PSYPAG
Psychology Postgraduate Affairs Group
Quarterly
Issue 77 December 2010

Electrodes on babies and whiskers on kittens

Psychology research on clinical populations

Publishing, conferencing and writing-up

Also in this issue:

Conference review

Lonely Brains

Editorial

Julie Port

HELLO AND WELCOME to the 77th edition of the *PsyPAG Quarterly*.

We open the current issue with the column from our Chair, Sarah Wood, who asks us to remember the importance of reflective learning especially over the Christmas period. We continue with Hester Duffy's interesting account of her research of infants and ERP. This is followed by an informative discussion by Rasia Pecta on the pitfalls of clinical research. John Radford replies to a previous article by Gareth Morris and Jenna Condie, in *PsyPag Quarterly 74* on professional identity, providing us with a number of thought provoking points for those wishing to become professional psychologists. The next article is a conference review by Abby McCormack who shares her experience at the International Gambling Conference, held in New Zealand this year.

This issue contains three articles full of wisdom for students at different stages of the PhD process. Sophie Von Stumm provides a great deal of thorough information that no one ever tells you. John Hyland provides some light at the end of the tunnel for those in the final stages and discusses some issues (and how to overcome them). Finally David Ellis discusses the importance of backing-up your data, giving a number of helpful tips – useful to all of us, no matter what the stage of our PhD!

The final article is by Jenna Condie, who discusses the benefits on being part of the Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section. I placed this article near the end because I wanted it to be close to the list of committee members. If you are thinking about joining a Division or Section but want to know more, please feel free to e-mail one of our representatives.

We accept a variety of submissions, including conference reviews, departmental reviews, discussion articles, research in brief, interviews, book and software reviews, or hints and tips. We understand that you need to keep the results from your research to publish, but we would like to hear about your experiences. For example, if something went wrong, tell us how you solved the problem. Also, if you do have results which you do not intend to publish elsewhere, we would love to publish them.

PsyPAG has a new website (www.psypag.co.uk) and I would like to thank and congratulate Hester Duffy (Communications Officer, and website developer) on a job well done! We have included lots of new resources including a recommended reading list, interactive forums, 'Lonely Brains' column, and links to Twitter and Facebook. Please take a look and tell us what you think.

I hope you enjoy the current edition and would love to receive an article from you in the future. All of us in the *PsyPAG Quarterly* Editorial Team hope you have a good Christmas break and a Happy New Year!

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

© The British Psychological Society

Chair's Column

Sarah Wood

AT THIS TIME OF YEAR, I think that it is a good time to reflect on the year that has gone and the promises of the year ahead. For PsyPAG it has been a year of change, with a number of long-standing committee members leaving us and a lot of new faces joining at our AGM in July. Hopefully you will have noticed some of these changes, our website (www.psypag.co.uk) has undergone a revamp including a new forum, allowing you to network with fellow postgraduates, getting advice and support or having a natter about non-psychology related topics and we have increased our presence on Facebook and Twitter. Our aim with these initiatives is to get members more involved with PsyPAG, after all we are here to support, recognise and represent you, psychology postgraduates. To this end, as I said in my September column, if you have any comments on our recent activities or what to suggest something that we should be doing, please get in touch with us; either with myself or a relevant committee member.

While the Christmas and New Year period provides an obvious place to reflect upon what has been and what is to come, reflection should be an ongoing process and it is important to make time for it within your normal schedule not just after key milestones or events. Reflective practice is something which is advocated on the professional training routes for psychologists, be it clinical or forensic and is something that first came to light for me while undertaking my MSc in Sport and Exercise Psychology. For me this means, after I have met with an athlete I will reflect upon the session, initially straight after the meeting and then a week or two later. I have found that taking the time to reflect has helped improve my practices by challenging me to do things better but it has also allowed me to say 'well done' when sessions have been successful. For those of you who are a bit of a perfectionist, like me (all psychology postgraduates?), this is something that we don't do often and our successes, of whatever size, can often pass us by.

While reflective practice was born-out of applied disciplines, initially in nursing, I think that it is something that psychology students should also consider incorporating into their academic lives. As a postgraduate student we are often faced with jumping from one challenge to another, with varied demands on our time and an ever increasing to-do-list, with little time to stop and think about what we have just done, what we have learnt and where we are going next. These are necessary questions that we should be taking the time to address.

There are many models of reflective practice in the literature and I would suggest that you go and have a look at them. While the models do differ one of the commonalties is that reflection should be a circular process. Considering a particular situation and what happened and what you did is only the starting point of reflection. From there you should consider how you plan to do things differently (or not) if a similar situation occurs and then put this action plan into practice and start the circle of reflection again. Reflective practice should be an active process not a passive one. Practically this could mean that you ask your supervisor to support your reflective practise in supervision in meetings or that you actually set time aside in your diary to reflect. Reflection shouldn't be an onerous process though, and rather than seeing it is another thing that you have to do, you should view it as part of the tasks that you already have to complete. You also don't have to reflect by yourself you can engage with reflective

© The British Psychological Society

discussion with others, looking for common themes and learning from each other.

Of course, an argument could be made that all of psychology research is based upon reflective practice: you reflect upon the existing literature in order to build a rationale for a new research question, you reflect upon how best to design a study before running it, you then reflect upon the results that you get and where they fit within the knowledge we already have. The concern is that within this process our reflections are mainly focused on the research process and not on the individual carrying out the research. While it can sometimes be difficult to divorce yourself from your work the reflective process should have a focus on the individual and the actions that were or were not carried out, the thoughts and feelings that have been experienced in a situation and what you would like to do next. It might be that you have spent weeks trying to analyse some data, getting more and more frustrated before a chance conversation with a colleague gives you the insight that you need. Reflecting on such a situation you might decide that when you are struggling you will always make sure that you talk it over with someone else. Here you have not only learnt something about the research process (the appropriate analysis technique) but also about yourself and the support mechanisms that you should utilise.

While reflective practice can sometimes seem a bit 'airy-fairy', from a more hard-line, cynical perspectiveI would say that reflection can help when you starting applying for jobs. If you go for an academic interview there are going to be many other candidates who have Masters degrees or PhDs and we all want to stand out from the crowd. If you can reflect upon your own abilities and the skills you have gained during your studies as opposed to a sole focus on the content of your PhD then you will be in a better place. This may also be truer of those of us that don't stay in academia, the topic of your PhD may be of little importance to your interviewer, but what are your transferable skills?

It has to be acknowledged that there needs to be further research carried out into the effectiveness of reflective practice, especially as a learning tool, but what is true to say is as the use of reflective practise grows within the applied psychology disciplines, it should be something that academic researchers also take note of.

In closing my column, I would like to thank the PsyPAG committee for all their hard work during 2010 and would like to wish you all a happy, relaxing and if possible work-free festive season.

Sarah Wood
PsyPAG Chair
E-mail: chair@psypag.co.uk

Electrodes on babies and whiskers on kittens

Hester Duffy

I STARTED WORKING in Developmental Psychology several years ago, when I got a short-term research assistantship at the Oxford BabyLab. I've always got on well with babies and young children, and I'm fascinated by language, so investigating how infants learn words using social and salience cues was a good fit for me. A large part of my job involved recruiting parents to bring their children in to be experimented on, and I worried that the name, 'The BabyLab' would put them off, so I was always careful to explain that it wasn't like a lab at all, there were no big jars full of chemicals, or strange machines throwing off sparks, and that, contrary to the jokes of numerous friends, we weren't growing babies in jars or attaching electrodes to them.

At the time though, I really didn't know anything about neuropsychology. In fact it was only a couple of years ago that I really developed an interest in the detailed workings of the brain. A friend pointed me at the Oxford Autumn School in Cognitive Neuroscience, an annual event aimed at postgrads and early career researchers, which presents a variety of research, theory, and methodology over the course of four intense days. It sounded interesting and challenging, and I was able to get a bursary to cover my accommodation costs, so I went along, with an open mind and no particular expectations.

It sounds like an exaggeration, but honestly, it opened a whole new world to me. The talks were just amazing; brains scans and deep-brain stimulation, animal work and human work, tomography and fMRI and ERP. It was exhausting, but absolutely fascinating. My favourite talk was by Mike Fox, at the University of Washington in St Louis, on Resting State Networks. I'd never even heard of RSNs before, but Fox is a fantastic speaker, who put across his enthusiasm really eloquently as he explained how neuroscientists had started to look at the 'background noise' which we usually try to filter out of any neurological measure. He described how they'd found patterns, or networks, within that noise which turned out to be predictors of a number of other measures; pre-test anxiety, performance on specific cognitive skills, and more. I sat there open-mouthed, with two thoughts running through my brain. Firstly that this was the neurocognitive equivalent of the Big Bang; background noise that turns out to be immensely meaningful when you actually look at it properly. And secondly, that these RSN people had found the physiological root of personality, intelligence; perhaps even what we might term the soul! It was genuinely life-changing stuff, and I came away from the Autumn School determined that somehow, some day, I would get into cognitive neuroscience.

A year later, I started a new role, as a PhD student studying the processing of accented speech, taking both a developmental and a neuroscientific approach. I joined an ongoing project, so my first two studies were already set up when I started; a behavioural study with infants, using a head-turn procedure, and an ERP study with adult participants; my first real experience with putting electrodes on people's heads. It was fantastic; injecting conductive gel through the acticap made me feel like a proper (mad!) scientist, and although the data is still so complex it makes my head spin, and we've had various software glitches along the way, I feel like I'd arrived.

