

Editorial

Claire Miller

WELCOME to the 79th edition of the *PsyPAG Quarterly*. With the deadline for registration fast approaching, we are looking forward to seeing many of you at the PsyPAG Annual Conference 2011. This year's conference will be held at Bangor University from the 6–8 July, and looks set to be both interesting and enjoyable. Conferences offer great opportunities for networking, communicating research and sharing ideas. Hopefully, the conference reviews in this issue will not only give you an idea of what to expect from the conferences they describe, but also provide advice on how to get the most out of any other conferences you may be attending this summer.

Alex Gyani provides the first conference review of the issue, with his piece describing the 38th British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies Conference. He details the themes and issues covered during the conference and preceding workshops, and what he gained from his attendance there. We then turn to some reflections from Benjamin J. Newton on his PhD experience, including thoughts and advice on how to get the most out of your time as a PhD student. The BPS Social Psychology Section conference review, by Lia Emanuel, details some of the topics covered and describes her positive experience of presenting at this smaller, more specialised conference. David Crelley's review of the IAREP/SABE/ICABEEP conference highlights the importance of multidisciplinary events in gaining new ideas and insights into your research.

Chloe Sharp offers some useful hints and tips for organising literature throughout your PhD, which will be especially useful to those in the early stages of postgraduate study. The article that follows reviews a work-

shop run by Vitae, entitled 'Careers in Academia'. Bex Hewett describes some of the practical information she gained, and the benefits both of the activities comprising the workshop, and the forum for networking with a diverse range of students that it provided. Dr Gillian W. Smith then offers invaluable advice on the benefits of online networking for those working on getting established in their field of research, as well as some situations in which to exercise caution online.

Christopher Russell's review of the Addictions 2010 conference provides an in-depth explanation of the main reasons that he chose to attend this conference and some of the benefits it provided. His article contains much advice that others should find useful when making decisions about which conferences to choose in which to present their own research. Following this, an article by Greg J. Elder provides an interesting review of literature relating to dreaming, describing current theories and models, as well as their potential flaws and interesting avenues for future research. Professor James Hartley's insightful piece on students' beliefs about academic writing details a brief study he conducted to find out what students really think. Finally, Ioannis Argyropoulos presents an introduction to research into backward visual masking and object substitution masking, detailing current thinking and future questions which should be addressed.

We hope you enjoy reading these interesting articles, and invite you to get in touch if you have anything you would like to contribute. The *PsyPAG Quarterly* is distributed to all postgraduate institutions in the UK, and is, therefore, an ideal forum with which to communicate your ideas and research. We accept a wide range of articles, from short 'Lonely Brains' pieces to longer

research articles and reviews. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any ideas you would like to discuss. We look forward to hearing from you!

Claire Miller

On behalf of the *PsyPAG Quarterly* Editorial Team 2010–2011: Charlotte McLeod, Emily Collins and Julie Port.

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Chair's Column

Sarah Wood

WELCOME to the June 2011 edition of the *PsyPAG Quarterly*. As always, the editors have worked hard to put together an interesting edition with a diverse range of articles, and I hope that you enjoy reading it as much as I will. The editors are always looking for articles which represent all areas of psychology, so please consider submitting an article of your own, especially if your work is something which has not been previously represented in the *PsyPAG Quarterly*.

I want to turn my attention in this column to the 'uncertain times' that we are currently living through, a time of potential financial austerity, with higher education funding in the spotlight and the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework (REF; www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref) on the minds of many. These conditions are being considered by many within our discipline and as postgraduates they are probably in our minds in terms of our future prospects and the options we will have at the end of a Masters degree or PhD programme. I want to consider some of the ways in which the landscape is changing.

For those of you who are training to be practitioner psychologists you will be well aware of the transition that psychology has undergone in recent years, with the change of regulation from the British Psychological Society (BPS) to the Health Professionals Council (HPC), and it appears that

academic psychology needs to brace itself for similar changes. While the change to HPC regulation has not always been without problems – indeed a look at the letters pages in *The Psychologist* shows that some of these changes are ongoing – practitioner psychologists have to work within the current framework, and the same will go for those in the academic arena. We might not agree with what is happening but it is a system that we will have to work within, especially if we want to make changes to it.

Part of the less palatable changes, at least for me, can be seen with the changes to the Higher Education Academy (HEA), which will close its subject centres from September, going for a more centralised approach. The Psychology subject centre has supported the network initiative Postgraduates who Teach (PGwT), who PsyPAG have enjoyed a close working relationship with. In the HEA's draft proposal in November 2010 for their 2011 services, they include details of the provision that they will continue to provide for post-graduate students who teach, so it appears that this work is still a priority for the HEA. That can only be good news but one of the benefits in the way the academy has previously worked is that information has been discipline specific. I know that I have attended generic teaching workshops that haven't aided my teaching practice and that psychology specific ones have helped me the most. Am I wrong though; are the skills and

knowledge needed to lecture the same across all areas, with the only difference being the content? The support offered by organisations such as the HEA can often be overlooked, but for those embarking on a career as a lecturer I think it is invaluable.

Being able to demonstrate an ability to teach is unlikely to be enough to secure an academic post. If you take a look at any recent job applications for psychology lecturers you will see a requirement that the candidates must be able to deliver high quality peer-reviewed publications which can be included in the 2014 REF. If you are applying for your first post after completion of a PhD this might be something that you find difficult to evidence. While many post-graduate students are publishing their research as they go, others are sometimes dissuaded from this route by their supervisors, who may believe that studies from the PhD should only be published following a successful defence of their work. Finding the time to prepare manuscripts and deal with revisions while you are still collecting data or writing your thesis can also be a big barrier to publishing as you go. Publications appear to be a deciding factor within the current job market and as such if your supervisor has the aforementioned views then you might need to talk to them about the reasoning behind their opinions. As well as being able to demonstrate high quality publications, another requirement which is often seen on job adverts is the ability to win research funding. This, however, is asked for in a climate in which we see changes in the research councils' funding opportunities, with a rationalisation of the number of grants that they will be offering and a move away from a number of the early career small grant schemes. Industry-funded research has also taken a hit in recent years, with companies having to make difficult decisions with regards to their overheads. Getting a foot on the ladder in terms of both publications and grant applications are the keys to job success at the moment. Of course, this is not as easy as it sounds, and as a postgraduate student

you will need to have a plan as to how you can demonstrate the qualities that the employers are currently prioritising.

My column may seem unduly negative but I wanted to start a debate on some of these issues, as I think that we are sometimes wary of looking to the future during uncertain times, when in fact we should be arming ourselves with information so that we can create the best possible opportunities for our future careers. Postgraduate studies can often feel like the end point, but it really is just the beginning. A shameless plug, but in these times of austerity I would like to remind you of what PsyPAG can offer you. The next deadlines for our conference and travel bursaries are the 10 June and 10 October. We also have a number of awards to recognise the outstanding research and teaching activities of postgraduates at the various stages of their careers. See www.psyag.co.uk for more details of all these schemes.

I am also really looking forward to our 26th annual conference at Bangor University (6–8 July). The conference team have worked hard to put together an interesting programme that appeals to psychologists from all research areas. In the current uncertain times in academia there are two career workshops that stand out for me: firstly, one focusing on the transition from a Masters degree to a PhD, and secondly, one providing advice on getting a post-doc position. As always we will be holding our Annual General Meeting at the conference, where there will be an opportunity for you not only to find out more about PsyPAG's activities in the last year, but also a chance to join our committee. Please look out for emails on the JISCmail list and website announcements for information on the committee roles that will become vacant. I am sure that I will be able to report in my September column that the conference was a big success.

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The 38th British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) Conference

Alex Gyani

The University of Manchester, 20–23 July 2010

THE British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) was founded in 1972 as an interest group for people involved in the practice of and research into behavioural and cognitive therapy. It enjoys a large and broad membership, with members' backgrounds and occupations ranging from clinical psychologists and researchers to general practitioners and nurses. Last year marked the 38th BABCP conference, which took place from the 20–23 July. The wealth of interests and functions of both the association and the 1000 delegates were clearly evident at the conference.

The conference was preceded by 23 workshops, which aimed to increase the knowledge and skills of the delegates in a wide range of psychological therapies. The workshops were delivered by a wide range of eminent clinicians and academics, the majority of whom were internationally recognised as leaders in their fields. These workshops could either serve to introduce delegates to emerging therapies being developed around the world, or to inform them of innovations in older therapies.

The conference programme comprised numerous symposia, panel discussions, and keynote addresses. These highlighted a number of important themes, including psychosis, self-regulation and control, parent training, interfacing health psychology and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), CBT for an ageing population and Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (a recent

Government initiative to train a new workforce to treat anxiety disorders). These topics reflected both recent innovations in clinical psychology and the challenges that currently face the field. The former helped my research by introducing me to a wide range of therapies and demonstrated the expansive range of clinical research being undertaken around the world. The latter helped me understand the difference between the issues in clinical trials and routine care, challenging myself and other researchers to make their work as relevant to practice as possible and improve the dissemination of research into practice.

The conference also had many smaller sessions that allowed postgraduates to present their latest research, often alongside world experts. There were 20 keynote addresses, each given by very eminent researchers and clinicians, which meant that delegates were spoilt for choice. The conference did not solely point to the future; there were also some very interesting retrospective presentations, which helped place the current work of clinical psychologists into a wider context.

The conference's social programme interspersed the presentations effectively, providing a variety of events that allowed the delegates to socialise, to reflect on the day's proceedings and to share ideas. Given the wide range of professions at the conference this was an excellent time to discuss other people's work and support one another with

various problems that we may have been facing. A PhD can seem like an enterprise in which one is detached and isolated from the wider research and medical community. The conference provided the opportunity to connect to other likeminded individuals. The breadth of delegates' backgrounds bolstered this sense of community.

On the last day I gave my first presentation at an academic conference, in a symposium organised by a member of my lab group. I was lucky enough to be presenting at this symposium with my supervisor and members of my lab group, all of whom had experience in presenting at international conferences and were very supportive before the presentation. Despite my preparation, I was still nervous. Nonetheless, the presentation went well and to time. After the presentation I was confronted with questions, some of which were more challenging than others. Thankfully, I was helped by some of the other speakers at the symposium in addressing one of the more challenging questions, highlighting the amicable atmosphere of the conference. I was also able to speak to the questioner at the end of the

symposium and address the issues raised by his question.

The BABCP conference was an excellent conference for anyone with an interest in clinical psychology, thanks to the quality of the speakers and the wide range of topics covered. Given the calibre of the speakers, the conference was also reasonably priced in comparison to others. This encouraged post-graduate delegates and junior researchers to attend, making the conference a platform to meet others in the field, to learn about the exciting clinical psychology research, and an ideal introduction to presenting. Even though the conference was large, and therefore potentially overwhelming, the supportive and friendly atmosphere enabled me to enjoy my first experience of presenting at an academic conference, put to rest my anxiety prior to the presentation and develop my public speaking skills.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER LECTURE THEATRE

Live the life! Some reflections on making the most of your PhD

Benjamin J. Newton

WITH LESS THAN six months to go in which to complete my PhD, I thought now was an apt moment to offer some reflections on my experience as a postgraduate research student. What I know now is radically different to what I knew three years ago, when I was contemplating leaving a well-paid job to become a student. This article represents an offering of my reflections on the last two-and-a-half years: I hope you can glean some useful thoughts and tips as I share my journey here.

