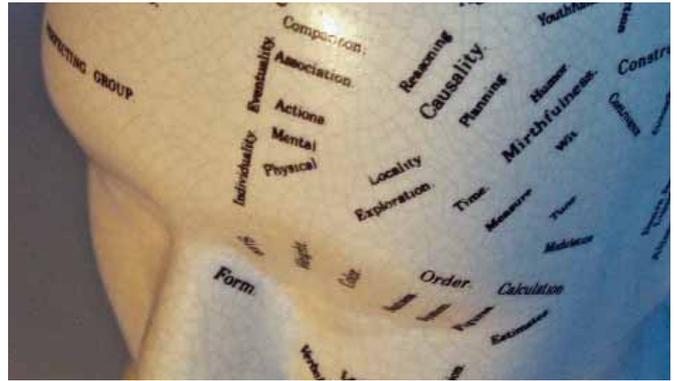
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We welcome contributions and letters from readers. Please send your correspondence to the Editor. The Editor reserves the right to edit and/or amend all articles submitted. The views expressed by contributors to the magazine are their personal views, and publication does not mean that those views are endorsed by the ATP.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,
Wow, how time does fly in the spring term! Summer is almost upon us and I find myself once again at the cusp of something crossed between high levels of anxiety and pure excitement as the run-up to exams begins. I

always feel creative at this time of year, much to the enjoyment/dismay of my students as I reflect on everything they have learnt over the past year.

There are a number of announcements to make for this magazine edition. As you know, the annual ATP conference is at the University of Hertfordshire so hopefully I will see you all there. It looks to be a fantastic line-up so well done to everyone involved in organising this fantastic event. As you will notice in the magazine, there is a copy of the nomination form for the ATP committee for anyone who is considering being part of the ATP. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to participate and remember that if you need any more information then do not hesitate to contact any of us via

the website email addresses before the conference.

Secondly, as of September, I will be starting a new job and due to the work demands, Dorothy Coombs has very kindly offered to guest edit the next edition of the magazine. I would like to personally thank her for this and very much look forward to a new and fresh perspective on the magazine. I am sure you will all support Dorothy in this role and send her lots of lovely articles. I will be recommending as editor for January 2012 edition.

Finally, I came across this quote the other week while looking through some books and I believe that it really applies to teachers as well as learners and so I thought I would share it with you all.

'We are all inventors, each sailing out on a voyage of discovery, guided each by a private chart, of which there is no duplicate. The world is all gates, all opportunities.'

By Ralph Waldo Emerson

I look forward to seeing you at the conference. Have a great summer

Laura Rudd
laura.rudd@franklin.ac.uk



FROM THE CHAIR

I hope your January results were good and now it's obviously full steam ahead for the summer exams. It seems that many people do have issues with the assessment process and its reliability and validity. Please let us know what you think, remember we

are the consumers and we do have a voice. Together we have more chance of being heard.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our planned one-day CPD event that was due to be held in Doncaster in March, owing to unforeseen circumstances. However, we will definitely be re-arranging this. Please let us know what you would like from ATP CPD events, where you would like them to be held, etc and we will do our best to accommodate you. The next big event is our prestigious Annual Conference. This is shaping up to be better than ever, if you haven't already booked your place to the best value and most fun CPD event of the year see www.atpconference.org.uk. I'll see you in the bar!

I've recently, successfully, completed the process to be recognised as a Chartered Psychologist (CPsychol) with the BPS. The process itself was relatively painless, a £40 fee, application form and personal statement covering prescribed standards. According to the BPS, the benefits are as follows: 'The Society's Chartered Status is a specialist title recognised as a professional quality statement of your ability. It is the Society's gold standard reflecting the highest standard of psychological knowledge and expertise. Professional recognition is more important today than ever before. Chartered status benefits your personal career profile as a benchmark for skills, practice and experience.' Not quite sure yet how it is going to benefit me personally, but I can see that it

would be a very useful addition to the CV of anyone looking for promotion. If any members would like further help or advice on the process please don't hesitate to contact me.

We are always looking for new volunteers to join the ATP committee. If you think this is something you would like to do and have skills to offer, please contact any of the committee for further information. In particular we would be interested to hear from people who might like to be involved in membership and finance teams or conference organisation. The AGM will be held at the Annual Conference and nomination forms are available from the ATP Secretary.

Deb Gajic
d.gajic@sky.com



Photo © Amy Walters/Fotolia

STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECT OPPORTUNITY

Would you and your students like to collaborate with psychology students in other European countries, on a research project? Lenka Sokolová, a psychology teacher from Bratislava, is running a project in which her students are designing an online survey (in English) on student motivation, critical thinking skills, and perceived outcomes of studying psychology; they are planning a comparison of psychology students in secondary schools and universities.

Lenka is looking for teachers/students as 'research partners': collaboration could take various forms: your students could be 'researchers' and use the survey to collect data themselves, or perhaps they could simply be participants; data may be shared between students in Slovakia, the UK, and possibly other countries too, as this invitation is going out to other European partners in EFPTA. Data analysis can then involve comparisons across cultures too. Timescales are flexible. If more people apply than can be

accommodated in the current project, further activities may be planned in future.

For teachers/lecturers in the UK, this kind of project can readily meet various course requirements for practical research work; in fact it could be a great opportunity for our students to contribute to – and benefit from – an innovative cross-cultural collaborative project, one that is unique at pre-university level!

Morag Williamson, ATPS representative to the European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations (EFPTA)

For more information on the project, contact Lenka: sokolova24@gmail.com

For information on psychology education in Slovakia, see <http://efpta.org/home/index.asp?SID=3&SSID=18&aid=9>



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

PAYMENT: Full Members

Paypal and Standing Order are our preferred payment methods for all new and existing Members, as they enable us to keep our running costs down. If new Members, or PayPal

Members, want to pay by Standing Order, they will need to email me for a form. Although we are trying to phase out cheque payments, it is still possible to pay by cheque for the time being – please email me.

The annual membership fee is £25.00 by PayPal and Standing Order, £30.00 for cheque payment (to reflect the extra administration costs involved).

PAYMENT: Students

This has been increased from £5.00 to £10.00 from January 2011. To qualify for student membership you must be on a full-time recognised PGCE/PG course for teaching psychology.

Paypal Difficulties

We've had some hiccups with the new system of PayPal annual renewal payments.

If your card details stay the same, PayPal will remind you that your annual subscription is due, ask if you want to make the payment, and then they will renew your subscription automatically.

However, if you've changed your card details, for any reason, Paypal cannot make a subscription payment until you have reauthorized them to do so with new card details. This means re-registering on the site as a new member and going through the full Paypal payment system again. Apologies for this, but it is a problem with the PayPal system which is out of our control.

Alternatively, you could take out a Standing order to pay your subscription. Please email me for a form.

Accessing The Website

Please visit the ATP website www.theatp.org to keep up to date with current events. To access the entire site you will need to register as a member. To register, the invitation code is 'atpmember'. You will then be sent a password which you can change into something more memorable.

Membership Numbers

Each Member has a Membership Number. It is not possible to access this on the website, sorry. However, your Membership Number will be with your postage details on the front of the magazine envelope, and, also, on new member welcome emails and renewal emails.

Email Address and Change of Details

Please make sure the details we have about you are correct, in particular please make sure (send me an email) we have an up to date email address for you since this is the easiest way of contacting you if we need to. If you move house or work and your details change, please let me know.

In particular, we have no emails for many long-term Standing Order members: please ensure we get your email address.

New Members

In order to improve the services to our Members, we would like our membership to grow. If you know any psychology teachers – colleagues and friends, who may want to join, please encourage them to join and give them our website address: www.theatp.org.uk

Membership Queries

If you need to speak to me/contact me regarding any other membership query, please ring me or email. Best wishes for 2011.

Wendy Wood, Membership Secretary
membership@theatp.org
wendywood@blueyonder.co.uk
 Tel: 0191 2650304

Research into teacher-training FOR PSYCHOLOGY IN EUROPE

The EFPTA research team has been busy again. You may recall that European psychology teachers took part in an online survey of pre-tertiary psychology education (PTPE) in 2009; findings were reported at the ATPS/EFPTA conference in Edinburgh (April 2009) and the EFPTA conference in Bratislava (April 2010, see <http://efpta.org/home/index.asp?sid=7>). One of the main points arising from the survey was concern over availability of teacher-training for psychology in the 15-19 age group: both initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD) varied across European countries, and in some cases fared worse than other subjects.