Both studies aimed to investigate differences between the processing of foreign

© The British Psychological Society

versus regional accents. We know from existing work that unfamiliar accents can cause difficulty processing speech, and it seems likely that stronger accents interfere more than weaker ones. However, there's also some evidence that we may process non-native accents (that is, those of people speaking in a second language rather than their native tongue) in a way which is qualitatively, and not just quantitatively different from the way in which regional accents, even strong or unfamiliar ones, are processed. The head-turn study should help us to pinpoint the age at which infants start to recognise words spoken in regional or foreign accents as acceptable variants rather than as novel words, while the adult study allows us to look at the precise time-course of word processing across different accents. The head-turn study is still running, but the adult data has indeed shown differences between regional and foreign accents; we hope to explore these differences in more detail with a new set of studies, including one using functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI).

I'm currently working on a new study, combining the previous two to create an ERP study for infants; finally, after all those years of people assuming I put electrodes on babies for a living, I get to do it for real. It was daunting at first; adult participants mostly stay pretty still when you fit the cap, inject the gel, and wiggle the electrodes to get good contact. Eleven-month-old children are far less reliable, and infant ERP studies were an unknown quantity in our department, no-one had done them before. This study should allow us to see whether infants are treating words spoken with an accent as familiar or unfamiliar, without having to rely on behavioural cues, and in a way which we can meaningfully compare with the adult data. It will be a long haul, as we need to successfully test at least 40 children, but the data we gather should be genuinely informative.

To date, most of the infant work in this field has been carried out using behavioural measures such as the Preferential Looking procedure or the Head-Turn procedure, both of which take visual attention to combined visual and auditory stimuli as a measure of interest and thus of recognition. These paradigms use natural behaviours in relatively natural settings, so they are useful and ecologically valid in examining infant cognition. However, because they rely on head or eye movements, and because infants in particular are easily distracted and unreliable as participants, these methods can be insensitive. In some cases we may be unsure whether a behavioural preference is due to perceived familiarity or novelty (both of which can produce preferences under different circumstances), and where there is only a very small difference in behaviour towards familiar and unfamiliar stimuli, we may fail to reach statistical significance. Our study is intended to tackle some of these issues, bypassing behaviour to look directly at brain activity, in the form of ERPs (Event-Related Potentials, or Evoked Response Potentials).

ERP studies use electroencephalography; that is, we use sensors across the scalp to measure the tiny changes in electrical activity across the surface of the brain which are prompted by the presentation of stimuli or by performing tasks. ERPs can give us a certain amount of spatial information, indicating approximate areas of the brain which are active during presentation, but their real strength is that they give us very fine temporal resolution; we can measure the changes in real time, and in slices of tens of milliseconds, whereas some other neurophysiological measures, such as fMRI (functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging) provide much more precision in terms of the physical structures of the brain, but much poorer temporal resolution. ERPs, therefore, can be used to look at the fine differences in speed of processing words when presented in variant forms, in a way which is much harder if not impossible using only behavioural measures. A large body of existing literature details a number of typical response patterns to the auditory presenta-

tion of stimuli. One of these patterns is known as MisMatch Negativity, or MMN, and it is the neurological equivalent of a behavioural startle response; a measurable response to an unfamiliar stimulus, which is attenuated with subsequent presentations of the same (or a very similar) stimulus. For our purposes, this is a useful response; we can habituate participants to a specific word, and then present it again in an unfamiliar accent. As with a startle response, we can then look at the dishabituation of the MMN to see whether the new stimulus is being treated as familiar (in which case we would expect little or no dishabituation) or unfamiliar (in which case we would expect a much greater degree of dishabituation). We can also use the same phenomenon to look at segmentation; the ability to pick out individual words from a continuous speech stream, which is vital to infants' early language learning.

With a certain amount of trepidation, a few months ago, we recruited a friendly family (both parents came in), and explained to them that their child was to be a test case. They were very understanding, and gave consent for their child to participate in our experiment. We explained in detail exactly what was involved in the experiment, and assured the parents that if the child became distressed we would stop. We provided lots of suitable toys (wipe-clean, not too noisy since this was an auditory study, and appropriate for 11-month-olds), a Teletubbies video, set up a comfortable high chair, wired up the baby-sized acti-cap, brought the gel to blood-temperature, and prepared our first participant for the study. Even with short blunt needles, working with syringes near the eyes of a wriggling infant is neither easy nor comfortable, but with a couple of colleagues distracting the baby, we managed it with no injuries, to the child or to ourselves. The cap successfully lit up green (indicating that we had good contacts across all electrodes), and we ran the study the whole way through, while the baby gurgled and played and watched Tinky-Winky and Po. Lo and behold, we had ERP data, from an infant.

ERP has both advantages and disadvantages for infant studies. Its sensitivity and its lack of need for overt behavioural responses make it useful when working with participants who cannot be easily directed to perform a specific task, and because the infants in an auditory study are passive and don't need to be attending to the stimuli (Sambeth et al., 2008, successfully used sleeping neonates in an auditory study using ERP data), we can collect a large amount of data, without the need for pauses, or reliance on the infants paying attention. Nor do we need the infants to achieve behavioural thresholds, as we do with the Head-Turn procedure.

On the other hand, ERP studies typically have a longer duration than behavioural studies, and before any data can be collected, we first have to fit the child with an Acti-cap containing a number of sensors, each of which then has to be injected with conductive gel in order to ensure that a clear signal is being received. This process can be time-consuming, some infants show strong objections, either by becoming distressed (in which case the experimenter is ethically bound to call a halt) or by tugging at the cap or wires, which both disrupts the setup and can cause damage to the equipment, again requiring the experimenter to halt the procedure. In addition, the sensitivity of the EEG equipment means that ERP data is necessarily very noisy, even in adult participants, and even more so in infants, who are unlikely to remain still and silent throughout data collection. Unwanted cerebral activity, as well as muscular activity from the head, face and neck, create interference which must be filtered out before analysis, which necessitates large data sets, created by collecting data from multiple trials from each of many participants.

Some months later, we've tested around 30 babies, and most of them haven't objected too strongly to the whole process. A few have, of course, but doing developmental work, you have to expect a fairly high drop-out rate, and on the whole, they've

been surprisingly relaxed about it. I did worry that the parents would be anxious due to the wires and the syringes, but again, they've all been pretty relaxed about it. In fact, a lot of them giggle and take photos! We haven't analysed the data yet as we still have a lot of babies to test; because all ERP data, and ERP data from infants in particular, is so noisy, we need large data sets. But after a steep learning curve at the beginning, I'm pretty proficient now at getting the cap set up quickly and with minimum stress to the babies. And I have to admit, I do get a kick out of the fact that I am now doing exactly what I got teased about all those years ago; putting electrodes on babies!

Correspondence
Hester Duffy
University of Plymouth.
E-mail: hester.duffy@gmail.com

Reference

Sambeth et al. (2008). REFERENCE MISSING?

Psychology research on clinical populations: Limitations and ethical concerns

Andra Raisa Petca

UNDERTAKING research on clinical populations can be very difficult, especially for postgraduate students. The academic world and the employers from the applied psychology fields value research experience that connects directly with a target population, and moving away from abstract research projects is more difficult that it may seem. This article delineates some of the challenges and ethical concerns involved in postgraduate psychology research pertaining to people with mental illness and it provides hints about ways of overcoming certain limitations and restrictions. However, the discussion pursued below is open to debate and should be regarded as a call for action from the part of postgraduate students who want to expand their research opportunities pool in order to include the clinical environment as a viable option.

Conducting research is a strenuous endeavour, particularly in applied areas of psychology that deal with vulnerable populations such as people with mental illness. Pursuing an investigation using the clinical population is especially challenging for postgraduate students. This is because postgraduates are expected to make important contributions to research discoveries, but have little access to patients and hence encounter far more difficulties than qualified clinicians. Enabling postgraduates to work with vulnerable people is beneficial to both the students and the clients/patients. On the one hand, students can emerge into the applied field while studying and can thus better observe the connection between abstract notions and real-world situations. On the other hand, the people with mental illness have the opportunity to express their needs and concerns to people who are not so restrained by the theoretical frames embedded in clinical practice but who still have a genuine curiosity and desire to understand the seemingly unknown. Despite such benefits for both parties involved in mental health care, postgraduate access to vulnerable people is restricted. Consequently, before submitting a research proposal that implies the involvement of clinical populations, several limitations and ethical concerns should be taken into account.

First and foremost, access to participants is highly restrictive. It is very likely that, if the researcher does not work within the NHS, he/she will not be granted approval for pursuing any research with patients with mental illness. This is mainly because such patients are extremely vulnerable and could elicit potentially dangerous behaviours directed towards themselves or others if not treated according to appropriate medical guidelines. Moreover, it might be that, with the best of intentions, the research itself could be harming to the participants and their successful recovery. Therefore, the NHS employs substantial measures to safeguard these vulnerable people, including denying access for postgraduate psychological research. Nevertheless, there are other ways to obtain permission for research at postgraduate level. One way would be to volunteer in a clinical setting and thus undergo special training in communicating with patients with mental illness. Another way would be to find a qualified clinician that is willing to directly supervise and monitor the research as to ensure the safety

© The British Psychological Society

and well-being of both the participants and the researcher throughout the entire investigation process. Even in such cases though, the permission to conduct research within an NHS environment could take as long as one year, which, in some situations, could be too long. If these solutions fail, a different option would be to conduct research on healthy populations. For example, one could investigate the results or scores on mental health related measures and then compare the different degrees of mental health within the general population.

Supposing that access to participants is granted, researchers need to confront a second limitation, that of a small sample size. In many occasions, patients are hospitalised because their mental state is severely disrupted; hence their involvement in research could, at times, be impossible. However, there are numerous people that struggle with mental illness, perhaps only the most severe cases are hospitalised whilst others benefit from other types of care such as community help or outpatient psychotherapy sessions. One should thus keep in mind that quantitative research might not be a viable option due to the small number of inpatients able to participate.