My story begins some three years ago. I was working as a researcher in the NHS with a focus on gaining work experience that would help me get accepted on the Clinical Psychology doctoral course. Consequently, I had reduced my hours so that I worked one day a week as an 'Honorary' (unpaid) Assistant Psychologist in a Physical Health Psychology department. We saw patients experiencing chronic fatigue, chronic pain and neurological difficulties. At the time I came across an advert for a PhD studentship in the area of chronic pain. I had previously contemplated exploring a PhD, but the allure of clinical psychology was still strong. I applied and was surprised to be in the healthy position of being a funded postgraduate. Moreover, I had a reasonable amount of flexibility in choosing my PhD topic. After several literature reviews and supervisory consultations, I settled on my current thesis: the development of a grounded-theory to explain how individuals with chronic pain experience their pain being taken seriously. Yes, that is quite a mouthful.

Starbucks: Enjoying the first year

Over the course of my first year I took the opportunity to ground myself in the literature. The new-found freedom as a student

helped me combine my passion for coffee shops with work: you should definitely make the most of the first few months before the pressure kicks in! I tried to organise my literature using a free software program from the internet, but to be honest, it wasn't the right tool for the job. Since then, I have discovered Mendeley and I can't recommend it enough to my colleagues. Think Facebook and EndNote fused together with online storage space for PDFs and a professional-looking, online, academic profile. Mendeley is invaluable for storing and accessing articles, presenting your publications and for using as a reference manager. Plus, it's free. There are other programs like CiteULike which you can use too. The important thing is to find a program early on that will help you remain organised with your articles: I'm still trying to bring order to the mountain of PDFs I have acquired.

At my institution the initial focus is on developing the thesis proposal, which is defended by oral examination. I met regularly with my supervisory team where they would offer three completely separate and sometimes incompatible ideas. Trying to please all three supervisors became a nightmare. The development of my proposal was characterised by uncertainty and the desire to make everyone happy. It took me a long time before I began to realise that at times, my supervisors wanted me to fight, not pacify them. They didn't want me to please them, they wanted me to be confident in my proposal. This was quite difficult for a person who struggled with self-confidence. No-one had told me I had to fight for the thesis. My supervisors see themselves as equals rather than as teachers. Of course, there is always room to listen and learn from

more experienced colleagues, but in the end it is up to you as the student to decide what you think and then to stand your ground: Remember, it's your work and not anyone else's. The end viva will be a test of how well you know your work, how original it is and whether you can stand by it (among other things). It is not a test of how much you did what your supervisors wanted.

I should add that I have an incredibly supportive supervisory team. They push me, challenge me and enjoy discussing what I'm researching. Supervisors can make or break the PhD experience, as I've found out from other, less fortunate friends and colleagues. If you happen to be one of the less fortunate ones, find yourself some support. At my institution it is possible to have advisors as well as supervisors listed in an official capacity. You might find an individual who you could regularly touch base with in a supportive function.

Having arrived at a protocol I had the tough job of gaining health service approvals. It can take a good chunk out of the year, so you need to be prepared for this if you're conducting research in the NHS. Waiting for permissions prior to data collection is a good opportunity for a holiday, or if you're super organised, for writing an early paper.

In fact, as your supervisors probably tell you, publication is extremely important. Published work can substantially boost the credibility of your thesis. It is also good practice for the academic life you might have at the end of the road. At the moment I've got a literature review from my thesis in press. Writing-up a review of the literature can be an easy publication, though from my own experience, I wish I had kept more detailed notes concerning how I conducted the literature search, as this would have helped with writing the methods section. Without a trail of notes detailing what you've done, it's very unlikely you'll be able to recall your method a year later. Demonstrating you have a robust and coherent approach will add credibility to your work, enabling you to pitch the

article for journals with a higher impact factor; so, make sure you keep an audit trail (e.g. Koch, 2006).

An even easier publication is to undertake a book review for a journal. These are a great catch for PhD students. You can review (and generally get to keep) a book, and you get a publication out of it. Journals often receive a whole range of books from publishing houses for review; you might find you can get hold of some rather expensive texts if you look around. Remember, however, that publishing takes time. You'll need to be patient. It has taken me almost two years from researching my literature review to seeing it through to online publication. Even now it still hasn't made it to the journal, but I have learnt a great deal from the process.

'PhD Comics':

Enduring the second year

Perseverance, stamina, persistence. Three words offered by two senior colleagues in my department concerning the PhD. Becoming a Doctor is not simply a battle of wit, but one of endurance. It is a test of how long you can keep going. Such perseverance is most clearly represented for me in the process of transcription. I abhor it. For other students it might be endless lab work, failed recruitment sessions, or late nights with SPSS, but for me it's the almost thankless task of typing up 90-minute interviews. I say almost thankless: One of the most touching aspects of my research has been to receive cards from my participants expressing their thanks. It's nice to know the reality of the ethical principle of beneficence.

I would like to suggest a magic solution to these tough moments but there is none. What helped me get through transcribing is a combination of small targets and rewards. I would split the interview across the week, transcribing 20 minutes of tape each day. I would then break down each day into hourly targets. I had to manage the tension between regular breaks and avoiding procrastination. Sometimes I'd sleep; some-

times I'd find Google Pacman a momentary distraction. I'd go to the gym and run. Spending time with others who recognise how tough it is sometimes helped. I've also found sources of inspiration in humour, for example, through 'PhD Comics', a website dedicated to the lonely graduate. It's also important to be kind to yourself. When those hopeless moments fill you with dread, take time out and plan something you like doing. I once treated myself to travelling first-class on the train to a seminar. I felt completely out of place, but it was very uplifting!

One of the hardest things for me is the experience that my PhD is so unique and specialised; there are very few people who understand what you're talking about. It's not something your mates at the pub really care to hear about (for long anyway!). Supervision is one outlet for this; another is conference presentations. The latter is where I flourish. I appreciate the idea of standing in front of 30 strangers is not everyone's idea of fun. However, for some people it's what they're born to do. Either way, conferences can be a fantastic opportunity to meet like-minded people, who are all eagerly fascinated by your PhD. Conferences can generate new ideas and perspectives from 'critical friends'. And let's face it,

conferences can be a great chance to travel to exotic places like Athens. Or Birmingham.

Post-Doc, The Sequel: Entering the final year

So after 30 months of planning, interviewing, transcribing and coding, I'm coming to the writing-up phase. A few final thoughts might be in order.

If you haven't already found an external examiner for your viva, now would be a good point to do so: it can take time for the university to process the paperwork. Find someone who doesn't have an axe to grind. Although it might be tempting to go for the best expert in your field, this may backfire. Try and find someone who will be supportive rather than intensely critical. You may need to put out a few 'feelers'. This is where conference networking can help. No doubt your supervisors and other colleagues you know might have their own thoughts and recommendations.

Look to write-up outstanding papers and submit them. At least then they can go in your thesis appendix as 'submitted', or even better, 'in press'. Remember, published articles indicate that you are capable of producing work that is peer-reviewed and, therefore, of a high academic standard. This



is one of the areas in which your viva examiners will assess your competency.

Finally, over the last eight months or so, I have been looking around for opportunities for the life after (yes there is life after) Post hole Digging. The PhD course has taught me that lecturing is something I love doing and am competent in. I have also realised I am strong in writing (but not transcribing). I think staying in the academic world is something I want to do, though it might not be for everyone. Touch base with contacts you have. Think about future collaborative work. Do you want to extend your thesis? You may want a total break in another field. Search and make opportunities in advance: be proactive.

Some closing thoughts

Writing a 'conclusion' would, for me, seem a little too decisive for what are essentially some rather piecemeal thoughts. The last two-and-a-half years have been challenging. I've been stretched in ways I had not anticipated: I have been challenged by both my work and my supervisory team. I am now

more focused on using evidence to support what I write and am more critical in my own work. The last 30 months have also brought opportunity. I have been able to visit some incredible places. I have also been both moved and changed by the deeply personal stories my participants have disclosed to me. Despite the drudgery of data collection and analysis, the PhD represents for me an immense privilege. I hope some of these experiences can help you to 'live the life' of postgraduate research.

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European Congress of Community Psychology

York, 15-16 September 2011

**Second Announcement &
Call for Papers**

Conference website: <http://bit.ly/dF5Fzu>

BPS Social Psychology Section Conference

Lia Emanuel

Winchester, 7–9 September 2010

UNDER THE THEME ‘Social Psychology in Action: Theoretical Debate and Social Impact’ the annual BPS Social Psychology Section conference brought together a wide range of both UK and international social psychology research. Although I was only able to attend the last day of the conference, it was by far one of the best conference experiences I have had as a postgraduate. Compared to my last conference experience, which had over 3000 attendees, I found the smaller, more specialised focus of this BPS event a more worthwhile experience in terms of networking. The meeting provided a fantastic venue to discuss not only research that had been presented, but to trade experiences of studies gone awry and importantly air ideas for future research projects. The lower number of attendees fostered an atmosphere of openness and approachability, most apparent during coffee and lunch breaks, in which professors, post-docs and students alike had ample opportunity to talk and network. With seven parallel sessions to choose from, the morning symposium I attended brought together a number of research projects under the theme of nonconscious mimicry in an impressively cohesive manner by the convenor. Due to the smaller number of attendees, the symposium finished with a very lively discussion and debate on both the findings and potential methodological and theoretical pitfalls of the research presented. Moreover, it was a friendly environment where the majority of the audience was involved in at least one part of the discussion.

I found the variety of topics present at the conference provided a well-balanced range of

current research, especially in terms of social impact. This included Professor James Sidanius’ discussion as the keynote speaker on the role of authority in terror, intergroup violence and the law; as well as individual papers ranging from theoretical social frameworks applied to commercial marketing and a number of cultural/regional-based socio-psychological studies. I had the opportunity to present my own research in one of the afternoon sessions, on perceptual and cognitive mechanisms underlying nonconscious mimicry behaviour. This being my first conference to give an oral presentation rather than a poster, I found presenting to a smaller audience a somewhat less nervous experience than I had anticipated. Although, even with the small audience size, I was impressed at the number of questions I received at the end of my presentation. I found it especially helpful to get a more social psychological perspective on a project that has taken a slightly more cognitive-oriented direction.

Overall, the conference in scenic Winchester was certainly a positive experience. I would recommend the BPS Social Psychology Section to first-time presenters, as it was a very welcoming group and the smaller audience size may make presenting just a little less daunting. However, there were a range of presenters including those established in the field, early career post-docs and PhD students, making it a useful, engaging experience.

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IAREP/SABE/ICABEEP Conference

David Crelley

Cologne, 5–8 September 2010

PRESENTING at multidisciplinary conferences is always a nerve-racking experience. In addition to the standard presentation nerves, there is the added pressure of ensuring that every member of the audience fully understands the purpose of your research and its findings. However, multidisciplinary conferences can be amongst the most beneficial to attend. I truly believe that talking with researchers from other disciplines can be an enlightening experience. This is particularly the case when two disciplines have radically different views on the same issues. The IAREP/SABE/ICABEEP conference is the annual meeting of the two largest organisations in the fields of behavioural economics (SABE – Society for the Advancement of Behavioral Economics) and economic psychology (IAREP – International Association for Research in Economic Psychology), with ICABEEP (The International Confederation for the Advancement of Behavioral Economics and Economic Psychology) acting as an umbrella organisation for the two disciplines. This year's delegates came from the fields of economics, psychology, marketing and consumer behaviour. The conference's overall aim is to help researchers in both economics and psychology realise the important contributions that other disciplines can make to our understanding of consumer behaviour and the economic world. Behavioural economists aim to develop realistic models of economic behaviour which integrate insights from both psychology and neoclassical economics. In my view economics is catching up with psychology and actually provides some key insights into human behaviour.