So, along with Renate Schrempf (Germany) and Lenka Sokolová (Slovakia), Dorothy Coombs and Morag Williamson (ATP and ATPS representatives respectively) have recently conducted further research into this issue, in the form of interviews and a focus group with a total of 15 participants from eight countries where psychology is taught for A-level equivalent courses: Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Russia, Scotland, Slovakia. In respect of CPD, findings suggest that:

- in most countries availability of CPD for psychology is at least adequate
- participants from several countries felt that the best quality CPD was provided by their psychology teachers' association.

ITE was more problematic. There are various forms of initial teacher-training and routes to achieving QTS in Europe, and participants from most countries were satisfied with provision, however, there were problems of availability of ITE in:

- England – small number of training places, and QTLS for FE is not valid as QTS for schools
- Scotland – no courses at all, and QTS for FE is not valid for schools.
- Germany – no courses in some regions (Länder).

England and Scotland appeared to be the only countries which make a distinction between teaching qualifications for schools and

FE; this was aggravating the ITE problems for psychology.

Availability of ITE for psychology seemed to be related to uninformed perceptions of psychology as 'easy', and in particular, to headteachers' judgments regarding deployment of staff. Norms varied in relation to frequency and acceptability of deploying non-specialists to teach psychology: in those countries with good training provision, deployment of non-specialists was virtually unheard of, for any subject (eg Finland, Iceland), whilst in countries with poor ITE provision it was not unusual (eg England, Scotland).

The researchers concluded that these major obstacles to ITE for psychology in England, Scotland and parts of Germany will need to be addressed, in order to:

- improve the supply of qualified psychology teachers
- enhance the quality of PTPE in the 15-19 year age band
- increase psychology teachers' and new graduates' career opportunities

... and raise these to the standards that exist in most other European countries, and in other subjects.

This research will be presented at the BPS Annual Conference in Glasgow on 5 May 2011, in the form of a research poster. Morag Williamson will present (the poster will be available after the conference on the BPS Conference website).

Morag Williamson, ATPS representative to the European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations (EFPTA)

For more information on EFPTA and all our partner countries in Europe see: <http://efpta.org>

Look out for more features on psychology teaching in Europe, in your autumn issue of ATP Today – it will be a European special issue!

Giving creativity back to students: EXPLORATIONS WITHIN VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Nathan Michael

The speed of change in society brought about by the Internet, combined with technological choices made by managers, has left education struggling to make the most effective use of technologies. The casualties in this maelstrom have been practices which would encourage creativity in students. This has left the implementation of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in crisis.

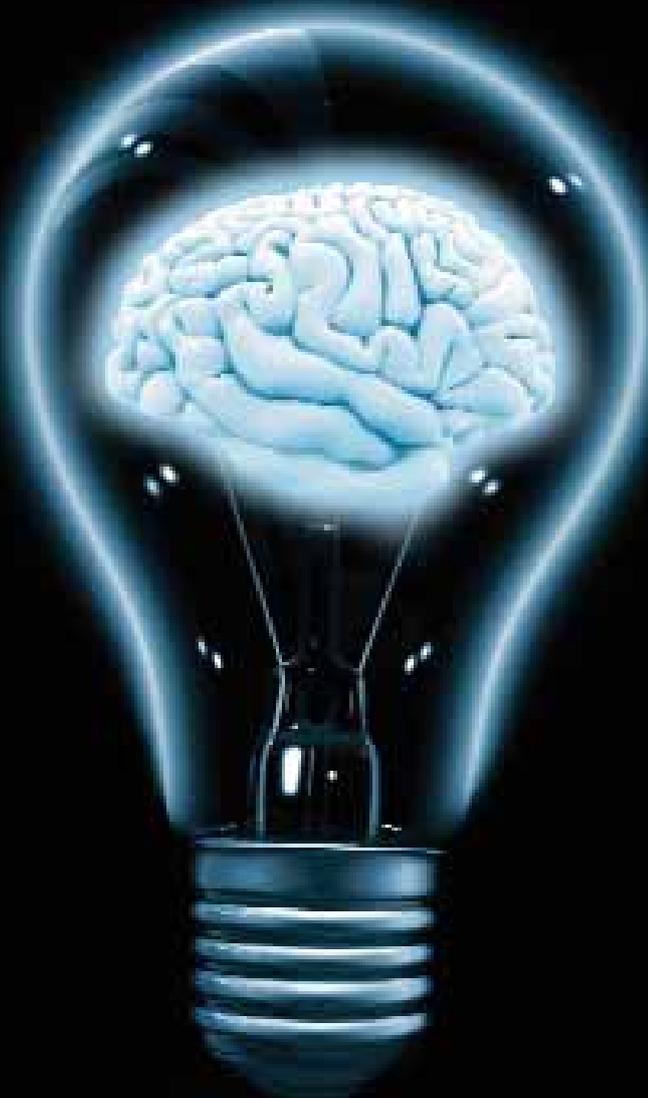
Discourse on creativity requires a careful definition of the term. First there must be understanding that creativity is *the process of having original ideas that have value* (Azzam, 2009:22).

Supporting this is the categorisation and definition given by Feldman *et al* (1994: 2) who argued that there are two types of creativity 'big' creativity and 'little' creativity. Little creativity is defined as a small idea which improves practice, whereas big creativity occurs *when something of enduring value is contributed to an existing body of knowledge, thereby transforming it*. Education has a goal to make students ready for the world of work. Robinson (2005) suggests that in a world where companies who remain static go out of business, education should be developing creativity to match this need for change.

There have been several major changes in communication within society in the last ten years. Throughout history the public have been consumers of organised media whether it was print, audio or visual. New technologies fuelled by the invention of the internet has changed this and the public are now writing in many forms; blogs, chat rooms, emails, tweets, front page posts and many more. Castells (2000: 31) foresaw

this and argued that *users and doers may become the same thus users take control of the technology*. Along with this alteration in the use of technology the concept of knowledge has changed. There has been a breaking down of what we consider intelligence to be. Sanger (2010) argued that individual knowledge, despite criticisms, is vital even in an information abundant age. Ridley (2010) argued that due to cumulative technology, specialisation and exchange of labour real world knowledge must be created in cooperation with others. It is argued that the rate of innovation is accelerated by the opportunity to have our ideas "meet and mate". Johnson (2010) compared the invention of the coffee houses with the invention of the Internet. He argued that the replacing of a depressant with a stimulant in people's diet and the changing of people's environment within a coffee house lead to the enlightenment. Ideas happen in physical spaces which allow people to share their ideas and mistakes. Ideas and creativity are therefore generated in collaboration with others.

The rate of change in education has not matched the change in society. Most institutions have adopted a VLE (McGill and



Hobbs 2007). With best practice these platforms have the potential to mimic the communication tools used by most students outside of education, but with worst practice they negate the need for waiting for a photocopier to become free. Dutton *et al* (2004: 140) categorised VLE using two main categories named One-Many or Many-Many. These are then broken into six approaches, the One-Many category contains the approaches eCopier, ePublisher and eProjector. The Many-Many approach is broken into *eProject Coordinator*, *eTeam* and *eClassroom*. Whilst many have researched into the types of applications used in education it is only by personal reflection on our own practice that we are to begin to change our practice. Witowsky (2008) discusses how learning can be improved through technology along with saving money. Crucially the article draws on the idea of the ideas of the dean of faculty who points to the fact they are not in the 'business of teaching' they are in the 'business of student learning'. Putting student learning at the heart of the technology use is the key to moving toward a creative use of VLE. The choices of how to implement this change, often based on cost effectiveness, have led to some problems Plendaerleith and Adamson (2009) argue that the desire for efficiency in Higher Education policy has overridden the drive for transformation of practice. *The 'white heat of technology' seems somewhat cooled and dimmed by the dark clouds of harsh economic realities* (Plendaerleith and Adamson 2009: 18). We have the tools to fight this and to encourage creative thought by ensuring our VLEs are used for Many-Many activities.

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The Perception of
Terrorism/Terrorist:

INTRODUCTION AND INVITE TO AN ON-GOING STUDY

Patrick Hilton
University of Lincoln



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"BUT THE BIGGEST THREAT THAT WE FACE COMES FROM TERRORIST ATTACKS, SOME OF WHICH ARE, SADLY, CARRIED OUT BY OUR OWN CITIZENS."