Furthermore, methods of enquiry such as focus groups could be difficult to pursue. One reason is that dealing with one patient at a time could already require extensive caution and special attention as to avoid patient's distress and regression from recovery. Group dynamics could increase the chances of maladaptive outbursts due to possible divergences of opinion between participants or due to a sense of discomfort in the group setting, which an inexperienced researcher could involuntarily foster. Another reason for why focus group conduction is not recommended is the fact that many inpatients are under substantial pharmacological treatment that might make interaction with other patients difficult, thus defying the entire purpose of an interactive discussion. Additionally, the bigger the group is, the more complicated it is to gather patients. This is due to the fact that, during hospitalisation, all patients have to undergo several investigations and treatment procedures, which means that they all have busy schedules.

It seems that the limited access to clinical populations, the likelihood of recruiting only a small sample size leads to a restricted range of research pursuits that could, at best, involve individualised qualitative research methods. In combination, this suggests that interviews could be the best option in postgraduate clinical research. Results from such endeavours could be simple accounts that could validate previous findings or, if unique results are found, these could potentially enrich scientific knowledge. Nevertheless, interviews have their own shortcomings. Firstly, one should make sure that the duration of the interview is generally short, as keeping vulnerable patients engaged for a long time might be challenging, especially when the researcher has a low level of expertise in dealing with mentally ill patients. Secondly, even though conducting interviews with patients whose condition has been thoroughly researched might seem less appealing, it could be that a wide literature about these patients might help the researcher become aware of the possible problems that could arise with that particular type of patient. For example, patients with borderline personality disorder are known to be extremely manipulative, a feature which an inexperienced researcher might not be able to detect unless he/she is aware of such a possibility. Thirdly, unique, rare cases seem exciting to investigate but, in the same time, the paucity of knowledge about these cases might make the investigation and data interpretation more difficult for someone who does not have a lot of experience with mentally ill patients in general.

In light of all the limitations mentioned above, several ethical concerns arise. On the one hand, postgraduate investigations could provide significant data that could be a door opener for impressive scientific discoveries. Likewise, it could show the interest and expe-

rience in clinical research of the postgraduate student and thus provide him/her with an advantage in being considered for further clinical training or job applications, which, in turn, could foster the opportunity for even more scientific development. On the other hand, the low level of clinical expertise and the lack of certification in clinical psychology could not only threaten the fidelity of research (i.e. how well the researcher adheres to professional guidelines) but could also unnecessarily endanger clinical patients. Is it then ethical to pursue a research project that only validates previous literature, assuming the risk of possibly harming the recovery process of the patients due to a lack of expertise in the field? Also, if the investigation seems promising in revealing new findings, should the well being of one or a few patients be considered over or below the well being of the entire community of patients with that specific disorder? What is more, if no postgraduate research is granted, then it becomes clear that this research would have to be pursued by qualified clinical professionals only. Therefore, the research findings would only be left to professionals who have to balance a conflict of interests; that is, balance the concerns pertaining to both their quality of clinical practitioner who has his/her patient's well being at heart and their quality of researcher whose focus is scientific advancement and the well being of the patient community as a whole.

In support of the aforementioned issues, I will provide the example of my own experience as a postgraduate student in the UK. I wrote my MSc dissertation about the experience of clinical interventions of adolescents with Borderline Personality Disorder. Although my qualitative study received ethical approval from the University, I was warned that the approval process within the NHS might be quite strenuous and that I might not receive ethical clearance in due time to finish my course. Fortunately for me, I was granted approval from a teaching psychiatry hospital in Romania, where I conducted my research. Nevertheless, at the hospital, I struggled with issues such as sample size or ability of the patients to participate in the study due to poor mental health. Supervision and guidance from the qualified practitioners was very useful in learning how to interact with the patients but the freedom to pursue my research project as specified in my proposal helped me maintain the autonomy of my ideas. Looking back on my experience, I identified some limitations of my study as well as some weaknesses of my own, for example, an empathic attitude that condoned emotional manipulation by the patient. While the shortcomings of the research can draw attention to issues to be improved in further studies, awareness of my personal drawbacks helped me observe aspects that I need to work on so that I can become a better equipped researcher and practitioner.

To sum up, pursuing postgraduate research in clinical populations is not easy. It implies struggling with a wide range of limitations and ethical concerns and it confines a debate about the best way of achieving an equilibrium between overcoming research challenges and maintaining the well-being of the patients with mental illness. It should, therefore, become a mission of postgraduate students and clinical professionals to create an environment that could foster entry-level research pursuits while catering to the health interests of the clinical participants. Perhaps one way to surmount such difficulties would be to include an applied psychology module in the postgraduate curriculum of research courses in which, postgraduate students could learn skills of approaching inpatients with mental illness for research purposes. Either way, it is certainly up to the postgraduate students to lobby for their rights to conduct research on clinical populations in a safe and productive manner.

Correspondence

Andra Raisa Petca
Institute of Health and Society,
University of Worcester.
E-mail: rakda87@yahoo.com

A conspiracy against the laity?

John Radford

IF YOU VISIT Lord's Cricket Ground (and if you haven't you should), and look across the grass at the Pavilion, suggesting I always think the Governor's residence in some far-flung province of Empire, you see in the centre the steps down which come the umpires and the teams. To the right as you face it, is a small annexe with another flight of steps. Until 1963 the professionals, known as Players, came onto the field here. The Pavilion was reserved for the amateurs, the Gentlemen. The two did not mix socially.

Gareth Morris and Jenna Condie, in *PsyPag Quarterly 74*, discussed the search for a professional identity. They concentrated on 'identity', and said less about 'professional'. The British Psychological Society formerly had a Council, and two Boards, for Professional and Scientific Affairs respectively. This carried, I thought, the unfortunate implication that scientists could somehow not be professional, and professionals could not be scientific. There was further, and perhaps still is, a rift between the Society and the universities, the latter feeling that the Society tried to impose restrictions on academic freedom, in the interests of making degrees in psychology a step towards professional qualification. This is now formalised in the Graduate Basis for Registration (GBR). All Departments whose courses qualify advertise it, presumably to attract students, although it will be useless to those (at least three-quarters of intake) who will never become professional psychologists.

I think this is a serious problem. But on the other hand, I think that professionalism, properly considered, should not only mark the various applied branches of Psychology, but is in many ways what higher education should be about. I touched on this in *PsyPAG Quarterly 68*, September 2008. There is no legal definition of what constitutes a profession. But there are several generally recognised characteristics (Warren Piper, 1992; Eraut, 1994; Radford, 1997, 2003a). I think they should apply, with some variations, to the academic, scientific, applied, professional and any other activities of psychologists (to say nothing of other disciplines).

First, formal and intellectual training, based on a shared body of knowledge, both practical and theoretical. This means much more than a set of skills, important though these are. There must be a grasp of the range of knowledge underlying the practice, and of its fundamental principles.

Second, a commitment to the best interests of the client, and acceptance of codes of conduct, enforceable when necessary. One expects a physician or lawyer to do what is best for the client, not what they prefer or find convenient. They should do so although the client may not be able to tell the difference. In other words, the professional must be trustworthy. In the case of academics, the client is the student. There is an obligation to teach what students need (not the same as what they want, though that is a legitimate concern), rather than what interests you (though that is also a valid concern).

Third, exclusion of the unqualified. A piece of paper does not guarantee good practice, but it should mean that a standard has been reached, and it is often something that can be withdrawn if that is not maintained. In education, it is absurd to insist that no-one can teach on a course without a formal qualification in that particular area. There have been distinguished professors with no academic qualifications at all. Any discipline can benefit from outsiders. But one does not want complete charlatans teaching.

Fourth, accountability for what is achieved, rather than for specific actions. What you need from your GP, or your clinical

© The British Psychological Society

psychologist, is to get better, without assessing the particular treatment. In education the results are, or should be, long-term as well as short. Students need to pass exams, itself a medium-term rather than immediate result. The real test is the rest of their lives, though evidence is hard to come by. It makes little sense to try to assess teaching by whether enough handouts are given or forms filled in, though these are (perhaps) necessary tools. Indeed it is counter-productive.

Fifth, responsible, autonomous work without direct supervision. Once again, the professional must be trusted, this time by those in authority.

Sixth, autonomy and self-regulation of the profession itself. There must be a robust system, not only to direct the profession's affairs, but to monitor the behaviour of its members, in line with the accepted codes of conduct. This should include a significant input from outside the profession itself, to ensure objectivity.

In Bernard Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma*, the elderly physician Sir Patrick Cullen pronounced all professions 'conspiracies against the laity'. That is indeed one of the major dangers of professionalism. A profession may become arrogant, secretive and defensive. When something goes wrong it closes ranks to protect its members. That is why the sixth point above is vital. The other major danger is stagnation. Professional training and practice may become hidebound, and reject anything new. Physicians at first refused to accept anaesthetics or antiseptics, and there are many other examples. These dangers must be actively guarded against. But professionalism can and should also, indeed mainly, provide protection for the 'laity', that is the clients or public. And it is far better if this is done willingly and with full commitment by individual members, rather than reluctantly under compulsion from outside. Regulations and systems are necessary, but they are not sufficient. The failure of Members of Parliament to grasp this was a major factor in the recent furore over their expenses.

These principles I believe should characterise universities, and those who teach in them, and the graduates they produce. The essence of them I sum up as *responsible autonomy*, or the ability to make informed, rational decisions, while having regard to the interests of others.