This year's conference was of the highest possible standard. As expected from our

German hosts, the event ran with great precision, and the facilities and catering were impressive. All the keynote talks were of extremely high quality. Axel Ockenfels discussed his experiences of economic engineering (applying economic and psychological theory to real world problems). It is always reassuring to hear from researchers who value applied practice and who conduct work on such a large scale. Perhaps the most interesting aspect was the research he conducted on behalf of eBay, exploring how anonymity may improve the reliability of feedback mechanisms. Dave Dunning was also a thoroughly engaging speaker, whose discussion of the emotional and social underpinnings of trust was highly entertaining. Thomas Mussweiler presented the imaginatively titled 'On Envy, Trust and Sloths'. Thomas was a charismatic speaker and I thoroughly enjoyed hearing about his research into comparative thinking and economic decision making. Finally, Robert H. Frank's rousing speech on the libertarian welfare state was a personal highlight. Robert made a very compelling argument stating that we would all be worse off without the existence of the welfare state and provided a timely and damning critique of the Tea Party movement.

As with any conference the invited talks were only part of the experience. The conference also featured a number of poster presentations, and also some shorter conference talks running in parallel sessions, of which I was able to sample a few. These often varied in quality, but overall the standard was high. One of the most pleasing aspects of the conference was the number of presentations which focused on methods of encouraging consumers to purchase in a more environ-

mentally responsible manner. Over 25 individual talks explored the factors which can influence consumers' decisions to engage in environmentally friendly purchasing. As ethical consumption forms the basis of my PhD research, I found a number of these talks very informative. In fact, at the end of the four days I had begun to feel more than a little overwhelmed at the amount of information which had flown my way.

The conference was exceedingly supportive and welcoming. My presentation on the relationship between self-regulatory fatigue and non-ethical spending was well received and the feedback both constructive and encouraging. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the other delegates who helped spawn future research ideas. With their help I left the conference with a notebook full of scribbled notes and a list of what seemed like hundreds of references to seek out.

As with any multidisciplinary conference there were aspects which I felt more comfortable with than others. In particular I found some of the economic modelling a struggle.

However, this is more my failing than any fault of the presenters, and for this reason I would advise those wishing to attend for the first time to brush up on the basics of experimental economics. One aspect which I did find disappointing was the fact that researchers from the field of marketing were under-represented, as it is always good to hear from those working in more applied fields. Whilst the absence of marketing representatives was regrettable, it was by no means a deal breaker. The Cologne conference was overall first rate, with excellent organisation and contributions. The next IAREP/SABE/ICABEEP conference will be held at my university (the University of Exeter) and hopefully the event will meet the high standard set by Cologne. I can strongly recommend the conference to anybody with an interest in Economics or consumer behaviour in general.

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COLOGNE CATHEDRAL AND HOHENZOLLEM BRIDGE

Tips on electronically organising your literature

Chloe Sharp

AT PhD level, the literature review involves reading a significant number of resources such as books, journals and conference proceedings. This article will guide you through organising your literature using Microsoft packages and referencing software. These computer packages can be used to store and retrieve much information, such as the number and types of items read, the areas which have been focused on in reading and common methodology, both quickly and efficiently.

This article will provide a guideline as to how to organise your literature by:

- Creating a ‘hub’ of references in Excel and keeping track of what has been read.
- Saving references efficiently to easily find them in the future.
- Using a filing system for hard copies of journals and creating a snapshot of information for quick future reference.
- Writing and storing notes.
- Using a mind-map or OneNote to map concepts and references.

Getting organised in Excel

Figure 1 shows an example of Excel tabs that could be used to organise your references (e.g. Books and Book Sections/Journals and Theses/Websites/Reports/Conferences and Symposia/TV/Websites/Personal Development/Personal Contacts/Reflective Log).

It is useful to keep track of the keywords that have been used and for which databases, a record of personal development and a reflective log. It is beneficial to keep these up-to-date for supervisory meetings, to help keep track of thoughts and provide explanations and justifications behind your reading in certain areas. We are going to focus on the ‘Journals and Theses’ tab, to show how information can be stored about references. These guidelines can then be applied to the other tabs.

Journals and Theses workbook

The workbook for ‘Journals and Theses’ should be organised in the referencing format preferred, as illustrated in Table 1 (overleaf) for a reference list in an APA format.

It is also useful to enter references found in books and journals that you intend to read in the future. When you create your spreadsheet, you could add filters to each column to make it easier to find specific information, such as journal author or journal name. Figure 2 is an example of the spreadsheet with the filter on the ‘area of research’ set at ‘Grounded theory’.

The ‘area of research’ column, on the left-hand side, is a way of categorising the reference, and keeping this title as general as possible will be helpful in the future.

Figure 1: Tabs in Excel.



Table 1: A reference table in APA format.

Area of Research	Author	Date	Article Title	Journal Title	Volume and Issue	Pages	Doi (optional)	Access Issues
Grounded Theory	McGhee, G., Marland, G.R. & Atkinson, J.	2007	Grounded theory research: literature reviewing and reflexivity	<i>Journal of Advanced Nursing</i>	60(3)	334 - 342	10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04436.x	Not available at university. Ordered through inter-library loan 5/11/2011
Grounded Theory	Chiovitti, R.F. & Piran, N.	2003	Rigour and grounded theory research	<i>Journal of Advanced Nursing</i>	44(4)	427 - 435	10.1046/j.0309-2402.2003.02822.x	None

For example, it is possible to use the ‘Area of Research’ filter to show which references have been read under this umbrella. It also shows which references you have not yet read, if additional reading needs to be done.

The ‘Access Issues’ column is there to keep track of the availability of the journal article at your university, or whether it is accessible at other universities or through inter-library loan. Therefore, when using a reference that is cited by another author, such as James (2001) cited by Smith (2003), it is possible to justify why this reference has not been read and has been sourced through another reference.

The ‘Traffic Light’ System

Earlier, I referred to adding journals that you intend to read in the future. In the ‘Journals and Theses’ workbook, the following ‘Traffic Light’ system could be used to help keep track of what has been read, and what hasn’t been read.

- Colour the row green if you have a copy of the article and it has been read,
- Colour the row orange if there is a soft or hard copy available to read but it has not yet been read.
- Colour the row red if you there is no copy and it has not been read.

Throughout the reading process, there will be many references that you may want to record for future use, such as those cited in journals and books, recommended through personal contacts or appearing on search engines. These will be coloured red in your spreadsheet, until you obtain a copy and turn it orange, and then read it and turn it green. When you obtain a copy of the reference, it should be filed and saved effectively: this will be explored in the next section.

The spreadsheet provides a quick snapshot as to how much has been read, the areas of research which have been focused on, and what could be explored next. When a row on Excel is turned green, the information can

Figure 2: Example of Excel spreadsheet.

	A	B	C	
1	Area of Research	Journal Author	Year	Article Title
296	Grounded theory	McGhee, G., Marland, G.R. & Atkin	2007	Grounded theory research: litera
298	Grounded theory	Chiovitti, R.F. & Piran, N.	2003	Rigour and grounded theory res

be transferred to the cells within a referencing software, such as Endnote or RefWorks. When writing articles, chapters or essays, references can be easily imported from the referencing software. Only references that have been read can be cited, not references that other authors have used; this helps to create transparency and honesty within your work

Saving references efficiently

Most journal articles and some edited books can be saved in PDF format. These should be saved in the C:\ drive, under the journal title, for example, C:\Computer\Documents\PhD\Literature Review\Methodology\Grounded Theory\Rigour and grounded theory research. This aids efficient access using the search function associated with your computer's operating system, such as Windows 7.

If we look at this pathway, we can see that there is a PhD folder, and within this folder there is a 'Literature Review' folder where all of the PDFs should be saved. In this 'Literature Review' folder are sub-folders where PDFs are stored about the different areas of your PhD, for example, the 'Methodology'. This is a broad term and there will be other folders within this folder, such as 'Qualitative Research' or 'Mixed methods', but this example focuses on 'Grounded Theory'. Any journal that relates to grounded theory should be saved under the full journal article title, as shown above; this makes it much easier to search for it.

If you want to read this article, you could print it out. This means that you can write notes on it and if there is a problem in the future with your computer, you will have hard copies of everything you have read. It is also necessary to save the journal article, in case the hard copy is lost or you want to find it quickly and cannot access the filing cabinet.

Writing notes

Microsoft Word is a useful programme to capture notes about the articles read; these notes may be extensive if the article was rele-

vant. It is useful to be reflective whilst reading the literature, perhaps by adding comments using the 'review' tab in Word or highlighting your thoughts and comments in light grey. The notes could be saved under the umbrella folder, as we did with the journal articles, for example, notes that were written about methodology could be saved under C:\Computer\Documents\PhD\Literature Review\Methodology\Methodology Notes. This means that notes about methodology, such as qualitative research and grounded theory, are all in one place.

To capture relevant points that you have read in this article, the next section looks at a way of creating a snapshot of what you have just read.

Creating a filing system for hard copies

It is useful to capture information about the journal and assign the hard copy a number. The grounded theory journal would be filed in the 'Methodology' section of the filing cabinet.

Using a Microsoft Word document, you can capture information about what has been read. You could create a tab in the Excel spreadsheet called 'Read Articles' or use another spreadsheet where tabs correspond with the different areas of research. Table 2 is a guideline for the type of information you may want to capture about the articles.

The information in Table 2 provides a snapshot of what has been read, and the numbering system is a quick way of finding hard copies of journals. You can review specific aspects of what you have read, for example, what methodologies have been used the most and the key areas which arise in the articles. After extensive reading, it may be useful to review these articles because information that was not viewed as significant then may be later when more deeply immersed in the literature.

Summary

This system needs to be updated accurately as you are going along; here is a summary of

Table 2: Table for a Word document/Excel spreadsheet.

Methodology

Journal Title	Journal Authors	Year	Methodology Used	Relevant Areas/ Keywords	Journal Number (Hard copy)	Journal Pathway (Soft copy – PDFs)
Reflections on 'unstructured interviewing'	Collins, P.	1998	Theoretical article	Dialogism, emotions, interviewing, narrative, qualitative methodology, self	1	C:\Computer\ Document\PhD\ Literature Review\ Methodology\ Grounded Theory\ Reflections on Unstructured interviewing
Rigour and grounded theory research	Chiovitti, R.F. & Piran, N.	2003	Review article	Rigour, grounded theory, practical application, reliability, validity, qualitative research	2	C:\Computer\ Documents\ \PhD\ Literature Review\ Methodology\ Grounded Theory\ Rigour and grounded theory research (This could be hyperlinked so it can be opened immediately)

the process using the example of a Chiovatti and Pirans journal article:

- The journal article is saved under the entire article name in the designated file on the computer: 'Grounded Theory'. (C:\Computer\Documents\PhD\Methodology\Grounded Theory\Rigour and Grounded Theory Research.
- The row in Excel should be turned orange.
- The journal article is printed out.
- Notes are taken in Word, in a document called 'Methodology Notes'.
- In Excel, the row is turned green once the journal is read.
- Any references you intend to read are taken from the reference list of the journal article, entered onto the Excel spreadsheet, and turned red.
- The referencing software is updated with details of the article that has been read.
- The journal article is numbered and useful information about the article is

captured, such as methodology and keywords.