Cameron, Munich Security Conference, 5th February 2011

"IN ATTEMPTS TO ACT RESPONSIBLY, HUMAN CONDUCT HAS A NORMATIVELY ACCOUNTABLE CHARACTER TO IT; IN ANYTHING WE DO OR SAY, WE EXPRESS, OR AT LEAST PRESUPPOSE, JUDGEMENTS OF GOOD AND BAD, SUCCESSFUL OR UNSUCCESSFUL, APPROPRIATE OR INAPPROPRIATE ... WHAT THIS MEANS IS THAT WE ARE EXPECTED TO SHOW IN OUR ACTIONS, NOT JUST A CONSCIOUSNESS OF OUR MATERIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT A SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS (THIS IS, AN AWARENESS OF HOW WE ARE 'PLACED' IN RELATION TO THE OTHERS AROUND US), A CONSCIOUSNESS OF OUR MORAL CIRCUMSTANCES."

Shotter, 1993,

"Psychology and Citizenship: identity and belonging", pp 121-122

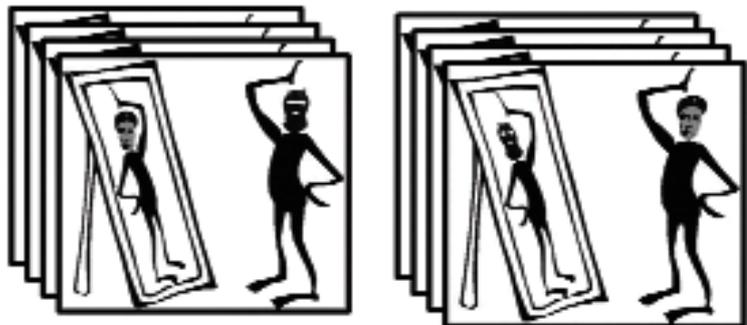
An on-line questionnaire asking how strongly people agree/disagree with 73 statements about terrorists and terrorism has been devised by lecturers at the University of Lincoln. We would like to invite you to take part in this major study aimed at investigating lay-understandings of this phenomena. The short article presents some of the rationale for the questionnaire.

The Implications of Citizenship and Terrorism

The statement by Cameron (2011) and Shotter's (1993) observations, taken together, invite possibilities for our understanding of terrorism/terrorists. Cameron recognises the notion of 'home-grown terrorists' by stating "terrorist attacks ... are, sadly, carried out by our own citizens". Elsewhere, in the media, 'terrorists' have been referred to as 'Jihad Jane' or 'Jihad Jack', which reaffirms that terrorists 'could be one of us'. So people who carry out terrorist acts can be citizens of the community they attack. Kilby & Horowitz (forthcoming) demonstrate that Cameron's claims are not new for his ideas are evident, for instance, in published 'Letters to the Editor' that appeared in British newspapers. As such, Cameron was voicing some common perceptions of terrorism/terrorists that are present in the general British public. But given the fundamental clandestine characteristics of terrorism, and that most people have little direct experience of terrorist activity – either as a victim, participant, or bystander, these public perceptions must be drawn from the zeitgeist, cultural available notions that circulate society, and political ideologies. In other words, there

ONE MAN' TERRORIST...another man's freedom fighter

ONE MAN' TERRORIST...another man's freedom fighter
 ONE MAN' TERRORIST...another man's freedom fighter
 ONE MAN' TERRORIST...another man's freedom fighter



" ... we never affirm anything without simultaneously denying something" (Fransella & Bannister, 1977;5).

is a psychology at work pulling together different notions about terrorism/terrorists that is framing people's understanding.

Being a citizen carries with it awareness of certain normative rules. Shotter's (1993) observation leads us to recognise that in all what people do there are normative rules which they/we may have contravened, but such anti-normative moral behaviour will need accounting for. So the working of the minds of terrorist are, to some extent, available to us to scrutinise, for they necessarily draw on the stock and trade that all people, citizens, use.

Extract from *Why don't the terrorists attack us more?* by Matthew Parris.

"There are huge questions, ... One of these has nagged at me ... not the question of why terrorists do the things they do. It is the question of why they don't do more. Doing more would be so easy. A drop of poison at a thousand access points to our water supplies could kill hundreds.

...Is there a kind of unconscious agreement? Is there a creepy, subliminal pact?

Why (do) pivotal battles in history seem to have taken place on agreed grounds at an agreed time according to agreed rules. Why Hastings? Why Verdun? Why Trafalgar? Why not kill the French sailors when they tried to come ashore? ... wonder whether the War on Terror, too, has subliminal echoes of a sporting series, with fixtures, scoring systems and rules mutually agreed."

Dialectic Logic

The suggestion here is that rather than terrorists living in an hermetically sealed off other world, like other citizens in our society, their motives and state of mind are available to us, but here we suggest their availability in terms of '*dialectic logic*'. In some sense Parris, (2007) claim of the possibility of a unstated relationship between the terrorist and government (see textbox for extract) highlights this dialectic.

Extract from *Why don't the terrorists attack us more?* by Matthew Parris.

"Our dialectic imagination allows us to envisage the possible arguments against our viewpoint. Structuring and examining our viewpoint allows us to scrutinise more closely potential counter-viewpoints."

Dialectic logic is found in 'repertory grids' (Kelly, 1955) in which reality is constructed on a set of constructs. For Kelly, constructs are the way a person makes sense of reality and are always bipolar. The claim here is that the devised perception of terrorism/terrorist questionnaire may provide us with one pole of a bipolar reality. This is useful, for, although we may not know who is the terrorist amongst us, *terrorists know what it is we think about them, who we think they are, what we think their motives are*, etc. Terrorists interact and react to this, generating motives to counteract these claims. In other words, there is a dialectic in all social phenomena, of claim and counter-claim. *So fully understanding the public*

perception of terrorism/terrorists permits us an insight into the work terrorists have to do to negotiate moral imperatives structuring behaviour.

Take comments from one of the bombers involved in the 7 July 2005 London attacks, Mohammad Sidique Khan (see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4206800.stm>). In his statement, Khan is clearly aware that "human conduct has a normatively accountable character to it" (Shotter, 1993; p 121). He demonstrates dialectic processes in which the morals expected of him and the constructions people will have of him for his deed is rebutted ("*the media's painted a suitable picture of me*"). His talk reconceptualises these deeds and thus act as a motive for his action. For instance, Khan sees himself as a "soldier" so acknowledging that he could be called a terrorist, amongst other things. He generates the self-perception where he self-attributes his actions as just and conscientious ("*This is how our ethical stances are dictated*"). Khan's statement can be seen here as legitimating statements ("*And your support of them makes you directly responsible*"), responding to a thesis that he knows will be directed his way. Khan's words can be seen to draw upon particular 'vocabularies of motives' (Mills 1940), whereby "Motives are words ... (that refer to) anticipated situational consequences of questioned conduct." (p 905). To avoiding being seen as merely as morally insane, especially when one's agenda is to persuade others of the worthiness of your action, as is illustrated by Khan's quote, people need to be aware of the ideology and context by which they can be held accountable. In knowing what you are held against is also to be allowed to know who you might or might not be.

Benefits of this Study

This study is not just a theoretical exercise, for politicians can draw on general perceptions (Kilby & Horowitz, forthcoming). But without a full exploration of lay-persons' perceptions of terrorism/terrorist, policies can be half-baked, fail to quell public anxiety, or may even boost terrorism. So formulation and making apparent how lay-persons render the variety of themes and ideas about *terrorism/terrorists* into a sensible holistic perception would be useful. To this end, we would like to invite you to take part in this major study investigating people's views of terrorists/terrorism. This online questionnaire can be found at the following address; www.surveymonkey.com/s/6HXGKLS

Some of the findings of this study will be reported in due course in the ATP Magazine. If you have any further questions please e-mail Phylton@Lincoln.ac.uk and thank you in anticipation of your assistance.

Recent video showing Bin Laden intently watching stories about himself could be seen as vanity and narcissism, or an instance of the monitoring of how others see you in order to respond successfully to this positioning.