Compulsion, however, is beloved of governments of all hues, and attacks on professional autonomy are ongoing. This is only the latest stage in a long story, which begins with the emergence of universities in the early Middle Ages, to provide training for the professions of law, medicine and theology (Radford, 1997, 2003b). In England at least, this function was later largely lost, until by the 18th century they were almost finishing schools for gentlemen (and for Anglican clergy). In the 19th century, the ethos became one of a non-specialised education for an elite governing class. This in turn gave way to the ideal of research as the essential criterion of higher education, as it still largely remains. Applied or professional training took second place, just as the professional sportsman was inferior to the unpaid amateur, despite the fact that the former usually won when they competed together, which in many sports was forbidden, for example, athletics. (My namesake, Professor Peter Radford, has pointed out that only amateur times went into the record books.)

Psychology has struggled for more than a century to develop a professional identity, for many reasons including that one. Another is the extremely diverse nature of the discipline. The study of human behaviour is necessarily so wide that many 'psychologists' are engaged in completely different activities, and even adopt widely different labels (such as neuroscientist or counsellor). A major factor is ever-increasing central control, manifested in the tsunami of bureaucracy besetting both education and the professions. Then there are the competing interests of other professions, especially medicine. The shotgun marriage of psychology with the Health Professions

Council, despite its inappropriateness for so many of our activities, manifests both the last two factors.

These are all powerful forces. Nevertheless I hope it will be possible for future psychologists, now at postgraduate level, to develop their own professional values and independence. And that these remarks will add to the food for thought offered by Gareth Morris and Jenna Condie.

Correspondence
John Radford
University of East London.
E-mail: j.k.radford@btinternet.com

References

Eraut, M. (1994). *Developing professional knowledge and competence*. London: Falmer.

Radford, J., Raaheim, K., deVries, P. & Williams, R. (1997). *Quantity and quality in higher education*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Radford, J. (2003a). The professional academic. In R. Bayne & I. Horton (Eds.), *Applied psychology* (pp.118–129). London: Sage.

Radford, J. (2003b). The higher education context. In R. Bayne & I. Horton (Eds.), *Applied psychology* (pp.184–194). London: Sage.

Warren Piper, D. (1992). Are professors professional? *Higher Education Quarterly, 46*, 145–156.

Conference Review

International Gambling Conference – Gambling in the 21st century: The implications of technology for policy, practice and research

Abby McCormack

24–26 February 2010, Auckland, New Zealand.

THE International Gambling Conference is perhaps the biggest conference in the area of gambling research. This year the focus was on the implications of technology for policy, practice and research and was held in Auckland, New Zealand. The conference was hosted by the Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand (PGFNZ), the Gambling and Addictions Research Centre of Auckland University of Technology (AUT), and Hapai Te Hauora Tapui Maori Public Health. This was the first year that three organisations worked together to organise the conference and it was a great success with over 220 delegates attending from around the world including Australia, Canada, US, Singapore, Macau, Finland, Hong Kong, Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. I would like share my experience of presenting at this conference in order to give an insight to other postgraduate students who may be involved with conferences in the future.

I wanted to attend the conference because it had some excellent keynote speakers and relevant symposia which would allow me to become aware of the latest research in online gambling. My abstract on the motivating and inhibiting factors of engaging in online gambling behaviour was accepted as an oral presentation.

The conference consisted of a full academic programme with six parallel sessions over three days. It was opened by Professor Max Abbott (Auckland University) and involved a Maori welcome and prayer. It was particularly nice to see a strong multicultural focus at the conference. The keynote speakers were Moana Jackson (Maori Legal Service), Professor Robert Williams (University of Lethbridge) and Professor David Korn (University of Toronto).

Having read a lot of papers written by Professor Robert Williams and Professor David Korn, I was particularly excited to attend these sessions, and they did not disappoint. These speeches stood out because of the expertise in which they were delivered. Professor Robert Williams' presentation focused on internet gambling. He gave a summary of the history of internet gambling, and continued to explain recent developments, including the different regulatory frameworks used in different countries and the concerns regarding internet gambling. He completed his talk with the pros and cons of legalised internet gambling. In the UK all forms of gambling are legal including internet gambling, however, in many countries (e.g. US, China, Russia, Greece, Portugal, South Korea) internet gambling is illegal. It was interesting to hear how and why these countries prohibit internet gambling, and, of course, the 'best' policy approach will be different for different jurisdictions.

© The British Psychological Society

Professor David Korn talked about gambling from a public health perspective and how to further prevent gambling harms in a range of populations as well as to better inform governments and policy makers as to the measurable costs and benefits of gambling.

The conference really was a great opportunity for me. I was able to meet some of the key researchers in my field of study and discover the latest research and issues. The conference enabled me a clearer understanding of how gambling research is disseminated and the importance of discussing your own research and others, in order to develop and understand the issues and research prevention of gambling problems and improved treatment outcomes. It was also useful to attend a conference focused specifically on gambling research. This was the first gambling conference I had attended, and also the first international conference I had attended.

I presented on the second day of the conference in one of the afternoon sessions in front of many international academics. I was also the only person from the UK attending the conference and I felt many people were actually quite keen to hear first hand some of the research perspectives from the UK. On the other hand, this perhaps increased my nervousness prior to presenting as I felt a great deal of pressure to do well, even though I was well prepared and had practiced my talk. However, I tried to look at it as a great opportunity to present my work to a knowledgeable audience and saw it as a challenge rather than something to fear.

Once I started my presentation, I settled into it well and my talk ran smoothly. I was given some encouraging feedback and a couple of questions from delegates. Although I was very nervous beforehand but I felt the presentation was actually a success and I am proud that I was able to do it well. The experience provided me with an opportunity to enhance my presentation skills and my confidence and to engage in academic discussion with a knowledgeable audience.

While gambling research is predominantly carried out in the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, it was great to hear from European, Asian and Pacific researchers who are also productively contributing to the field. The conference highlighted the variety of research being undertaken in the field of gambling and the potential for future research was truly immense. The sessions were well attended which is a credit to the conference delegates, and the conference organisers for putting on such a well run and highly informative conference. Everyone I met at the conference was friendly and eager to discuss ideas about research that had been presented. This left me feeling motivated and enthused, as I'm sure many others did, and inspired me to think about new directions in which to take my own research.

One of the highlights for me (as I think it was for many), was the consumer voices panel. This was where people who had been directly affected by problem gambling talked about their personal stories. This was a great session as it is not often that we have the chance to hear directly from the people whose lives have been impacted by gambling. They had the opportunity to share their ideas about legislation that could provide protection for individuals, families and communities.

Poster sessions were also used to display and illustrate various studies on gambling research and allowed opportunities to interact and discuss the findings with the authors in detail. I found myself in discussion with a research fellow from Flinders University, Adelaide, on her project looking at the effectiveness of naltrexone therapy in treatment resistant gamblers. This is an area I have little knowledge about so I found it particularly interesting talking to her and hearing about the findings.

I would encourage any postgraduate student to attend and present at a conference that relates to their research. It is an excellent way to meet and interact with others in your field of research, and it is

important to keep up-to-date with current developments in your research area. To conclude I would like to thank PsyPag for supporting me in this invaluable experience by providing me with an international conference award. It provided me with a great opportunity to develop a number of skills, obtain feedback about my work, and receive insights from experienced researchers and practitioners. I would also like to acknowledge my supervisor, Professor Mark Griffiths, for his support and contribution towards my research talk.

Correspondence
Abby McCormack
?????? ????????????
E-mail:

Division of Occupational Psychology

The British Psychological Society

Postgraduate Occupational Psychology Conference
11th and 12th January 2011,
Holiday Inn, Stratford-Upon-Avon

Are You:

- An MSc or 1st year PhD student in the area of Occupational Psychology
- Interested in a career in Occupational Psychology?
- Wanting to meet like-minded colleagues and potential employers?
- Hoping to present your research at a prestigious conference?

If You Answered Yes To Any Of The Above, The Pop Conference Is Not To Be Missed!

Keynote Speakers:

- Professor Binna Kandola, Pearn Kandola
- Professor Fiona Patterson, Work Psychology Group/University of Cambridge
- Dr Steve Woods, Aston Business School, Aston University

Interactive skills Workshops include:

- Bonding and Networking – John Cooper, JCA
- Coaching – Richard Boston
- Wellbeing – Rob Archer
- "Do you want to do a PHD"– Rob Briner and Kevin Daniels
- Career Development Group – Angie Ingman
- Chartership – Rachel Lewis, City University Ltd
- Green Behaviour and Sustainability
- "Using Occupational Psychology at Work"
- Client Liaison Workshop

Dinner And Entertainment will be held on the evening of Tuesday 11th January at The Shakespeare Hotel with Steve Woods as our Guest Dinner Speaker.

Please join us for what promises to be a fascinating and informative event!

Registration fees start from £98.
Group Booking Discount is available for groups of 10 or more (limited availability)

For registration details, the conference programme and further conference information please see the website www.bps.org.uk/pop2011

Publishing, conferencing and writing-up: Hints at PhD success

Sophie von Stumm

THERE ARE MANY REASONS for doing a PhD. For some postgraduate students it is an early stepping stone to a career in academia, for others it's an opportunity to develop skills that guarantee a highly paid job in the world of business and for some lucky kids it is simply a chance to develop their intellect and pursue the passion of curiosity without the lure of any profit. Conversely, 'PhD success' includes a wide range of outcomes, such as having an original idea, publishing articles in scientific journals, establishing business contacts, presenting at conferences, developing a research programme, winning research awards, and most importantly completing (and passing) the thesis in time whilst securing a tenured position at an Ivy League university. It is beyond the scope of this article to cover all aspects that constitute PhD success; therefore, I will focus on what I consider the three essentials of PhD success – publishing, conferencing and writing up. These are – besides an enormous amount of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll – indispensible to make miserable college accommodations, tiny offices without printer and coffee maker, and lonely late nights with the laptop worthwhile.