- The article is then filed in the relevant folder in numerical order, in the filing cabinet.

It is useful to write these stages on the front of the hard copy of the journal that you have read, to keep track of what information has been stored, such as 'read, refs, Excel, Word' and tick off what has been done for each reference.

Using the information effectively

This system illustrates a way of storing information, however, it is important that the information that is taken from the references is not static and forgotten about. Using a mind-map tool, for example, MindGenius, helps to overcome this problem by mapping the references, and is a good starting point to write essays and articles from. The mind-map can show, for example, different schools

of thought on a subject, how they link together and the negative and positive aspects. It is possible on these programmes to attach the relevant PDF to the article reference on the mind-map. Alternatively, you could use Microsoft OneNote, which is a 'notebook' to which you can attach PDFs and websites.

Conclusion

This article highlights a logical and practical way of using Microsoft packages and referencing software to effectively and efficiently

organise literature. Literature is collected throughout the PhD, meaning there can be hundreds of articles and references at hand, and the system that has been outlined in this article shows an approach that enables you to efficiently organise your literature through electronic tools.

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Developmental Section Annual Conference

The 2011 British Psychological Society Developmental Section Annual Conference will be held in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, between 7–9 September 2011.

We look forward to welcoming you to Newcastle.



The conference is hosted by the Northumbria-Newcastle Developmental Psychology Initiative, a group of academics and postgraduates involved in developmental psychology at Newcastle and Northumbria Universities.

The conference takes place on the Northumbria University City Campus (Northumberland Building) and places you in the centre of buzzing Newcastle!

We present you with three days of full academic programme as well as opportunities to network at our wine reception (evening of 7th September) and the Annual Conference Meal at the Copthorne Hotel on the Quayside (evening of 8th September).

For more information please visit www.bps.org.uk/dev2011 or find all the information you need on the conference at <https://sites.google.com/site/developmental2011>

Contact: dev2011@ncl.ac.uk

Workshop Review

Vitae 'Careers in Academia'

Bex Hewett

Bristol, 23 September 2010

RUN BY Vitae, an organisation dedicated to developing researchers' skills, 'Careers in Academia' promised to help students find their way in the post-PhD academic job market. Rodney Day, from the University of Herefordshire, led the course and was joined by nine other tutors from universities across the UK. They brought with them a wealth of experience in academia, which ranged from traditional route lecturers, through to researchers whose careers have been financed solely through grants, to those who decided that academia wasn't actually for them and had moved into student career development after their PhDs.

We began the day in small groups brainstorming what we thought being 'an academic' actually involved and were amazed by the range of activities identified. The tutors discussed the changing world of academia, and the increased emphasis on showing the impact of research and working in partnership with industry. We also discussed what the funding cuts would mean for our future careers. While there were some bleak stories of universities who were cutting staff numbers dramatically, there was also hope in the fact that the UK still has a strong university sector and that planning ahead for our future careers to make sure that we had the skills necessary could only be a good thing in ensuring that we stand a chance in the competitive academic job market. In the second session, Luke Freeman, an Anthropologist from University College London, talked engagingly about his experiences of teaching and the 'do's and don'ts' that he had learnt in his career to

date. For example, do present your subject with confidence and enthusiasm and don't lose the respect of your class by humiliating a disruptive student!

We were asked to imagine that we had bumped into the Vice Chancellor at a function and had a few minutes of his time to sell him our research by making our 'elevator pitch'. In small groups we took turns presenting our pitch using HOOT as our guide: Hook them, Outline the research, explain the Outcomes and finally, move the listener Towards action (perhaps getting that all important funding). The exercise itself and feedback from the others in the group was invaluable and helped to increase our confidence to sell our research when the opportunity next presented itself.

In three practical sessions we went through the stages of getting an academic job: Preparing a CV, filling in an application and attending an academic interview. We had all been asked to bring along a copy of our academic CV, so after discussing what a CV should and shouldn't include, we moved again into our small groups and took turns to review each other's CVs, looking at the layout, content and general presentation, and each came away with a sheet of very useful comments on strengths and weaknesses. After lunch we were given the task of reviewing application forms from candidates competing for an imaginary postdoc opportunity. None of the applications were particularly weak, some had more practical experience and some more academic and each had taken a different approach to selling themselves for the job. Each group had picked a different successful candidate

showing how important it is to get to know the university, department and job that you are applying for; look at the website, read the job description, address every point in your application and speak to current staff in the department to find out what the priorities are. Without this knowledge, there is no way of knowing whether you are giving the recruitment panel what they want. In the final group session of the day we moved onto the academic interview; in groups of four we arranged ourselves with 1 interviewee and three interviewers before switching roles so that we all had a turn. We worked through some predefined questions drawing out the experience we had gained during our PhD study. While not everyone is comfortable with 'role-play' we all agreed that trying to answer the questions in a safe environment would help when it got to the real thing.

At the end of a day of interactive and practical sessions, we finished with the opportunity to pick the brains of the tutors about their experiences of academia and the state of the current academic job market. A couple of students, myself included, were interested in how part-time PhDs are viewed when

embarking on a career in academia. Having myself experienced some negative reactions to part-time study with the view that it is not as serious or dedicated as a full-time PhD, it was reassuring that the tutors were very positive about it. They felt that changes in the nature of an academic career mean that those students who already have substantial experience in industry have developed some essential skills for becoming an 'academic'.

As always with sessions that bring together students from different disciplines and universities, the value of networking just can't be underestimated. I spoke to students from disciplines as wide ranging as biochemistry, music, management and linguistics. If you are thinking of a career in academia I would encourage you to seek out this course. Vitae present it for free and the quality of the session was excellent. I went away feeling more equipped to apply for my first academic job with confidence.

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Online networking for early career researchers

Gillian W. Smith

PUBLISHING PAPERS is key to getting your research known. However, it takes considerable time from writing a manuscript to seeing it appear as an article in press in a journal. Getting known by the field is vital for early career researchers to increase visibility to funders, potential employers, potential collaborators and to the wider (including non-academic) arena. Thankfully, there are some new websites and technologies to help you with this process. This article will outline some of the key ways to assist you in valuable self-promotion activities, providing some examples from my own use.

Academia.edu

<http://nottinghamtrent.academia.edu/>
Gillian W Smith

First, and in my opinion best, is academia.edu. Upon registering, you create a profile attached to your place of employment (and there is a place for independent researchers). This is a simple site which allows you to both promote and share your own research by uploading papers, talks and listing your research interests. It also offers an opportunity to look at others' research

papers, talks and research interests they have listed. So far, this is nothing extraordinary. However, where academia.edu dominates is in the search capabilities. This website emails you when individuals use a search engine and find your page on academia.edu, technically allowing you to map your own popularity (or lack thereof). You can also see what keywords led them to your page, my favourite being 'gill smith catboat plans pauline' and also see that this search was performed on Tues 20th October 2009 at

10:54pm by someone from Australia, and I was the fourth listing for these keywords. In this case, I am not entirely sure what professional value being associated with 'catboat plans' might do for my reputation, but it is amusing nonetheless. It also seems to have considerable value in increasing visibility and moving up the search rankings (particularly if you have a common name like 'Smith').

The screenshot shows the Academia.edu homepage. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links for 'Log In' and 'Sign Up'. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Academia.edu helps you**: A section with the heading 'Follow the latest research in your field'.
- How to get started**: A numbered list of four steps:
 - 1 Join Academia.edu**: Be part of a growing community.
 - 2 Find your colleagues**: Search by research interests and departments.
 - 3 Follow their work**: See their latest papers, talks and status updates in your News Feed. Includes icons for Papers, Talks, and Status Updates.
 - 4 Share your research**: Upload your papers and talks.
- Join a growing community**: A line graph showing the number of people (275,000) from Oct '08 to New.
- People on Academia.edu**: A list of featured researchers with their names and affiliations:
 - Richard Dawkins, University of Oxford, Zoology
 - Stephen Hawking, University of Cambridge, Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics
 - Paul Krugman, Princeton, Economics
 - Maria Montoya, Chemistry



@gillianwsmith

Twitter is a great tool; it is what you make of it. Whilst you can use it as a private communication tool, part of its appeal is its fully public nature (although you can protect your tweets). You need to decide what you will use it for, and I use mine for work (and the occasional personal tweet that I don't mind becoming public news). It's easy to register and has a simple interface which can be accessed by the web, by mobile telephones, via text and a number of other options too. This instant access gives it an edge over many other types of self-promotion. Every 'tweet' is no more than 140 characters, and you are encouraged to let your followers know 'what you are doing'. You might want to think instead, 'what might be interesting or important to my followers (and me)?' With this in mind, you could tweet about conferences you have been to, giving some commentary on perspectives. For example, by tweeting recently 'Jurgen Rehm concerned about surveys in alcohol research, response rates getting worse, but what are alternatives? #kbs2010', people may respond to me with answers, sympathy or commentary which becomes a shared and public conversation to reveal new insights.

However, do take care not to become 'noisy' and fill up users' twitter feeds with conversations only relevant to two people by prefixing your response tweet with @ followed immediately by the name of the person you are replying to. Using the hashtag function can also be helpful in improving your visibility. In the case above, #kbs2010 refers to a conference I regularly attend hosted by the Kettil Bruun Society. For those who perhaps have not been able to attend, they can search for #kbs2010 and find my tweets, and those of others attending the conference, and find out what is happening at the cutting edge of social and epidemiological alcohol research. Twitter can also be used to tweet on either your own or others' findings, news articles or opinion pieces (including their links) and to demonstrate a knowledge of your area. I have been fortunate to find the work of excellent researchers, and some of them have even become followers of my tweets. There is no optimal way in which to use Twitter, but deciding whether your account is for business or pleasure is a must, and reading through some of the help pages on Twitter to understand its functionality is also vital. It can also save considerable time and resources in keeping up with trends in your field; for me tweets from key agencies in the alcohol and drugs field have made me aware of interesting and challenging times ahead for my field.

Biomedexperts

www.biomedexperts.com

(Access to individual profiles are only available via password upon registering with the website)

I am a psychologist, so not entirely a 'biomed-expert' to any degree. However, I do have a profile on this site. The key benefit is the functionality regarding 'co-authors in my network'. It assesses who has collaborated with you, and looks at their collaborators. Your profile, therefore, has a primary network (your collaborators), a secondary

network (who has collaborated with your primary network) and a tertiary network (those who have collaborated with those in your secondary network). It can also send you emails notifying you of researchers in your network and when they publish new work, which was my primary reason for signing up. It also has a nifty visual tool telling you the keywords about your research and that of your primary, secondary and tertiary collaborators and a pretty map function to illustrate your geographical spread. It's also another way to increase your search engine visibility,

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News

Since April 2008 **over 351,070 life science researchers** joined the world's fastest growing scientific social network BiomedExperts.com. BiomedExperts contains visualizations of over 24 million co-author connections between 1.8 million researchers and lists many of your colleagues from over 3,500 institutions in more than 190 countries. The networks were automatically generated from co-author information from millions of publications published in over 20,000 journals!