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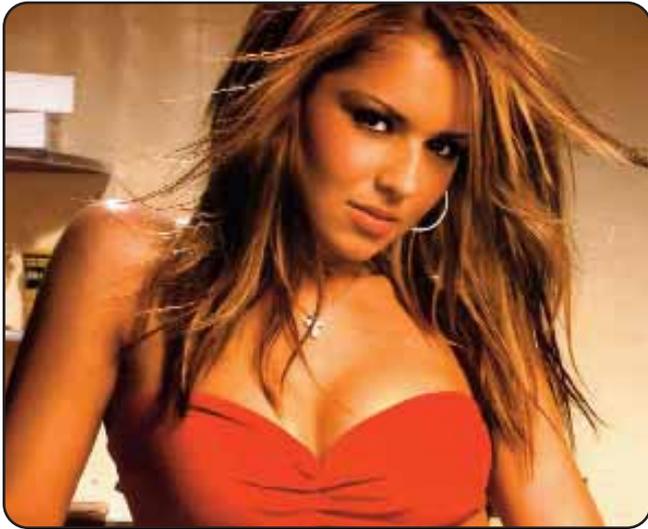
THE MATRIXICATION OF REALITY

Andy McCarthy
Canterbury Christ Church University
& Kent College Canterbury

IT IS EASY TO BELIEVE THAT WE ARE SENTIENT BEINGS WITH FREEWILL BASED ON OUR PERSONAL VOLITION. DO WE REALLY MAKE ALL OUR DECISIONS BASED ON RATIONAL EVALUATION OF CHOICES AS PRESENTED? IT IS EVEN EASIER TO BELIEVE THAT OUR EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT EXISTS AS A SHARED COMMON EXPERIENCE, EXACTLY AS WE PERCEIVE IT. THIS SHORT DISCURSIVE PAPER WILL MOVE AMONGST THESE ISSUES AND MAYBE HELP YOU DRAW SOME VERY DISTURBING CONCLUSIONS.

Agnes Lech
University of Kent

Free will is a concept that suggests we are sentient beings who make choices based on the evidence as presented; see pictures below, which 'artiste' do you prefer? Determinism would suggest that we are not in charge of our decisions; so to what extent have we volition?



Lady Gaga and Cheryl Cole, if I was to ask you to say which you prefer and then point towards which singer you prefer, you might well assume that this is the process in your brain:

1. Frontal Cortex (weighs up choice)
2. Pre-Motor Cortex (plans movement)
3. You are aware of your choice and take action both physically and verbally

But is this what actually happens?

As a result of research starting in 1973, Prof Benjamin Libet suggested that all our decisions are predetermined. Planned action and the conscious 'will' to make that action, come some 50 to 500 milliseconds after the decision has been made. (Libet, 2004).

This is interpreted by Neuropsychologists as meaning we actually live in the past and that our consciousness is like an epiphenomenal 'monitor' (part of a process but not essential to a process) which reveals everything to us about half a second (a subliminal illusion) after the event has actually occurred (that is from planning to action).

How did Libet start to discover this?

Libet electrically stimulated the brains of patients while they were awake (no pain receptors in the brain). If you stimulate the somatosensory strip it produces feeling in the body. However, when asked to say when they first felt the sensation, they said they could not as it had already happened!

Libet then designed a ground-breaking experiment. In 1983, Libet, using an ECG (electroencephalogram), monitored subject's brains. He told them to relax and when they felt the urge to lift a finger they had to verbally report it and NOT actually do it. (Thus creating laboratory quasi-free will.) Libet discovered that consistently the pre-motor cortex activated some 300 milliseconds before they reported the urge to act!

Libet (1983) concluded:

"The decision to move a muscle takes place before that decision reaches consciousness."

Quite simply, we can only be aware of a decision after that decision has been taken. The urge 'to do' reaches us only when the brain is ready to perform

We do not take a decision to act and then perform that action, but rather we perform an action predetermined for us to do so. The brain creates a 'real-time illusion' by hiding the time delay below the 'Liminal' (threshold of consciousness). We exist in the past, determined by an even earlier past.

However, Libet's 'cop-out':

Libet later suggested that we have 'the power of veto' (sometimes called Free Won't). While consciousness plays no part in the *instigation* of volitional acts, Libet suggested that it may still have a part to play in suppressing certain acts instigated by the unconscious (a window of opportunity from 'urge to act' of some 150 milliseconds).

Libet noted 'anecdotally' that everyone has experienced withholding an unconscious urge. ('*The Zombie Within*' Newscientist, 1998.)

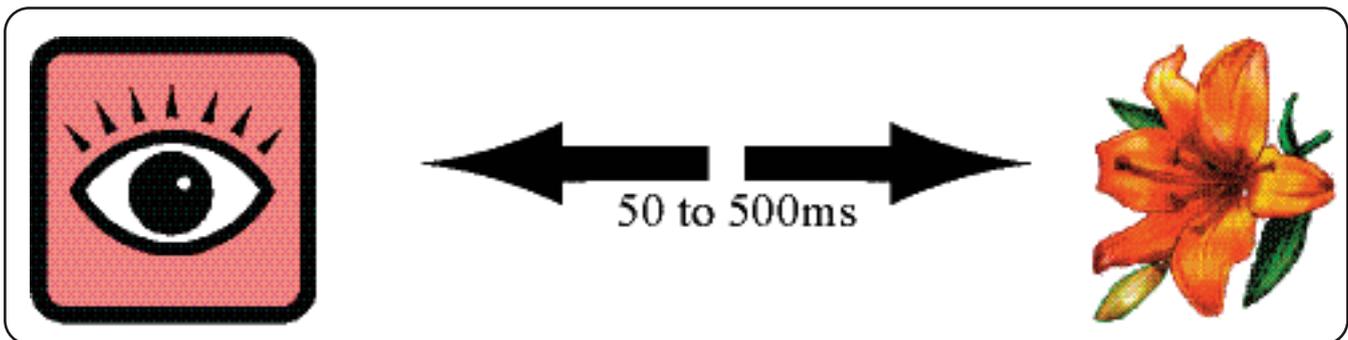


Fig One: "All we perceive as happening in real time is delayed by up to half a second from the actual event itself."

But who/where is the decision to make the veto coming from?

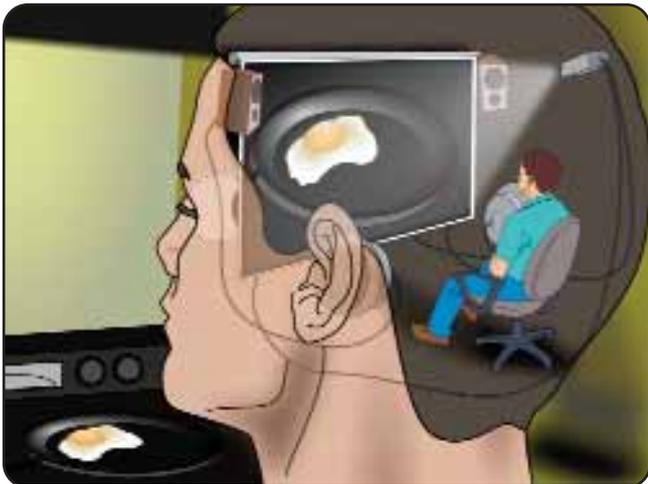


Fig Two: Cartesian Theatre . If the conscious self is an illusion – who is it that's being fooled?

Final thought:

1. Do you agree with the assumptions?
2. Where are our decisions made? (It must be in the brain).
3. Are we consciously involved in our brain's cognitive machinations? (cf: *Wittgenstein's 'Private Language'*.)
4. Can we separate mind and brain? (cf: Duality of Mind: Descartes.)
5. Based on Libet's argument, have we any freewill?

NOW LET'S TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD

A CONCEPT

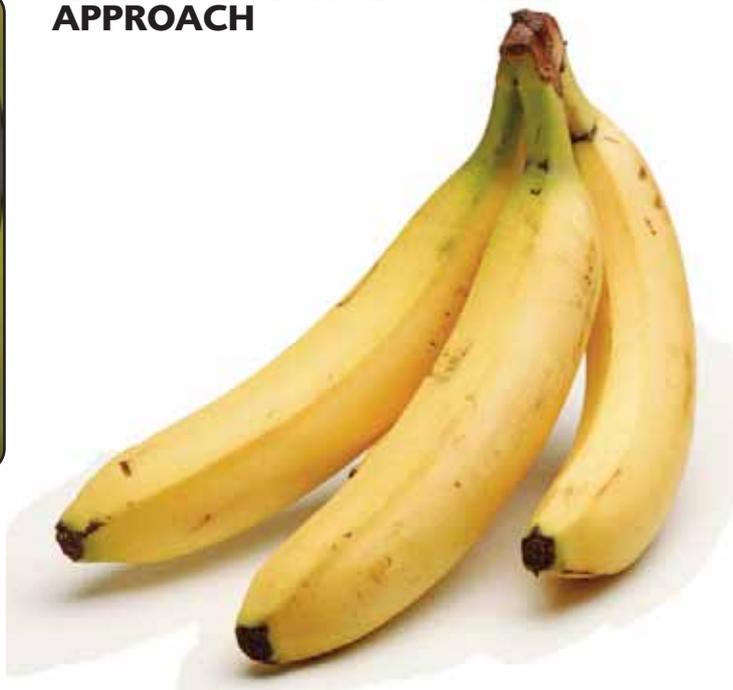
If a palm tree on an uninhabited desert island fell over, would it make a sound?