Publishing

Early research projects – for example, a Master's thesis, an extended literature review or a third-year dissertation – may not qualify as invited essay in Science but trying to publish these will be nonetheless a valuable (even though sometimes painful) experience and a first step to developing a research track-record. It is best to start the write-up of the original thesis as a journal article immediately after (or if you are really good, simultaneously with) submitting the dissertation because with time you do forget, you do lose the data, you do lose touch with your supervisor, and suddenly your thesis is this dark corner of neglect and faded memory.

Publishing any postgraduate research, either from your Master's or your PhD, involves rigorous and drastic re-writing, cutting, and most importantly ruthless shortening. It is helpful to identify early on a number of suitable target journals (ask your supervisor for advice) and to pay attention to their submission criteria and formatting rules. Some journals accept different types of article submissions (some do not), such as short communications, meta-analytic reviews and original research papers, each of which might come with a different word limit, regulations regarding table and figure designs, and specific referencing styles.

Note that publishing is not a quick, not even a timely issue but it is a lasting, seemingly endless cycle of revisions, proofreading and editing. If your submission is fortunate enough to be sent out for review by the editor, you will receive the first, often anonymous reviews within three to four months (by then, you are usually busy doing something else). Depending on the journal, your submission will be reviewed by two to five independent peers, who potentially address anything ranging from concerns about the statistical analysis to problems with the experimental design, limitations of the theoretical rationales to grammar, writing style and table formatting. In response, you will draft a hail-fellow-well-met letter in which you express your gratitude and happiness to rewrite and re-analyse your work; that is, you address each concern raised and

© The British Psychological Society

describe the corresponding amendments you have undertaken (if you are the audacious type, explain why you were right in the first place and there is no need for changes). In the worst of cases, the reviewers reject your paper and you will have to resubmit to a different, usually less prestigious journal*. This is surely frustrating but no cause for worry: some of the greatest papers in psychology were been repeatedly rejected by high impact journals before being successfully published.

If the paper is accepted after (possibly several rounds of) revisions, proofs need reading, editing and confirmation before the release of the online version (in press), and eventually the journal print about three months later. In case you planned to celebrate your first paper publication, do it on the day of acceptance and don't wait until it is printed – no bottle of champagne has ever lived longer in my fridge than the one for the first paper which took two years from an electronic word document submission to a soft-bound journal copy. That said, in the world of nerdy PhD students there is little that beats the euphoria of turning the pages of an article with your name on it.

Publishing in peer-reviewed journals does not only beautify your CV but makes your work known and respected amongst fellow researchers. Most importantly, the peer-reviews offer a uniquely rewarding opportunity to learn and to improve your work. Of course, there are more and less useful reviews ('the authors haven't cited my publications, so their paper is no good' or 'I have no clue about this field but I don't like it') but some will raise theoretical ideas, methodological concerns and research advice that truly strengthen the paper as well as your own research skills. For example, I would probably not have learned about the importance of manipulating the default settings in MPlus for latent class analysis or what full information maximum likelihood estimation does to missing data if it was not for Paul Silvia's and Keith Widaman's meticulously detailed reviews.

I would also recommend writing peer-reviews for journals yourself during your postgraduate training when possible. You can start by asking your supervisor to review papers he or she received in order to practice. Later, you may register as a reviewer with a journal that specialises in your field, detailing your research interests and expertise; the editor will then get in touch with you when evaluating a submission that matches your competence. Reviewing will enable you to learn of ongoing research in your discipline before it is in print (remember that print takes a long time) and, therefore, to adjust and develop your own research in line with the latest findings, theoretical advances and methodological progresses.

Conferencing

Scientific conferences are a puzzling paradox to me: they constitute a platform for members of a profession, which typically attracts individuals who prefer solitude, quietness and even social isolation, to meet one another, chat, and perform nerve-racking oral presentations. To explain this phenomenon, a very wise professor explained to me the three reasons for academics to attend conferences: jobs and networking, gossip and romance (with age as moderating variable). I will only cover the first one; the other two might be enjoyed at discretion and in moderation.

In general terms, conferences are a great opportunity to disseminate your work and also to meet and greet key researchers in your field. That is, there are chances to observe and listen to seminal pioneers in psychology whose work you have probably been reading, citing and using to develop

* Journal prestige is commonly assessed by the Impact Factor (IF), which is the average number of citations received per paper published in a given journal during the two preceding years in science and social science journals. Note that the IF is not necessarily and objective or meaningful indicator; see *Folia Phoniatrica et Logopaedica* as an example of successful IF manipulation.

your own research. Outgoing people will even find occasions to take the relationship-building to the next level: academics, even the greatest truth seekers, are not free of vanity – do not hesitate to flatter a much-admired professor into giving you a personal lecture on his research insights and his surely superior understanding of science. Such chitchat may not immediately transform into a professorship at Harvard but there might be post-doc or junior positions available in the much-admired professor's department. Also, the next time you have a question that google cannot answer or you have an idea for a research collaboration, the much-admired professor will respond to your e-mail in a kind, helpful and timely manner.

Beware that conferences come with costs: you will have to cover a registration fee, travel, accommodation, expenses for consumables and sometimes an additional fee for the conference dinner. Some universities offer conference money for their postgraduate students (check with your Department), and some conferences have their own travel bursaries; if these options fail, you best apply for external funding, for example from PsyPag or the Experimental Psychology Society. In any case, you should look into funding options when you submit your conference contribution to complete travel bursary applications as soon as your talk or poster is confirmed (most funding bodies require a conference contribution confirmation to consider your application).

Writing the thesis

You might have been told to start writing your thesis on the first day of the degree. Although this surely helps reducing the writing-up pressure at the end of the three years, a warning is advisable: a research thesis is a living, malleable and evolving matter and, therefore, writing too much in too great detail in the beginning may solely be a healthy exercise in writing but not meaningfully contribute to the shape and direction of the thesis at later stages.

Conducting and developing research, regardless if it is at undergraduate, postgraduate or professorial level, is highly context dependent: that is, your supervisor, the university resources and your fellow students and researchers will substantially shape your dissertation. I will address each of these factors in the following, which may not appear to constitute a direct guide to 'how to write up your thesis' (there is no such guide) but hopefully outlines how PhD studies and dissertations are affected by external factors, and how to benefit from and expand on existing research provisions.

Some students like to be closely monitored and guided and matching supervisors will map out each stage of the postgraduate training, ask for a substantial literature review and leave little space for chance findings or unrelated research projects. Some students wish to almost autocratically develop their own research programme, and supervisors act mainly as guarding angels fixing errors in research designs when possible or suggesting novel ways of data analysis. Others will become closely involved with their supervisor's academic work and projects, and dive immediately into writing and publishing papers that can (hopefully) eventually be merged into a coherent thesis (if you can identify with this approach, check with your university if it is possible to do a PhD via publications). Personally, I was lucky to work with a supervisor, who introduced me to numerous collaborators and let me independently run several research projects; who always encouraged me to go on training courses, to apply for conferences, awards and grants, and to use my research knowledge in business settings; and who at the same time never tried to interfere with my nerdy stubbornness.

As much as the student-supervision style affects postgraduate research, so do the resources available to you – for example, you might need special software packages for your work, most of which are rather pricey. However, there is often a possibility to download trial versions, such as a full version of the

structural equation modelling software AMOS, as well as of the meta-analysis software CMA (restricted to two weeks). There is also an increasing number of freely available statistic software packages, which are communally developed by statisticians, geneticists and psychologists, such as R and Open Mx (their only downside is that they require syntax writing). If you have to read journal articles your university does not have access to, do not hesitate to e-mail the first author directly and ask kindly for an electronic copy – in most cases, you will receive the paper within the next days. Also if you do not understand something in the requested article, as well as in any other paper, do e-mail back and ask (again kindly) – it will be valuable information for you to learn and for the author to improve his research and writing. In case you learned of a new book publication in your field that you would like to read but not necessarily have the petty cash to buy, you may prompt academic journals that print book reviews to send you a copy of the book in exchange for a commentary.

After supervision and resources, your fellow students as well as researchers at your university will help you to develop your thesis and research program. Attending departmental seminar series, journal clubs, postgraduate presentations and discussion rounds will broaden your understanding of current research not only with respect to your own field but psychology in general. Even if some of the topics covered in such settings may seem rather unrelated to your own work, they might be inspiring and sometimes offer a new, challenging perspective on your research. Dutiful PhD students run easily the risk of single-mindedly focusing on one approach or methodology but true knowledge and scientific advancement is most often rooted in combining findings and ideas of different disciplines and fields – anything goes.

Conference funding links

www.psypag.co.uk/bursaries
www.eps.ac.uk/index.php/grindley-grants-for-conference-attendance

Software links

www.spss.com/downloads/
www.meta-analysis.com/pages/demo.html
open-mx.gforge.inria.fr/
www.r-project.org/

The author

Sophie von Strumm's research interests root in the field of Individual Differences with a focus on intelligence-personality associations in the context of educational, social and health outcomes. She completed her PhD in Psychology at Goldsmiths University of London under the supervision of Dr Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, and is now a Senior Lecturer of Individual Differences at the University of Chichester. She is winner of this year's PsyPag Rising Researcher Award for her PhD thesis entitled 'Intelligence, Investment and Intellect: Re-examining Intelligence-Personality Associations'.