[Directory](#)

but again, if you do have a common name like 'Smith', you may have to create a profile which reflects your actual publications by emailing them to identify which publications belong to you specifically. You can also only link to papers which have page numbers (i.e. not the online first articles).

There are many other notable sites worthy of your attention including Mendeley (www.mendeley.com) which now includes a free reference manager, ResearcherID (www.researcherid.com) which identifies your papers and separates them from others with similar names, Graduate Junction (www.graduatejunction.net), a website dedicated to linking worldwide postgraduates in a support network, and many more. However, a word of caution: It is vital that you read and digest the terms and conditions of any of these sites. The spreading of your contact information, however con-vincing the hype from the site, should not be taken lightly.

Take control of your details and only put them where you don't mind them being seen. Don't forget that employers may well be looking at these and other websites to assess your suitability, and just like the caution you might exercise over Facebook photos or details, make sure that the information you put out on the web is information you don't mind becoming public knowledge. However, positive promotion, well considered and well placed can be an important tool in a developing career, whether academic or otherwise. P.T. Barnum once said 'Without promotion something terrible happens... Nothing!' so pick the right tools for you and your development, and spread the word!

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Addictions 2010, The New Frontier in Addiction Treatment: Evidence-based policy and practice

Christopher Russell

Sheraton National Hotel, Arlington, Virginia, USA, 28–31 October 2010.

RECENTLY ATTENDED the *Addictions 2010* conference in Washington DC, organised by Elsevier. I was attracted to this conference for at least five reasons, and I would recommend other postgraduates to seek out opportunities to attend and/or present work at academic and industry conferences if the same reasons apply to them.

The strongest selling point of the *Addictions 2010* conference was its theme of evidence-based policy and practice in addiction treatment. Presentations on this topic by the foremost authorities in the world of addiction research and policy promised a critical examination of why the current systems for treating addiction are inadequate in terms of policy, structure, funding, methodology, collaboration, and treatment efficacy. Presenters also described the practical and political changes required to both slow the prevalence rate of addictive behaviours at the societal level and improve the practitioner's ability to treat the problem at the individual level. With research scheme money becoming harder to obtain, the National Institute of Health (NIH), the largest public funder of addiction research in the US, recently announced their intention to priority fund research which contributes to an understanding of the neuroscience of addiction, and treatment efficacy studies where treatments already have an established or emerging evidence base. From listening to ongoing work and

conversing with delegates, it appears that promoting the adoption of the mainstream, evidence-based addiction treatments – cognitive-behaviour therapy (CBT), motivational interviewing (MI), and pharmacological interventions – will be the foremost priorities of the US treatment community for the foreseeable future.

In line with this theme, oral presentations described the effectiveness of three methods (face-to-face, telephone, manual) of training therapists to deliver CBT to stimulant dependent individuals in South Africa (Rick Rawson, University of California, Los Angeles), barriers and facilitators to the widespread use of medication-assisted treatment for substance use disorders in the US (Paul Roman, University of Georgia), and service adoption of remotely delivered interventions (e.g. via websites, SMS, MMS, and Skype) in Australia (David Kavanagh, Queensland University of Technology). Presentations which were more relevant to my PhD work included the efficacy of Mindfulness training in the treatment of comorbid substance abuse and eating disorders in Canada (Christine Courbasson, York University, Canada) and a programme to train motivational interviewing skills to community programme clinicians using expert and train-the-trainer strategies (Steve Martino, Yale University). These projects operated on budgets of hundreds of thousands – if not millions – of dollars, comprised large multidisciplinary teams, and will have a

significant bearing on the course of addiction policies in the imminent future. To hear first hand about the scale of these projects, the ethical, financial and access barriers faced by the investigators each day, and the presenters' basic English explanations of abundant and complex datasets was as daunting as it was impressive. In appreciation of the daily highs and lows of addiction research, the presenters at the *Addictions 2010* conference certainly described research careers to which I aspire.

More immediately, however, the presenters collectively emphasised the importance of evaluating addiction treatment efficacies in the context of their effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, feasibility, desirability, and scalability. Much of what we thought we knew about addiction, they argue, have turned out to be misunderstandings because we tend to assume that therapeutic effects observed in our interventions and randomised controlled trials give a glimpse of what effects will be produced at a state or national level. Doing so, these presenters argued, is to under-appreciate the influence of added social and economic variables and the logistical problems which are inevitably encountered when trying to deliver an up-scaled, cost-effective treatment for which there is a client demand and which retains the significant therapeutic effects observed in the smaller-scale randomised control trials. Part of the reason, therefore, why our addiction policies lag somewhere between 12 and 15 years behind our research, is because the very act of adapting a treatment from the form in which was proven to be efficacious will always change its efficacy, effectiveness, and by extension, its scalability. To use a metaphor, addiction researchers are trying to carry a full glass of water from one room to a thirsty friend in another room while retaining as much water in the glass as possible. The glass will always remain full (i.e. the treatment will retain its efficacy) if the glass isn't moved from its initial place, but, of course, we poured the glass of water for the very purpose of moving it to some-

where else (i.e. we conduct small-scale research with a view to contributing on a larger scale at some point in the future). The very act of moving the glass increases the probability of spillage; nonetheless, we are justified in our intention to move it and never justified in being content with leaving the glass where it is. The task of translating addiction research into policy is an understandably long, frustrating, but ultimately worthwhile process for researchers, policy makers, and clients alike. The presentations at the *Addictions 2010* conference were as much concerned with how to get as much water as possible to our thirsty friend (how does practice translate into policy?) as it was with how much of the glass they were able to fill in the first place (which practices work?).

My second reason for attending was the calibre and diversity of the delegates in attendance, of which I had been informed prior to registering. The conference was attended by editors-in-chief and associate editors from some of the top impact factor-rated journals in the addiction and substance abuse field, including *Addictive Behaviours*, *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, *Journal of International Drug Policy*, and *Behaviour Research and Therapy*. Other delegates included heads of treatment services, clinicians, primary care workers, administrators, researchers, writers, policy analysts, and even some bloggers. Being able to access these knowledgeable and influential individuals in one place, to be able to ask for their research advice, share plans and ideas for the future, discuss ongoing research, and debate current issues has undoubtedly enhanced my appetite for conducting addiction research. I also now have a more nuanced understanding of the top-down dissemination of addiction research to the treatment community, and how addiction science ultimately translates or fails to translate into policy in the US. My interactions with delegates at *Addictions 2010* have already proven to be invaluable sources of information and inspiration as I continue to write-up my thesis.

I also believe that that my interactions with delegates at this conference have enhanced my profile as a researcher in this field. When I left the conference on the Sunday I thought to myself, 'Well, at least they know my name!' But more than this, simply initiating conversations with 'this is who I am and this is what I do' actually got me into longer conversations with renowned, seasoned researchers about my work, their work, and what we want to work on next. So even before I consider the benefit of listening to talks by renowned presenters, I found that simply attending, wearing a name badge, initiating conversations, and talking about my own work and what I want to do next were simple yet lucrative ways to initiate exciting collaborative writing and research partnerships.

My third reason for attending was to present a poster on one of my PhD studies which had fortunately been accepted for publication by the *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* only three days before the conference. This study surveyed addiction treatment providers in the US ($N=219$) and UK ($N=356$) about their beliefs in the competing disease and choice models of addiction and investigated factors explaining variance in these beliefs. My findings describe how these treatment communities differently conceptualise addiction aetiology, processes, and treatment, and that the general concept of addiction means very different things to the US and UK treatment communities. I am confident that my findings were of interest to the addiction researchers, treatment providers, and policy makers in attendance as they speak directly to how addiction is understood by those working at the front line of treatment. My poster also described how the future of addiction research may depend on a greater focus on clients' subjective experiences and conceptualisations of addiction rather than on addiction science. This idea is currently provoking debate among addiction treatment providers and definitely prompted many questions during the poster sessions. Indeed, my poster had a

great spot in the poster hall with plenty of traffic and subsequently I fielded questions from delegates about my study and its implications for the entirety of the two two-hour poster sessions. The ensuing debate and feedback from delegates was personally enjoyable and professionally valuable.

My fourth reason for attending was to fulfil the advice of my PhD supervisor who told me at the beginning of my second year that with a view to applying for post-doctoral work or lectureships beyond my PhD, my CV would be greatly strengthened by presenting work at respected, relevant international conferences and symposia. Around January 2010 I began searching the internet and asking colleagues to keep me informed of upcoming conferences with an addiction or substance use focus. I soon came across the *Addictions 2010* conference call for submissions on the conference website. The website made clear the theme, the biographies of the speakers, and the attraction of the location in Washington DC so I became very keen to present some of my work at this conference. I submitted an abstract and received my acceptance email about two weeks later. Now, beyond the face-time with some of the world's leading addiction researchers, I believe that record of my presentation at the *Addictions 2010* conference will significantly ($p<.001$) strengthen my academic CV. When resources permit, I highly recommend that postgraduate students attend one or two national conferences in each year of their PhD, and I feel strongly that presenting work to knowledgeable and critical others, particularly in years 2 and 3 of a PhD, will sharpen critical and reflective thinking skills precisely when they are most needed.

The final reason I attended was to experience Washington DC as a tourist, and I was fortunate that the conference happened to coincide with some pretty major cultural events including political rallies on the National Mall as the US prepared for their mid-term elections, Halloween parties, and the 35th Annual Marine Corps Marathon. Though I didn't have much time to fully

engage in these events, I did manage a day of sightseeing and I thoroughly enjoyed being part of the atmosphere which these events brought to Washington DC for these few days. I fully expect that the *Addictions 2011* host city will provide attendees with a similarly memorable cultural experience and I would recommend that others try to find time to experience some of a city's cultural offerings when attending a conference.

In all, the *Addictions 2010* conference in Washington DC was a fantastic experience for me, both professionally and personally. The organising committee are contemplating hosting the *Addictions 2011* conference in Europe with Dublin and Amsterdam mooted as potential host cities, though do check for regular internet updates. I'm sure

this event will not only go ahead, but will again draw internationally-leading psychologists, sociologists, neuroscientists and policy makers in the addiction field to present their work. I strongly recommend the UK addiction research community to come share its work and enjoy the knowledgeable and friendly company of the *Addictions 2011* conference just as I enjoyed my time at the *Addictions 2010*.

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UNION STATION, WASHINGTON DC

Dreaming: A psychobiological view

Greg J. Elder

WHY DO WE DREAM? Although the exact function of dreaming is still unknown, various studies have examined this from a psychobiological approach. This article will provide a very brief summary of the findings from these approaches and of the potential neural and neurobiological substrates involved in dreaming. During a night of sleep, EEG recordings can be categorised into different stages, and can be split into rapid-eye movement (REM) sleep or non-REM sleep. During REM sleep, EEG recordings are virtually identical to those obtained from an active, awake brain, comprising fast beta EEG rhythms and eye-movements. The brain in REM sleep has higher levels of cerebral blood flow (Madsen et al., 1991) and higher cerebral energy requirements (Maquet et al., 1990) than in non-REM sleep. Historically, it was thought that dreams only occurred within REM sleep and although this is not the case (Solms, 2000) dreams which occur within REM sleep do tend to be the most vivid and bizarre. REM dreams also tend to be the most emotional in nature and tend to be longer than non-REM dreams (Hobson, Pace-Schott & Stickgold, 2000; Suzuki et al., 2004).