Sound does not exist; it is an ecological application existing purely in the brain. Its sole function is to help us order and navigate our external environment along with other equally illusory modality applications such as vision.

Some assumed concepts concerning, seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting

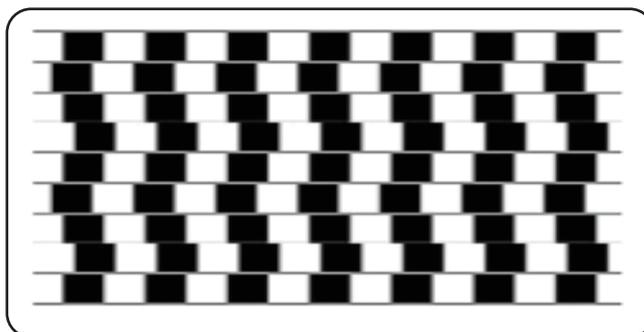
- Event Potential (Vision & Colour: Electro Magnetic Radiation 400-700nm and Acoustic: Air waves in the range 20 to 20,000hz)
- Receptors: External power source (stimuli)
- Transduction
- Electro-Chemical Messages: Afferent (in) & Efferent (out)
- Epiphenomena
- Ecological Application
- Blindsight (Weiskrantz, 1986) and blind: touch/taste/smell?
- Blind: touch/taste/smell?
- Phantom Limbs, Anarchic Hand Syndrome and Body Dismorphia
- Synaesthesia
- Modality Hierarchy

SO DO THESE BANANAS REALLY EXIST? A NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

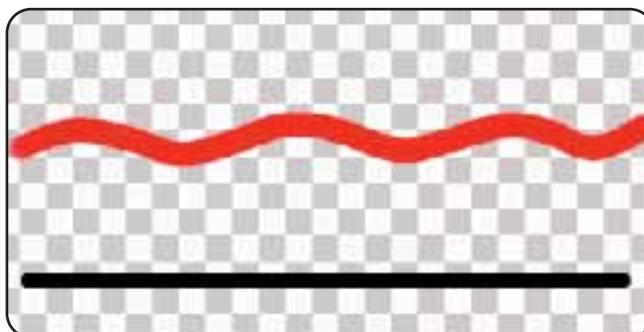


We can see the banana.

But are you sure you can trust what you see? (The Café Wall Illusion: These are parallel lines!).



We can feel the banana, but are you sure you can trust what you feel?

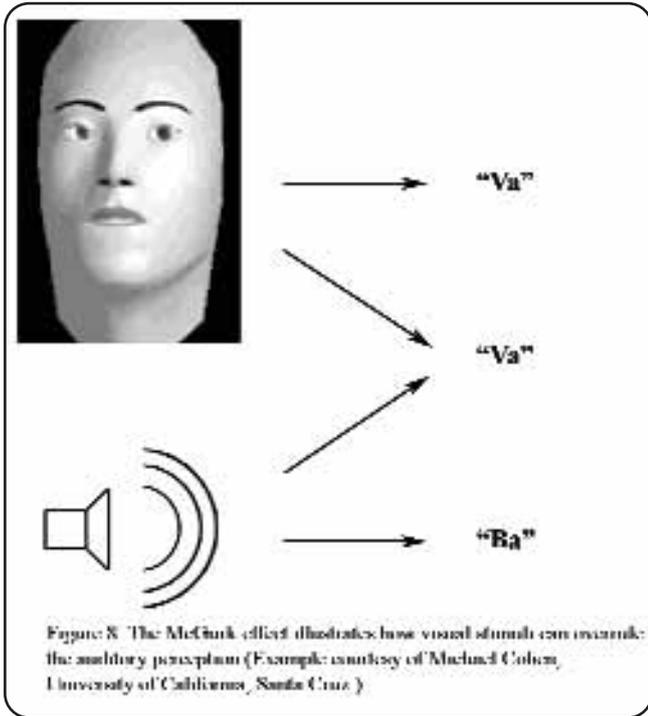


Are these sticks straight or wiggly? Gibson (1966) demonstrated that by wearing 'wiggly glasses' vision outranks touch; you could not tell the difference.

Are you sure you can trust what you hear?

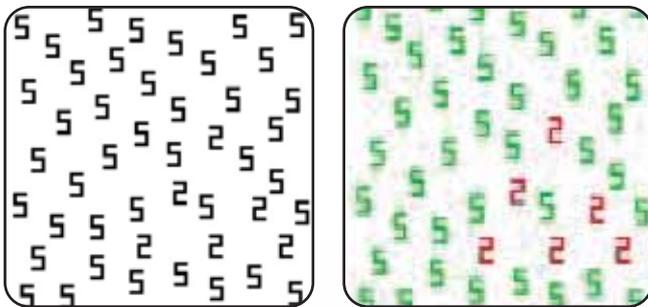
The McGurk Effect is where again vision outranks another modality. If you were to see someone mouthing "VA" with an over-

laid sound "BA" in an experimental situation it was demonstrated you would claim to have heard the sound "VA". (McGurk & MacDonald. 1976).



What if our senses go all wrong?

Synaesthesia: A complex neurological disorder where external stimuli is sent to the wrong sensory processing area of the cortex. Most commonly multi-modality (eg. we see and hear colour etc) as opposed to cross-modality (all the visual stimuli going to the auditory cortex).



The Synaesthesia 'pop-out' test was used to demonstrate 'Grapheme Synaesthesia'. A person with 'normal' visual processing

would have trouble (left above) in quickly stating how many number twos are in the picture. However, a person with synaesthesia, who sees numbers with different colours, would have no problem at all!

Now, are you still sure that the banana really exists?

The object of this whole discussion was to make one simple process clear. We receive various stimuli in the form of an external power source (eg vision through electromagnetic radiation). The external power is accepted by a receptor (eg the retina) and is transduced (changed from one form of 'energy' to another). Transduction changes the external stimuli into an electro-chemical message (how neurons work). This afferent message then travels to the relevant sensory area of the cortex (usually!) and is processed (remember the 'time-lag'). The brain then externally projects an efferent interpretation of the stimuli (based on an electrochemical message), allowing us to safely understand and navigate the world.

We are at the mercy of how our brain translates the transduced information and this 'fragile' historic translation (remember our perception is based on the past, determined by an even earlier past) is the projected 'matrix-like' illusion in which we live!

You cannot be certain a banana exists!

QED (QUOD ERAT DEMONSTRANDUM)
(However to win my point, I may still have to eat the banana.)

References

Gibson, J.J. (1966). *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin

Libet, B.; Wright, E. W.; Gleason, C. A. (1983). "Readiness potentials preceding unrestricted spontaneous pre-planned voluntary acts". *Electroencephalographic and Clinical Neurophysiology* 54: 322-325.

Libet, B. (2004) *Mind Time. The Temporal Factor in Consciousness*. London, Harvard University Press

McGurk, H & MacDonald, J (1976); "Hearing lips and seeing voices", *Nature*, Vol 264(5588), pp. 746-748.



Notice of the 2011 Annual General Meeting of the **ASSOCIATION FOR THE TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY**

to be held at
17.00 on Saturday, 9 July, 2011,
University of Hertfordshire
(during Annual Conference)

The AGM is open to all Members of the ATP, not just Conference delegates. You just need to be a current ATP Member on the date of the AGM. There is no fee for attending the AGM.

If you would like to stand for election to the ATP Committee please complete a nomination form, which must be signed by a Proposer and a Secunder who must also be members. Please also include a brief statement introducing yourself and outlining which committee tasks you feel that your talents are best suited to. All the committee roles are for a fixed one-year term, although it is possible to be re-elected into the same role at the next AGM. Please send your completed nomination form and statement to the Secretary: Morag Williamson, 84/10 North Meggetland, Edinburgh, EH14 1XJ, MoragHWill@aol.com at least two weeks before the AGM (deadline 25 June 2011). The form is available to download at www.theatp.org – You must be able to attend three committee meetings a year: these are usually held on a Saturday in September, January and April, and location rotates around the country (typically Birmingham, London, Sheffield, Newcastle), depending on the geographical location of the majority of committee members.