Correspondence

Sophie von Stumm
Goldsmiths University of London.
E-mail: s.vonstumm@chi.ac.uk

How I learned to stop worrying and love the thesis

John Hyland

WHEN I THINK of how I felt in the latter days of my time as a postgraduate, a particular song by The Eurythmics comes to mind. According to Lennox and Stewart (1986) *'...thorn in my side, you know that's all you'll ever be... Now every time I think of you, I shiver to the bone'*. Indeed, research students talk of many humorous methods to avoid procrastination and to stay focussed on the task of 'writing up', such as humanising their work. There were times when I would try to represent my findings through interpretive dance, which usually involved frustrated punches in the air and intense shrugging of the shoulders. Regardless of how one deals with the monster, it provides the postgraduate student with a valuable set of skills that equips them for a life in a number of professional arenas. One obvious option, which I will talk about here, is lecturing. Many postgraduate psychology students will at some stage be approached to teach or tutor on particular modules during the semester. This provides a good opportunity for the student to get a small taste of the academic duties one needs to learn to balance later on in their careers. The preparation and delivery of lectures is also thrown into the work cauldron with the continuing writing of the thesis, and the corresponding articles for prospective publication. If offered, and subsequently accepted, opportunities such as this will prepare you for the transition to academic positions, a transition from pure thesis focus to juggling the numerous academic beanbags of professional life.

I envisage that some readers at the particular stage in their studies would agree that the final few months before the thesis hand-in date can be a very stressful and lonely time. At this stage for me, the thesis was the first thing I thought about in the morning and the last thing before I fell asleep at night. It began to take a starring role in dreams, usually the central character of the story. At this stage I found the social aspect of my life even more important. Keeping contact with friends and loved ones, even to talk about something as trivial as the weather, helps to provide a distraction. Especially at a time like this, when we find themselves writing six to seven days a week for weeks and months on end. For me, it was important to give myself one day where I tried to distract myself from thinking about the thesis. Whether that involved walking on the beach along the beautiful coast of Portstewart, calling over to a friend's house to talk about the inevitable Zombie apocalypse, or simply spend the day watching multiple DVDs at home.

There are a number of other obstacles that arise during the writing up period. One that I found especially frustrating is writer's block. I found that the best thing to do in this situation was to be productive in other ways, instead of trying to break through a seemingly indestructible wall. There are always other PhD-related issues that need addressing. In the earlier part of your PhD, article sourcing and the generation of specific research questions are central to the development of the thesis. In the middle stages, when data has been collected, there is always time for more analysis. Other duties and important tasks, such as lecture preparation, and building the reference list, also can result in productive days.

Another important issue that you can also work on towards the end of the PhD is job application preparation. More generally,

© The British Psychological Society

it is very useful to keep updating your CV with your achievements and experiences as they happen. I spent a lot of time ensuring that I didn't undersell my experiences and abilities. This can be quite easy to do, especially when you are under time constraints to get job applications in before looming deadline dates. It can also be time consuming to craft your CV to fit with the emphasised fields of the job in question, where sometimes it may be necessary to strongly feature your teaching experiences, or other times research or administration experience may be vital. In teaching institutes such as where I am currently based, research is encouraged but not a mandatory requirement. In this case, highlighting your teaching and tutoring experience may hold more importance than your research portfolio.

If you are fortunate enough to be offered a job before you fully complete your thesis, be prepared to continue sacrificing some of your weekend. It is much too easy to put the thesis to one side and forget about it, as many changes occur during this transition, and responsibility levels rise to include not only your work, but the welfare of the students you teach. If you are like me, you may be moving away from the institution you are affiliated with as a postgraduate student. This results in a house and office move, which can be a long and tedious process. A move to a new institution can also be quite daunting, with questions emerging in your head regarding the social and professional dynamics of the new institution. As previously alluded to, all these additional pressures can distract from the completion of the PhD thesis. This is where good supervisors can play a further role, if you allow them to be. Though it may be incredibly frustrating to receive e-mails from your supervisors while you are preparing for the start of the teaching semester in your new job, it is vital that the PhD doesn't disappear from the 'To Do' list. In my experience, I asked my supervisors to keep e-mailing me for updates on the thesis. What I found helpful was to put aside at least half a day during busy weeks and a full day during the weekend to work on the thesis. Continue to check in with your supervisors and keep them updated with the current status of the thesis, and the PhD will continue to develop nicely towards completion.

In terms of preparation for the beginning of the semester, make sure you utilise the options available to you. Supervisors may offer to help you with advice, ideas and resources that will help you in the preparation of lectures. As an example, your supervisors may be able to provide advice regarding tried and tested topic discussions for classroom involvement. This can give some students an opportunity to discuss issues that they are finding especially tough to grasp. Alternatively, it can provide the occasion for students to develop a passion for such topics, which can lead to idea generation for final year theses topics. Many students enjoy the opportunity for this type of classroom discussion. As a lecturer, you are there to offer a psychological perspective on particular topics, but there may be students who have unique experiences which can offer fascinating perspectives for discussion. For example, parents can offer unique life experiences to topics such as developmental and educational psychology. Similarly, those who have worked particular types of jobs can offer much to topics such as organisational psychology. Also, it's perfectly fine not to have the answers to every question. I have found in my short experience as a teacher that it is best, if I can't answer a question, to take a note of it and answer it the following week.

It can feel like a daunting task to make the leap from research student to lecturer. No matter where you begin, try and appreciate that you are starting out on a road. Don't allow yourself to get anxious about what is ahead. You cannot expect yourself to become a fantastic lecturer overnight. Identify your strengths and play to them. Identify your weaknesses and work on them as you move on. Students can wait for an answer to a question, and is a much better option than

trying to bluff your way through an answer. Best of luck with all your endeavours, and I hope some of this advice will help you along your way!

Correspondence
Dr John Hyland
??????? ???????????
E-mail:

What's your back-up strategy?

David A. Ellis

IT IS ESTIMATED that 90 per cent of all new information produced will be stored on magnetic media. These have become the preferred long-term storage mechanism for the personal computers that sit at every PhD student's desk. While rarely ever seen, these bundles of magnets help organise our research data in ways that would have been viewed as science-fiction about 20 years ago (Pinheiro, Weber & Barroso 2007). On the other hand, while there are few certainties in life, one of them is hard disk failure. Given the incredible tolerances to which hard disks are manufactured, it is amazing that they work at all!

Everyone will have had their own small personal tragedy, where they lost a few hours of work and given the prevalence of computers in our lives, this is perhaps unavoidable. On the other hand there are horror stories, which circulate with alarming regularity. Most academics and post-docs can recall a poor friend who lost a large chunk of their thesis a week before submission.

'It will never happen to me' is an attitude that will not prevent someone from loosing their work, but taking a few careful precautions may, if the worst happens, turn a potential disaster into a minor inconvenience. Furthermore, keeping subjects' data secure is essential when complying fully with the Data Protection Act and British Psychological Society ethical guidelines.

While data can be lost, software (the programs that run on your computer) will almost never be responsible. Research has consistently shown that hardware failure (the actual physical bits inside the computer) and human error are the two most common causes of data loss, accounting for roughly three-quarters of incidents (Smith, 2003). On the plus side, most people are aware that if they highlight all the text in, for example, a Word document and hit delete without backing up, all is not lost. The undo command (Ctrl+Z) can reverse the last action and bring the deleted text back. But human error goes beyond the occasional typo and even with the best filling system in the world, things can go astray and accidently end up in the recycling bin.

Fortunately and despite our human failings, a few simple steps can almost eliminate the worry of loosing your work, even if the worst should happen.

From the outset, your computer should be secure so that anyone else who shares a flat or office space cannot access your files without your say so. At the very least, a password and user login should be required when switching on the computer. This is likely to be enabled by default on all network machines within a university department, but this is equally as important elsewhere.

To further help prepare yourself for the 'inevitable' click of death, buy an external USB or Firewire-type hard drive. A 500Gb drive is relatively cheap and is a more solid base for data back-up than a USB stick that can easily become lost or damaged. Of course, a back-up isn't much use if it gets incinerated with your office or home. Whatever you choose to back-up on to, make sure you make at least one other additional copy and store secondary back-ups offsite. To make this process easier, you might want to consider backing up online with the likes of Dropbox, ADrive.com or File Cube, who offer a basic service for free.

In the same way that the undo command automatically remembers the last few actions, back-ups should also eliminate the failings of human memory and be automated wherever possible. Computers are better at dull repetitive tasks and there are so many applications to choose from that it

© The British Psychological Society

makes a detailed comparison impossible. Most are either bundled with the operating system (usually Windows or Mac OS X) or free to download. If you use a Mac and have OS X 10.5 or later, you will already have access to Time Machine, which can fully automate all back-up tasks. Windows and Linux solutions are vast, but two utilities to consider are DetaCopy and Ace Back-up.

The best back-up solutions are, however, not only those that back-up data automatically, but also archive old back-ups. For example, Time Machine can be set to back-up every hour, but will only back-up anything that has changed during that time and will keep an archive of the last back-up. Imagine you have a paper that is in its fifth draft, but you now feel like the second draft was better. While you didn't keep a copy of the second draft, you can still find this in your archive back-ups.

Last but not least, test restoring data once in awhile. There is no point backing-up data only to find that you can't restore it when needed. If you have lost a substantial amount of information that hasn't been backed-up, it may still be recoverable. When information from a computer is 'deleted', it is not physically removed, but made available to be over-written with new data. Some computer shops offer a recovery service, but it isn't cheap and the old data my already have been over-written, making recovery almost impossible.

If all this technological responsibility sounds like too much, you could always buy a typewriter and an old filing cabinet off Ebay! However, the availability of cheap hard disks and even cheaper bandwidth means it has never been easier to keep regular back-ups of your work. Of course, your hard disk might work perfectly until it becomes obsolete, but it would be naive to assume that this will be the case.