Currently there are two main models believed to be responsible for dreaming, with a brainstem-based model focusing on ponto-geniculo-occipital (PGO) waves and another focusing on cortical arousal. PGO waves are a fundamental part of REM sleep and reflect phasic activity within the brain, originating in the pons as electrical waves before moving to the lateral geniculate nucleus (LGN) and finally to the primary visual cortex of the occipital lobe (Bókkon, Dai & Antal, 2010). PGO activity may be a correlate of dreaming, as previous lesion studies have shown that the brainstem has a primary role within the generation of PGO

waves and the REM sleep state. PGO waves can be measured from the LGN and from the occipital cortex of cats, two areas which are consistent with the visual nature of dreaming (Datta, 1997; Stuart & Conduit, 2009). Dream features support this model, as 100 per cent of dreams contain visual components, whereas 40 to 60 per cent of dreams contain auditory components, 15 to 30 per cent of dreams contain kinaesthetic components, and less than one per cent of dreams contain smell and taste. In addition to this, the majority of dreams tend to be experienced from a first-person perspective (Strauch, Meier & Foulkes, 1996; as cited in Schwartz & Maquet, 2002). So far, PGO waves have been observed within animals, suggesting animals may dream, however, the main drawback of the PGO dream model is the current difficulty in directly measuring the waves within humans. At present direct measurements are invasive, as current neuroimaging methods lack the spatial and temporal resolution to directly detect PGO waves. However, fMRI studies have provided some support for the model, with one study which time-locked fMRI to the occurrence of REMs within sleeping participants showing increased BOLD activation in areas where PGO waves appear the most prominently (Miyauchi et al., 2009). One such area was the primary visual area V1. The inclusion of a control condition in which participants performed self-paced saccades in the scanner suggested that the activation of V1 was caused by a functional link between REM sleep and visual activity. Importantly, as V1 activation occurred prior to REM, despite there being no visual input from the retina, this provided support for the PGO model. This was in agreement with the results from an earlier study (Madsen et al., 1991), which observed increases in blood flow within the

associative visual area during REM sleep, suggesting activation of the cerebral structures which process visual material is related to the experience of visual dreams. Born-blind individuals experience visual dreams (Bértolo et al., 2003), meaning these dreams may simply be a result of the activation of visual cortical areas. Taking the PGO model further, Bókkon et al. (2010) consider it possible for dream generation to be a completely artificial process, with dreams a result of spike-related electrical activation at a neuronal level. These patterns of activation are converted into extremely weak optical signals within the retinotopically-organised neurons of visual areas V1 and V2 and are processed by higher-order areas during REM dreams. Areas V1 and V2 represent aspects of vision including colour, form, motion and depth and as the neurons that represent visual awareness are activated when visual perception occurs, according to this model similar activation occurs during REM dreams.

As these visual circuits involved in the detection of visual perception are responsible for generating phosphenes (vision caused by electrical excitation of the visual pathways), Bókkon et al. suggest that transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) could be used to induce phosphenes in humans during REM dreams as a test of this hypothesis. The PGO model has also been examined pharmacologically. Page, Coleman and Conduit (2006) studied the effects of 24-hour transdermal nicotine patches, following previous animal studies showing that nicotine is capable of blocking PGO activity during REM sleep. Individuals using the nicotine patches experienced less REM sleep, whereas non-REM sleep was unaffected and in addition, the quality of REM dreams were observed to increase as participants reported more visual imagery and also more vivid dreams. However, although this suggests nicotine can affect REM-specific dreaming as a side effect, PGO waves cannot be directly measured and pharmacologically nicotine has different effects on smokers and on non-smokers.

The cortical arousal model focuses more on the significance of regional brain activations, meaning certain features experienced within dreams may simply be experienced as a result of these patterns of activation and deactivation. During REM sleep these have been observed within areas including the pontine tegmentum, thalamus, amygdala, hippocampus, anterior cingulate cortex, temporo-occipital areas, basal forebrain, the cerebellum and the caudate nucleus. Conversely, other areas show reduced activity, including the prefrontal cortex, the posterior cingulate gyrus, the precuneus and inferior parietal cortex (Palagini & Rosenlicht, in press). Within dreams, the hypoactivation of the prefrontal cortex, an area responsible for behaviours including decision-making and planning, may be responsible for lack of insight, distorted time perception, and the amnesia experienced upon waking (Schwartz & Maquet, 2002). Solms (2000) proposed that dreams are a result of specific dopaminergic forebrain mechanisms which operate together, separate from REM sleep mechanisms which are controlled by cholinergic brainstem mechanisms. This is supported by the fact that individuals who have forebrain lesions and intact brainstems cannot dream, and the ability to dream is also lost following lesions in the ventromesial quadrant of the frontal lobes, an area specifically where the mesocortical/mesolimbic dopamine system originates. Dreaming can also be manipulated by dopamine agonists and antagonists without affecting factors such as REM duration. Chemical activation of the dopamine circuit stimulates positive psychotic symptoms by causing excessive, vivid dreaming in addition to nightmares, and drugs which block activity in the dopamine circuit actually inhibit vivid dreaming (Solms, 2000). Solms suggested that this dopamine system has a causal role in dream generation (the 'dream-on' mechanism), and that this interacts with the 'REM-on' mechanism, the paradoxical REM state in which the brain is both asleep and activated at the same time, as reflected



through the associated patterns of cerebral activation. Solms proposed that for dreaming to occur, cerebral activation has to occur during sleep, and that the dopaminergic circuits of the ventromesial forebrain also have to be activated. The neurotransmitter acetylcholine is involved, having a major role in both the regulation of behavioural arousal and in cortical EEG activation patterns. Animal research studies have shown that the cholinergic neurons of the basal forebrain supply the neocortex with acetylcholine, and the levels of cortical acetylcholine release are the highest during wake and REM sleep, and the lowest during non-REM sleep (Vazquez & Baghdoyan, 2001). Despite this support, the most damaging evidence against cortically-based theories of dreaming comes from studies which actually show that dream recall ability is greatest when cortical activation is decreased (Russell & Conduit, 2009).

Emotions are typically present within dreams, with negative emotions including fear and anxiety being particularly prominent. The amygdala modulates response to threats during wakefulness, and high activity within the amygdala and inferotemporal visual cortex has been observed to correlate with the emotional intensity of visual stimuli (Sabatinelli et al., 2005). This suggests that activation of the amygdala within REM sleep might be a correlate of the emotional load of dream content, although there may be other structures involved (Dang-vu et al., 2005). The emotional content of dreams can also be altered externally. In one study (Schredl et al., 2009) healthy women were exposed during REM sleep to a pleasant stimulus (the smell of roses), an unpleasant stimulus (the smell of rotten eggs) or a completely neutral, odourless stimulus. The individuals were awakened almost immediately after the presentation of the stimuli, and were asked to report their

dreams and to rate various aspects quantitatively. Whilst these odours were not explicitly incorporated within the volunteers' dreams (i.e. they did not dream of rotten eggs or roses), the emotional content of the dreams was influenced in that dreams following the pleasant stimulus were judged to be positive and those following the unpleasant odour were judged to be negative. The authors noted that the olfactory bulb is directly connected to the amygdala, meaning the emotional quality of the odour may have encouraged processing of emotional memories. The dream, therefore, reflected the positive or negative emotional tone of the stimulus, rather than directly incorporating it.

There are still various problems to overcome within dream research, as indeed there is no definitive answer as to why we dream. One possibility is that it has a role within memory consolidation. REM sleep may facilitate the formation of new memories, as this process supports consolidation of procedural and emotional memories, and consolidation during sleep may be under the control of prefrontal and hippocampal brain activity (Diekelmann, Wilhelm & Born, 2009). The amygdala and prefrontal regions may select information of strong motivational and emotional relevance for processing during sleep, resulting in strong emotional content within vivid dreams (Wamsley & Antrobus, 2009). Similarly, sleep can lead to memory

retention of the emotional content of visual scenes (Payne et al., 2008). Hormones such as cortisol may also play a role within memory consolidation during REM sleep, as cortisol in this context can disrupt communication between the hippocampus and neocortical regions, interfering with consolidation and affecting the content of dreams (Payne & Nadel, 2004). Dream research studies must also attempt to overcome potential methodological flaws, as future studies must attempt to examine dreaming within non-REM sleep as well as within REM sleep. The application of techniques such as TMS may be of benefit, particularly since models of dreaming which incorporate PGO waves cannot presently be tested at neural levels. Finally, further research could examine dreams within clinical populations. One such avenue would be to examine dreams within schizophrenic patients, as recent work has suggested that this may be able to provide an insight into the underlying neurocognitive processes (Lusignan et al., 2009) since dreaming may result from the activation of similar neural circuitry responsible for some symptoms of schizophrenia (Solms, 2000).

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Students' beliefs about academic writing

James Hartley

IN THE October 2010 issue of the *PsyPAG Quarterly* Mark Griffiths listed eight myths or false beliefs that people hold about writing – before moving on to clarify them and to list 14 recommendations for making writing more productive (Griffiths, 2010).

I thought it might be interesting to see what postgraduate students actually thought about these issues. Did they share these myths, or are they more sophisticated? Accordingly, in Study 1 below, I asked 21 postgraduate psychology students at Keele to indicate whether or not they agreed with Griffiths' myths. And, in Study 2, I present the data gained earlier from asking 28 more Keele postgraduates to indicate the techniques they used when writing academic text.

Finally, I list in an Appendix some texts on academic writing that psychology postgraduates might find useful.

Study 1

Twenty-one Keele postgraduate psychology students attending a discussion session on academic writing in November 2010 completed a brief questionnaire in which they were asked to indicate whether or not they agreed with Griffiths' 'myths'. Eighteen of these students – 15 female and three male – handed in their response sheets. Their median age was 21, range 20 to 40, and all but one reported that they were native English speakers.

Table 1 shows the myths in abbreviated form, and the numbers of students answering yes, no or not sure.

These results speak for themselves and suggest that most of these postgraduate only believed in one myth – that good writing must be original.

Table 1: Responses of 18 psychology postgraduates to Griffith's myths.

Myth	Yes	Not Sure	No
Good writing is inherently difficult	6	7	5
Good writing must be original	13	1	4
Good writing is achieved in a single draft	0	1	17
Good writing is spontaneous	1	9	8
Good writing proceeds quickly	0	7	11
Good writing is done best in good blocks of uninterrupted time	2	4	12
Good writers are born not made	0	2	16
Good writers do not share their writing until it is finished	2	2	14

Study 2

For some years now I have spoken about academic writing to postgraduates at Keele on induction courses for all disciplines. To start the ball rolling, I usually ask them to complete a 13-item questionnaire about academic writing that focuses on their beliefs about what might be termed ‘good practice’. Many of these students have handed in their questionnaires and I present below the results for 28 of them. Regrettably I have no personal details of these respondents so I am unable to say how many were men or women, how many were science/social science/arts postgraduates, and how many had English as their first language. Table 2 shows the overall results for eight items from this second questionnaire.

