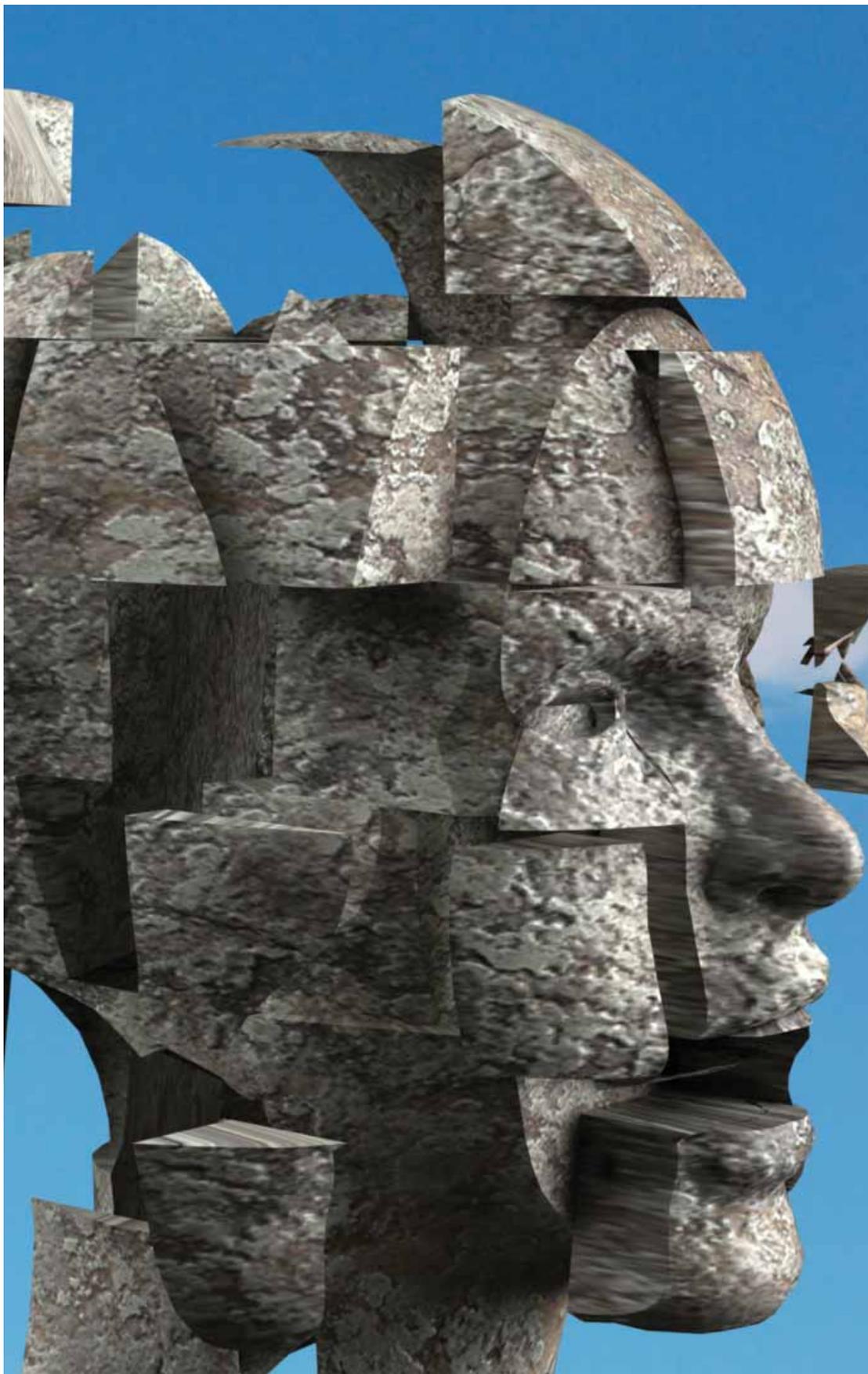


ATP TODAY

The Magazine of the Association for the Teaching of Psychology



October 2009



INSIDE

Discovering the world of Forensics
Creating heroes in psychology
University Focus

Scottish Qualifications Agency



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FROM THE EDITOR



IT HAS BEEN A YEAR FOR OLD ENDINGS AND NEW BEGINNINGS. We have seen the end of coursework for A-levels and the arrival of new specifications across the board. Is change always a good thing? Not always. Is it in this case? I think so.

It is also a new beginning for the magazine and for myself. I have taken over as Editor from the wonderful Evie Bentley and hope that this, my first edition, won't disappoint. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped me in my new position as Editor; those of you know who you are. Thank you, your unbending belief has been an inspiration.

I would also like to take this occasion to wish you all well and the very best of good luck with your new beginnings as we once again brave the storm and battle our way forward into that great and often unpredictable world of education. For those of you just starting, bear with it. For those of you who are dab hands, keep up the hard work. I leave you with this poem by Sheenagh Pugh which a dear friend read to me recently, I hope you may appreciate it as much as I do.

*Sometimes things don't go, after all from bad to worse
Some years, muscadell faces down frost: green thrives:
the crops don't fail
Sometimes a man aims high, and all goes well
A people sometimes will step back from war
Elect an honest man: decide they care enough,
that they can't leave some stranger poor
Some men become what they were born for
Sometimes our best efforts do not go amiss;
sometimes we do as we meant to
The sun will sometimes melt a field of sorrow
That seemed hard frozen: may it happen for you...*

Laura Rudd
laura.rudd@franklin.ac.uk

FROM THE CHAIR



WELCOME BACK TO THE START OF A NEW ACADEMIC YEAR. I hope you all had an enjoyable and restful summer break. Autumn term is without a doubt the toughest and most challenging of the year.

However, I do always start the year enthusiastically and really enjoy getting to know my new students. I'm actively looking forward to the challenges of teaching a new A2 specification. I've found PsychExchange invaluable for sourcing new and inspirational resources and ideas – www.psychexchange.co.uk

Those of you who were able to attend the Annual ATP Conference at Exeter will agree that the conference was one of the best ever – Phil Banyard did a marvellous job. The programme was very full, relevant and inspiring. Once my hangover wore off, I felt I had gained an awful lot from the conference. Once again I was gratified to see what a committed, professional, enthusiastic, caring and friendly bunch Psychology teachers are. For those of you who have never attended an ATP Conference, you are missing a treat; it really is the best value CPD on offer for Psychology teachers. Next year's conference will be at Brunel University – go to www.atpconference.org.uk for more details.

It's all change here at the ATP, I'm sure you will have noticed that the new look newsletter is fabulous and will go from strength to strength under the editorship of Laura Rudd. Laura has some great ideas of what she would like to do in the future. Please support her by letting her know your thoughts and of course, submitting articles and items. The website has also undergone a comprehensive overhaul. The new webmasters are Mark Holah and Jamie Davies, who are

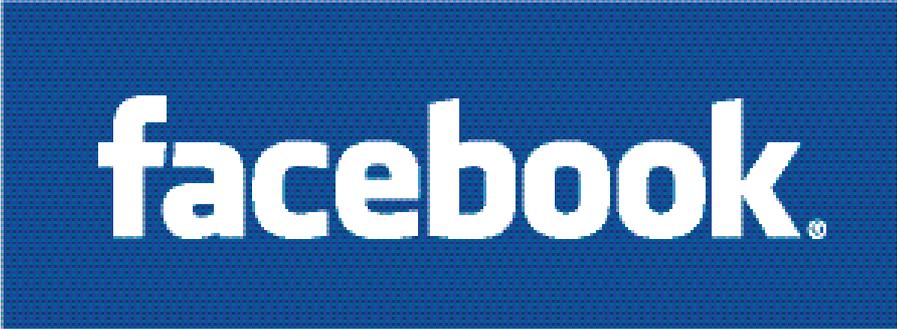
also the brains behind the wonderful PsychExchange. If you haven't already, please have a look and register at www.theatp.org – the invitation code is 'atpmember'. We welcome constructive feedback and ideas for the website. Whilst you are there please check that your personal details are up to date, you will be able to amend them online, and any queries please contact the membership secretary, Wendy Wood at membership@theatp.org

If you know of any Members who are not receiving their ATP newsletter, it is probably because we haven't got an up-to-date contact address for them, again please ask them to contact Wendy. We really need Members' e-mail addresses as this is a much easier and efficient way of contacting them, so either register on the website or e-mail Wendy direct.

After the success of the annual conference, many Members were asking for one-day events throughout the year. We are currently planning an NQT/New to teaching Psychology day, details of which will be posted on the website soon. We would also like to offer Regional events if there is sufficient demand. If you are interested in becoming part of a regional group please contact Jeff Standen – standen.jeff@gmail.com – or join the discussion on the website forums.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any ideas or comments about how the ATP can best serve its Members. I wish you all a productive term and don't forget the work/life balance!

Deb Gajic
d.gajic@sky.com

The Facebook logo is displayed in white lowercase letters on a dark blue background with a fine grid pattern.

The new VLE?

Ask students if they regularly use your VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) and you might be lucky if you get 50%. Ask them how many are using social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace, the figure probably hits more like 90%. This was worrying. Our department, like any, is always looking for new ways to reach students on their level and provide as much support as possible.

What started as a joke between myself and a colleague suddenly became a very plausible idea. Why couldn't we use Facebook as our own supplementary VLE? So like all good Psychologists, we hypothesized and created our own pilot test under the name of Franklin Psych (or Frank Psycho as the students prefer). We set ourselves a few basic ground rules and then created our account. The results were positive. Within weeks our students had found and added us onto their friends' lists. We had set boundaries beforehand so anyone adding us onto their list was aware of what it would entail to have their teachers on their private account. Obviously, with all new programmes, there are issues that need to be resolved but with careful management, this can be a useful tool.

I am not suggesting by any means that networking sites such as Facebook are substitutes for VLEs or should replace them completely. I am simply suggesting that these systems can be harnessed and used as supplementary programmes that can improve communication with students. Below I have written a quick 'How to' guide for setting up your own account for your department.

Facebook – A 'How to' guide

Think of a good name for your Facebook

account. You also need an e-mail address for this to work. We decided that we didn't want it to be our personal e-mail account so we created an e-mail account on Hotmail that the whole department has access too. The whole department also has access to the Facebook account so that anyone can check it at any one time.

Rules for yourself Set yourself some simple rules that you want to follow. For example, you may wish to only have Psychology students on your friends' list. You might also want to agree on times when you are going to access it, for example for an hour three times a week, etc. We also ensured that as we have personal accounts with Facebook, our students could not access these with links to our department account.

Chat facilities The rule we use on this is that we never start conversations with students unless they start them with us. We also do not comment on their status updates.

Rules for students Strictly a 'no abuse' policy. If anyone is offensive, they are deleted from our lists immediately. Depending on the level of abuse, we have also informed students that they may face an inquiry within college, depending on the

severity of the case. All students are informed of these rules before adding us on Facebook. You may also wish to remind your students that you will see their status updates so it is not the best idea to post that you are missing college when your teachers can see.

Quizzes There are some excellent quiz facilities on Facebook. You can create simply multiple choice questions or add more detailed questions using the 'notes' section on your homepage. We have noticed that students get competitive on the scoreboard which leads to them trying the quizzes more often. We also often put practice exam questions up and students e-mail them in or bring them into lessons to discuss them.

Links You can add some important links on this section such as links to the exam boards, journal articles, etc.

Status Updates We have often used these to advertise extra classes, trips and even posted research questions and used this as a forum for debates.

Photos If your students agree, you can put trip photos up so students can look at them.

Laura Rudd

In this section, we have included some articles related to teaching and learning in Psychology.

Help with OFSTED

Jamie very kindly let us include this for the newsletter. OFSTED is still seen and felt as a cause of great stress, and Jamie's experience shows that we could manage inspections of lessons well by knowing what OFSTED wants to see. But her last sentence is critical; keep paperwork up-to-date as that, apparently, is what education is about.*

Just a note re OFSTED – we got done last year and were rated highly– the school also got in an OFSTED professional to coach us on what OFSTED were looking for – they said to be careful not to be too teacher-led because OFSTED really wants to see the students interacting, self-learning and asking and answering questions – it's all about engagement (and AFL) – so the more the students are doing and the less the teacher is doing the better! With that in mind, here are a couple of tried and tested suggestions:

Suggestion 1

Start off by showing the brain song (Pinky and the brain) found on U-tube, search brain song.

Sperry study: use the psychologystuff.com building a brain out of toilet paper (very good for the kinaesthetic learners). If you can't find it e-mail me direct and I'll send you a break-down, then clips found on U-tube – (there's a particularly good Alan Alda clip), this helps the visual learners.

Dement – do this study by making posters in small groups – no more than 10 words allowed – it has to be primarily pictorial (works really well as they can cut and stick on the bed and the electrocuclogram and the EEG,

put in a bell etc) – this is also good for kinaesthetic learners and demonstrates transformation of information. Then each group presents their poster back to the class with Q and A from students about their poster.

Suggestion 2

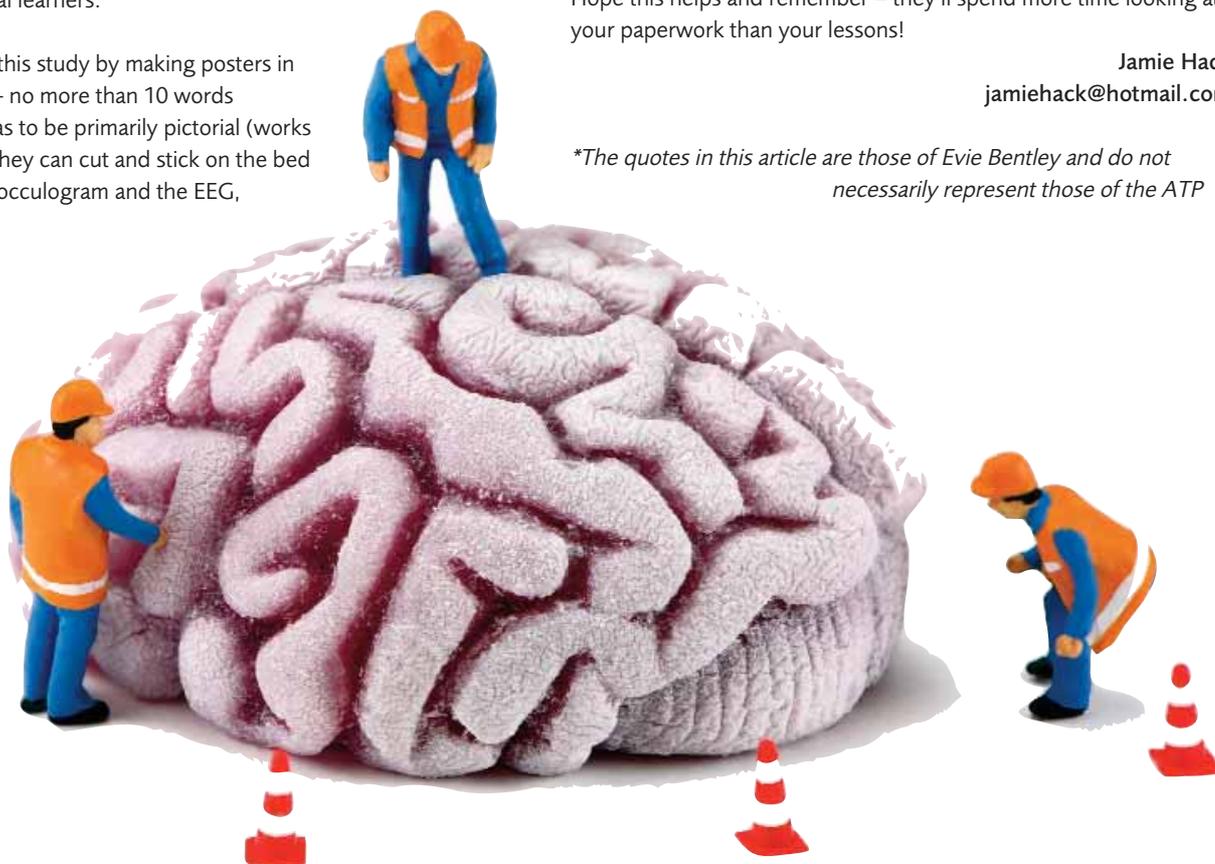
If you want something OFSTED-friendly for the A2 why not try market place – it's a great activity and the students love it!