Don't say I didn't warn you.

Correspondence

David A. Ellis
University of Glasgow.
E-mail: d.ellis@psy.gla.ac.uk

References

Pinheiro, E., Weber, W. & Barroso, L.A. (2007). Failure trends in a large disk drive population. *Proceedings from the 5th USENIX Conference on File and Storage Technologies*, 17–28.

Smith, M.D. (2003). The cost of lost data. *Graziadio Business Report, 6*(3) 1–10 .

Psychology of Women Section

PoWS

The British Psychological Society

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.

This is an excellent opportunity for feminist researchers, teachers and practitioners in and around psychology to meet and exchange ideas, as well as for students to present their work for the first time in a supportive and friendly environment.

Coming soon

Call for papers and further information will be available at http://www.bps.org.uk/pows

No longer a lone wolf: On being part of the Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section

Jenna Condie

WHEN I BEGAN my postgraduate research at the University of Salford, one of the first suggestions my supervisor made was to go and investigate the Qualitative Methods in Psychology (QMiP) Section of the British Psychological Society. I believe this was for two reasons: one, I was relatively inexperienced in carrying out qualitative research; and two, I was potentially in for a lonely ride, being the only psychologist (at the time) in a science department. Moreover, as I was set to embark on a social constructionist approach, something quite alien to my fellow postgraduates with whom I share an office, the importance of making supportive contacts within the qualitative psychology community was essential.

For the purposes of transparency I shall declare now that I have been the PsyPAG representative for QMiP for two years now. Having noticed the vacant position on the PsyPAG Facebook page I jumped at the chance to get more involved with the Section. Established in 2008, QMiP is the largest Section of the Society with around 1000 members, perhaps reflecting the need for representation for those who consider themselves as qualitative psychologists, and those who are interested in and use qualitative methods in their research.

The Section is very pro-active in their strive towards raising and securing the profile of qualitative methods in psychology research and teaching. Another central aim of the Section is to create a network of qualitative psychologists, to connect those with similar interests, and create opportunities for collaborations. With continued support from its members the Section is going from strength to strength, hosting a wide range of events and sponsoring a number of prizes which reward excellence in qualitative research. Furthermore the Section have recently made important contributions to the HEFCE consultations for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) through the British Psychological Society, representing the concern of qualitative psychologists who feel disadvantaged by the planned REF procedures which align psychology with neuroscience. Alongside these consultations, the Section have also funded a working party led by Dr David Giles (University of Winchester) on qualitative research and the internet, with the hope of contributing to the Society's Ethics Committee's recommendations for conducting research online.

Recently, the Section also held their second bi-annual conference at the University of Nottingham. The theme was 'A change of tongue' which proved popular with attendees, the tone of which set by a film called *The Phone Call* written by Victoria Tischler (University of Nottingham) and produced by Gaylan Nazhad, (www.Tamfilm.com) – delivering a powerful message about mental health in the UK (a trailer for the film can be viewed here: http://vimeo.com/14293024). This installation demonstrated how effective film can be and what can be achieved if we open up to more creative and innovative ways of communicating ideas. The keynote speakers were also impressive, particularly Professor Jonathan Smith's (Birkbeck College) talk on finding 'gems' within interview data from an interpretative phenomenological perspective.

There were also training sessions at the conference, something which I wish to emphasise here. The Section is strong on supporting the training and development of

© *The British Psychological Society*

its members, funding a number of workshops and events each year. For example, a workshop on getting qualitative research published recently took place at York St John University. A mix of postgraduates, early career researchers and researchers from other public and private organisations attended bringing a diverse group of people together, which made for an interesting day and a useful networking opportunity. Great advice from qualitative researchers with impressive publishing portfolios was given to those starting out in their academic careers.

The Section also publishes the *QMiP Bulletin* twice a year, which contains a wide range of articles on contemporary issues, with the latest edition including its first peer-reviewed article 'Myspace or Myhealth' by Sarah McCormack (Leeds Metropolitan University) exploring online social networking sites influence on health and whether they can be used within health promotion. The *QMiP Bulletin* is a great read, where you can find out the latest news on qualitative psychology and the Section's efforts to raise the profile of qualitative research. Also, the *QMiP Bulletin* editors welcome pieces written by postgraduates, from conference and event reviews to articles about your research.

Subsequently the benefits of being a member of the Section are plentiful, particularly in terms of research training in a range of qualitative methods, but also in terms of the potential publishing opportunities available and getting your work out there. With a reduced membership fee of £5 for the year, *'you can't go wrong'* as my mum would say. Interestingly student membership has seen marked growth every year since the Section was established – surely they must be onto something! From attending the various Section events, which are free to members, I have met some fantastic people researching similar issues and using similar methods who will no doubt be contacts for years to come – thankfully I'm no longer a lone wolf. If you would like any more information about the Section visit their website (www.bps.org.uk/qmip/) or join their jiscmail list – search qualpsy.

Correspondence
Jenna Condie
University of Salford.
E-mail: j.condie@edu.salford.ac.uk

Lonely Brains

THIS SPACE is available for you to write in 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.

This section is also available on our website, so you don't have to wait until the next issue of the *PsyPAG Quarterly* to have your details or question published. Go to: www.psypag.co.uk/resources/lonely-brains.

Please submit approximately 200 to 300 words including your contact details and an outline of your research interests or problem.

As an example we have included the details of one of our Committee members.

Hester Duffy
Communications Officer at PsyPAG
University of Plymouth.
E-mail: hester.duffy@gmail.com

I'm at the end of my first year of PhD, looking at the processing of accented speech in both adults and infants. So far we've been using behavioural methods with infants (head-turn procedure), and ERP (using an acti-cap) with both adults and infants. We're about to do an fMRI study with adults, which is massively exciting! It's quite a wide-ranging field of study; as well as the experimental stuff, I've found myself trying to describe various regional and foreign accents in English (trickier than you'd think!), learning phonetics, and brushing up on neuroanatomy.

© The British Psychological Society

Annual Conference 2011

The British Psychological Society

4–6 May
Marriott Hotel
Glasgow

Themes:

Development, learning and education
Psychology, the law and justice
Psychologists and neuroscience

Follow us on Twitter
@BPSConference

www.bps.org.uk/ac2011

Dates for your Diary

December

1 December 2010
PsyPAG Outstanding Masters Research Award
www.psypag.co.uk/awards.html

1–3 December 2010
Manchester
Division of Clinical Psychology Annual Conference 2010
www.dcpconference.co.uk/

9–10 December 2010
London
The Division of Sport & Exercise Psychology Conference 2010
www.bps.org.uk/dsep2010

13–14 December 2010
Nottingham Trent University
Maths, Stats and Computing Section Annual Scientific Meeting
http://bps-msc.blogspot.com/

January

11–12 January 2011
Stratford-upon-Avon
Postgraduate Occupational Psychology Annual Conference 2011
www.bps.org.uk/pop2011/

12–14 January 2011
Stratford-upon-Avon
Division of Occupational Psychology Annual Conference 2011
www.bps.org.uk/dop2011/

24 –25 January 2011
University of Stirling
Symposium: Exploring The Everyday Lives Of Young Children:
Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives
www.ioe.stir.ac.uk/research/projects/toys-andwww.ioe.stir.ac.uk/research/projects/toys-and-tech/Exploring%20Everyday%20Lives/Callforpapers.php

© The British Psychological Society

February

26 February 2011
National Psychology Postgraduate Teaching Award
(to attend the Psychology Learning and Teaching Conference,
Edinburgh Napier University, 31 June – 2 July, 2011)
www.psypag.co.uk/awards.html

March

26 March 2011
University of Westminster
Psychology for All Conference
www.bps.org.uk/lhc/forthcoming_events_lhc.cfm

July

6–8 July 2011
Bangor University, Wales
Psychology Postgraduate Affairs Group (PsyPAG) Annual Conference
Website TBA (check www.psypag.co.uk)

13–15 July 2011
Cumberland Lodge, Windsor
Psychology of Women Section Annual Conference
www.bps.org.uk/pows

Bursaries: Need help with the cost of attending a conference? PsyPAG may be able to help...

ALL POSTGRADUATES registered on a course in the UK are eligible to apply for PsyPAG postgraduate awards. PsyPAG offers three types of award for post-graduates looking for financial support to attend both domestic and international conferences:

- **International Conference Award –** this is an award of up to £300 to help with the cost of attending an international conference. Typically there will be no more than four awards of this magnitude per year.
  Deadlines: 10 February, 10 June and 10 October.

- **Domestic Conference Award –** an award of up to £100 to help with the cost of attending a UK conference.
  Deadlines: 10 February, 10 June and 10 October.

- **PsyPAG Annual Conference Bursaries –** up to 10 awards per annum for delegates wishing to present and attend the PsyPAG Annual Conference.
  Deadline: Mid June.

There are three rounds of applications each year for both the International Awards and the Domestic Awards, closing on **10 February, 10 June** and **10 October**. For the PsyPAG Annual Conference Awards, there is a single deadline, usually around mid June. Applicants will be notified of the results, four to six weeks after each closing date. **Successful applicants are required to write an article of their choice for the *PsyPAG Quarterly* and will be invited to present at our Annual Conference.**

While retrospective applications are welcome, please note that due to the rising popularity of the fund, applicants who are not presenting either a poster or a paper are unlikely to be successful.

Successful applicants from the June 2010 round

Domestic Bursary Awards
Ray Percy – University of Reading.

International Bursary Awards
Helen Moore – University of Stirling.
Annelies Vredeveldt – University of York.
Cherie Armour – University of Ulster.
Elisa Carrus – Goldsmiths College, University of London.
James Rumbold – University of Loughborough.
Jessica Mayhew – University of St Andrews.

