

PSYPAG

Psychology Postgraduate Affairs Group

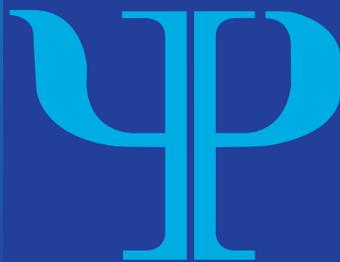
Quarterly

Issue 81 DECEMBER 2011

**Recession-beating ways to
research and collaborate**

Tips on getting your first grant

Publish or perish



Also in this issue:

Making enough time in the day

Workshop, symposium and conference reviews



Annual Conference

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'Improving Health in the Olympic Year'

...Will London 2012 have any long term effect on the health of the nation?
How will the games impact different groups within UK population?
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Dr. Colin Greaves - Peninsula Medical School:
Behaviourally oriented prevention services:
What kind of services might the NHS commission?

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Editorial

Claire Miller

WELCOME to the 81st edition. We hope that the great variety of tips and advice, reviews, and research-based articles in this issue will make for interesting and informative reading.

In the first article of the issue, Steven Caldwell Brown focuses on making time for the social side of things during your PhD, detailing some techniques he has found to help him achieve a good work/play balance. The next article contains some useful advice from Professor Mark Griffiths on what you should and shouldn't do when writing your first grant application. Thomas Dunn's persuasive and informative article, which should be useful to anyone with an interest in quantitative statistics, reviews the advantages of moving towards using R, a syntax-based statistical software.

Lucy Czwartos and Paul Worthington's insightful piece focuses on the importance of interpreters in mental health practice, and the challenges that interpretation can bring to therapy. This is followed by Katherine L. Wheat's review of a 'writing for publication' workshop, attended as part of the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading. Katherine details some useful advice given at the workshop, which may be helpful to many of you. The review that follows, by Nesrin Gokcen, describes the proceedings of the 12th European Congress of Psychology, including some details of next year's event and the kinds of audiences that are likely to benefit most from attending.

Rebecca Harris's article considers the relationship between loneliness and health, and the numerous factors thought to affect this, suggesting a model to illustrate this complicated interplay. Kate Doran then hosts the first in a series of interviews, entitled 'psychology people in profile'. Her first

interview, with Phil Loring, focuses on the nature of his job as BPS Curator of Psychology at the Science Museum in London. The next article, by Dr Carly Sarah Jim, gives insight into the importance of publishing papers during a PhD. The article suggests how early career researchers should use publications to increase employability, and what could be done by others, such as academic supervisors and employers, to aid in the development of a strong publication record.

Catherine Gardiner's symposium review discusses the possible benefits and detriments to cognitive performance of naturally occurring substances, including caffeine and nicotine. The final article of the issue, by Michael Richards, details the contribution that disability studies and community psychology can make to research and intervention design. He gives an example of how ideas from these disciplines can be put into practice, to develop a useful and cost-effective intervention.

We hope you enjoy these articles as much as we have enjoyed putting this issue together. *PsyPAG Quarterly* is distributed to postgraduate institutions across the UK, making it a great way to get your ideas across to others within the psychology community. We invite you to get in touch with any contributions of relevance to postgraduate psychologists, ranging from research articles and reviews, to 'lonely brains' advertisements and interviews. We look forward to hearing from you!

Claire Miller

On behalf of the PsyPAG Quarterly Editorial Team 2011–12: Emily Collins, Blaire Morgan and Daniel Zahra.

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Chair's Column

Sarah Goldie

IT SEEMS like only days ago that I was reflecting on the work of PsyPAG in 2010 and here we are at the end of 2011; is time speeding up? It has been another eventful year for PsyPAG; we have supported a number of successful workshops, awarded a large amount of funding for conference attendance and we have also seen the introduction of a new award – recognising the role of supervisors within the postgraduate experience – to our strong stable of awards. The committee has also been working hard to represent your views within the British Psychological Society and the other organisations we have links with. This has been demonstrated by the surveys we have conducted on ethics teaching and training, and the peer review system. Alongside all of this hard work, we also held another fantastic annual conference and it is this, the value of postgraduate conference attendance, that will be the focus of this column.