These results complement those in Table 1. The first three items are concerned with planning and, as I have indicated before (Hartley, 2008), they suggest that one of the standard ways of labelling students as either planners, revisers, or mixed is too simple in these days of word-processing. The results for the remaining items support those reported in Table 1 and indicate that many postgraduates enjoy academic writing – and that several share their texts with others.

Conclusions

These small studies suggest that student writers’ beliefs and practices vary: there is no one way of writing that is best, or suitable for all (Hartley, 2009). New technology has facilitated planning, drafting, sharing, revising, and coping with the technicalities of spelling, grammar and referencing. Indeed, today, many psychology postgraduates are already publishing in academic journals before they graduate (see Aichison, Kamler & Lee, 2010; Hartley & Betts, 2009). Although the data presented here are hardly substantial or robust, they suggest that academic writing today is not supported by the traditional myths. It requires more work, of course, to establish whether or not this is true.

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Table 2: Responses of 28 postgraduates students to aspects of academic writing.

<i>Procedures in and attitudes to academic writing</i>	Yes	?	No
I first have a general plan, and then I start and see how it goes	19	5	4
I first plan in detail, then I write, then I revise	14	6	8
I can be described as a continual reviser	16	4	8
I put of writing off as long as possible	9	3	16
Given lots of practice anyone can improve their academic writing skills	27	1	0
I enjoy writing academic text	13	6	9
Some people are just naturally good at writing	18	7	3
I like my friends to read what I have written	12	10	6



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Appendix

Useful texts on academic writing for psychology postgraduates.

- Hartley, J. (2008). *Academic writing and publishing: A practical handbook*. Abingdon: Routledge.
Contains an introductory chapter on the nature of scientific writing, followed by bite-size sections on all aspects of academic writing – including articles, theses, book reviews, letters to editors, refereeing, etc.
- Murray, R. (2006). *How to write a thesis* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
The standard text on this topic in the UK. Includes sections on different kinds of theses, and writers' groups. The only text (listed here) devoted solely to the thesis (and post-publication).
- Silvia, P.J. (2007). *How to write a lot: A practical guide to productive academic writing*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
A short text despite its title. Behaviourism in the raw – in this book no one suffers from 'writer's block' – only inappropriate behaviours that can be changed.
- Sternberg, R.J. (2003). *The psychologist's companion: A guide to scientific writing for students and researchers* (4th ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Sixteen chapters on different aspects of academic writing for psychologists in an American context, including writing lectures and journal papers, but nothing specific on the thesis.

A brief introduction to Backward Visual Masking and Object Substitution Masking

Ioannis Argyropoulos

THE Visual Masking paradigm has long been a valuable tool in vision research; it provides insight into the basic mechanisms of visual awareness, such as the effect of irrelevant stimuli (distractors) on the perception of a target stimulus, the formation and establishment of visual representations and the effects of the temporal properties of stimuli on visual perception. Backward Visual Masking (BVM) refers to the perceptual phenomenon in which the brief presence of one stimulus (the mask) can impede the perception of a previous (target) stimulus (Breitmeyer, 1984; Breitmeyer & Ogmen, 2006). The term *backward* reflects the fact that although the mask follows the target in time, it can still render the target unreportable or even 'invisible'. Numerous studies have shown that the temporal interval between the onset of the target and that of the mask (Stimulus Onset Asynchrony; SOA) mediates masking magnitude (Breitmeyer, 1984; Breitmeyer & Ganz, 1976; Breitmeyer & Ogmen, 2006; Jiang & Chun, 2001). For instance, when the mask appears simultaneously with the target, observers have little difficulty reporting the target. If, however, the mask follows the target in time, the latter becomes less visible to the observers and their performance drops significantly when the interval between them increases up to a certain point.

Target and mask patterns may share common structural elements (*masking by structure*; Figure 1), or the mask may consist of a random dot pattern (*masking by noise*; Figure 2). In these types of masking, the mask spatially overlaps the target, but this is not a necessary condition for masking to occur; in *metacntrast masking*, the mask closely surrounds the target but it does not

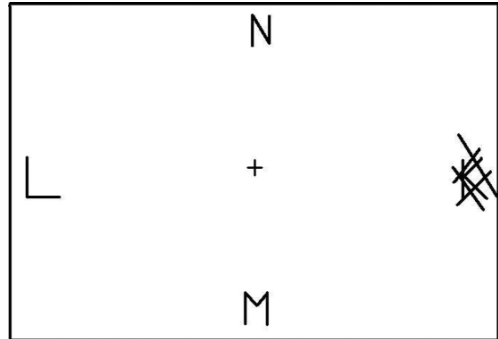


Figure 1: Masking by structure: The mask consists of elements (lines) similar to those used to construct the target.

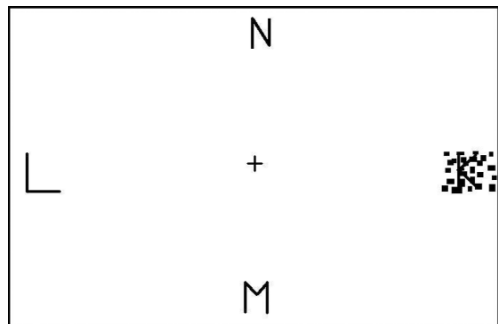


Figure 2: Masking by noise: A random dot pattern covers the target.

spatially occlude it, yet a substantial masking effect is achieved (Figure 3).

Accounts of backward masking argue that two main processes may contribute to the genesis of masking: an *integration* and an *interruption* process. The former is said to take place when the contours of the mask integrate with those of the target, forming a unitary percept of the combined contents of the target and mask representations. The interruption process, on the other hand, is argued to operate when the delayed onset of

the mask interrupts the processing of the target resulting in visual and attentional mechanisms being re-allocated to processing of the mask alone (Breitmeyer & Ogmen, 2006).

Traditional models of BVM were based on the assumption that the processes that take place during masking involve low level visual processes. Low level processes are concerned with simple stimuli attributes such as colour, luminance, shape and figural characteristics. For instance, in masking by structure, the degree of structural similarity between the mask and the target may affect the masking magnitude, with greater similarity resulting in a larger masking effect. In masking by noise, on the other hand, high levels of mask density results in observers giving poor performance.

In recent years, however, a newly-reported form of BVM has questioned the exclusivity of low level visual processes in BVM and it has been argued that, at least in some forms of masking, high level visual processes are involved in the masking effect as well. High level processes are concerned with more abstract aspects of visual perception such as the formation of stable representations.

Enns and Di Lollo (1997) showed that in a display with several distractors, a mask of only four dots flanking the target item not only exerted masking but did so at the same magnitude as a metacontrast mask. There are several unique characteristics of this new type of masking – which Di Lollo, Enns and Rensink (2000) dubbed Object Substitution Masking (OSM) – that distinguish it from other masking phenomena; for instance, in contrast to typical BVM paradigms, masking in OSM occurs even when target and mask onset simultaneously. In fact, it is not the SOA that mediates the masking magnitude, but rather the persistent presence of the mask in the target's location after the target offset (Stimulus Termination Asynchrony – STA; Figure 4). A second feature of OSM is that processes that were suggested to contribute to the masking effect in the traditional BVM

paradigms could not explain Enns and Di Lollo's (1997) findings; the mask does not overlap with the target and, therefore, integration processes cannot be involved, nor can the interruption mechanism account for OSM as the mask may also onset along with the target. A third characteristic is that OSM appears to be much less susceptible to low level processes than other forms of masking; the mask (four dots) has few contours and the masking effect is not affected by the distance between the target and the mask.

OSM appears to have more in common with metacontrast masking than other forms of BVM; in both types of masking the mask does not cover the target – but, the fact that metacontrast masking is achieved only when the target precedes the mask in time and that it is also susceptible to low level processes (e.g. level of proximity between the target and the mask), makes OSM a unique masking phenomenon (but also see Breitmeyer & Ogmen, 2000, for why OSM could be considered as another form of metacontrast masking). However, the second and most crucial characteristic that differentiates OSM from metacontrast masking is that whereas metacontrast masking can be achieved even when only one item (the target) is presented on the display, this is not the case for OSM.

Indeed, one of the hallmarks of OSM is its dependence on the distribution of visual spatial attention over the search display. Di Lollo et al. (2000) identified two factors that affect the masking magnitude in OSM. They found that when there was only one item in the display (i.e. the target) and the mask terminated along with the target, observers' performance was nearly perfect. When, however, the number of items increased and the mask was present for a longer time, observers had great difficulty reporting the target.

To account for these findings, Di Lollo et al. (2000) suggested a new theoretical model which was based on the assumption of inter-communication between brain areas

(Felleman & Van Essen, 1991). According to this account – which Di Lollo et al. named the *Iterative Reentrant Processes account* – visual input from the target plus mask is sent initially to low level visual areas for basic coding and processing. This information is then fed forward to higher level visual circuits to form a representation of the stimulus or stimuli in the target location, in this case target plus mask. This provisional representation is in need of confirmation and thus, through backward projections, is sent back to lower level areas to be compared to the current input. If the stimuli in the target location remained the same (target plus mask) during these iterative cycles, the hypothesis is confirmed and a visual percept is formed. If, however, the current input has changed (i.e. mask alone) when the perceptual hypothesis arrives for confirmation then a mismatch occurs and a new cycle begins in order to form a new hypothesis based on the current input.

More recently, Lleras and Moore (2003) and Moore and Lleras (2005) entertained a new hypothesis regarding the processes involved in OSM which they named the *Object Updating Theory* (OUT). Contrary to the re-entrant hypothesis that suggests that OSM arises from competition to reach awareness between the object token for target plus mask and that for the mask alone, the OUT argues that the masking effect is rather the consequence of the features associated with a single object token – initially target features plus mask features – being transformed over time into those of the mask features alone. In a series of experiments, in which they employed apparent motion to link the target and mask, so the former appeared to transform into the latter, the researchers showed that when observers can successfully establish two separate object tokens for the target and the mask, the target is then protected from masking. A number of further studies have also supported this interpretation of OSM (but see Gellatly et al., 2010; Pilling & Gellatly, 2010).

Concluding remarks and future questions

Visual masking is a powerful tool in vision research and it has enhanced our understanding of the processes underlying visual awareness. It is worth mentioning that in a survey from Perception and Psychophysics, 20 per cent of all articles on vision concerned visual masking (Enns & Di Lollo, 2000). Object Substitution Masking, on the other hand, has highlighted the involvement of higher order processes in the dynamics of visual perception. The re-entrant hypothesis and updating theory accounts do not necessarily oppose to each other but they could be considered as complementary. Nevertheless, both models leave open a series of questions, for instance, is OSM an all-or-none process? That is, is it possible for some stimuli attributes to be less (or more) susceptible to masking than others (Gellatly et al., 2006)? By the same token, what is the level of processing of target stimuli that observers fail to report? And finally, how can OUT and the re-entrant hypothesis account for reports from various studies that observers described a blank space inside the four dots (Di Lollo, et al., 2000; Neill, Hutchison & Graves, 2002; Tata, 2002)?