Divide the students into three groups – each group has one of the areas/sections you want covered – one group would have the study, another would have the background theory, another would have the implications. Provide notes and text books – then each group has about 20 mins to put together a crib sheet (they may only use 10 words but as many pictures as they like), then one person stays behind as the 'seller', the other two go off to a different group each as a 'buyer'. The seller tells their two buyers all about their area for about 15 mins. The buyers then go back to their groups and tell them the information they have got – so each group ends up with all three areas of information, teacher going round scaffolding and extending where appropriate. Then do class Q and A for review (with students posing the questions and answering), before final summary note-taking. Obviously you have to adapt depending on how many students are in your group.

Hope this helps and remember – they'll spend more time looking at your paperwork than your lessons!

Jamie Hack
jamiehack@hotmail.com

**The quotes in this article are those of Evie Bentley and do not necessarily represent those of the ATP*



Active Learning STRATEGIES

*George Bannister, Manchester Metropolitan University and
Ashton-Under-Lyne Sixth Form College*

DURING MY PGCE YEAR AT MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN

the importance of active learning in the classroom has been heavily stressed both whilst on placement and during my time in lectures at University. Even at the stage of an NQT (as I am now), the sinking sensation that comes with having to teach a particularly arduous topic, for which active learning strategies are scarce, has struck me on many occasions. Hopefully the following activities can provide effective methods in the teaching of various topics which can be adapted to cross all specifications.

ACTIVITY ONE – Philosophy for Children

This activity is great for encouraging the development of personal learning and thinking skills as well as improving skills in debating. It also encourages all students, including those who may be generally less vocal, to express personal views in a respectful and civilised environment.

Step One: Find an article of a controversial nature. Examples of which could be: 'Does childcare have negative implications for a child's development?'

The students then read the article, after which the teacher instructs students that they must all individually generate a point of discussion raised through the article's content. For example, from the above topic, a question that may be generated may be: 'Why are children put into childcare in the first place?'

Step Two: Once the article has been read, the students are given time to consider points for discussion and must then express them to the class teacher. The contributions of all students are written on the whiteboard. Students must then all vote for the point of discussion that most interests them, or that they think would generate the richest debate. After the vote has been completed, they must then each give their personal view on the elected point. At this stage it is vital to discuss the importance of ground rules.

Important to note: The article has been selected on its merits of being controversial, as it is more likely to evoke reaction from students who may well not be used to expressing their personal opinions in front of their peers. The other edge of the sword is that it may generate controversial views that certain students may object

to. Students should be made aware that when a student is vocally contributing to the debate, no other member of the class can interject whilst they are speaking. It may be useful to use a board pen that is passed round the class and only the student with the board pen can speak at any one time.

It may well be that the debate shifts focus as each member contributes, but this should be seen as enriching the discussion as opposed to losing focus. This activity also promotes a stretch and challenge theme of learning.

ACTIVITY TWO – Revision Activity

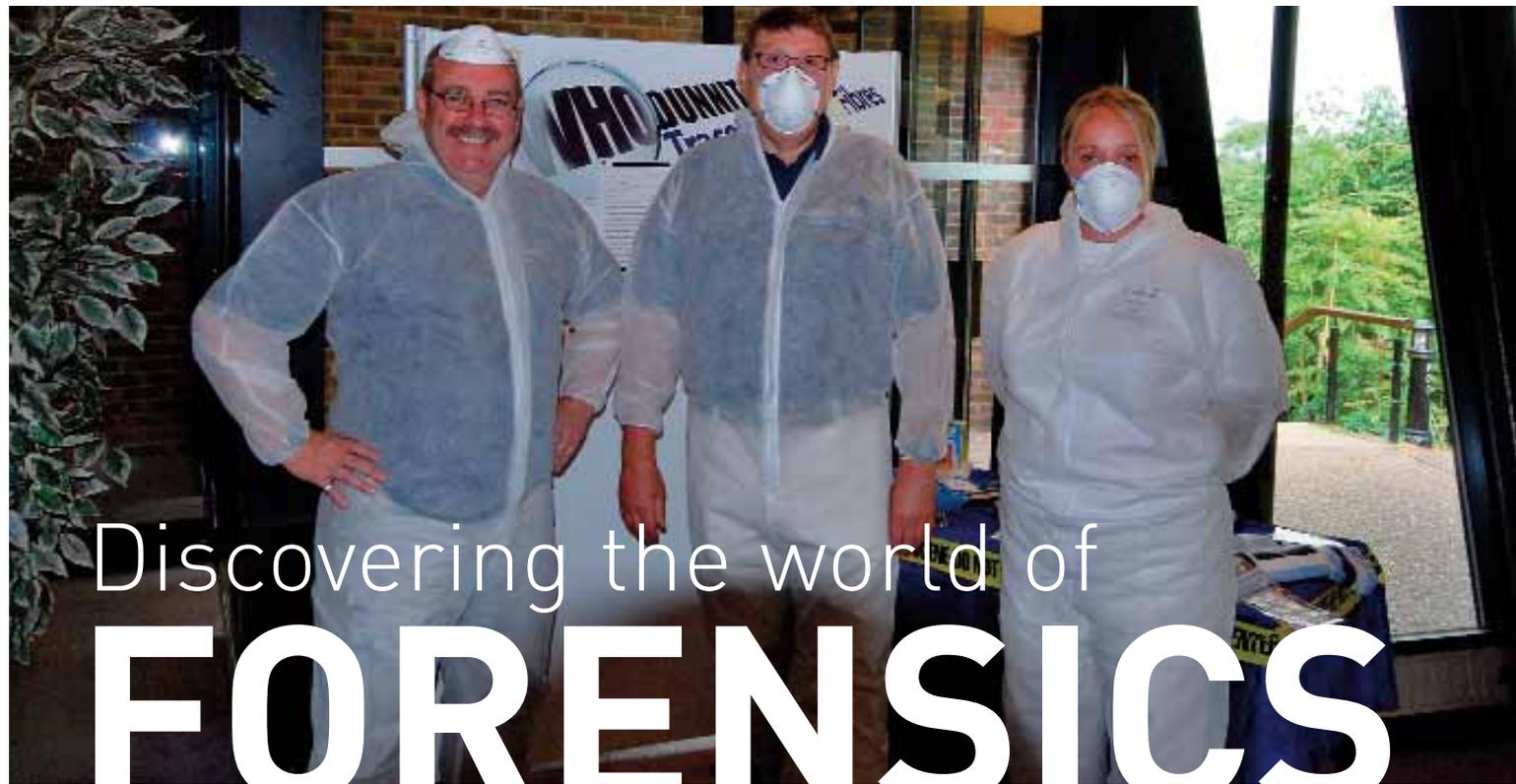
This activity is particularly effective due to its fast-paced nature. The teacher I picked this up from said she used it to good effect towards the end of term, leading up to exams. Depending upon the number of students in the class, it can be done as an individual activity or in groups of any size.

Step One: Give each student (or group) a piece of sugar paper with a heading related to a previously learnt topic and a marker pen. Each group is then given 1-2 minutes to brainstorm all that they know on that particular topic.

Once this time is up, the pieces of sugar paper are rotated around the class.

Step Two: Students or groups should then be given a short period of time to read the contribution of the previous group(s) before they themselves must contribute to the sheet of paper. This continues until all students or groups have contributed to all pieces of sugar paper, with their respective topic headings. Once all headings have been covered by all groups, the resulting pieces of sugar paper should then contain a great deal of information relating to their topic. These revision notes can then be reduced to an A4 booklet for the students to use as a revision aid.

An alternative to passing the pieces of sugar paper from group to group is to keep each piece of sugar paper on one table and each student or group can then move from table to table contributing to the respective heading. This serves as a means of getting students moving and can be particularly effective if concentration levels are low.



Discovering the world of **FORENSICS**

Watch any of the current crop of TV 'forensics' shows such as CSI and Waking the Dead and you would be forgiven for thinking that the solving of crime is just a matter of making startling conclusions based on convenient scraps of evidence and interviews with made-to-order suspects.

HOWEVER, THE REAL-LIFE WORLD OF FORENSICS is a great deal more complex than its sexy TV counterparts would have us believe. It is a world which calls upon the expertise of a myriad of disciplines – psychology, pathology, serology, psychiatry, toxicology and ballistics – and one in which interest is growing rapidly within the educational world.

Delving into this world, an appearance at the 2009 Association for Teachers of Psychology (ATP) Annual Conference at Exeter University, saw OCR working with two leading forensic practitioners – Brian Hook and Clive Donner – as they launched their new GCSE *Psychology* specification.

Considered to be the highlight of the conference, Brian and Clive's Psychology based workshops provided a fascinating insight into the techniques employed in forensic investigation – what constitutes a crime scene, how a crime scene is examined, how prints are identified and preserved, the interpretation of witness statements and the importance of fibre comparison.

Although forensic science is a versatile and powerful tool in the investigation of a crime, science alone is not enough. To be successful, forensic techniques must be utilised along with the knowledge and experience of detectives, uniformed police, and civilian experts. Following the event, OCR News met with Brian and Clive – known professionally as CSI4U and regular consultants to the emergency response agencies in Europe and many other parts of the world – to discuss the world of forensics.

CSI on TV – help or hindrance

So working with a name such as CSI4U, do Brian and Clive consider the existence of TV shows such as *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* and

the like to be a help or hindrance as they strive to introduce forensics to a new audience? Brian: "We often ask our fellow professionals and the teachers and students that we train if they watch CSI and the answer is that almost everyone does. People have always been intrigued by crime-solving fiction, their detection, criminals and their motives. CSI-type programmes have gone to a higher level, it's not a 'who dunnit' but a 'how we can prove they dunnit'." The vast majority of people realise it's an entertainment show; it's the subject matter that is fascinating and enigmatic. The show makes people think. It's raised the profile of Crime Scene Examination and Management greatly and for that we are grateful and in general people realise that the content, examination results and circumstances are shortened to fit into the time parameters. Hopefully one day we may be able to actually get results in the same time scale."

Background and experience

Whilst pondering the future of forensics, Brian turns back the clock to the years of learning his trade. "I was a police officer in the Metropolitan Police for 30 years," says Brian as he references an impressive CV. "Over half of that I spent on specialist units: homicide teams, murder as it was called in the old days; the Racial and Violent Crime Taskforce and the Anti-Terrorist Branch. In all those specialist roles I was involved in forensic examination of crime scenes, forensic management of crime scenes, lecturing and training to other agencies outside the police service and also within the police services, nationally and abroad. Most uniformed officers have a multitude of jobs to do. So it's about knowledge, it's about training and so early on I embarked, on behalf of senior officers, to spread the message – if people haven't got that knowledge, go out and give it to them. As Clive can attest, nobody can possess all the knowledge, you can't have it all, all you can do is pass on as much as you possibly can."



Consultancy to education

So having established an impressive track record with the Metropolitan Police and as a forensics consultant, how did the move into the educational world come about? Brian: "I was approached by Thames Valley University to look at their Forensic Degree course, and at this time, Clive and I were also involved in training other agencies around the world. It was pointed out to us that what we were doing training-wise would actually be a very good platform for team-building and so we took part in an open day and as a result we got a phone call from a high school in Sussex asking us to go along and speak to them. It kind of ballooned from there really."

Approach

With the move into the world of education underway, how much distinction was made in the approach to the teaching of forensics to fellow professionals as opposed to teachers and students? Brian: "Having lectured extensively in the UK and overseas to both groups I think the difference is not as big as some may imagine. One of our maxims is 'Training as Real as It Gets'. We endeavour to make it just that. Both groups tend to have some general idea of forensic issues but the professionals, law enforcement. The main difference is the professionals are put under far more pressure and levels of scrutiny than teachers or students ever would be. If teachers or students then progress and themselves and enter the professional arena, that's when they will come up against that level. We keep lectures to the minimal time as possible. The best way to learn is to bring together all the strands of knowledge in a practical hands-on way and involve students or delegates. Benjamin Franklin said: 'Tell me and I will forget. Teach me and I will learn. Involve me and I will remember.' So we involve them."

Working with OCR

The ATP Conference saw Brian and Clive's first association with OCR as they helped launch its new GCSE *Psychology* specification using a series of practical and theoretical activities entitled *The Wonder of Forensic Psychology*. "We were tasked with bringing out the psychological profiling and the psychological aspects of forensics so the first thing we did was to look at the definition of psychology," remembers Clive. "We quickly realised that whilst they might have a good broad knowledge of psychology, they actually probably, other than CSI on TV, didn't know a lot about forensics. So, the first thing we did was raise their level of forensics knowledge: what is it, how is it done, and why is it done? What are our capabilities and also what are our limitations?" After establishing a theoretical base, practical activities for delegates included the chance to make a photo-fit using actual Police software and the opportunity to guess 'Who Dunit' following a robbery. Explains Brian: "We created a crime scene scenario – the theft of a valuable cup from Walkham Hall country house – which was broken down into different disciplines – physical exhibits, witness statements, E-fits and finger-print evidence. We

injected clues so delegates would have to work out the significance to certain things. The answers were there for the teachers and students, but the whole purpose was for them to look at all the different aspects and to use their critical thinking to solve the crime." "I think the crucial thing is that we recognise that all this has to be a positive experience. It's no good it being otherwise. We want these activities to be informative and fun," added Clive.