I recently read a blog post (<http://tiny.cc/zbo2k>) about the benefits (or not) of attending postgraduate conferences. The post was generated when the author, Martin Paul Eve (MPE), was asked (via Twitter) whether it was worth doing this. The key here is what we consider to be the meaning of worth; is it that you are looking for a tangible outcome from attending a conference, or is it the intangible benefits that make a conference worthwhile? The comments on the post give an insight into the difficult balancing act that we all must play as postgraduates, with one person surprised that the question should be even under discussion, believing that presenting at postgraduate conferences should be an essential experience. The response from MPE is that while he agrees (in an ideal world), we have to consider the time pressures on postgraduates, and that we should

be considering worth in terms of the trade-off between the time taken in preparing and attending the conference versus the benefits for our research and our career. As postgraduates we are time poor. Yet this seems to miss some of the key benefits that are provided by attending postgraduate conferences.

I have spoken at recent PsyPAG events about how isolated I have sometimes felt as a postgraduate, from starting my masters programme, through to the now final stages of my PhD. Sometimes you feel like you must be the only one having the self doubts, questioning if it's worth it or if you will ever finish, and it can be hard to know where to turn. The real value that I found in attending my first PsyPAG conference back in 2008 was the chance to speak to other people who were feeling exactly like I was. This is also true of other peer-support events that I have attended such as Postgraduates who Teach (PGwT) network events. The support gained from speaking to another person should not be underestimated. Our conferences and other events are developed to provide a supportive environment that enables discussion of how you are feeling as a postgraduate without having to worry; after all, everyone is in the same boat. Going back to the blog post, I do think that the trade-off question is one you should consider; however, I think that it might need to be framed in terms of not only what benefits your career but what benefits you and your wellbeing. Attending a supportive and friendly postgraduate conference often provides those intangible benefits, of feeling that you have found a community in which you fit and reducing fears of isolation. I am not sure this can always be said of other conferences.

Of course it would be naive of me to think that any of us have the time to stop

thinking about our career progression, and with that in mind I think that postgraduate conferences are also valuable career advancing experiences. They might not provide the opportunity to network with the current leaders in your research area, as MPE states, but you are networking with those who will be the future leaders. To liberally plagiarise Jenna Condie, our information officer, 'we are the psychologists of the future', and postgraduate conferences afford the chance for longstanding working relationships to be developed with those who are going to be at the forefront of the field in 20 years time. I know of a number of research collaborations and publications that have come from attending a PsyPAG conference and am sure that there are many more that I don't know about. Personally, I am still in contact with those I shared accommodation with in 2008, not only socially, but also for collaborative purposes. You would expect me to say this but I do truly believe there is a lot of worth in attending postgraduate conferences.

In my September column I was unable to announce the venue for 2012; I am pleased to say that I can do so now. It will be my great pleasure to welcome you to our 27th Annual Conference at Northumbria University. Our flagship event is travelling to the North East, and I am sure that you will receive a warm Geordie welcome when you join us. I am, of

course, incredibly biased, having lived in the North East since I was six, married a native and studied at Northumbria since I started my undergraduate degree in 2003, but I am sure that it will be a vibrant and exciting conference. I hope to see many of you there and we will do our best in the next few months and during the conference to demonstrate the worth of attending. Please make sure that you keep checking the website (www.psypag.co.uk) for further conference updates.

Another (re-launched) innovation from PsyPAG is the discussion forum on our website (<http://www.psypag.co.uk/forum-press/>). I mentioned feeling isolated before, and we are aware that those isolating moments often come when you least expect it, and sometimes there are moments when you just need someone to talk to right now. If you are feeling like this you might find our forum a useful place to go – it doesn't have to be all work chat, fun is encouraged as well, but it is a good place to go and let off steam.

In closing, I would like to wish you all a very happy and relaxing festive period. I want to say a big thank you, as ever, to the PsyPAG committee for all their continued hard work in what has been a very busy 2011.

Sarah Goldie

PsyPAG Chair

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On the social side of things: Making enough time in the day

Steven Caldwell Brown

IN THE LAST ISSUE I described my experiences of merging my love of creative writing with my academic writing. It was a lot of hard work, but worthwhile in the end. With effective time management, I managed to meet my deadlines. However, this project meant I missed out on a few social events I regret not attending over the winter period when I was still adapting to my PhD post.

It's difficult to strike a balance between your hobbies and your academic responsibilities. My hobbies don't make many demands on me in terms of how much time I commit to them, whereas someone learning a musical instrument might have to dedicate a set amount of hours to rehearsing per week. I can go back to my hobbies whenever I have the spare time, and enjoy them all the more because of this. Conversely however, social events like parties, gigs and weddings ... you either go or you don't.

Listening to people's stories about nights out I missed because I had my head buried in a book can be thoroughly upsetting, particularly when I could have gone, had I just committed a bit more time during my working week to getting through my to-do lists. That's really the focus of this particular piece, making time for the social side of things. As such, some tips and suggestions follow, which I hope will be useful for some of you.