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Psychology of Women Section ANNUAL CONFERENCE

13-15 July 2011

Cumberland Lodge, Windsor

Themes

- Feminist Reflections on Evidence-Based Practice
- Feminism and the Psycho-Social
- Feminism and Innovative Methods

Keynote speakers TBA

The POWs annual three-day conference covers a wide range of issues including: gender, mental health, women's health, feminist theory, masculinities, sexualities, qualitative methodologies, disability, ethnicity and racism. Contributions include papers, symposia, posters and workshops.

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This section is available for you if you're looking for help with a problem (be it on statistics, methodology, or issues relating to being a postgraduate) or want to meet others in your field. Please submit approximately 200 to 300 words including your contact details and an outline of your research interests or problem.

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Go to: www.psypag.co.uk/resources/lonely-brains

Michael Richards

Manchester Metropolitan University.

05005309@stu.mmu.ac.uk

I am in my second year of my PhD programme. My work brings together community psychology and critical disability studies, working with men in groups with learning difficulties in improving their health and wellbeing. I use an action research methodology, which involves working with people in the community and not on them. I am interested in using creative, visual methods alongside traditional psychological methods. My work explores these approaches through film, cameras, art, creative writing, healthy eating, debate and music. Community psychology appreciates the contexts in which people are placed at micro (e.g. family) and macro levels (e.g. government), rather than focusing on the neuropsychological make-up of a person. Empowerment is a central concept. For example, using methods to tackle and challenge homophobic young men. In addition, community psychology promotes diversity and gender equality between groups. It uses a plurality of research methods, particularly action orientated, especially qualitative methods. Evaluation and reflexivity in practice are essential tools to build on the idea of praxis, that action builds on knowledge and knowledge is acquired through action. Action research is a reflective approach of progressive problem solving led by individuals rather

than the researcher, as part of a 'community of practice' to improve the way issues can be solved. In addition, action research is an interactive inquiry process that balances problem solving actions implemented in a collaborative context with research to understand underlying causes enabling future predictions about personal and organisational change.

Chantelle Bailey

PsyPAG: SW Branch and Publications and Communications Board Representative.

Centre for Appearance Research, University of the West of England,

Chantelle2.Bailey@uwe.ac.uk

I am in the second year of my PhD, which is aiming to develop a school-based body image intervention to reduce negative attitudes towards appearance and promote appearance diversity. More specifically, I am interested in how collaborating with key stakeholders through a co-participatory approach can benefit the design of school-based body interventions. My research interests primarily include sociocultural influences on body image, but I have a keen interest in innovative research methodology (including visual methods), and the public perception of psychology. I would love to collaborate with someone who is interested in exploring the public image of psychology further, or any other of my research interests.

Dates for your diary

Event	Date	Where	Website
Postgraduate Conference: 'Practicing alternative approaches to qualitative research'	3 June 2011	University of Bath	
PsyPAG Annual Conference	6–8 July 2011	Bangor University	www.psypag2011.co.uk
Association for the Teaching of Psychology Annual Conference	8–10 July 2011	University of Herefordshire	www.atpconference.org.uk
BPS Psychology of Women Section Annual Conference	13–15 July 2011	Cumberland Lodge, Windsor	www.bps.org.uk/pows
BPS Division of Counselling Psychology Annual Conference	14–16 July 2011	The Thistle Grand Hotel, Bristol	www.bps.org.uk/dcop-conference/dcop-conference_home.cfm
MHID Congress 2011	1–3 September 2011	Palace Hotel, Manchester	www.mhid2011congress.co.uk
BPS Cognitive Section Annual Conference	6–8 September 2011	Keele University	www.keele-conferencemanagement.com/bpscognitive2011
BPS Social Psychology Section Annual Conference	6–8 September 2011	Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge	www.bps.org.uk/conferences-and-events/event-listing/events\$/2011/september/social2011/social2011_home.cfm
BPS Developmental Section Annual Conference	7–9 September 2011	Northumbria University City Campus	www.bps.org.uk/dev2011
BPS Division of Health Psychology Annual Conference	14–16 September 2011	University of Southampton	www.bps.org.uk/dhp-conference/dhp-conference_home.cfm

PsyPAG Committee 2010/2011

Position	Currently held by	Due for re-election
Core Committee Members		
Chair chair@psypag.co.uk	Sarah Wood sarah.wood@unn.ac.uk	2012
Treasurer	Josie Booth josephine.n.booth@strath.ac.uk	2011
Vice Chair vicechair@psypag.co.uk	Alana James psp01aj@gold.ac.uk	2011
Communications Officer webmaster@psypag.co.uk	Hester Duffy hester.duffy@gmail.com	2012
Information Officer info@psypag.co.uk	Jenna Condie J.Condie@pgr.salford.ac.uk	2012
PsyPAG Quarterly Editors quarterly@psypag.co.uk	Charlotte McLeod cm267@bath.ac.uk	2011
	Julie Port julie.port@gmail.com	2011
	Emily Collins e.collins@gold.ac.uk	2012
	Claire Miller claire.miller@bangor.ac.uk	2012
Division Representatives		
Division of Clinical Psychology	Fleur-Michelle Coiffait F.M.Coiffait@sms.ed.ac.uk	2012
Division of Counselling Psychology	Sarah Baker sarah@mkvie.com	Co-opted
Division of Educational and Child Psychology	Emma Jackson e.jackson@worc.ac.uk	2012
Scottish Division of Educational Psychology	Position under review	
Division for Teachers and Researchers in Psychology	Puja Joshi aa9040@coventry.ac.uk	Co-opted
Division of Forensic Psychology	Emily Collins e.collins@gold.ac.uk	2012
Division of Health Psychology	Ruth Laudler ruth.laudler@northumbria.ac.uk	2012
Division of Neuropsychology	Jen Mayer j.mayer@gold.ac.uk	2012
Division of Occupational Psychology	Kazia Solowiej k.solowiej@worc.ac.uk	2012
Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology	Sean Webster sean.webster@uws.ac.uk	2012

Position	Currently held by	Due for re-election
Section Representatives		
Cognitive Psychology Section	Darren Lewis dsdl@exchange.shu.ac.uk	2012
Consciousness and Experiential Psychology Section	Greg Elder greg.elder@strath.ac.uk	2012
Developmental Psychology Section	Natalia Kucirkova n.kucirkova@open.ac.uk	Co-opted
History and Philosophy of Psychology Section	Elisa Carrus psp01ec@gold.ac.uk	2012
Psychology of Sexualities Section	Andrew Clements andrew.clements@beds.ac.uk	2011
Mathematical, Statistical and Computing Section	Elisa Carrus psp01ec@gold.ac.uk	2011
Psychobiology Section	Robin Kramer psp837@bangor.ac.uk	2011
Psychology of Education Section	Emma Jackson e.jackson@worc.ac.uk	Co-opted
Psychology of Women Section	Helen Owton howton1@chi.ac.uk	2011
Psychotherapy Section	Kate Doran K.Doran@sheffield.ac.uk	Co-opted
Qualitative Methods Section	Amy Fielden a.fielden@northumbria.ac.uk	Co-opted
Social Psychology Section	Ruth Laidler ruthlaidler88@yahoo.co.uk	2012
Transpersonal Psychology Section	Alexander Griffiths-Moros aig3@st-andrews.ac.uk	Co-opted
Coaching Psychology	Gareth Picknell gareth.picknell@hotmail.co.uk	Co-opted

Position	Currently held by	Due for re-election
Branch Representatives		
North East of England Branch	Tom Merrill tommym777@hotmail.com	Co-opted
North West of England Branch	Alyson Blanchard alysonblanchard@btinternet.com	Co-opted
Northern Ireland Branch	Paul Wilson pwilson23@qub.ac.uk	2011
Scottish Branch	Jillian Hobson jillian.hobson@strath.ac.uk	2012
South West of England Branch	Chantelle Bailey chantelle2.bailey@uwe.ac.uk	2012
Welsh Branch	Rhian Worth rhian.worth@hotmail.co.uk	Co-opted
Wessex Branch	Christopher Rossiter cr00107@surrey.ac.uk	Co-opted
West Midlands Branch	Emma Jackson e.jackson@worc.ac.uk	2012
London and Home Counties Branch	Position vacant	
Board Representatives		
Membership and Professional Training Board	Position under review	
Publications and Communications Board	Chantelle Bailey chantelle2.bailey@uwe.ac.uk	2012
Ethics	Kirsten Bartlett k.e.bartlett@shu.ac.uk	2012
Research Board (Chair)	Sarah Wood sarah.wood@unn.ac.uk	2012
Other Committees		
Conference Standing Committee	Stuart Flint swf07@aber.ac.uk	2011
International Representative	Jen Mayer j.mayer@gold.ac.uk	2012
Learning and Teaching Support Network	Elizabeth Freeman e.freeman@yorks.ac.uk	2011
National Postgraduate Committee	Position under review	
Undergraduate Liaison Officer	Stephen McGlynn stephen.mcglynn@new.ox.ac.uk	Co-opted



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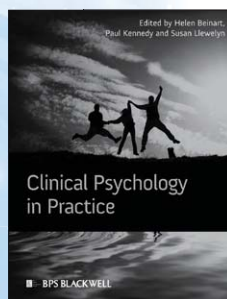
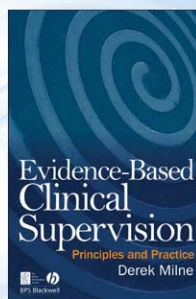
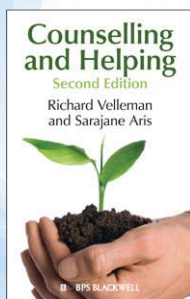
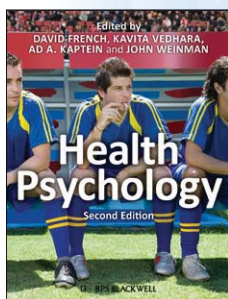
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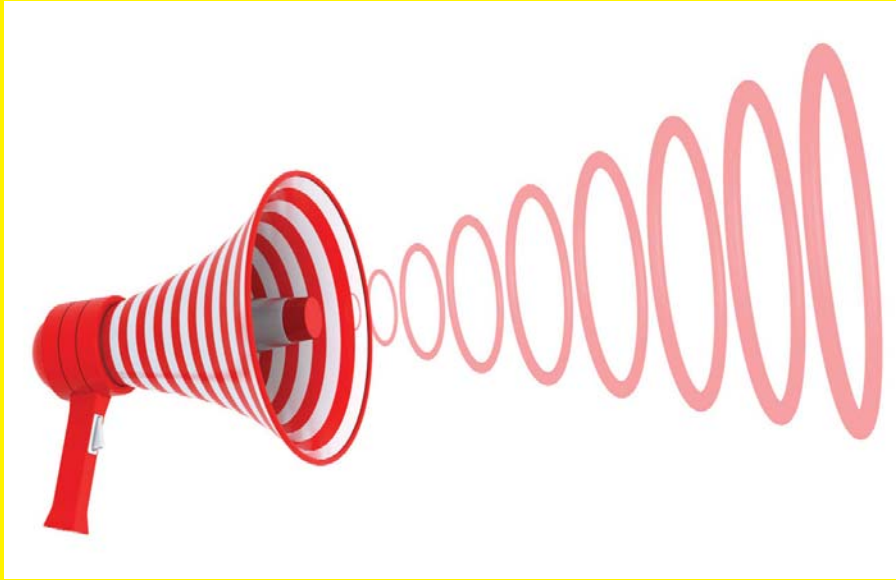
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