Moving forward

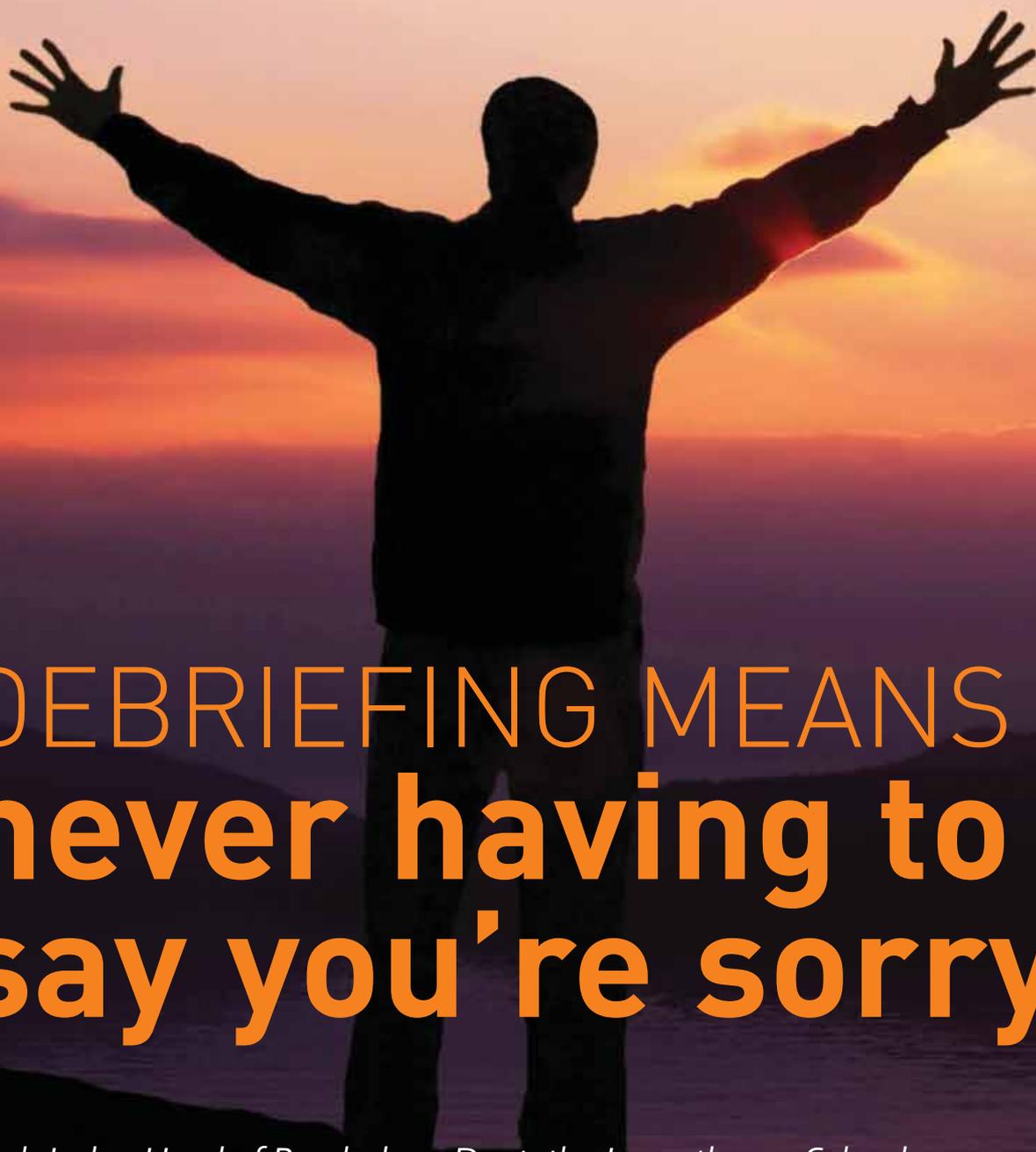
Flushed with their success at the ATP Conference, Brian and Clive are in [no] doubt as to the wisdom of teaching forensics and the benefits it brings to students and teachers as well as to themselves. "To be a successful forensic psychologist you must have a firm understanding and knowledge of what drives an investigation and how the examination of a crime scene is done. Passing on the knowledge, experience and comprehension of scene examination and management forensics still excites us," affirms Brian. Equally enthused, Clive says: "To be able to pass that on to others with the same passion or to see that passion being woken is a magnificent feeling. I always had a thirst for knowledge and the one thing about what we do is you never stop learning."

As to the way ahead, the course appears clear. "Clive and I have become more and more involved in the educational world and it's obvious there is a need for our skills, knowledge and ability. We can impact on a variety of subjects where forensic knowledge is required either directly or because it forms a part of a broader knowledge base. I think that we and OCR complement each other and I believe that working together in the future would be mutually beneficial."

Catching the Ripper

Given the modern forensic science techniques available today, would such expertise have caught the perpetrator of the most famous of unsolved crimes – those of the Whitechapel Murderer himself, Jack the Ripper? "Most likely" is Brian's answer. If the current methods and procedures had been in place we would like to think that they, or those responsible, would have been caught and convicted. The application of the disciplines of crime scene preservation and control and the continuity and integrity of the recovered forensic evidence would mean the evidence would provide much more information and intelligence about the suspect(s). "Although five murders are generally attributed to 'Jack', there were a total of 11 murders investigated between 1888 and 1891. "I know that the witness statements are no longer in existence, but the coroner's inquest was widely reported and a lot of the testimony from private and police was reported verbatim so partial records do exist. So it would have been interesting to not only look at them forensically, but to also apply the current psychological profiling methods to the scenes, witnesses and potential suspects to enhance and focus the investigation."

The nature of experimentation, ethics, implanting memories and messing with your mind.



DEBRIEFING MEANS **never having to say you're sorry?**

*Mark Judge Head of Psychology Dept, the Leventhorpe School,
Sawbridgeworth*

m.judge@leventhorpe.herts.sch.uk

Debriefing – Following the research, especially where any deception or withholding of information had taken place, the committee wishes to emphasise the importance of appropriate debriefing. In some circumstances, the verbal description of the nature of the investigation would not be sufficient to eliminate all possibility of harmful after-effects. For example, an experiment in which negative mood was induced requires the induction of a happy mood state before the participant leaves the experimental setting.

BPS Guidelines, 23-7-2009.

Love means never having to say you're sorry.

Ali McGraw to Ryan O'Neal in the movie Love Story 1970.

As a newbie in the teaching world of psychology (three years) but not a newbie in life (just coming up to 50) I have been interested in the nature some issues are dealt with by some much more experienced teachers and lecturers than I. Recently, at an excellent OCR conference, I heard a Professor discussing memory and mentioning her use of implanting false memories in her psychological research, its usefulness to her and its wider acceptance in the field. She said it was all ethical and fine in her research as everyone had been debriefed so that was OK, but is it OK? As background she mentioned 'the mousetrap experiment' as an example of how introduced memory in children can surface later in life and be confused with actual memory. I had never heard of this experiment so did a bit of digging around in the arena of false memory.

My issue, in the area of memory and debrief, is that I say to students that debrief is used to respect the participants 'wish to' understand what has happened, but I often forget to add that this does not mean the participants should accept our explanation especially if they, for the good of science, have been deceived. If I can deceive them in small things, how do they know that I am not deceiving them in larger things, does offering a debrief circumvent our saying sorry when we have deliberately changed a person's view of events, who are we to say what is harmless and what is not?

Understanding of the BPS ethical guidelines is drummed into our A level students from day one and we try to get them to see the importance of being open and honest and professional with each other and with themselves about the nature of their work, research interests, and how what they know can affect who they know. Brandishing newly acquired social skills through a study of psychology still makes those with only a cursory knowledge of the subject a little nervous, and I always advise care when students start to discuss what they have learnt with family and peers. No we can't read minds, but we can have a jolly good go at it when no-one is looking!

Knowing something gives us an advantage, from how to change a tyre to how to read reactions, with knowledge comes understanding and hopefully responsibility. I have now expanded the teaching of ethics in the new spec (OCR 2009/10) to include all nine ethical aspects rather than the five I used to use in the first two years of my career. (Informed consent – Deception – Debriefing – Right to withdraw – Protection of participants, now adding Confidentiality – Observational research – Giving advice – Colleagues.) I had always inferred the extra four (adding Confidentiality – Observational research – Giving advice –

Colleagues) but from this year enshrined them from week one in AS methodology classes with the eager Year 12s.

But back to my original idea – the BPS argument quoted above reinforces the idea that a participant should leave an experiment in the same emotional state that they enter it, but specifically emphasise the negative. In August I had the good fortune to visit Boston Massachusetts, taking a day trip to Harvard University. The square outside the walls of the grand college was crowded with tourists, hawkers and students offering free tours whilst standing next to a large placard which informed the curious that 'students live on tips so please be generous'. I hurried through the crowd but heard two students shout 'be part of a psychology experiment'. It had a 'roll up..., roll up!' kind of carnival feel about it so I volunteered. I had to imagine a happy incident in my life then turn the page over and answer questions. I did so using a rating scale, which they insisted was a Likert scale but was not (not so clever there then) and then I gave back the form. They thanked me and carried on touting for business. I asked for a de-brief and they were very apologetic about not having offered it, scolding themselves that in future they would. I felt very smug that I had caught them out in a little methodological gaff, apparently 27,000 people apply to Harvard every year and only 7% get accepted, my kids are cleverer than I thought because they know to debrief at 17. So the experiment used my subjective memory of a happy incident then tried to find out if my positive frame of mind would alter the ratings I gave. I wasn't harmed obviously, but if the experiment was designed to change my mood then according to BPS the debrief should be applicable regardless of the positive nature of the outcome. I know guidelines are as diverse as the countries which try to enforce them and that memory is subjective so I made a mental note to think about both on my return to the UK.

The nature of memory, like my happy memory in Harvard Yard, is debated endlessly in psychology textbooks and papers. Elizabeth Loftus is a big name in OCR study and in her book 'The Myth of Repressed Memory' she continues her quest to help the world understand how vulnerable and open to change our precious memories are and her belief that repressed memory is an illusion, thus saying goodbye forever to daddy Freud, and throwing doubt on acres of court testimony in sexual abuse cases, a subject in which Loftus often appears as an expert witness. The consequences of her belief make her as unpopular with some groups as she is popular with others, leaving not much room for fence sitting. If you believe in repressed memory and the ability for therapy to uncover secrets then she is a demon, if you feel that memory archaeology is a playground for those who wish to influence and implant memories then she is an angel with an unpalatable message. I believe she sees the therapeutic process in recovering memories as a form of informative debrief where memories are induced in an effort to give the patient some kind of understanding as to the process they have been involved in but previously were deceived by, but in this process the memories can be manipulated and moulded. Loftus may see this as well meaning but dangerous and of no benefit to the patient regardless of how important the therapist says the recovering of repressed abuse is to the patient's recovery and health.

Nigel Hunt in his article 'Debriefing children and Young People' (lost the reference but its page 59 when I find it) writes about the use of PD (psychological debriefing) when it comes to helping

children and young people deal with traumatic events in their life to prevent the onset of PTSD. Offering help and talking things through is examined from a clinical perspective and concludes that much of the evidence of success is anecdotal but surrounding evidence about children and trauma generally more abundant. This surrounding evidence is often more peer assessed giving greater credibility to the psychological interventionist approach when it comes to helping children deal with trauma.

He discusses the fine line between revealing too much to a child during an intervention which could harm their own internal acceptance and healing process and withholding to protect which could lead to later trust issues when the child realizes they were further deceived, even for all the right reasons. Revealing truth has its own ethical dilemmas, but then if all that is left is memory of the events with no corroborating forensic evidence then whose truth is the most truthful?

I expect that debriefing is seen as a powerful tool in somehow healing up the mistrust between any participant and experimenter, saying that something was in fact a little white lie or a ruse is a way of saying sorry and being up front, hopefully this is supposed to heal the rift of mistrust however minor the deception was.

Elizabeth Loftus too used false memories in her own research 'Loftus and colleagues' (Loftus 1993, Loftus and Ketcham 1994, Loftus and Pickrell 1995) demonstrated that people can be led to integrate into their personal histories an entirely fabricated event. Over the course of several interviews that involved using a subject's family member as a confederate, subjects were led to believe that they had been lost in a shopping mall when they were young children.' (Lynn p138)

Is this acceptable psychological experimental method to test the reliability of memory as practised by such luminaries as Elizabeth Loftus when she in turn rails against the claims of repressed memory therapists who in their memory recovery work claim validity to abuse memories, long buried, from clients whose perpetrators profess innocence? Both seem to have similar aims, to prove that memory is vitally important in the human experience but for different ends, one that it is fallible, the other that it is a storehouse of the too terrible to live with. Both sides claim they are right, perhaps someone could debrief me and tell me which side to believe more.

Research into adults who had had false memories implanted as children was carried out by Huffman, Crossman and Cessi in 1996, corroborated some years later, stated that out of 22 children who had been part of an experiment about an angry child called Sam Stone (Leichtman & Ceci 1995) that anything from 13-33% of the participants remembered the fabrications as truth. So when implanting memories in children, or adults for that matter, even if we give an in-depth debrief, we still leave a shadow on the memory in the participant. The Mousetrap study which I mentioned earlier (Ceci, Huffman, Smith and Loftus 1994) introduced a story of a child getting his/her fingers caught in a mousetrap, which never happened. I could not find much data about this so some of you may have more. Some children remembered it as real when questioned and the same children were later interviewed in a follow-up study several weeks later (20/20 interview with John Stossel 1994). A child still ascertained

the mousetrap and, by inference, the pain was real. These studies are often quoted when the credibility of child witnesses is challenged, can children be relied upon, and for that matter can an adult be relied upon? Lauren Slater in her excellent book 'Inside Skinners Box' challenges Loftus's idea of all memory being completely fallible saying that it seems to turn us all into subjective witnesses to events which have no common heritage, each of us sees everything as a personal experience and none of it could be true. She thinks that is depressing, which I suppose it is. Slater also writes with feeling about the participants in the original Milgram experiment kids all know and love and traced some of them. Even though they were all debriefed, the events had a traumatic effect on many of their lives changing forever their view of themselves and their capacity to be compliant in the face of authority; debrief was given but no-one said sorry. Loftus comes through continuing to state the claim that courts which decide life or death for murderers still rely on eye-witness testimony and faulty memory to make their decisions, so her quest continues.

Finally an article in the 'The Guardian' of 2003 called 'We can implant entirely false memories' begins with a story where Elizabeth Loftus convinces Alan Alda (actor Hawkeye of MASH fame) that he dislikes hard boiled eggs because he made himself vomit on them as a child. The article talks of suggestibility and how plausibility improves the chances of accepting a story is true, such as kids and bullying, being lost in a shopping centre, both socially regular occurrences in western society. If it happened to someone you know then it could have happened to you too. The Welcome Institute proved that emotionally charged words such as 'murder' and 'scream' were more easily remembered than more neutral words in their testing of a memory assisting beta blocker drug called Propranolol. So I return to my original issue, debriefing. Telling a child they were hurt by a mouse trap seems innocuous, it is not a life-threatening event but if you are three years old it's quite a biggie. If this is acceptable then great care is needed. The professor I met at the OCR conference changed the process to include a false memory of a pleasant event, which was also successful, so perhaps time has mellowed the American research programme, but still, for me, it feels a little uncomfortable to do this with children. These memory altered children grow up and then you could let your conspiracy theory Hollywood movie mind go wild and wonder if our deliberate interference might have a butterfly effect creating super hero type monsters...and then...and then...but perhaps I am being too dramatic.