My sister successfully quit smoking using the unconventional approach of avoiding alcohol. By staying away from one, the other followed. Inspired by the simplicity of this (the logic, not the effort) I adopted a similar approach to squeeze more work out of my working day by avoiding checking my Hotmail e-mail account. This often leads to

checking other websites which command a lot of attention and absorb a lot of my time (blogs from Richard Wiseman and Derren Brown are particularly dangerous for me). It's a sneaky one, but it works and it means I can reward myself with a look on my favourite websites after doing some hard work.

In a similar vein, I now tend to reward myself after meeting various deadlines and milestones. These nights out are always fantastic for a wealth of reasons and I often find myself adding reminders on my phone about tips and advice which came up organically whilst chatting to my peers. Related to this, I also take an hour out a week at a set time to meet with fellow post-grads who are in the same department at the same stage in their PhD to discuss a variety of topics, where we effectively support each other by sharing our collective knowledge. It's fun and relaxed, but it is also a really useful resource where we learn all about books we otherwise might not have heard about, upcoming conferences and events, etc. We are mostly comprised of social psychologists and we strive to keep our working lives as social as possible.

It can be difficult to live and work in Glasgow, when all year round you have amazing live music, comedy, quizzes, club nights and festivals. I try to maximise the potential from my PhD overall which includes not only the research, but the lifestyle of living in such a vibrant city. As such, I have regular quiz nights and poker nights along with some other activities I attend only infrequently. When it comes to live music, however, I never miss a gig. It's the same principle as I outlined earlier

where if you miss a party or a wedding, no amount of photos taken secondhand can make up for your absence. Seize the opportunities available to you which are more exclusive and work everything else around them. If I don't read a particular article today, I can read it tomorrow.

Striking a good balance between the principal demands of a PhD and getting involved with extra-curricular activities is a real challenge. I like to think I have accomplished this, largely due to a carefully maintained diary. I would suggest attending as many events as your diary allows where you get to meet other people: any conferences you can afford to go to, any public engagement opportunities, anything. It helps remind me that I am not simply typing numbers into spreadsheets, but I am measuring human responses. Keeping sight of this can be difficult, but it's not impossible. It's just a matter of making time for some variety in your schedule.

To suggest more general and perhaps practical advice, I find to-do lists, mind maps and Gantt charts particularly useful. Mind maps, as I am sure many of you are aware, visually represent ideas or themes and the links between them. For those of you who work well with mind maps and favour more visual forms of communication in general, Gantt charts might be worth investigating. For the unfamiliar, a Gantt chart is basically a bar chart which represents a timeline for different tasks. It is clear, concise and most importantly easy to interpret by others as well as yourself. As such, it is a useful addition to any form of progress report.

Gantt charts can be time consuming, but look good (a simple Google search will spawn free software which is easy to use). The charts will either work for you or they won't. For me, the only reward is aesthetics. Unlike the efficiency of to-do lists, I feel like there is an imbalance with Gantt charts as they can take me some time to produce. Perhaps I am just getting used to them. As for mind maps, they are also aesthetically pleasing but more stimulating to create.

Again, a Google search will reveal free software allowing digital copies to be made which are easy to exchange between colleagues. To-do lists work particularly well for me. I make a to-do list for the day, the week and a sort of ongoing list as well. This is in addition to diary and calendar entries for upcoming deadlines along with a wipeboard with ideas and reminders. Maintaining these costs me little over 10 or 15 minutes a week.

By engaging with such materials, it is effectively my time management that allows me to meet the demands of my PhD successfully, and also enjoy a rich social life and exercise regime. By committing more time during the day to getting my work done, I can now enjoy my free time in the evening without feeling guilty or letting my mind wander to tasks I feel I should really be working on, as was the case for the most part of my four years of undergraduate study.

I believe making the most of a PhD involves negotiating your time to allow for the social side of things. Whether this be regular meetings in a casual setting, going out for drink or meal at the end of the month, attending conferences and training events or any number of potential ways of coming together, I value them and strive to ensure my diary allows for them. In the same way that my body tells me I have missed a meal, my mind tells me that I am lacking some social engagement with my peers every now and then and I address that as best as I can.

While I understand and appreciate that some people prefer to work alone and generally enjoy their own company, I would nonetheless encourage getting involved with other people who are at a similar level. If for no other reason, it is a rich source of knowledge transfer where more people means more contacts and more opportunities.

To come full circle, achieving this coveted social time comes at a cost: less work. Given the positive rewards I feel I have gained from committing as much time as possible to the social side of postgraduate life, I know where I stand when it comes to

striking this balance. If my work isn't done today, I can do it tomorrow. If I don't go out with colleagues one night, then that's a unique experience limited to that time and place I cannot get back. There are plenty of rainy days in the UK to ensure you catch up with your work.