The following list is not definitive, it simply states the current tasks undertaken by the committee, and some of the tasks do involve working in small teams, as they are too onerous for one person. On the other hand, it's possible to be involved in more than one task area! We would be very interested to receive nomination forms from people who feel they could assist with these tasks. Alternatively, we are also open to suggestions for new tasks that you feel you could undertake on behalf of the committee to benefit our Members.

Current Committee roles and tasks:

Officers – Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Membership Team, Magazine Editor, Website Editor, Advertising, Awarding Bodies Liaison, BPS Liaison, CPD Organisation (One-day events), Conference Organisation (Team), EFPTA representative.

Deb Gajic
ATP Chair





News from the **BPS 2011 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Morag Williamson
ATP Scotland Member

The BPS 2011 Annual Conference took place, on 4-6 May, in Glasgow. Although not many ATP Members are also BPS Members, this year's conference was especially interesting for us as several programme items were devoted to psychology education in schools and colleges ("pre-tertiary psychology education", or PTPE). This came about largely through ATP's participation in SCOPE (the Standing Committee on Psychology in Pre-tertiary Education, a sub-committee of the BPS's Psychology Education Board), and through ATP Scotland's initiative in tackling the teacher-training issue, with BPS Scotland's support.

The location of the conference in Glasgow was particularly convenient for local ATP Members, several of whom participated in two Round Table discussions – one on 'Inspiring Students', and

one on teacher-training for psychology in Scotland in the wake of the Donaldson Review. The EFPTA research group's investigation into psychology teacher-training in Europe (see article on page 5) was also presented by an ATP Member at the conference, in the form of a research poster.

The BPS helpfully timetabled these conference sessions during after-school hours on Thursday, 5 May, and offered a reduced rate to enable psychology teachers/lecturers to attend them.

If you didn't make it to Glasgow 2011, look out for 'London 2012' (the BPS conference, that is!).

For more information on the BPS, including membership and conferences, see <http://www.bps.org.uk>



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY



COGNITION VS EMOTION HOW DO WE MAKE DIFFICULT DECISIONS?

The School of Psychology at Bangor University offers students an opportunity to gain first-hand experience in world-class research. Students in the third year of their undergraduate degree work alongside psychologists to complete research for future publication. We would like to introduce you to some of the cutting edge research currently being undertaken by our students this year. This article has been written by one of our third year students about her current research exploring decision-making processes in the brain.

The most long-lasting and enduring relationship an individual develops during the lifespan is the sibling relationship (Cicirelli, 1982).

The relationship that we have with our sibling is one of the most important and longest we will ever have in our lives. Research to date exploring adult sibling relationships has only focused on the quality and function of the relationships in typically developing individuals. There has been limited research investigating relationships in which one sibling is typically developing and the other has autism. There is a considerable body of research exploring these relationships in children and a wealth of research investigating how parents cope with having a child with autism (mainly focused on the mother). These studies cannot, however, generalise to adult thoughts, feelings, and behaviour and there is currently very little evidence to indicate the impact of autism on adult sibling relationships.

Our research replicates Doody, Hastings, O'Neill and Grey's study (2010) to examine the quality of the sibling relationship through Expressed Emotion (EE). EE is a construct which is used to measure the feelings and attitudes about a relative (the family

climate): the typically developing sibling gave a 'Five Minute Speech Sample', which was then coded to see what type of EE the sibling has expressed. One possible finding of this coding is that the individual is over involved with the sibling who has autism and the other possible finding is that the individual does not understand or interact much with the sibling with autism, which can result in a highly critical EE profile. Our preliminary results indicate that there is significantly more conflict between typically developing siblings than between those with a sibling with autism. Siblings of adults with autism reported significantly more warmth in their relationship than typically developing siblings. This research is hoping to help families in which there are both typically developing children and children with autism by providing useful information for therapists, GPs and support groups, etc. The Gold Standard of therapy is to provide a theoretical evidence base from which the therapist can work and research such as this can add to the current evidence.

Written by Gillian Ball
under the research supervision of Dr Tracey Lloyd
Edited by Dr Fay Short

LETTERS & EMAILS

WHITE PAPER GETS APPROVAL

I am delighted to see that the Schools' White Paper (2010) is entitled 'The Importance of Teaching'. In their foreword David Cameron and Nick Clegg say "no education system can be better than the quality of its teachers", and Michael Gove writes "nothing matters more in improving education than giving every child access to the best possible teaching". In recent years the emphasis has been on 'learning' and it has occurred to me that the value of a skilful and enthusiastic teacher in promoting learning has been, to some extent, under-estimated.

Promises made in the White Paper include reforming initial teacher-training, increasing the proportion of time that trainees spend in the classroom while they focus on core teaching skills

and freeing our teachers from external constraint. Raising the profession's status is another target that is long overdue. In countries where academic performance is high, such as Finland, teachers are highly valued and are recruited from the top ten per cent of the cohort who graduate.

It is to be hoped that whatever improvements are made to initial teacher-training as a result of the reform programme they are applied consistently across all subjects and that psychology graduates have the same access to qualified teacher status as those every other subject.

Dorothy Coombs
Prior Pursglove College
Guisborough
Cleveland



NATURE NURTURE SEROTONIN GENES AND DEPRESSION

Evie Bentley, Advisor for Psychology,
West Sussex Adult and Community Learning
eviepsych1@gmail.com

Some people feel we are the products of nature, our genes, our biological heritage, and that an individual's unique genetic mix, the genome, determines how she or he will progress through life, psychologically and behaviour-wise as well as physically. Others maintain with equal fervour – I would say "fury" after being a bystander at conference arguments – that psychologically and behaviour-wise we are the products of the environment, of experiences, of nurture. Both sides of this argument cite twin studies as supporting research, but surely it is more realistic to hold the holistic view, nature and nurture, rather than one or the other?

Twin studies show both genetic and environmental effects on us, and the diathesis-stress hypothesis can be applied to far more than psychopathologies. It is fact that genes can be switched on and switched off, expressed, over-expressed or repressed, and the triggers doing this are often found to be environmental. Informed argument is good and one of the bases of scientific research; conjectures should be heard, tested, supported or refuted but I promote the view that being extremist at either end of the nature-nurture debate is to be less, rather than better, informed!

Clinical or unipolar depression is widespread in the community

and studying this disorder is part of many psychology courses. What causes this most common disorder? Well, depressive disorders often run in families, but this could be an effect of upbringing, environment as well as of inherited genes. I found the following pieces of research a great example of conjecture, testing, re-testing, and a concluding glimpse of diathesis-stress, nature and nurture. I hope you read on!

Way back in 2003 a research study was published showing that a gene involved in regulating serotonin levels was linked to the ability to recover from serious emotional trauma such as physical or



sexual abuse in childhood. This was good, empirical research judged by the journal 'Science' to be a top discovery. However, by 2009 there was a meta-analysis of fourteen different studies which challenged the 2003 findings. The supposed genetic link between the serotonin gene and depression was not a good one, it was a weakest link and so was a candidate for elimination. However the walk of shame has been avoided because of a new meta-analysis. Sen et al (2011) have published a new and broader analysis of fifty-four studies, dating from 2001 to 2009, looking at the link between the serotonin gene and depression, involving nearly 41,000 participants. The team's conclusion after including all relevant studies is that "an individual's genetic make-up does make a difference in how he or she responds to stress". The key finding is that there is an area on the serotonin gene which can exist in a short form or allele, and individuals with the short allele find much more difficulty in recovering from trauma, they don't bounce back as quickly or as well as the longer-allele people, they are vulnerable to developing depression. The short variant of the gene makes people more sensitive to adversity. Interestingly the actual type of adversity or trauma is also a factor for this gene's expression. Being mistreated as a child is one of the experiences which show a

strongly significant link between the shorter allele and sensitivity and becoming depressed. Stressful life events did not show a strong link, which makes sense when one thinks about it. Mistreatment is traumatic; a life event labelled stressful will have a variety of biological effects on a variety of individuals, and these effects are likely to be different from and less than those from suffering abuse.

So what does the latest research mean? Should we all be tested for the shorter allele so we are warned if we have this strong vulnerability? The answer is a definite No. According to Sen this short-allele vulnerability is but one factor among many involved in moderating how a person reacts to adversity. Some of these factors will also be genetic, and others will not; nature and nurture effects will interact.