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Skinners Box
by Lauren Slater

THE USE OF VISUAL MEDIA TO TEACH Psychological concepts and theories

Media texts can be some of the more influential tools we have at our disposal as teachers. In this article, I am going to suggest ways in which you may choose to harness media texts for your teaching purposes, without getting side-tracked by students losing interest or them missing the bigger picture.

So let's try this together.

Think of a film. What about a romantic comedy? You would all know what I was talking about, correct? Something with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan, Hugh Grant, Matthew McConaughey, Kate Hudson. Boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy gets girl back. Easy right? You know the drill.

So if I was to say to you that I wanted to talk to you about a point in my life when I lived through that exact scenario, you could understand what I was talking about because you would associate it with that experience of your own, the time you watched when Harry met Sally for example. It's the same process for your students. Through the use of the right media clip, we can directly reinforce and create a link for students to think back on and remember. It is because of this that I find it odd that so many subject areas struggle with the use of media within their teaching practice. Now I'm not arguing that you have to relate each topic to a student's very own favourite film, you could however make certain generalisations.

One of the biggest problems with the use of film or media in lessons is its perceived irresponsibility. Too often in the past, tutors have been guilty of just sticking on any old film for students to watch in order to keep them quiet. I myself had this treatment every Monday morning when rather than deliver tutorial, our school tutor would stick a film on, which I can only assume would allow him time to recover from the weekend. I still remember more about those films than I do about the actual lessons he delivered.

There are key things to remember when utilising media examples in session:

- Relevance
- Length
- Obscurity
- Effectiveness
- Genre

Some of these are fairly self-explanatory, relevance obviously refers to the actual usefulness of the piece. Showing your students Freud : The Secret Passion (1962 dir. John Huston) is unlikely to truly teach your students much useful about the practices of the man. Showing One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest (1975 dir. Milo, Forman) however, as an indication of how mental health was dealt with in the past could well be of use. Effectiveness is next, and I hate to say it, but quite often shocking your students will be most effective. Again

using One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest as an example, the fact of the matter is One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest works both as a film and as a teaching tool due to its shocking end, especially now when students are used to the 'Hollywood' happy ending. Taking students out of their comfort zone can sometimes be a good thing.

Obscurity is a fairly similar idea to effectiveness in this context. If you screen a piece of work to students that they have already seen or is a huge blockbuster, they are less likely to actually take in the educational value of it and just watch it for the sake of entertainment, which is of course not the point of this. An example of this might be to utilise Scum or Romper Stomper as examples of anti-social behaviour as opposed to say the more commercially known Green Street or Football Factory. Having said that, don't necessarily discount something just because it's huge, just ask yourself first, "Will my students benefit from this?".

Tying in with this is genre, comedy can be tremendously effective; allowing students the opportunity to learn and simultaneously enjoy themselves should not be discouraged. Unfortunately though, most comedy films will lead to students merely listening to the jokes and forgoing the point. This can be said for horror also as when in larger groups, students can have a tendency to giggle or laugh when nervously watching a horror film. This can also lead to them missing the point.

The last point here is possibly the most important, Length. Do not, I repeat, DO NOT feel that you always have to show an entire film. The fact of the matter is, if you are trying to get a point across using film, you may be able to do it with a simple scene or two. It is not necessarily important that students follow the plot or get to see the ending. The fact is, if they are that bothered about seeing the ending, they will seek the film out themselves.

Just utilise what is most important. Sometimes it is important you stop yourself from showing the whole film (who amongst us has never been tempted to watch a film and forgo teaching for an hour or two?).

Also remember that film can be a tremendously powerful tool and can help to break up some of the drier portions of a session. I am yet to find a subject matter that I cannot illuminate in some way for students by using a piece of film footage.

Chris Hallam – Media teacher at Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies, Nottingham

Creating heroes in Psychology

Heroes are celebrated as special people. They're different from you and me. We see the fearless and selfless acts of famous heroes throughout history and say, 'I couldn't have done that. What an extraordinary person!'

It's an interesting self-deception. The reality is that the act of heroism is extraordinary. The person performing it is more often than not perfectly ordinary. History is littered with ordinary people doing extraordinary things who become labelled as heroes. To gain this label, the ordinary person's extraordinary act must satisfy three conditions. It must include an element of risk or sacrifice. It needs to be for the good of others without expectation of any personal gain. It has to be done willingly and deliberately. This definition of a heroic act allows for heroes everywhere. They're living in your town, eating at the same restaurants as you, and sitting in your classroom. However, they're still rare. How do we increase the incidence of heroic acts? The answer comes from Dr Phil Zimbardo – the promotion of the Heroic Imagination. By regularly thinking about heroism, discussing heroic acts, and considering situations that call for heroism, these ordinary people are more likely to perform heroic acts when called upon.

The classroom is an ideal place for nurturing the Heroic Imagination as children are more likely to accept the possibilities of everyday heroism. Adults already know everything. So here are four steps to growing heroes in your classroom.

Who is a hero?

The first business at hand is to separate the fake heroes from the real deal. The best way I've found to do this is simply present a series of famous people for the students to classify as hero or celebrity. You can do this visually with a T-Chart. Don't set any definitions for either category, simply allow the students to discuss their decisions. If a consensus can't be made, leave that person out.

The goal of this step is to get each student thinking about their own 'hero' definition. With their brains engaged, move onto the second step.

What makes a hero?

What differentiated the heroes from the celebrities? By reviewing the selection process your class should be able to come up with a set of attributes that seem to be required for hero status. You could have the class do it as a whole or split them up into small groups. The groups could then present their set of attributes to the rest of the class. There is ample opportunity to discuss the meanings of the words presented – many will be similar in meaning.

How can I be a hero?

Now comes the 'ah ha!' moment. By creating a list of attributes, students will have developed a road map to heroism. This is where you can introduce the concept of the heroic act. It is the practice of these attributes that prompt ordinary people to do the extraordinary. With their list handy, your students will be able to choose the attributes that appeal most to them and put them into practice. This deliberate behaviour is the kind of thing that develops Heroic Imagination. However, they're going to need your help and that's where step four comes in.

How can I keep this up?

The vital piece in the Heroic Imagination puzzle is consistent revisiting. Heroic Imagination is developed through regular exposure to heroism and consideration of heroic behaviour and situations. There are myriad ways to accomplish this in your classroom and ultimately you're going to be the best judge of how to do it.

There are two keys to keeping it current. The first is to use the language the class developed in part two. If you embrace their words and use them to describe their own behaviour as well as acts seen in the public eye, they're more likely to continue practising them.

The second is to develop routines. You could allocate a window of time each week for the sharing of heroic acts noticed in the media. The class could create a hero award that is given out at the end of every week. The award could be restricted to people in the class, or perhaps to people in the community or beyond.

The important thing is to create anticipation and expectation of regular forays into heroism and its people. It is with this that you will notice Heroic Imagination come to the fore in your classroom. I'd love to hear your stories.

Matt Langdon

Zim writes about heroism;

www.lucifereffect.org/heroism.htm

Zim talks about it;

www.ted.com/talks/philip_zimbardo_on_the_psychology_of_evil.html

A survey at;

<http://heroworkshop.wordpress.com/2008/04/28/new-zimbardo-research-a-survey/>



CBT

An evaluation from a therapist's viewpoint

The objectives of this article are two-fold, with both relating to the title.

The first objective is to provide information about CBT and the evaluation of it as a form of therapy that can be used as an evaluation as a therapeutic approach within AS and A2 lessons.

The second objective is still about information, but goes much further than the classroom and relates to what is happening within counselling and psychotherapy world, in the UK right at this present time. It relates to changes, in fact huge changes that affect service users and providers within the counselling and psychotherapy world. Changes that have stirred up comments and controversy.

Actually I am going to start with the second objective as this will cast light on, and inform, the first. It will make clearer some of the criticisms that are levelled against CBT and the clinical application of it within therapy.

Up to this point in time in the UK 'counsellor' and 'psychotherapist' and even 'psychologist' have not been protected titles. That is anybody could use the term even with the least amount of training if any at all. Get out the brass plate, shine it up, and fix it up outside the door and wait for the customers to come along. Although that was possible there has been organisational self-regulation in place. For example, this has been true within the therapeutic world with organisations such as the BACP and UKCP. These organisations regulate their member-practitioners by requiring certain amounts of training and the adherence to codes of ethics and practice. If these are breached in any way then the practitioner could lose their membership. This process was developed over a number of years and has taken into consideration a wide and disparate range of theoretical ways of working. A difficult task in view of the different interpretation of the therapeutic relationship and process which in

turn will lead to differing goals and aims. Given that, in the opinion of many, this self-regulation has been effective and has worked at keeping the profession ethical.

Registration

However, this is changing. In a white paper published in February 2007, called Trust Assurance and Safety, the Department of Health stated the Government's intention to regulate psychologists, counsellors and psychotherapists as a matter of priority. 'Psychologist', 'Counsellor' and 'Psychotherapist' will become protected titles which will mean that anyone using those titles as a description of themselves will have to be registered (Department of Health, 2007). The 1 July saw the start of this with the opening of a register for Psychologists. Registration is in the hands of the HPC (Health Professions Council). A minimum standard will be required of the practitioner before registration is permitted (as far as counselling and psychotherapy are concerned, in the opinion of some, it will require lower levels than at present within BACP and UKCP accredited membership). These changes have been welcomed by many therapists. It now gives a base-line for practice and a protection for the public. If complaints are made they can be made to a central source. If upheld and the matter is serious enough then the therapist will lose their practitioner certificate and will not be able to legally practice using the protected title of 'counsellor' or 'psychotherapist'.

However not all have welcomed these changes and regulation. On 5 April this year there was a conference in London organised by therapists who are objectors to the proposed regulation. The conference was entitled 'Against State Regulation'. Subsequent to this, the 'Alliance for Counselling and Psychotherapy' issued a statement outlining their objections. Look closely here because



implicit within the statement is criticism of CBT, which of course ties in with my first objective and the title of this workshop/seminar.

Among other points, the Alliance states: 'Although many counsellors and psychotherapists work in medical settings, their work is not a branch of medicine nor an activity ancillary to medicine. Most forms of therapy do not focus exclusively on the relief of symptoms, but emphasise creating and exploring a relationship. If there is a goal it is a general improvement in the quality of life (so that client satisfaction, rather than the improvement of an isolated symptom, is the appropriate measure of effectiveness). Regulation through the HPC implies medical values and criteria which are in many ways antithetical to psychotherapy and counselling.'

'Many practitioners see their work as more of an art than a science: a series of skilled improvisations in a relational context, where each client offers unique issues and demands unique responses. Such an activity cannot be captured by a list of competences. Yet regulation by civil servants, who themselves know nothing of the field they are regulating, demand an objective version of practice, even if this falsifies its nature.'

'The initiative to regulate psychotherapy and counselling is itself a symptom of our tick-box society: of an obsession with safety, a compulsion to monitor every activity, an illusory belief that everything can be brought under control. In many ways psychotherapy and counselling inherently expose this illusion: they support us in tolerating uncertainty, difference, risk, and the unknown.'

The point has to be made here that all these views and the content of the Alliance statement are the views of the Alliance and is contrary to the stated view and official line of The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (Aldridge, 2009).

A speaker at the London conference who is a well-respected therapist and writer, Brian Thorne, in his paper 'A collision of Worlds' asserts that statutory regulation will do little or nothing to protect clients, but will sap therapists of their creativity. He argues that therapy is not a medical-associated activity that concerns itself with symptom reduction treatment plans and empirically validated procedures (all these terms are familiar to and used in CBT). But, Thorne says, therapy is about relationship, depth and about extraordinary intimacy. So that a person who is suffering can find hope, alleviation from pain, a sense of meaning and a way forward. He states: 'To subject therapists to statutory regulation has about the same incongruity as putting ballet dancers under the direction of a regimental sergeant major' (Thorne, 2009).

To continue with a final point in the Alliance for Counselling and Psychotherapy statement:

'NICE clinical guidelines and IAPT privileges a single form of 'evidence based' therapy [referring no doubt here to CBT] over all other modalities and promise to reduce access to long term, relationally oriented therapy; to reduce client choice; to medicalise the field; and to rigidify training'

Above there is reference to NICE clinical guidelines and IAPT. Two collections of initials that need explaining. NICE is an acronym for the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:

- **public health** – guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention of ill health for those working in the NHS, local authorities and the wider public and voluntary sector
- **health technologies** – guidance on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments and procedures within the NHS
- **clinical practice** – guidance on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS.

This organisation provides recommendations based on research for best clinical practice within the NHS. CBT, because of its abundance of evidence-based research, is strongly favoured as a therapy preference for many common mental health problems.

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies

Now to the other acronym IAPT. This stands for Improving Access to Psychological Therapies. In 2006 the London School of Economics published a report advising that psychological therapy should be made more widely available to everybody in the UK. This has come to be known as the Layard report, named after its principal author Lord Richard Layard. It has led to the government-funded initiative IAPT programme. The proposed focus of this is to provide increased therapeutic access and availability to help adults with common mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. This initiative will total a massive £300 million and represents the largest programme ever to support the provision of psychological therapies in Britain. Layard's economic analysis is based on the assumption that the cost of this will come from the benefits of savings of reducing absenteeism, getting people back to work and reduced use of NHS resources (Layard et al. 2007). Incidentally, its critics say that the analysis is predicated on what they call in the May 2009 edition of the 'Psychologist' a naive view of mental health problems, essentially a simplistic illness model and of an overly optimistic assessment of how effective psychological treatments can be' (Marzillier and Hall 2009).

So now put all his together. Regulation which means developing a way of measuring competences; NICE guidelines which look to the paradigm of measurable evidence-based research; and the NHS IAPT programme strongly influenced by NICE recommendations.

You can see that CBT rides high in being in a favourable position as contrasted to practitioners from other approaches who may see their positions and way of working as being under threat.

The British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) is the leading organisation for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy in the UK.

Also of note is that recently, that is within this last year, BABCP has withdrawn its affiliation to the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapies (UKCP). In letters to members it was stated that 'autonomy and independence of the BABCP is particularly important at this time' as they 'are now actively involved in key developments in relation to the Government's agendas on HPC regulation and New Ways of Working for Psychotherapists, as well as their central involvement in the implementation and expansion of the IAPT programme'. According to this letter, 'the UKCP has not only failed to support CBT but has been highly critical of it, particularly in regard to IAPT'.

All the foregoing has its effect on the therapeutic community here in the UK. An increasing number of jobs are requiring CBT training and expertise. Primary care counsellors in various PCTs have been required to re-train in CBT or have lost their jobs working within GP practices.

CBT – against and for

It is no wonder that therapists from other approaches have reacted in protest to what they see as a monopolising of practice and a marginalisation of alternative therapeutic methods and philosophies. There have been many articles published of late objecting to what has been seen to be the exclusivity of CBT, the emphasis on the medical model (Sanders, 2007), and the questioning of its evidence base (Fairfax, 2008). A book recently published by PCCS Books puts the arguments forward written by opponents and supporters of CBT. It is edited by Richard House and Del Loewenthal. The title of the book is 'Against and For CBT: towards a constructive dialogue'.