Visit the website for further information, and to apply online:

www.psypag.co.uk/bursaries/bursary-application-guidelines

© The British Psychological Society

About PsyPAG

PsyPAG is a national organisation for all psychology postgraduates based at UK Institutions. Funded by the Research Board of the British Psychological Society, PsyPAG is run on a voluntary basis by postgraduates for postgraduates.

Its aims are to provide support for postgraduate students in the UK, to act as a vehicle for communication between postgraduates, and to represent postgraduates within the British Psychological Society. It also fulfills the vital role of bringing together postgraduates from around the country.

- PsyPAG has no official membership scheme; anyone involved in postgraduate study in psychology at a UK Institution is automatically a member.
- PsyPAG runs an annual workshop and conference and also produces a quarterly journal, which is delivered free of charge to all postgraduate psychology departments in the UK.
- PsyPAG is run by an elected committee, which any postgraduate student can be voted on to. Elections are held at the PsyPAG Annual Conference each year.
- The committee includes representatives for each Sub-Division within the British Psychological Society, their role being to represent postgraduate interests and problems within that division or the British Psychological Society generally. We also liaise with the Student Members Group of the British Psychological Society to raise awareness of postgraduate issues in the undergraduate community.
- Committee members also include Practitioners-in-Training who are represented by PsyPAG.

Mailing List

PsyPAG maintains a JISCmail list open to ALL psychology postgraduate students. To join, visit **www.psypag.co.uk** and scroll down on the main page to find the link, or direct: **www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?subed1=psych-postgrads&a=1**.

This list is a fantastic resource for support and advice regarding your research, statistical advice or postgraduate issues.

Social Networking

You can also follow PsyPAG on Twitter **(http://twitter.com/PsyPAG)** and add us on Facebook: **www.facebook.com/?ref=home#%21/pages/psypag/130589426953875?ref=ts**. Again, this information is provided at **www.psypag.co.uk.**

© The British Psychological Society

PsyPAG Committee 2010/2011

Due for re-election

Core Committee Members

Chair

Sarah Wood — 2012
chair@psypag.co.uk
sarah.wood@northumbria.ac.uk

Treasurer

Josie Booth — 2011
treasurer@psypag.co.uk
josephine.n.booth@strath.ac.uk

Vice Chair

Alana James — 2011
vicechair@psypag.co.uk
Psp01aj@gold.ac.uk

Communications Officer

Hester Duffy — 2012
webmaster@psypag.co.uk
hester.duffy@gmail.com

Information Officer

Jenna Condie — 2012
info@psypag.co.uk
J.Condie@pgr.salford.ac.uk

The Quarterly Editorial Team (quarterly@psypag.co.uk)

Emily Collins — 2012
e.collins@gold.ac.uk

Charlotte McLeod — 2012
cm267@bath.ac.uk

Claire Miller — 2011
psu525@bangor.ac.uk

Julie Port — 2011
julie.port@gmail.com

Division Representatives

Division of Clinical Psychology

Fleur-Michelle Coiffait — 2011
F.M.Coiffait@sms.ed.ac.uk

Division of Counselling Psychology

Sarah Baker — Co-opted
sarah@mkvie.com

Division of Educational and Child Psychology

Emma Jackson — 2012
e.jackson@worc.ac.uk

© The British Psychological Society

Due for re-election

Scottish Division of Educational Psychology
Position under review

Division for Teachers and Researchers in Psychology
Fiona Essig 2011
f.essig@herts.ac.uk

Division of Forensic Psychology
Emily Collins 2012
e.collins@gold.ac.uk

Division of Health Psychology
Ruth Laidler 2012
ruth.laidler@northumbria.ac.uk

Division of Neuropsychology
Jen Mayer 2012
j.mayer@gold.ac.uk

Division of Occupational Psychology
Kazia Solowiej 2012
k.solowiej@worc.ac.uk

Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Sean Webster 2012
sean.webster@uws.ac.uk

Section Representatives

Cognitive Psychology Section
Darren Lewis 2012
dsdl@exchange.shu.ac.uk

Consciousness and Experiential Psychology Section
Greg Elder 2012
greg.elder@strath.ac.uk

Developmental Psychology Section
Alana James 2011
psp01aj@gold.ac.uk

History and Philosophy of Psychology Section
Elisa Carrus 2012
psp01ec@gold.ac.uk

Psychology of Sexualities Section
Andrew Clements 2011
andrew.clements@beds.ac.uk

Mathematical, Statistical and Computing Section
Elisa Carrus 2011
psp01ec@gold.ac.uk

Psychobiology Section
Robin Kramer 2011
psp837@bangor.ac.uk

Psychology of Education Section
Keith Schofield 2011
k.schofield@hud.ac.uk

Due for re-election

Psychology of Women Section
Helen Owton — 2011
howton1@chi.ac.uk

Psychotherapy Section
Kate Doran — Co-opted
K.Doran@sheffield.ac.uk

Qualitative Methods Section
Jenna Condie — 2011
J.Condie@pgr.salford.ac.uk

Social Psychology Section
Ruth Laidler — 2012
ruth.laidler@northumbria.ac.uk
ruthlaidler88@googlemail.com

Transpersonal Psychology Section
Position Vacant

Coaching Psychology
Gareth Picknell — Co-opted
gpicknell@marjon.ac.uk

Branch Representatives

North East of England Branch
Keith Schofield — 2011
k.schofield@hud.ac.uk

North West of England Branch
Jenna Condie — 2011
J.Condie@pgr.salford.ac.uk

Northern Ireland Branch
Paul Wilson — 2011
pwilson23@qub.ac.uk

Scottish Branch
Jillian Hobson — 2012
jillian.hobson@strath.ac.uk

South West of England Branch
Chantelle Bailey — 2012
chantelle2.bailey@uwe.ac.uk

Welsh Branch
Claire Miller — 2012
psu525@bangor.ac.uk

Wessex Branch
Position Vacant

West Midlands Branch
Emma Jackson — 2012
e.jackson@worc.ac.uk

London and Home Counties Branch
Fiona Essig — 2011
f.essig@herts.ac.uk

Due for re-election

Board Representatives

Membership and Professional Training Board

Erica Cook — Position under review
erica.cook@live.co.uk

Publications and Communications Board

Chantelle Bailey — 2012
chantelle2.bailey@uwe.ac.uk

Ethics Committee

Kirtsen Bartlett — 2012
k.e.bartlett@shu.ac.uk

Research Board

Sarah Wood (Chair) — 2012
sarah.wood@northumbria.ac.uk

Other Committees

Conference Standing Committee

Stuart Flint — 2011
swf07@aber.ac.uk

International Representative

Jen Mayer — 2012
j.mayer@gold.ac.uk

Learning and Teaching Support Network

Elizabeth Freeman — 2011
e.freeman@yorksj.ac.uk

National Postgraduate Committee

Position under review

Undergraduate Liaison Officer

Helen Owton — 2011
howton1@chi.ac.uk

BPS Learning Centre

e-Learning

BPS e-Learning courses

The Society has a range of e-learning courses aimed at those starting out in the profession and for those professionals wanting to refresh knowledge for CPD.

Do you want to:

Improve your career prospects?

Update your skills?

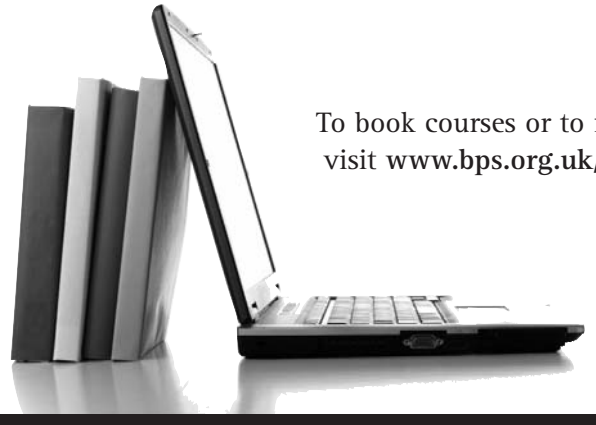
Study from your own armchair?

Work at your own pace?

Develop your professional knowledge?

Then e-learning is for you...

Individual courses start from £50 plus VAT (members) £100 plus VAT (non-members). Discounted packages of courses are available starting from £75 plus VAT (members) £150 plus VAT (non-members).



To book courses or to find out more visit **www.bps.org.uk/learningcentre**

Contents

Editorial – *Julie Port* 1

Chair's Column – *Sarah Wood* 2

Electrodes on babies and whiskers on kittens – *Hester Duffy* 4

Psychology research on clinical populations: Limitations and ethical concerns – *Andra Raisa Petca* 8

A conspiracy again the laity? – *John Radford* 11

Conference Review: International Gambling Conference – *Abby McCormack* 14

Publishing, conferencing and writing-up: Hints at PhD success – *Sophie von Stumm* 18

How I learned to stop worrying and love the thesis – *John Hyland* 22

What's your back-up strategy? – *David A. Ellis* 25

No longer a lone wolf: On being part of the Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section – *Jenna Condie* 28

Lonely Brains 30

Dates for your Diary 32

Bursaries: Need help with the cost of attending a conference? PsyPAG may be able to help... 34

About PsyPAG 35

PsyPAG Committee 2010/2011 36

St Andrews House, 48 Princess Road East, Leicester LE1 7DR, UK
Tel: 0116 254 9568 Fax: 0116 227 1314 E-mail: mail@bps.org.uk www.bps.org.uk

© The British Psychological Society 2010
Incorporated by Royal Charter Registered Charity No 229642

The British Psychological Society

ISSN 1746-6016