References

Karg, K., Burmeister, M., Shedden, K. and Sen, S. (2011) The Serotonin Transporter Promoter Variant (5-HTTLPR), Stress, and Depression Meta-analysis Revisited: Evidence of Genetic Moderation. *Archives of General Psychiatry* Published online 3 January, 2011. doi:10.1001/archgenpsychiatry.2010.189.

A Participant's story

BEING IN THE CAMBRIDGE STUDY

Kindly submitted by
Dorothy Coombs

This is an article written by a student on the Farrington study. This is a good idea for A2 students to do as part of their revision process as it helps to really conceptualise their studies.

My name is Robert and in 1961 I was just a boy of eight years old, going to school in south London, and living with my mum.

My teacher at school told me to go and speak to a woman who was visiting the school (I found out, in my later years, she was a psychologist); it wasn't that special, other boys in my class were picked out too. She was a nice kind of lady, interested in kids and was easy to talk to, so I did, I talked to her and answered her questions.

I suppose this was exactly what they wanted to achieve, the research team. They asked me all about where I lived and what it was like, probably to grade my living circumstances, although they were perhaps no better than the other boys'.

She also asked me what I liked to do in my own time, and if I had ever broken the law. This was a scary question to be faced with as an eight year old – was this why she was interviewing me, because I was a criminal?

Later on my teacher took us all away again to do some tests; IQ, several psychomotor tests, and the antisocial personality scale. Having taken these tests at intervals throughout my life, I had got quite interested in what they were about – the tests in schools measured individual characteristics such as intelligence, attainment, personality, and psychomotor impulsivity. These researchers had lots of ways to see exactly what I was like throughout my time in the study, more than I ever could have known.

I was quite worried at times because, as I later understood, my teacher was required to rate me on how 'troublesome' I was, and I didn't want people to think that I was bad. I wasn't bad, but I never did think that Mrs Black really liked any of us.

My mum had also told me in later years that she had been interviewed, and asked about how much we earned, our family size, her employment history and if and how she disciplined me (to list a few). These 'family' interviews were done once a year until my last year of education. My Interviews in school, however, only occurred when I was eight, 10, and 14, but like I said, it was nothing special, maybe the familiarity of this was perhaps the reason I stayed involved – I just never had a reason not to.

My life, as I found, contained numerous factors, which I now know, affected my behaviour in later years. I never knew my dad; he had gone to prison for being involved in killing a policeman in Croydon while robbing a warehouse. A lot of robberies happened at this time in London, just because of the ease while the capital was under thick smog (1952). My dad died in prison as he was sentenced to death. Actually he was the last person in England to get the death penalty. My mum was very young to be a mother on her own, only being 17 when she was found to be pregnant with me. My dad's side of the family was involved too. With him being in prison, they looked after me and I became very close to my cousins, like they were brothers.

When I was 15 (1968) I had become involved heavily in the Grosvenor Square riots, and what came after was a need for thrill, to be the big guy, to fight. My crimes were violence and robbery, until I got caught. I became what they called a chronic offender. I fit the criteria because I had started to offend before I was 21, and was identified as having numerous risk factors (eg the disrupted family described above). I was one of 7% found in the study to have been labelled a 'chronic offender'.

I spent my days in and out of prison, being interviewed again at ages 16, 18, 21, 25 and 32. By the age



of 35 my criminal career was over (this was seen to be the typical age of chronic offenders to stop). Incidentally, during my time in prison, I had become interested in what theories lay behind my 'condition' and about the study my life experience was feeding into.

My very last interview meeting happened when I was 48, I had turned my life around and they asked different kinds of questions from those in previous interviews. They were interested in aspects like: becoming a more conventional and law-abiding citizen (between ages 32 and 48), and to what extent measures of life success improve between these ages. I also did some tests like the Eysenck Personality Inventory and the Big Five Personality Inventory.

It is possible to see, through this longitudinal study, that I have changed over the years. I have children and I am a good father too, I'm no longer involved in crime, and thanks to the Open University and Farrington's study I have a degree in criminal psychology and help in a young offenders' institute. It is possible, thanks to Farrington's study, to identify children who have certain characteristics in their upbringing and therefore are more likely to carry out criminal behaviour. We can then use this to intervene early, and try to prevent young people becoming chronic offenders like me.

My family and I have also campaigned against the justice system, for the injustice of my father's sentence. He was innocent as he did not pull the trigger. I have also been involved in the making of a film about the incident (*Let Him Have It*). Like I said, I am a changed man at 53.

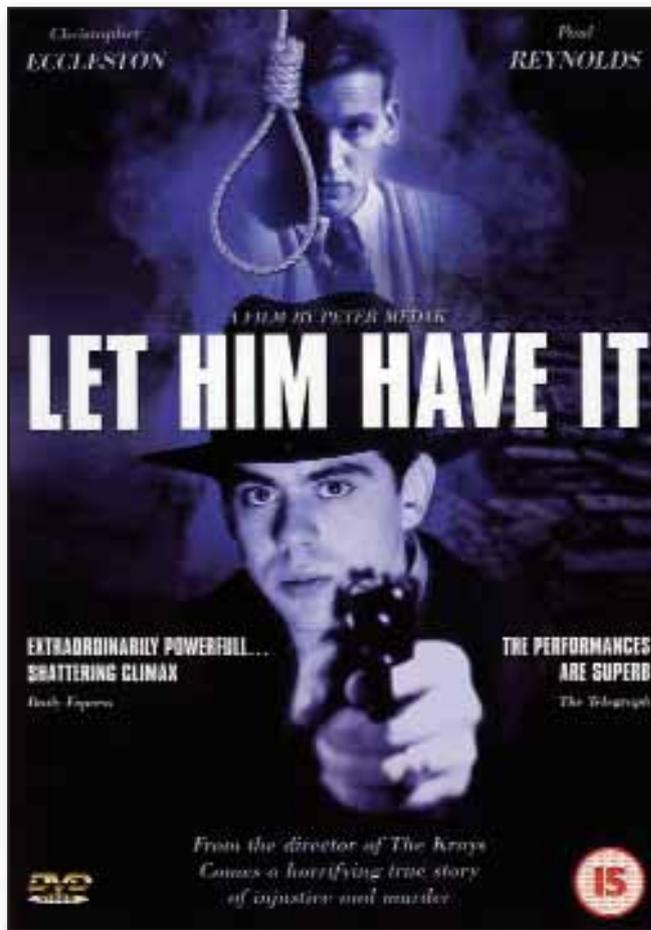


Photo © milosluz/Fotolia



Association for the Teaching of Psychology

NOMINATION FORM FOR ATP COMMITTEE

Your completed form must be given or sent to the Secretary before the start of the Annual General Meeting. Please send your signed form by post to the Secretary* to arrive by 25 June 2011.

*Morag Williamson, 84/10 North Meggetland, Edinburgh EH14 1XJ

Committee information

ATP Committee normally meets three times per year, in September, January, and April. Meetings are held on a Saturday, 11.00am-4.00pm, in various cities such as Birmingham, Newcastle, Sheffield. Travel and subsistence expenses are paid. All members

are expected to attend and to play an active role in Committee tasks, and, if possible, to attend Conference. There is always a full agenda so the meetings are hard work, but stimulating and sociable too!

Name of Nominee (print): _____

ATP Member No (if known): _____

Proposer: I (print) _____

nominate the above for the position of: _____

Chair Deputy Chair Secretary Treasurer ordinary committee member

(tick one box only)

Second: I (print) _____

second the nomination

I (the nominee) accept this nomination.

Signatures:

Nominee: _____

Date: _____

Proposer: _____

Date: _____

Second: _____

Date: _____

To be completed by the nominee:

Home Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Home Tel No: _____ Mob No: _____

E-mail (please print very clearly): _____

Nominee statement:

Opposite, please write/type a brief statement about what you feel you can offer ATP, for example: help with membership tasks, organising events, writing or seeking items for the magazine and website, regional group(s), etc. Your statement will be displayed and/or read out to Members at the AGM.

Consultative Forum for **PSYCHOLOGY**

As some of you may know, OCR has started a forum for Teachers, Lecturers, Researchers and other prominent figures within the Psychology community. This has been designed with the intent to have a more interactive approach with the Psychology community in its development of A level and GCSE Psychology provision. The first meeting in January 2011 saw a small gathering of people discussing issues such as AS to A2 progression, assessment methods including new possible ways to assess the exam. This was, of course, purely a discussion-based forum but OCR actively engaged with the ideas that were presented and listened to the

concerns addressed, much the same as they did at the ATP conference in 2010. I myself took part in this first forum and very much enjoyed meeting the representatives from OCR as well as other practitioners across the field.