The major areas of criticism raised are: The alleged superficiality of the approach with the focus only on accessible cognitions and the ignoring of deeper motives and desires Philosophical critiques of the assumptions underpinning CBT such as technicism and rationality. The mechanistic determinist view of the human condition. The focus on a medicalised model that plays down meaning and purpose in clients lives. The strong cultural bias with the taking to task of Layard-type thinking with its socio-economic flaws. The collusion with psychiatric power structures and being used by the Government as a way of upholding a political and social economic system. The reliance on flawed research paradigms for support. (House and Loewenthal, 2008).

Last month there was a debate held at the Royal Geographic Society in London organised by Intelligence Squared. The subject and proposal of the debate was 'Psychotherapy does more harm than good'. A subject that has echoes of the Eysenck study (Eysenck, 1952). In a pre-debate Radio 4 interview on 17 June, two of the debaters were interviewed. They were Jeffery Masson, an eminent opponent of therapy and author of 'Against Therapy', and Richard Layard. In the discussion that followed Masson referred to CBT as more of a marketing device than a therapy. He went on to say that: "CBT says that you are looking at the world in the wrong way. But who is to say that they are looking at the world in the right way? It is a political difference. Why should their way be better than your way? You will not be harmed by talking to a friend; you may be harmed by talking to a therapist." (Incidentally, the result of the debate was 30% For, and 63% Against the motion 'Psychotherapy does more harm than good').

As a practising CBT therapist I, of course, do not completely agree with such a statement and look at things from a different perspective. CBT is a well-researched method of helping people overcome difficulties that they are experiencing in their lives. It has helped people to return to a functioning and fulfilling way of life. It is evidenced-based, that means it has been developed and continues to be developed on what works and what has had long term beneficial effects. However, I do think it is important and healthy to consider the voiced criticisms. There can be a danger in the conveyor belt-type application if practising a rigid manualised CBT. This can dehumanise and disempower individuals (Merrett and Easton, 2008). Not to be underestimated is the importance of the therapeutic relationship and the empathic interaction of the therapist (Thwaites and Bennett-Levy, 2007). Cognitive Behaviour Therapy is an umbrella term that encompasses a growingly varied way of working therapeutically. REBT, ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy), Schema-Based CBT, Compassion focussed therapy and Mindfulness-Based CBT are a just a few that come under that umbrella. The popularity and growth in the diverse angles of focus give evidence of the applicability and livingness of this as a therapy. All these varying ways of applying the principles and philosophy that underpins the approach offer in themselves a powerful response and reply to many of the criticisms that have been made.

Stuart is an accredited CBT therapist /supervisor. He is an accredited member of BACP and a UKCP registered psychotherapist. He is Features Editor of the Journal of the International Stress Management Association UK and a member of the Faculty of Healthcare counsellors and psychotherapists and works in private practice and in primary care. He also teaches psychology.
Contact: stuartrose@psychealth.co.uk

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Breaking into the Psychology Research Field

Post degree

Working at the University of Sheffield as a developmental research assistant for the past two years has permitted me to work alongside a variety of people, all of whom have been at different stages of their academic careers.

My time spent at the developmental lab has provided me with a rich insight into both the difficulties faced by prospective students wanting to enter academic research as well as those faced by those already well established in their field.

Before highlighting what I believe to be the main difficulties faced, it is important to describe what I have observed to be the typical pathway leading to a career in research psychology.

The first step for any aspiring research psychologist is to get as much work experience under their belt as possible that is related to their chosen research area. This can be attained prior to the completion of a degree at college/sixth form, during their university studies or even after they have graduated. Once a degree has been attained, a student can then either apply for a masters course relevant to their field of interest or apply for a PhD straight away. Although it is not considered prerequisite to hold a masters degree prior to the completion of a PhD, it often helps bridge the transition. Finally, once armed with a PhD, the next step for a newly qualified researcher is to seek out post-doctorate research positions in order to gain more vital research experience and thus enter the world of academia.

In academia, experience is considered vital. And I believe it is this gaining of experience that can be one of the main difficulties faced by aspiring researchers. Quite often students or graduates face a 'catch 22' situation whilst seeking to enhance their skills and experiences. In short, they need experience to get experience and this can cause some serious problems. Consider for a second that in order to get a place on a masters course you need experience, but also that many research assistant vacancies ask for applicants qualified with a masters degree.

Another difficulty faced by individuals at any stage of their research careers is that of funding. Whether you're a fresh-faced graduate or a high-flying professor, funding for research underpins everything. On the whole, the number of research related vacancies advertised to graduate students is determined by the success of grant applications made by researchers. As well as this, many researchers

are themselves dependent on securing this funding in order to pay their own wages and as a result many individuals in a research team will be on fixed term contracts. Acquiring funding has always been tough and even fully fledged researchers with many publications to their name can be unsuccessful. You will not be surprised therefore to learn that the situation has been worsened significantly by the current economic downturn in the UK and across Europe.

A final difficulty linked very much to the issue of funding is that of job stability. In research, individuals are often required to be highly flexible and be prepared to move to different areas of the country or even different countries in order to keep their research going.

Although the situation faced by those working in research can be argued to be disheartening, especially when considered in line with the issues raised here, it should be noted that many academics overcome these difficulties and have highly successful careers. However, in my experience, the successful individuals are those who possess a passion for their research area and the zeal to persist in the face of the difficulties. It is also important to note that, in addition to research psychology, all areas of applied Psychology place an emphasis on experience and so the issue of facing a 'catch 22' is a common one.

For students wanting to achieve a career in Psychology, acknowledging the limitations of all fields of psychology will allow them to make a more informed decision, but remember that passion and hard work have the power to overcome any obstacle.

Neil Goodare

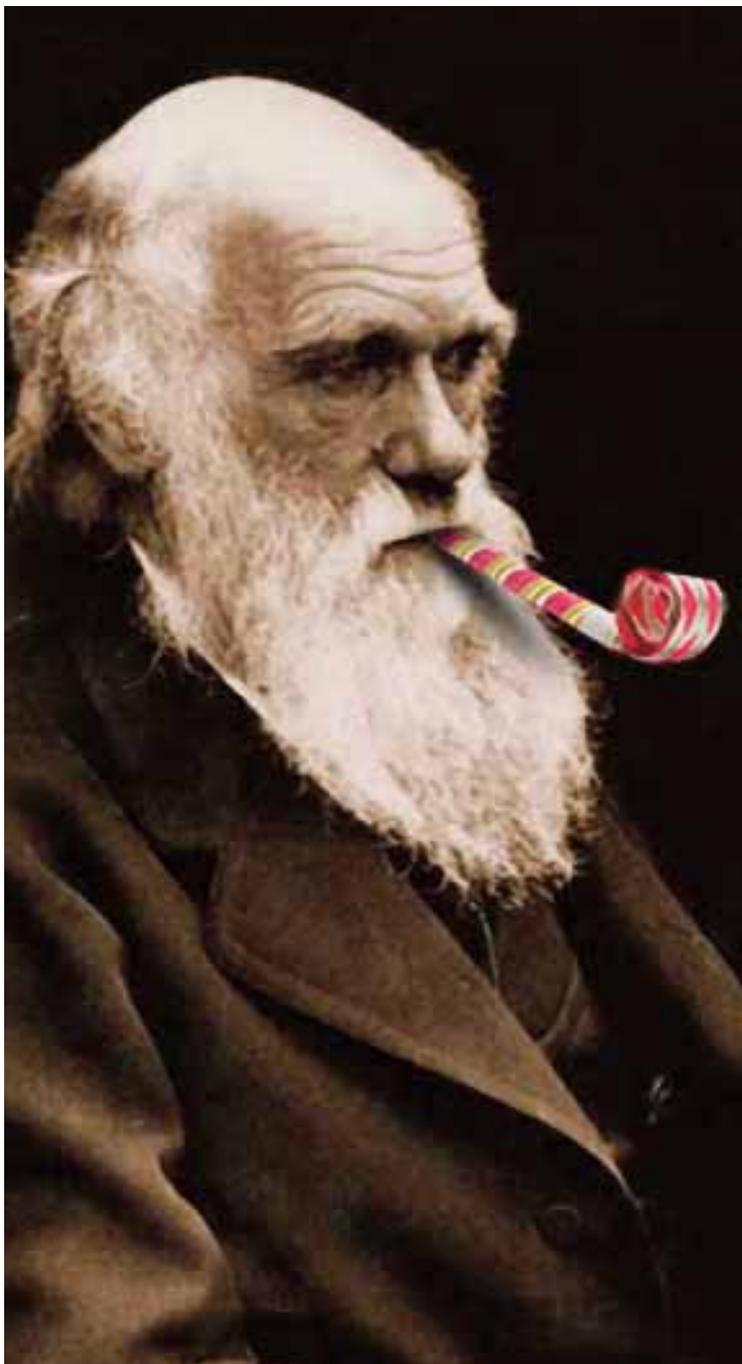
Development Research Assistant at The University of Sheffield

"IN ACADEMIA, EXPERIENCE IS CONSIDERED VITAL. AND I BELIEVE IT IS THIS GAINING OF EXPERIENCE THAT CAN BE ONE OF THE MAIN DIFFICULTIES FACED BY ASPIRING RESEARCHERS."

EVOLUTION AS AN EXCUSE FOR ETHNOCENTRISM: TAKING ON NEW SCIENTIFIC RACISM

By Mark Souter

My 150th birthday party was a bit spoilt when my name was taken in vain.



After an understandably quiet period following WWII, scientific racism developed a higher profile from the end of the last century onward. A vivid example of this comes from the writings of J. Philippe Rushton. He is a significant figure in this field; Herrnstein and Murray repeatedly cite Rushton in support of their own ethnocentric conclusions in 'The Bell Curve'. What makes Rushton more topical is that he claims he is the heir of Darwin and criticism of him is criticism of evolutionary science. I have come across this author in students' writings, with some making a good stab at evaluation whilst others have repeated it uncritically.

Whilst part of me does not want to give it further airing, the greater urge is to use it as a vehicle for tackling scientific racism head on. Just as Rushton is candid about his own project fitting his own outlook, I am content to say I read his work in the context of an existing viewpoint. This includes the view that it is part of my job as a teacher to (a) give all views appropriate consideration (in my Critical Thinking scheme I have a discussion about the merits of the view that the moon landing was a hoax), and (b) to apply scientific and critical analysis to a wide range of material.

My first point is that Rushton is a psychologist who uses concepts from evolutionary biology as a central plank of his assertion that there are 'races' within humans. An interdisciplinary approach must have merit, since confirmation of a theory across different intellectual domains should confer greater validity. However, the applications of such concepts still have to be valid in themselves. I will take Rushton's central concept of 'r/K selection theory' and show how he plays fast and loose with both evidence and application of this impressive sounding concept. I will also point out that it is far from being a widely accepted theory within evolutionary biology.

Another plank of Rushton's approach is that there is an academic conspiracy to discourage research into 'politically incorrect' theories, including those of Darwin. To this end he has been head of the Pioneer Fund since 2002; this historically funded eugenics research and more later funded work on intelligence and inheritance such as the 'Bell Curve theory'. Since 2000 it has given the bulk of its funding to the 'Charles Darwin Research Institute', which is Rushton's own vehicle for promoting his ideas. In this respect another aim for me is to show that this is not an area in which there are 'neutral' views. I am not rejecting Rushton here because I find his views unpalatable. I acknowledge that I do, but this is not an evaluative category I am applying.

That said, since Rushton claims the support of Darwin, I'll do so too. Darwin was celebrated at this year's ATP conference and quite rightly so. Darwin considered the implications of his work in relation to contemporary issues of 'race', such as slavery and imperialism. He has recently been (selectively) presented as the harbinger of Nazism by US creationists. This is clearly false. Darwin's view was that humans had the capacity of compassion over and above biological imperatives. To the extent that he thought there were variations in human populations, and that advances in medicine let 'the weak' survive, Darwin clearly indicated his reservations about a eugenicist approach:

'The aid which we feel impelled to give to the helpless is mainly an incidental result of the instinct of sympathy, which was originally acquired as part of the social instincts, but subsequently rendered, in the manner previously indicated, more tender and more widely diffused. Nor could we check our sympathy, even at the urging of hard reason, without deterioration in the noblest part of our nature.'
(Darwin et al 1882)

This undermines Rushton's claims for the support of Darwin in applying natural selection (as it does Rushton's predecessors in the eugenics movement). Rushton also applies the work of a more recent, and less revered, evolutionary biologist – Eric Pianka – who came up with r/K selection theory. Pianka's theory attempts to explain natural selection as working through a trade-off between quantity and quality of offspring in response to environmental pressure. Rushton applies this to support his claim that 'blacks' 'evolved' in an environment of plenty, whilst Europeans had to survive in more difficult conditions. Rushton, in a less academic context, explained the evolutionary pressure in response to more or less restricted resources as 'a trade off, [between] more brains or more penis. You can't have everything.' This is a reference to his claim – presented in a more straight-faced way in his book – the 'blacks' have bigger genitals. His source references to this are rather modest: the writings of early explorers and an anonymous Victorian treatise, attributed to a French military doctor. Even accepting the dubious data supporting this key claim point a further link in the chain of his theory is that the size of genitalia is an 'r' selected characteristic. This is based on another unsupported assumption: large genitalia correspond to sexual promiscuity and high reproductive rates. Neither has any supporting evidence. A similar point can be made in relation to many of Rushton's application, of r/K selection theory: he applies it to suit his assumptions about the ranking 'races' in an inconsistent manner.

The whole idea of racial hierarchies has the appeal of a simple story that excuses European domination, and in doing so it echoes historic examples of scientific racism. Rushton performs a sleight of hand. He takes sources from a wide range, even giving references for some of them. He then applies such ideas to fit a pre-existing conclusion. For example, r/K selection theory sounds plausible, and readers might assume a citation to a peer review means it is accepted in that discipline. Even if that source is checked a psychologist might not be familiar with the debate in that area. Pianka's theory has been shown to be very questionable in a number of experiments. Furthermore, Rushton is very 'flexible' in his application of this theory. When it comes to characteristics of 'blacks' he invariably interprets these as 'r' type, whilst 'whites' and 'Orientals' are always 'K'. It is worth noting that in the paper that Pianka cited for his own evidence, the author concluded that temperate climates produce more stable environments than tropical ones, so 'r' (high reproduction) strategies are selected for, whilst 'K' (high nurturing) strategies are advantageous – a relationship that Rushton reverses to fit his own ideas!

At the same time Rushton is denying a conclusion which Darwin reached, and which has been supported by biologists ever since:

there are no 'races' amongst humans. This is the core assumption of his theory, but he starts from an assertion that there are 'races', and then moves on to applying his own version of r/K selection theory. His evidence for 'races' starts from an 'everyone knows' basis, citing the performance of top athletes in particular sports. In doing so he conflates small phenotype differences (which can have consistent effects when performance is measured in hundredths of seconds) with genotypic differences. Space precludes me from covering the rich literature on this topic, but a good summary is contained in Fish (2002) p71. For the purposes of this article I have set aside all of this literature: Rushton dismisses it, without talking about it directly. For him it is part of a conspiracy of wishful thinkers who lack his 'courage' in investigating his 'scientific' analysis. What I hope I've shown is that this is just one more flawed assumption in a flawed approach.