I all too often find the boundary between my work and social life particularly blurry, where I don't think I will ever switch off when I come home. At least for now, I find contentment knowing that I have adapted my working day to allow for a genuine feeling of winding down in the evening where I can feel a sense of achievement and accomplishment, one day at a time. That's all a PhD is, one day at a time. If you can find

ways to make the most of each day, each week, month and semester will naturally become more productive and ultimately free your diary sufficiently to allow you room to enjoy all the other things that get you excited in life.

As my quiz partner Nelly says: 'Believe!'

Correspondence

If you would like to quiz Steven on any of the issues raised here, contact him at steven.brown@gcu.ac.uk or <http://gcal.academia.edu/StevenBrown> Steven is a second year PhD student in Glasgow Caledonian University researching music piracy.

Lonely brains...

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

Lonely Brains 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.

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I am an occupational psychologist (Practitioner in Training) in my first year of my PhD. The focus of my research is organisational justice (OJ) and workplace diversity; specifically I am inductively exploring the justice perceptions of employees with a hidden disability and how this may affect work-life balance. While some literature does consider diversity and OJ, very little takes account of the effects of disability. Indeed, very little research has been conducted in occupational psychology or human resource management generally. This is at odds with other demographics, particularly gender and ethnicity, despite more than 10 million people having a condition as outlined by the Disability Discrimination Act and more recently the Equalities Act.

www.psyPag.co.uk/resources/lonely-brains

Tips on...

Getting your first grant

Mark Griffiths

THE start of your academic career can seem daunting with all the day-to-day demands that you will have to face. You will be expected to teach, publish papers, carry out research, engage in a wide range of administrative duties, attend a wide range of course committees, attend staff development events, mentor/supervise students, and present at conferences. On top of this there is an increasing expectation to bring income into your university in the form of grants or consultancy. In this article I briefly provide some tips on getting your first research grant.

Remember that grant proposal writing is a skill

Writing a good grant proposal is a skill (like writing a good paper, giving a good talk, etc.) and like all skills can be developed.

Make a cost/benefit decision on whether to write a grant proposal in the first place

In the university research system there are two main academic units of currency (i.e. papers and grants). You need to decide where you want to invest effort in the limited time that you have. The opportunity cost of writing a grant proposal can be high, and it may be more strategically advantageous to write up refereed journal papers from your PhD rather than go grant chasing at the very start of your academic career.

Get some publications

Don't submit a grant proposal before you have a few quality refereed publications under your belt in the subject area that you want to carry out research. You will develop a set of demonstrable core competencies through your research publications and you

will be judged by funding agencies on your ability to deliver.

Get to know the funding agencies and sources

Different funding sources have specific missions and criteria. Most universities have a dedicated research office that should be able to either get you the information you need or point you in the right direction. Identify the funding source that has the greatest overlap with your own research interests and invest heavily in getting to know more about their interests. Other information sources can also be profitable (e.g. searching the internet, talking to experienced colleagues, etc.).

Get to know the key people

If you are going after grants, get in touch with the relevant programme officer (PO). It is the PO's job to know about their funding agency, and they will be the people who know about upcoming funding programmes and/or opportunities. A short e-mail that briefly (and concisely) provides an outline of your research idea, and how it connects to their mission is a good first step.

Get to know the research community by presenting and networking at relevant conferences, seminars and/or workshops

This helps those in your field to get to know your research. This could include people such as potential funders, potential collaborators, and potential reviewers of grant proposals you submit.

Look at successful proposals of colleagues in your field

Your departmental research colleagues and/or your university research office should

have access to successful (funded) research proposals. Read these to get a good idea about the range of information that will be needed, and about the quality threshold. You can also read them to get practical ideas for ways of presenting your research project.

Get a good idea

Get your research ideas down first and then think about how to organise them. This is what I call 'splurge and edit'!

Get a mentor and submit your first few grants proposals with senior colleagues who have been successful in getting grants

Grant proposal writing is not typically taught in postgraduate schools, and on-the-job training is the best way to learn how to acquire that skill. Doing this with already successful colleagues and using a mentor is likely to be the most academically profitable in the early stages of your career.

Find a research gap, write in a focused manner, and get critical feedback

Do your homework. Know the literature and issues, questions and controversies in your area. Make it very clear how your research idea will address the important gaps in the research field. Every section in your proposal should be clear, focused, logical and help develop your key idea. Highlight the key points, make your priorities clear, and provide a timeline (making sure that all tasks can be realistically done within the projected time frame). Write multiple drafts and get constructive feedback throughout the writing process. There may be reputation consequences to constant submission of below par proposals. A funded proposal must describe work that does not yet exist, but at the same time, the reviewers must be convinced of you and your team's ability to do it.