OCR is very much interested in having people attend so if you are interested in taking part in this OCR activity then please contact Mary Brennan (Mary.Brennan@ocr.org.uk). The next meeting will be on Thursday, 6 October 2011 10.00am - 3.00pm at OCR in Cambridge.

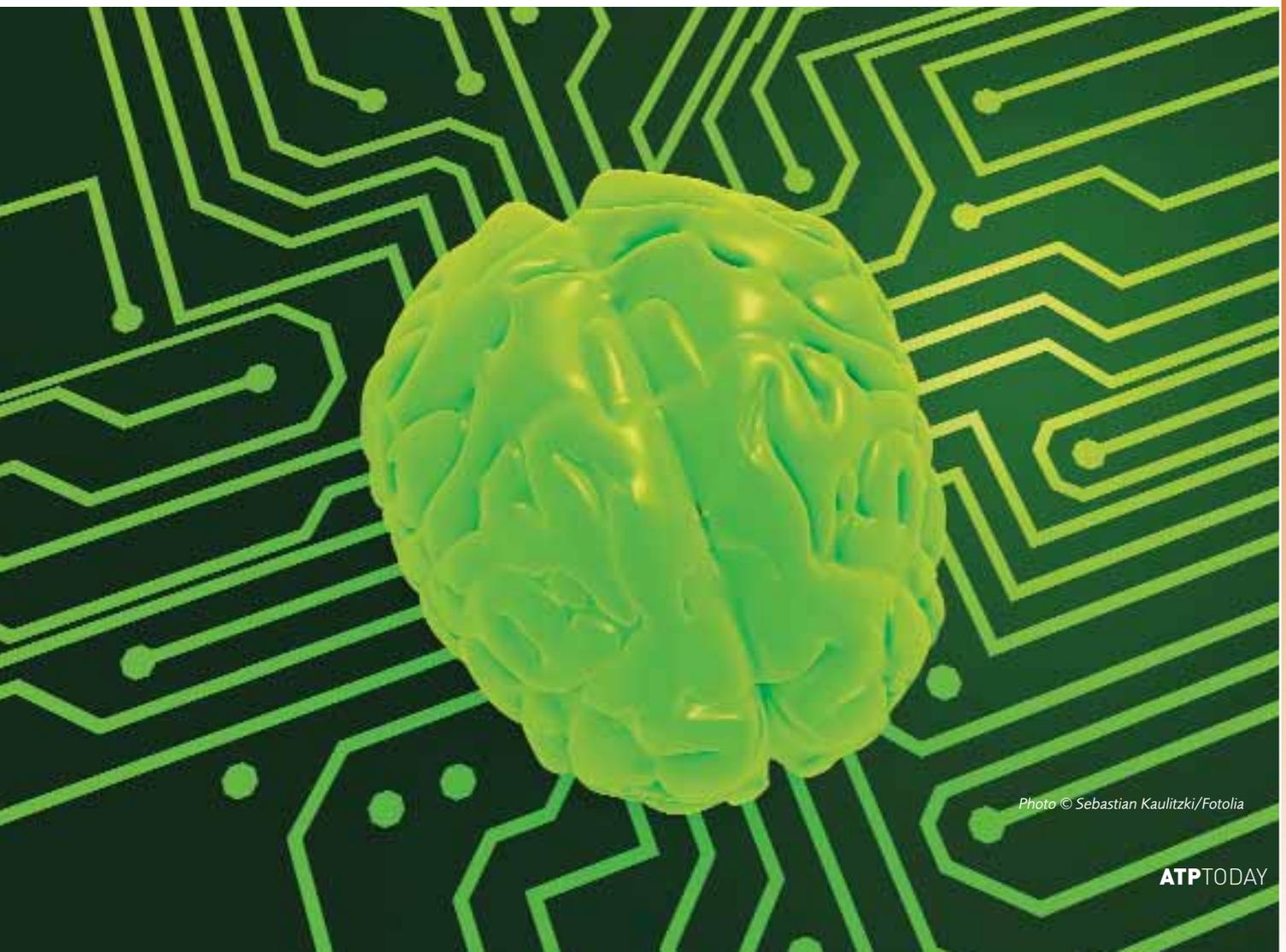


Photo © Sebastian Kaulitzki/Fotolia

INSET COURSE

with Elizabeth Loftus and
Tanya Byron

Tuesday 5 July, Central London

PROFESSOR ELIZABETH LOFTUS

Manufacturing memories

Elizabeth Loftus has had a unique career as one of the foremost psychologists of her generation and is listed as the most well-known female psychologist ever. She has been an instrumental figure in cognitive psychology and continues to be active in research, focusing on the malleability of memory and false memory syndrome.

PROFESSOR TANYA BYRON

The effect of video games and computers on behaviour

Tanya is a clinical psychologist, broadcaster (e.g. *Am I Normal?*), journalist (weekly column in *The Times*) and Professor in the Public Understanding of Science. In 2008 Tanya published *The Byron Review: Safer Children in a Digital World*.

The aim of the day is to give you the opportunity to reflect and learn, and, most importantly, be filled with enthusiasm. A rare opportunity to hear brilliant minds talking about what they know and love best, which will inspire your own thinking and teaching. Almost all INSET courses are (understandably) focussed on improving your delivery of psychology and understanding of exam requirements. Teaching can be improved by just feeling intellectually stimulated and this course aims to do just that. Both speakers are immensely interesting and entertaining. There will be plenty of opportunity for Q&A. I guarantee you will leave walking on Cloud 9!

**For details see www.southwestconferences.co.uk
or contact cara.flanagan@btopenworld.com**

STUDENT CONFERENCE

with Elizabeth Loftus

LONDON Wednesday 6 July
SHEFFIELD Thursday 7 July

Transport is often a problem so I am happy to try to help to reduce costs if you contact me, perhaps even organising a coach share! Megabus is a very cheap option from some destinations. A wealth of brilliant speakers!

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Professor Elizabeth Loftus | Memory Matters |
| Mike Cardwell | The Psychology of Peace |
| Cara Flanagan | Auschwitz, obedience and heroes |
| David Wilson | The Psychology of Murder |
| Phil Banyard in London | The Blooming Buzzing Confusion |
| Tom Stafford in Sheffield | Thinking meat: Putting brain and mind together |

**For details see www.southwestconferences.co.uk
or contact cara.flanagan@btopenworld.com**

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Helpline

The ATP runs a telephone and email Helpline service for Members. Please contact Dorothy Coombs who will try to answer your query or refer you to someone who can.

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Writing Articles for ATP Today

What kind of articles are we looking for?

We are looking for a variety of articles such as:

- Teaching & learning articles
- Lesson suggestions (activities and suggestions that have worked well for you)
- Resources that can be used by teachers or students (worksheets etc)
- Psychology research
- Current research by University Departments
- Reviews of books (Exam and non-exam texts welcome)
- Articles of interest including current teaching issues

Who can write for the ATP?

Anyone can write for the ATP. We particularly welcome articles from teachers, researchers, University departments, University lecturers and PGCE students.

How long should my article be?

Your article can be anything from half a page to three pages of A4. Articles should be submitted in Arial font size 12.

Can I submit pictures?

Yes. We welcome photos to be used for the articles. If you want to submit them, once you have checked copyright, please attach them to your e-mail separately and do not embed them into the article. All photos need to be taken in the highest resolution setting on your camera possible and in jpeg format.

ADVERTISEMENTS

What kinds of advertisement is the ATP looking for?

Here at the ATP, we pride ourselves on offering our Members the highest quality resources and facilities available in the Psychology teaching world. This is the same for advertisements.

- Teaching resources
- Trips and conferences
- CPD opportunities
- Exam boards
- University information

What constitutes an advertisement?

If you wish to invite Members to an upcoming event, issue a call for papers, or other items that you think may provide a service to our Members; we may be able to waive some or all of the fees for advertising. This decision will be made at the discretion of the editor. Please contact us for more information.

If you would like to submit an article, need any clarification on your article or are interested in advertising then please do not hesitate to contact the editor via email on Laura.rudd@franklin.ac.uk



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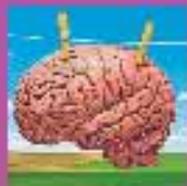


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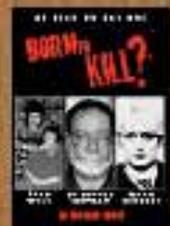
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