Rushton's work is wide ranging and any full evaluation needs to be too. I am not pretending that I have dealt with all of his evidence and analysis, though I hope I've dealt with two core assumptions. If there is one further point to be made it is psychologists should be well prepared if they are going to apply evolutionary concepts in the field of psychology.

Sources and further reading

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There has been a backlash again in the progress made in regard to the use of language in the 1970s and 1980s. That progress was made when it was acknowledged that the images and words used in text books (and elsewhere) helped to shape people's view of their world. Subsequent approaches, including courses of study, designed to take it into account, were criticised in the 1990s as 'political correctness', alluding to the use of this term by the political left. Ironically the political left had got there first: Jessica Mitford had mocked politically clichéd language in the 1950s* e.g. President Bush I 'Remarks at the University of Michigan Commencement Ceremony in Ann Arbor, May 4, 1991'

* Jessica Mitford (1956) 'Lifeitselfmanship or How to Become a Precisely-Because Man'.



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Body and Brain: How is your body represented in your brain?

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 research active psychologists to design experiments, test participants, analyse data, and write research reports with the potential 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 will focus on the fascinating world of the body schema to demonstrate how research is exploring the way that the body can be represented (and misrepresented) in the brain.

How does your brain understand your body? Look at your own hand and the hand of someone next to you – how does your brain know that one hand belongs to you and must be protected from harm or damage? Do you have an internal 'sense' of your body? And, more interestingly, could you ever make fundamental mistakes about your own body? Dr Fay Short and Dr Robert Ward are working with students at Bangor University to explore how the body is represented in the brain and how the brain can misrepresent the body.

The internal representation of the body in the brain is known as the body schema (Head & Holmes, 1911). Your body schema distinguishes between the parts that belong to your body and the rest of the world. It could be argued that two experiences contribute to this distinction between 'body' and 'not body': physical sensation from the body and physical control over the body. Early research exploring the cortex of the brain has revealed that the sensory cortex is responsible for creating the experience of physical sensation from the body and the motor cortex is responsible for granting control over the body (Penfield & Rasmussen, 1950). Modern research, however, has found that the body schema is not merely a result of sensation and control. Our body schema is actually a complex concept influenced by a wide range of factors including sensation, control, proprioception, vision,

emotion, and memory. In fact, the body schema is so complex that it is vulnerable to many different types of error.

Your brain can misrepresent your body by extending the schema to include things that are not a part of your actual body. Amputee patients will often report an awareness of their missing limb and, perhaps even more astonishingly, some stroke patients have reported an awareness of additional body parts, such as an extra arm (Khaten et al, 2009) or even an extra head (Turnbull et al, in prep)! These phantom limbs and supernumerary phantom limbs demonstrate how the body schema can include body parts that no longer exist or have never existed. Research has also found that the body schema can even include external objects that are not real body parts at all. The rubber hand illusion shows how synchronous stroking of a hidden real hand and a visible rubber hand can result in the weird sensation that the rubber object is the real hand (Botvinick & Cohen, 1998). All of these findings suggest that our body schema is quite flexible and current research at Bangor University is exploring how this flexibility could help people to improve their interactions with external objects. We are using virtual reality techniques to encourage the body schema to incorporate tools and equipment; for example, could we help sportsmen incorporate their equipment into their body schema to improve performance? In terms of the brain, a tennis player could quite literally have a racket that is an extension of the self!

Your brain can also misrepresent your body by modifying the schema to appear physically unattractive or abnormal. Patients diagnosed with body dysmorphic disorder will fixate on specific parts of their body with the belief that the part is abnormal or unattractive. This disorder is currently classed as a mental illness, but it is possible that there may be underlying neurological causes for this misrepresentation of the body. Current research at Bangor University has highlighted the importance of control over the body (Short & Ward, 2009), so perhaps the experience of poor control over the body (particularly during the 'clumsy' teenage years of physical development) contributes to these negative feelings. Perhaps the misrepresentation of the body schema can be corrected by giving the patient an opportunity to experience successful and graceful control over his or her own body? We are using virtual reality techniques to investigate reactions to 'ugly' hands and explore how we could manipulate feelings towards these limbs by providing the participant with control over their movement. We are hopeful that our research in this area may further our understanding of this devastating illness.

This article has provided a brief overview of the exciting research currently being conducted in the virtual reality lab by Dr Fay Short and Dr Robert Ward at Bangor University. We hope that you have found this article interesting, and please do not hesitate to contact us at f.short@bangor.ac.uk if you would like any further information.

THINK PSYCHOLOGY THINK BANGOR

The School has one of the largest student cohorts in the UK and this, combined with 2008 RAE results that placed the department 7th (out of 76) in the UK, provides students with a unique combination of quality and quantity. Our teaching has been assessed as 'Excellent' and is combined with innovative and extensive pastoral care all set in a vibrant, friendly city located amongst some of the most beautiful scenery in the UK.

"...the School of Psychology at Bangor is producing some of the best quality psychology graduates in the UK."

External Examiner's Report

School Facts

- Teaching Quality Assessment award of 'Excellent' (highest possible).
- Bangor is prominent in independent student support and satisfaction surveys.
- Two-thirds of our students graduate with a 1st or 2:1.
- The Research Assessment Exercise of 2008 saw Bangor Psychology rated 7th (out of 76) for research power.

Key Facts about the Institution

The University has topped UK wide independent polls for its student support, has a long history of academic excellence and offers accommodation to all first year students. Bangor has excellent transport links; Birmingham, Leeds, Carlisle, Dublin and even the outskirts of London are accessible within three hours. The large student union, student-focused nightlife, outdoor pursuits, sporting activities, low living costs and low crime-rate make Bangor an ideal student city.

Entry Requirements

The School operates an admissions policy based on the principles of both excellence and accessibility. Typical offers are between 300-260 points. Actual offers will vary dependent on individual circumstances although this will not disadvantage students at confirmation. GCSE Maths is required and Biology/Science is also very useful.

Undergraduate Courses: (BPS Accredited)

- BSc/BA Psychology
- BSc Psychology with Clinical & Health Psychology
- BSc Psychology with Neuropsychology
- BSc Psychology with Child and Language Development

www.bangor.ac.uk/psychology



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LL57 2AS

t. 01248 382 629 f. 01248 382 599

e. psychology@bangor.ac.uk



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School of Psychology

Psychology teaching and research in the School of Psychology at the University of Lincoln has been based at Lincoln's Brayford Pool campus since 1997. The school currently consists of 24 full-time academic staff and 12 PhD students.

The Psychology teaching accommodation includes purpose-built laboratories housing two large PC-based teaching laboratories; an observation suite for video/audio recording; a psychophysiology laboratory with two Electroencephalogram recorders (EEG/ERP), one a 16-channel EEG and the other with 64 channels; a Trans Magnetic Stimulation system (TMS); the Lincoln Infant Lab and numerous specialist research and practical laboratories as well as a library of psychological tests (e.g. Implicit Association Test). Three technicians are also at hand to aid students in the production of experimental materials and software development

Undergraduate Awards

Around 550 students are enrolled on five undergraduate programmes (three-year full-time study or flexible part-time study), a general *Single Honours Psychology degree*, three more specialist awards comprising, *Psychology with Clinical Psychology*, *Psychology with Child Studies*, *Psychology with Forensic Psychology* and the *psychology Major award* consisting of *Psychology* and one other subject. ALL of our undergraduate degree programmes are recognised by the British Psychological Society (BPS) as conferring eligibility for Graduate Basis of Registration with the BPS.

Each degree is taught over two semesters per year with four modules within each semester. In the final year, as with all psychology degrees, the students need to complete an independent empirical study, which takes place over both semesters. While adhering to the needs of the BPS, the degree programme is designed to develop critical, independent, and socially aware psychology students. Hence the programme acknowledges cultural factors in its modules (Development in a Cultural Context); the need to be able to argue and justify a stance (Themes, Issues and



One of the Psychology IT teaching laboratories containing 25 workstations.

Debates); alternative ways of approaching psychology (Current Research Issues in Psychology); the socio-political implications of psychology as a discipline (Conceptual Issues) and allows students to pursue their interests (elective modules).

We actively seek to generate a culture that is in keeping with the university logo, Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom and knowledge, in both teaching and research. We have endeavoured to enrich the learning experience of our students in a number of ways so as to develop independent critical learners. The psychology school was the first in the university to initiate a *tutorial programme* for all of its first year students. The aim of the tutorial programme is to equip students with both academic and transferable skills through weekly group meetings between one member of staff and a small group of students. This system provides a learning space where students can discuss ideas with other students. Also, the tutorials offer students the chance for self-exploration, development, and an understanding of the roles and responsibilities necessary to become independent learners.

Postgraduate Awards

The School of Psychology runs the following Postgraduate taught programmes: *Doctorate in Clinical Psychology* (developed in partnership with University of Nottingham and three NHS Trusts in the region), *MSc Child Studies*, and *Postgraduate Certificate in Primary Care Mental Health Practice* (with the Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Trust).

Research

We see the discipline of psychology as heavily research-based, hence we don't only teach research skills or wait until the final-year dissertation for students to engage in research; instead we actively



The University of Lincoln – one of the most improved universities in England – up 21 places in the 2008-2009 Complete University Guide

involve students in researching psychological phenomena. In year two, students work together in small groups under the supervision of a member of staff on a *research project that lasts for an entire semester*. Also, the School takes full advantage of schemes within the University that aim to enhance the links between teaching and research in the undergraduate curriculum. The *Undergraduate Research Opportunities Scheme (UROS)* provides students with the opportunity to engage in real research projects, usually during the summer period, for which students can receive up to £1500 per project. In this competitive bursary scheme, the School of Psychology has been awarded more bursaries than any other in the university. Some of the successful projects includes;

- Gender Differences in co-operation: An evolutionary and meta-analytical approach
- The Mere exposure effect in high functioning adults with Autism
- Games and discrimination: An observational field analysis of voting patterns of contestants in the TV game show Weakest Link
- Can we use eye scanning patterns to assess people suffering from different learning difficulties?

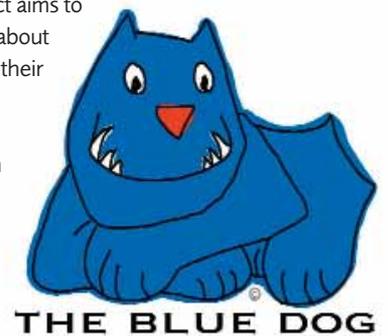
We are committed to achieving excellence in scientific research with a focus on theoretical and applied research. Research within the School falls into three research groups developmental psychology; visual attention, and the psychology of health. The *developmental research group* focuses on cognitive, language and motor development as well as on injury prevention, face processing, social

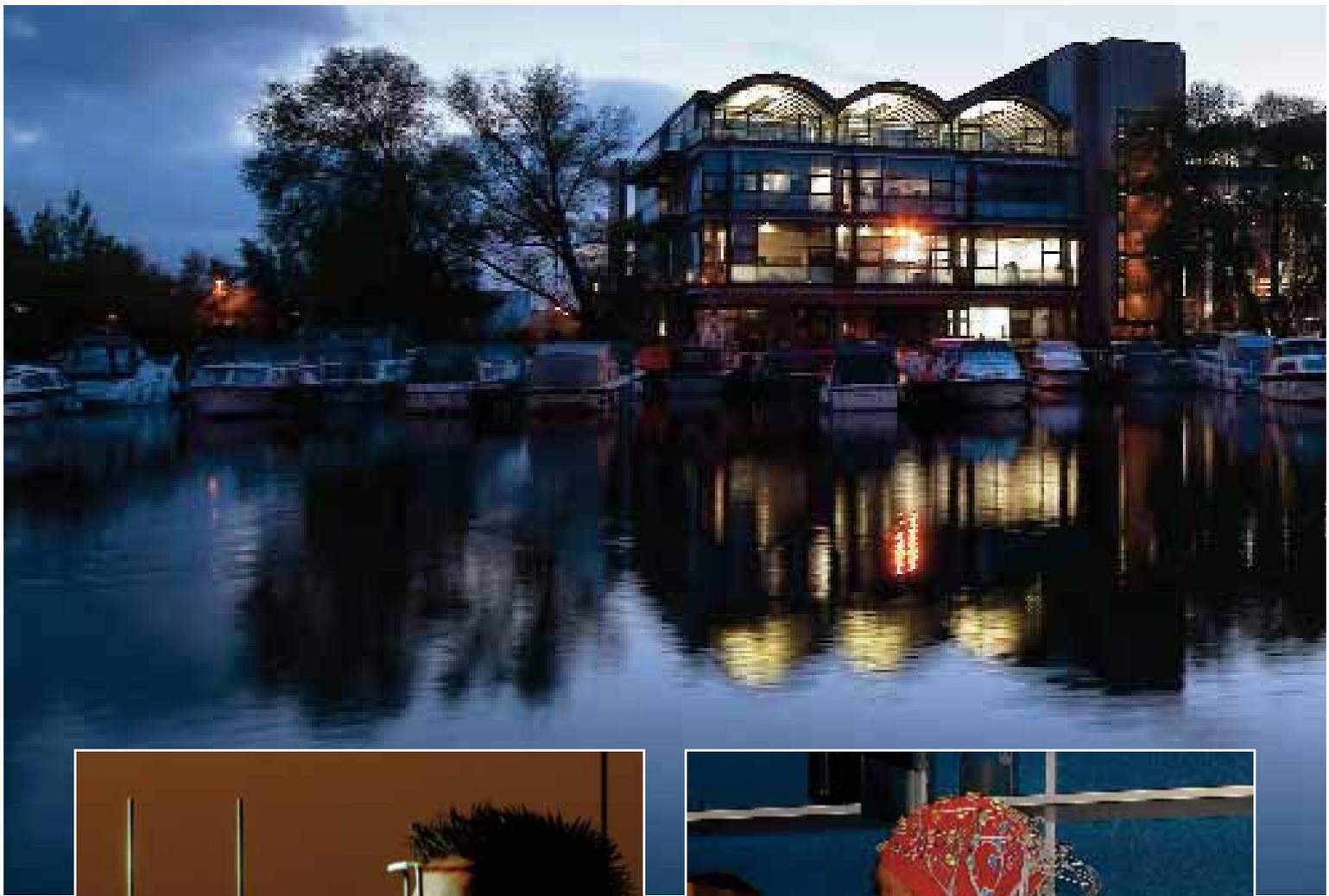
development (development of trust), comparative studies, attention and atypical development. For instance, colleagues within the School conduct research on prevention of road traffic accidents, children's motor development and comparative work on infants, dogs and Barbary macaques.

As well as numerous other projects, *Lincoln's Infant Lab* has carried out the following investigations:

- Do children categorise animals using the head or the body region?
- How do children learn their first words?
- How do children develop trust?
- Can children recognise different facial expressions in dogs?

One example of applied psychological work in the developmental research group is The *Blue Dog* (www.thebluedog.org) injury prevention project. This project aims to educate parents and children about the safest way to interact with their dogs within the household. Research within the *visual attention group* is focused on the structures and processes underlying visual attention. Research has focused on comparing aspects





Apparatus used to investigate attention in 3D. Most research into attention has been carried out using computer screens in 2D.



Electroencephalography used for recording brain activity from the scalp.

of human cognition with equivalent aspects in animals. Also, the development of these mechanisms has been investigated so as to provide insight into how these cognitive functions have evolved in our own species. For instance, a current project is investigating the attentional bias for features on the left side of the face in infants, primates and dogs. This project is investigating whether human beings have this left hemiface bias from birth, whether this bias is shared by closely related primates, and whether dogs – who share at least 10,000 years of evolution with us – also show this bias.

A second focus in our research is the exploration of neural correlates associated with the effect of attention on early visual perception. The School of Psychology's Neuroscience Laboratory is fitted with equipment for several imaging methods used for investigating these neural processes, such as EEG/ERP and TMS.

Finally, the psychology of *health research group* is concerned with social and psychological functioning and experience of individuals, as well as the measurement and management of psychological well-being. Health is considered from a broad perspective to cover normal and abnormal states including mental disorder and offending behaviour. In particular, much of the research carried out in this group

is applied or practice-based and intended to be directly relevant to participants, practitioners, professionals and policy makers. Currently, research activities are in forensic psychology and applied developmental research, including work across the lifespan. For example, the forensic psychology research focuses on risk, personality disorder and attitudes towards offenders, while research into lifespan issues focus on psychosocial aspects of adolescence, pregnancy and ageing. Another research project evaluates Magstim Super Rapid Transcranial Magnetic Stimulator's (rTMS) therapeutic potential for Depression, Schizophrenia, Epilepsy and Parkinson's disease.

Postgraduate Students

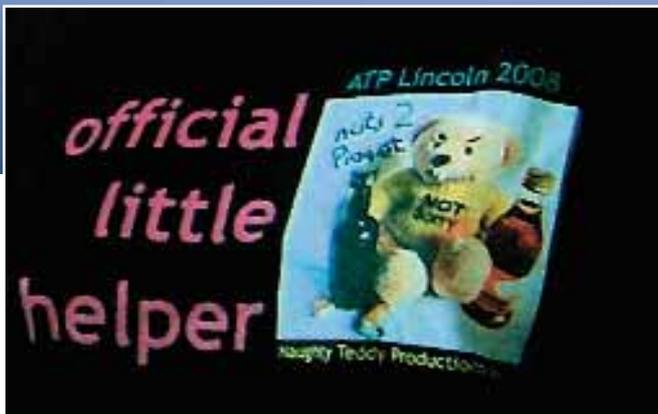
Our *PhD students* are principally conducting research within these three research groups. At present, we have postgraduates investigating grooming exchange and social cognition in Barbary macaques in Morocco; the role of left gaze bias in facial communication in human infants and domestic dogs; how the concept of social inclusion is used within the forensic services and the implications this has around issues of risk prediction and management; differential gaze behaviour towards sexually preferred and non-preferred body images; and dog gaze patterns in response to potential facial and bodily threat cues, etc. The School also



The study of Barbary Macaque Monkey in the Atlas Mountain of Morocco.



The University of Lincoln Infant Lab allows for work with babies and infants.



undertakes research outside of these fields. For instance, we have postgraduates working within a non-experimental framework (e.g. social constructionist perspective) in the area of sheltered housing for older adults focused on gardening and identity. Another postgraduate is looking at how terrorism is constructed in scientific (psychological), media and lay discourse.

Our Culture

The School's culture is built on our recognition that education is about people – students, staff and our communities. We make links with local FE institutions (for instance, we have contact with John Leggott College in Scunthorpe and have put on day events for a number of their students). The School has also organised a FE psychology teaching forum. Each year the School hosts a 2-day conference for all FE psychology teachers within the region (Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, South and East Yorkshire). The *Trent and Yorkshire conference for FE Teachers of Psychology* is free to all Members of the forum; membership itself is free (see below for contact details). The aim of this conference/forum is to share and develop good teaching practices, and update lecturers about the Psychology FE curriculum and innovations in psychology. On our part, we see this conference

as a way of smoothing students' transition to higher and further education by keeping teachers informed about further education in general and our School in particular. Thus another goal of the forum is the widening of participation in higher education. The commitment we have to making links with FE lecturers was strengthened further when The School of Psychology at Lincoln hosted and actively contributed to the *ATP conference of 2008*.

At our local FE psychology conferences, presentations and workshops are not only given by the forum members and Lincoln psychology staff, but also our students. Credit is given to such students in terms of a certificate which they can use in seeking employment.

Excellentia Per Studium

With these and other activities we aim to produce the learning landscape that achieves the university motto, *Excellentia Per Studium* – Excellence through Studies.

To join the Trent and Yorkshire forum for FE Teachers of Psychology please e-mail CGillard@lincoln.ac.uk with your contact details. For any other information about the School of Psychology at Lincoln please see our webpage at <http://www.lincoln.ac.uk/psychology/>

Psychology conferences of interest

Thinking of taking your students on a trip but not sure what is available? In this section, we have a brief overview of some of the national conferences going on all over the country. Furthermore, if you are interested in advertising your own conference, please contact the editor on the contact details at the beginning of this newsletter.

Howard Sleep

Head of Offending Behaviour Unit
HMP Shepton Mallet will talk on *Assessing risk of re-offending in prisoners serving life sentences*

Friday, 20 November 2009

5:45-6:45pm

– followed by finger buffet

Millfield School (Street, Somerset)

This talk will be appropriate for all teachers and A level students studying topics in criminal psychology.

£5.00 includes CPD certificate

- Valuable CPD and outstanding value for money
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Early response is recommended to guarantee a place.

For further information, please contact us:

George Smith (Millfield)
0775 446 0540
gbs@millfieldschool.com

Claire Barker (Wells CS)
07749 845 218
c.barker@wells-cathedral.school.com

Sponsored by the Association for the Teaching of Psychology –
www.theatp.org

Psychology at the cutting edge:

A one-day conference for A level students

Dr Emma Dunmore – Head of Psychology,
Harrogate Grammar School

11 March 2009

Harrogate Grammar School

One Night Only!

170 students and teachers from five schools (Harrogate Grammar, Malton School, Tadcaster Grammar, King James School and Harrogate High School) came together to hear about the work of leading researchers and applied psychologists. The aim of the day was to give A level students the experience of being at a conference and hearing from leading researchers. It also aimed to offer opportunities for learning outside the classroom with people from other schools. An overview of the day is presented along with a selection of reports written by Year 12 students attending the conference. We would like

to thank all the speakers for generously giving their time.

The day began with a presentation by Dr Catriona Morrison (University of Leeds) who has done some fascinating research on memory. Those of you who would like to take part in her research on how 'The Beatles' music sparks memories can go to her website: www.magicalmemorytour.com

The Magic of Memory

Dr Catriona Morrison – University of Leeds

Catriona Morrison's talk on The Magic of Memory was focused on the human senses and on how, through them, we can explore who we are and determine a sense of self. This, she said, was mainly through autobiographical (or episodic) memory, which enables us to remember specific events and personal facts. Autobiographical memory seems to rely heavily on verbal and visual cues and through it, we can understand who we are, as we have a past, present and future. Dr Morrison also explained about how the senses can be extremely important and powerful in evoking memories; one sense tool for

evoking memory is music. In a study using 'The Beatles', music was found to be a good memory cue, providing accurate, detailed, believable accounts from a variety of people spanning 67 countries. It did, however, see a shift to the left in the reminiscence bump (the period of time when the most significant events are remembered), being 11-15 years instead of the usual broader band of 10-30 years. As music generally produces positive emotion, and emotion is essential in making events memorable, music is therefore an important tool in retrieving memories.

Smell was also shown to forcefully enhance memory, so much so that we are more likely to recall information if the same smell is present when we study and when we are tested. Although smell does naturally decline with age, we were told how a relationship has been shown between the decline or loss of smell and cognitive decline. A study was conducted of siblings and other adults (control) where 10 strong odour stimuli had to be matched to relevant pictures. Those siblings with the E4 (ApoE) gene present (a gene which can predict cognitive decline/dementia in 'high risk' people) had a lower mean score, and siblings generally performed poorer than the control group. Therefore, one of the conclusions from her presentation was that problems in odour identification can be an early indicator of cognitive decline, help identify those in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease, and distinguish between depression and Alzheimer's.

The other main conclusions drawn from the presentation were that music is a good aid for memory retrieval (though is perhaps not as useful in memory storage), and that all of our senses are vital to create a sense of self. Brin Pearson.

Dr Sam Cartwright-Hatton (Manchester University) then explained about her ground-breaking treatment for children suffering from anxiety disorders. This treatment focuses on teaching parents how to encourage confident behaviour in their child and how to manage their child's worries and fears. She role-played some of the things that parents say and do that lead children to develop anxious ways of thinking. Often this stems from the parent's own anxiety. Dr Cartwright-Hatton then talked about how she designed a randomised controlled trial to test this new treatment approach allowing the students to see 'How Science Works' directly.

We then moved on to ethics and the role of ethics committees. Many students noted how Dr Mark Wetherell (University of Northumbria) managed to take what could have been a very dry topic and make it really interesting. His use of PowerPoint animation was marvellous. This was followed by an interactive exercise where students acted as ethics committees to decide on whether to accept or reject a proposal for a real study. Both Dr Wetherell's talk and the exercise are summarised below.

The Role of the Ethics Committee Dr. Mark Wetherell – University of Northumbria

We were addressed by Dr. Mark Wetherell from the University of Northumbria, Chair of the Undergraduate Ethics Committee. He discussed how ethics committees study new proposals of research, study materials and ensure that all the studies they review run

according to the protocol and review any changes to the protocol. He outlined how the main priority of an ethics committee is to protect the participants taking part in the research. The three main principles of the ethics committee are respect, beneficence and justice; respect being that you need to treat every participant as an autonomous person – deserving their own respect. The idea of beneficence being that the research has to be doing overall good and justice being that the participants are being treated impartially and within the law. Dr. Wetherell went on to talk over some examples of ethical guidelines – The Nuremberg Code (1947) and the Declaration of Helsinki (1964). The first ethics committee was formed in 1966.

When conducting research, he emphasised the importance of gaining fully written consent from your participants. There are unique professional guidelines for psychologists. All research has to meet certain criteria to be passed by an ethics committee. These are informed consent, deception, and freedom to withdraw from studies as well as debriefing, confidentiality and the protection of participants from psychological harm. Dr. Wetherell gave examples of research that was ethically controversial, Milgram's Obedience Study, but also asked whether Big Brother is unethical. Finally, he talked about the structure of the ethics committee.

After the ethics committee lecture, delegates were split into small groups and given different roles of committee. We considered a proposal for research on whether the drug propranolol reduces artificially induced fear memories, and we made a decision about whether or not this research was ethical.

Joshua Robinson

After coffee we were honoured to have our key-note speaker, Professor David Clark from the Institute of Psychiatry in London. Professor Clark is a world expert in cognitive therapy for the treatment of anxiety disorders. Most recently he has been one of the leading figures in developing a government-funded strategy to widen access to psychological therapies across the country. This is known as the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies strategy (IAPT) and it will require the training of many more cognitive therapists. These therapists will not all need to have undergone full clinical psychology training – so lots of future opportunities for our psychology students. You can find out more about IAPT from: www.iapt.nhs.uk – Here is a summary of Professor Clark's presentation on cognitive therapy for panic disorder.

Anxiety and how to deal with it Professor David Clark – Institute of Psychiatry

Professor David Clark, Director of the Centre of Anxiety Disorder and Traum, has done a lot of research on the development of 'Cognitive Therapy' for anxiety. This is the use of discussion and behavioural experiments to stop people feeling anxious, as opposed to more direct methods, such as drugs.

Anxiety develops when we think something bad will happen, often due to the unpredictability of a new situation. We focus upon an apparent danger, causing our hypothalamus to trigger the sympathetic nervous system. This results in sweating, an increase in heart rate and blood pressure and nervous feelings in one's stomach. This is the common 'fight or flight' response, however as Professor Clark points

out, in 'normal' people it occurs only when there is genuine cause for anxiety. Clinical anxiety is when anxiety is based on mistaken beliefs about how dangerous a situation is and is diagnosed in about one in ten people. It can be caused by many factors: traumatic events, the modelling of a fear from parent to child, misleading information and vulnerability. The most common treatment is drugs, usually Benzodiazepines or antidepressants, for example Prozac.

Professor Clark first began researching a psychological approach to treatment in the early 1990s. The specific technique involves proving to the patient that their fears are mistaken. People who suffer from panic attacks are more sensitive to their heart-beats than other people. They notice perfectly normal phenomena, like the heart skipping a beat, and interpret it as the beginning of a heart attack, which then of course makes them anxious. Patients with panic disorder may have thousands of panic attacks during which they believe they nearly died. They engage in various 'safety behaviours', like lying down or breathing deeply, to stave off the heart attack, which of course goes away as it isn't real. The therapy consists of discussing and encouraging other explanations of the sensations, meanwhile pointing out that it is near impossible for someone to survive two heart attacks, let alone thousands. The patient is told to recall a time when they were having an attack which went away when they got distracted, proving it must be psychological rather than physical. Finally, one has the patient bring on the attacks without doing their safety behaviours. Eventually, most people will begin to realise the attacks don't have a physical basis and are caused by their catastrophic beliefs. This can often lead to many people being completely cured of their panic disorder.

Roslyn Forman

We then moved on to consider psychology in prisons as summarised below.

Riots in prisons and the reality of prison psychology **Sue Baron – Senior Forensic Psychologist,** **HMP Holme House**

This session began with a re-enactment of a prison riot by a group of Sixth Form drama students. Afterwards, each group was asked to comment on aspects of the play and prison riots in general, using their knowledge of psychology. The group who produced the best sheet of comments won an edible prize! Issues raised included: what factors contributed to the prisoners rioting?; how did the prisoners interact during the riot?; and what caused them to be sent to prison in the first place? Students found this task both interesting and thought-provoking, as it helped them see the challenges faced by prison officers everyday, and allowed them to apply their knowledge of psychology to a real-life situation.

Afterwards, Sue Baron, a forensic psychologist, gave a talk on the methods used in prisons to help prisoners rehabilitate and prepare for the outside world after their release. A lot was learnt from this talk, including: the problems prisoners have when they get sent to prison; the types of schemes used to help them and the aims of these schemes. For example, many prisoners come to prison from a chaotic lifestyle, possibly with a history of abuse. Just two of the many schemes available are Anger Management and the Enhanced Thinking Programme, which would help prisoners cope with their

emotions and improve their chances of succeeding in the real world.

Naomi Breton

The day ended with a presentation on the practical applications of the famous working memory model of memory by Professor Susan Gathercole from York University.

Working Memory and Classroom Learning **Professor Sue Gathercole – York University**

Professor Gathercole began by introducing herself and her studies. She is the Head of Psychology at York University and is part of a research into cognitive psychology spanning 30 years. Her main topic of study is memory, particularly focusing on short-term memory. She stresses that cognitive psychology is vitally important in everyday life, particularly in a classroom setting.

She then moved on to the facts behind her research; beginning with the key features of the working memory. She outlined the Working Memory Model which was initially developed by Baddeley and Hitch (1974):

- CENTRAL EXECUTIVE (control)
- VISUO-SPATIAL SKETCHPAD (visual patterns)
- PHONOLOGICAL LOOP (verbal information)

She then evaluated working memory; saying that it is a good feature due to its ability to become a mental workspace, which is particularly useful in classroom situations such as mental arithmetic. However, working memory has negative aspects as well, as it only has a limited capacity meaning there is only so much information it can hold and for a short amount of time. Professor Gathercole then talked about the characteristics which are common in children with poor working memories. These include poor academic process; poor social ability; difficulties following instructions; place-keeping difficulties and problems with activities combining storage and processing information. Unfortunately, for these children, most, if not all, of these features become present in a classroom. Professor Gathercole discussed typical responses from teachers when evaluating children with this problem, which is almost always stating that the child has a poor attention span and highly distractible. Very rarely does a teacher realize that these symptoms are a consequence of a poor working memory.

Professor Gathercole asked herself the question: How can we help these children? This is where she discussed her own research and the results of it. By looking at children with poor working memories, warning signs can now be given to children to tell them what the symptoms of this are. Not only has Professor Gathercole achieved this, but she has also been part of a highly successful training programme for 10 year olds with working memory problems. This consists of a computer game based around a robot character to test the working memory of children. The main feature of the game, which differentiates it from other treatment options, is that it is adaptive to the child playing, meaning that they can set their own personal limits and can develop at a pace and a way that suits them. The result of this was very triumphant as, compared with other, non-adaptive treatments, it was highly successful. This was particularly true in the improvement of reading and maths in children.

Nick Cairns

Local ATP Groups

A big theme at this year's conference was local groups. Are you interested in joining other ATP Members and setting up a Local ATP forum? Could you use the support of other teachers in your local area but are unsure of where to start? Would you like to know which ATP Committee Members are in your local region?

If you are interested in this new development from the ATP then please complete the form below and send it to the following address below or e-mail Jeff Standen at: contact@jeffstanden.net

Laura Rudd
Psychology Department
Franklin College
Chelmsford Ave
Grimsby, DN34 5BY
N E Lincs

Name

Institution

Town/City

Region

E-mail Address

Interested in:

Setting up local group

Contacting local Committee Members

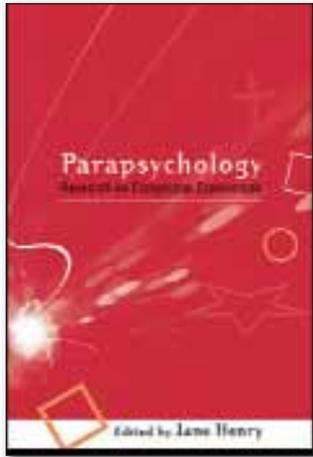
Contacting other ATP Members

Creating your own shared CPD activities

Other (please state)

**From this information, we will contact other Members local area and set up a networking forum via our website*





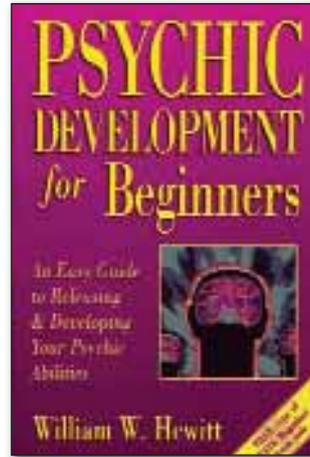
Parapsychology – Research on Exceptional Experiences

**Jane Henry (2005) pub: Routledge £15.95
Exam board: AQA-Aright**

For those who are about to embark on teaching AQA A A2 Anomalistic Psychology for the first time this academic year, I would highly recommend this text.

The book starts by giving a brief but detailed account of the concepts of both parapsychology and the methodology used by researchers in this field. The main aim of this book is to document scientists' attempts at trying to investigate and understand paranormal experiences. Most of the topics covered within the text relate directly to the AQA unit, and each chapter is free-standing, short in content and referenced. The topics covered include; psychokinesis, extrasensory perception, animal psi, out-of-body experience, near-death and reincarnation. Contributors to the text include Chris French (a leading academic in this field) along with Susan Blackmore (whom some of you may recall was a keynote speaker at the Lincoln conference last year). Most of the work covered is based on experimental design/evidence and is very student-friendly and would/will provoke both discussion and debate within the class. At the end of the text there is a very useful section which includes websites, organisations and journals to allow you to develop and obtain further resources for this course.

Finally, I must confess that when I first thought about teaching this course, my general impression was that it was not very worthwhile or scientific in both nature and content. However, upon reading this text and making use of the websites listed, I feel that both my students and myself will enjoy the opportunity of studying something that is both interesting and different and a subject matter that does indeed lend itself to scientific examination.



Psychic Development for Beginners (An easy guide to releasing and developing your psychic abilities.)

**William W. Hewitt. Pub: Llewellyn Worldwide (2008)
Exam board: AQA-A**

Before I begin, please do not be put-off by the title of this book. I am a psychologist, I recognise the importance of science and validity, but this little gem at only £6 from Amazon is worth getting. Why? If you are looking for a cheap but cheerful resource to add towards the introduction of the new Parapsychology unit in AQA A A2 then you could have some nice introduction/ice-breaker sessions to set the tone for the rest of the course. The book consists of 26 short chapters which give plenty of techniques that your students can attempt to use. It gives insight into the areas of Clairvoyance, Telepathy, Psychic healing and even Communicating with animals and spiritual entities! These topics will offer endless debate about the 'scientific evidence' (or lack of) and will get your students thinking about the seriousness of this topic area in general. The book starts with some general questions which you could use in your class such as: Have you ever had a hunch that was true or accurate? Have you ever known who was phoning you before you picked up the phone? Have you ever had a sudden feeling enter your mind that you should, or should not do something and found out later that you should have listened to your feelings? These questions are followed by brief accounts of topics such as altered states of consciousness and even a chapter on helping you to become a Psychic! There are some fun exercises on Visualization, and Hewitt (who is a clinical hypnoterapist), has written a book which allows you to master a variety of psychic techniques. My own view (for what it's worth) is that you could use some of these methods and then introduce the more serious side towards questioning the validity of these concepts. In total you get more than 44 fun and simple activities and 28 case studies which explain these methods, so you will have some fun if nothing else!

Trevor Dunn (Cambridge)

PsychExchange.co.uk

Over 2,000 resources and growing

We were pleased to be asked to deliver a couple of breakout events at the ATP Conference this year through which we were able to gather lots of constructive criticism about PsychExchange. On the whole teachers were very kind with their comments.

Around 80 psychology teachers attended our two discussions at the ATP Conference and provided us with some great feedback which we have been able to use to improve the site. Following on from the conference, during the latter part of August, we decided to conduct an online survey of the usefulness of PsychExchange via e-mail.

This article is therefore a summary of the feedback we have received and the resulting changes that we have been able to make to PsychExchange.

It was a relief for us that the feedback from the conference and the survey was very good regarding the usefulness of the site. For example, of the approximately 200 people who completed the online survey (by the time this article was written) over half found the site 'very useful'. The qualitative responses were also very encouraging.

How useful have you found psychexchange?

The survey revealed that teachers are finding the downloading of resources, videos, ideas and the weekly e-mail the most useful features. From the qualitative responses we discovered that the



forums, private messaging and bookmarking are rated as less useful because many teachers are not aware of how to use these features. Several teachers have requested a 'dummies guide' to using PsychExchange which we have developed and is now available on PsychExchange.

We were encouraged with the responses to the question on the survey which asked how likely users would be to share a resource in the future, with over 90% of respondents saying they would be likely to share in the future.

How likely are you to share a resource in the future?

An interesting finding from the survey was that even though the majority of teachers state that they are comfortable leaving comments on the site, most teachers do not. This is backed up by

our user data on the site showing that 1,352 files have been uploaded compared to 1,000 comments made. The main reason given for not commenting on resources is simply forgetting to do so. The most common criticism of the site, not surprisingly, is searching the site for the appropriate resources. In particular, finding a good resource and then not being able to relocate the same file again.

We have made a number of improvements to the site and most of these are to the profile section of the site which should help users manage downloads more effectively. Every user now has a unique profile which can be found, once you are logged on, by clicking on the 'My Profile' link in the top right-hand section of the site. The profile page can be used rather like a Facebook-type page and importantly it keeps a record of resources, ideas etc that you have both uploaded and downloaded. For example, in your profile if you click on 'My Bookmarks' this will show you all of the recent files that you have downloaded which you might want to either use again or comment on.

A great feature of the profile section is that it will save all of the resources that you bookmark, so you can use them again in the future. When you are browsing resources and you find a resource



that you find useful, you can now bookmark it by clicking on the link next to the resource detail called 'Bookmark'. You can now go into your profile, click on 'My Bookmarks', and you'll find that the resource has been saved there.

There is a more detailed analysis of the survey on PsychExchange. More importantly thanks to all of those teachers who have taken time to upload their resources, ideas and comments and have given us feedback to improve PsychExchange.

Mark Holah & Jamie Davies

Application for Membership

and renewal of Membership of ATP



The ATP has had to make quite radical changes to the process of membership applications and renewals. The old paper, postage and cheque system was just not working. We now have a Membership Committee, and the proposals for change are to bring the membership system into the C21st and make it much more streamlined so that the service for Members is much better.

Online application

All applications will occur online from now on. This means that the application will be instantaneous, and there can be no errors in completing the fields and typed entries will be legible. It also means that we can keep track of payment details and the time for renewals.

Membership numbers and membership cards.

Members will now be issued with a membership number and in due course all will be sent their own membership card.

Payments

Payments can occur in three ways. The preferred method of payment is through PayPal, but we will also be giving members the opportunity to apply to pay by standing order and cheque on line. Current up-to-date standing orders are on-line. Please see the website for details.

Students

Student membership is now being charged at £5.00 for the year, and again application and payment will occur online.

Access to your details

Every Member will be able to access their own details and change them (with the exception of payment and membership number details). You can do this by visiting the website www.theatp.org. Simply register on the website using 'atpmember' as the invitation code. You will be then sent a password, which you can then change into something more memorable. The current database protection policy continues.

Many hours of work have gone into the new system this summer. We hope the benefits will outweigh any problems which may occur in the change-over. Please be a little patient if things are not sorted immediately. But please do contact us if you have any concerns or difficulties. To contact a member of the membership committee please e-mail membership@theatp.org

Wendy Wood

(On behalf of the membership committee)

Helpline

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

Dorothy Coombs (EFPTA)
Prior Pursglove College, Church Walk,
Guisborough, Cleveland TS14 6BU
Wk: 01287 280800
Hm: 01287 636502
d.coombs@prior.pursglove.ac.uk

Emma Shakespeare
Emma_shakespeare@yahoo.com

NOTICES

Stella's request

Dear ATP Members, The newsletter team is currently gathering contributions for the new Division for Teachers and Researchers in Psychology (DTRP) bumper newsletter.

This bi-annual issue will be showcasing achievements, issues, research, etc at all levels of academia and will be disseminated across the UK. We would like to invite Members to contribute to this first issue. If you feel this is something you would like to get involved in, please contact us (dtrp@bps.org.uk). We are flexible regarding content, which can relate to activities at an individual staff member level or a department level. This could be an update on research, or discussion of an issue within the teaching of Psychology at your institute or at a particular level of education. We already have a number of contributions from tutors within Higher Education, however our network has the advantage of representing tutors at all levels of academia and we would very much like our publication to represent these varied groups.

Please pass this communication on to anyone you feel maybe interested. We look forward to hearing from you.

Stella

Academic Assistant Division for
Teachers and Researchers in Psychology
The British Psychological Society
dtrp@bps.org.uk www.bps.org.uk/dtrp



ATP – The Journal

We are re-launching the ATP Journal as a peer-reviewed publication with articles on psychological topics and personal research.

Contributions should be sent to the editors, Craig Roberts and Evie Bentley, who reserve the usual editorial rights.

Send us your contributions!

croberts@totton.ac.uk and eviepsych1@gmail.com

EFPTA The European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations.

We are meeting in Seville on Friday and Saturday 23/24 October.

We are planning a European conference in Bratislava, Slovakia on 16/17 April 2010

Details of both these events can be obtained from Joe Cocker, joe.cocker@ukonline.co.uk

PSYCHOLOGY and FASHION

After Joe Cocker's workshop on this topic, a number of teachers expressed interest in a full-day seminar on the topic, possibly in London in March. If you would like to register interest in this please e-mail joe.cocker@ukonline.co.uk

The Association for the Teaching of Psychology Officers and Committee

Janet Brennan (Treasurer)

7 Clairville Gardens
Hanwell
LONDON W7 3HZ
janet.brennan@btinternet.com

Gill Bunting

Apartment A2
Maison Victor Hugo
St Clements JE2 6PW
Jersey
01534 482822
gillian.bunting@localdial.com

Dorothy Coombs (EFPTA)

Prior Pursglove College
Church Walk
Guisborough
Cleveland TS14 6BU
01287 280800
d.coombs@prior.pursglove.ac.uk

24 Whinchat Tail
Guisborough
Cleveland TS14 8PW
01287 636502

Deb Gajic (Chair)

Polesworth Int. Language College
Dordon Road
Dordon
Tamworth B78 1QT
01827 702205
d.gajic@sky.com

Julie Hulme

Staffordshire University
Department of Psychology
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire ST4 2DE
j.a.hulme@staff.ac.uk

Laura Rudd

Psychology Department
Franklin College
Chelmsford Ave
Grimsby
N E Lincs DN35 4BY
Laura.rudd@franklin.ac.uk

Emma Shakespeare

The McAuley Catholic High School
Cantley Lane
Doncaster DN3 3QF
01302 537396
Emma_shakespeare@yahoo.com

Jeff Standen

Head of Psychology
Boston College
De Montfort Campus
Mill Road
Boston PE21 0HF
Lincolnshire
01205 365701 ext 4409
standen.jeff@gmail.com

Morag Williamson (Secretary)

84/10 North Meggetland
Edinburgh EH14 1XJ
07718 647487
MoragHWill@aol.com

Jackie Moody

40 Kingfisher Drive
Catterick Garrison DL9 4DP
North Yorks
jaxamo@yahoo.co.uk

Wendy Wood (Memberships secretary)

membership@theatp.org

Gail Ward (Vice chair)

Head of Psychology
Durham Gilesgate 6th Form Centre
Providence Row
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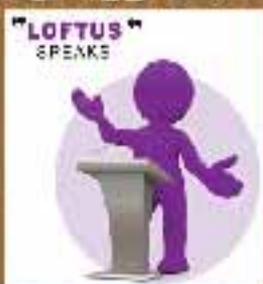
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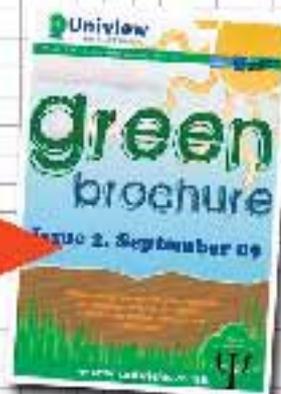
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