Convey your confidence and enthusiasm for the research

If you are not excited and enthused by the proposal it is unlikely that the reviewers will be. Readability is also important.

Think about your target audience

Grant reviewers may include experts from a variety of academic disciplines. Your research proposal should not be so discipline-specific and jargon-laden that those outside your field will not understand. However, a fine balance is needed. Don't dumb down as you may unintentionally insult the reviewers.

Budget appropriately

As a general rule, smaller grants are easier to get than larger ones. Don't ask for more than can realistically be spent. Budget for what you need and get the university Finance Office (or equivalent) to cost up all staff time and other project costs (e.g. equipment, travel, subsistence, participant payment, transcription costs, etc.) including all the full economic cost overheads of carrying out the research. Methodically plan your budget in the same way as you would the project outline and the project timeline.

Proofread (at least twice)

Grant reviewers typically have little tolerance for typographical errors, misspellings or sloppy formatting. If the proposal comes across as sloppy, the reviewers will infer that the research team is too.

Resubmit if you are given the chance

If you get good, constructive, reviews but are not funded first time round, consider resubmitting the proposal. Learn from your mistakes. Consult with the PO before resubmitting, and ensure you address each point raised carefully, just as you would in revising referees' comments in the publication of journal papers.

Deliver on what you promise

Once you have got that first grant, make sure you deliver on what you promised in the proposal. The funding agency needs to know about all the disseminated outputs from the research (publications, presentations, media coverage, etc.). They also need regular progress reports of how the research is

going. The more impact your research has with various stakeholder groups, the more likely the funding body will continue to support your research throughout your career.

Remember that good grant proposals tell a story: Not only do good proposals tell a coherent story but they also answer a number of questions. What is the problem to be solved? What is wrong with current approaches? What is your new idea? What is your technical approach to this idea? Why is your team the one to do it? How are you going to show that it works? If these questions are answered, you are already on the path to a potentially successful grant bid.

Hopefully, this article has highlighted

some golden rules to think about when preparing grant proposals. Reviewers can typically highlight very quickly proposals that they will not support and fund. These are the proposals that are: (a) poorly written, (b) inadequately researched, (c) not written with the intended audience in mind, (d) not significant, and (e) not feasible. I can't guarantee you research grant success, but failure to think about the issues highlighted in this article will almost certainly result in grant failure.

Correspondence

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PsyPAG on the web

We've been doing some work on the site in recent months, so we now have a shiny new **Amazon Store**, featuring books and DVDs recommended by our members. If you need some pointers, check it out, and if you have any recommendations of your own, please send them to commsofficer@psypag.co.uk and we'll add them.

We also have a newly relaunched Discussion Forum, where you can talk about anything related to psychology or to PsyPAG, as well as asking for participants for online studies. To celebrate we're running a couple of competitions throughout September, so please take a look, register (it only takes a minute and we promise not to do anything nefarious with your email address!), and join in; you could win a £20 Amazon Voucher!

visit www.psypag.co.uk/

Using 'R' in psychology research

Thomas Dunn

The following article is designed to bring to the attention of researchers the possibilities of using statistical software other than SPSS, which has become something of a convention in psychology. It will briefly highlight the considerable advantages of using R (Ihaka & Gentleman, 1996) as well as offer directions for pursuing a more comprehensive 'R' education.

YOU MAY or may not have heard of R, but it is certainly a word, or more correctly a letter, being bandied around with some frequency within psychology departments. It is now becoming acknowledged as the *lingua franca* of statistical programming languages (Vance, 2009). For those of you unfamiliar with it, it is a statistics programme that relies on syntactical input by the user to manipulate and analyse data, known as a command-line interface. It is based on a very successful language called 'S' which was developed by John Chambers at Bell Labs in America (Chamber & Hastie, 1992). The major difference between R and existing popular programmes such as SPSS® is that the programming language itself is available to be manipulated directly (i.e. it can be seen by the user). This is in comparison to programs such as SPSS which have set functions (defined by 'pieces' of programming called 'code') that are carried out on the user's behalf when a button or tab is clicked (this is known as a GUI – a graphical user interface).

Over recent years there has been a growing trend, particularly in the social sciences, to switch from such user-interface based statistical programs such as SPSS to command-line based ones such as R (Fox & Andersen, 2005). It seems prudent to discuss why we have seen this increase and why researchers would want to switch from clearly laid out and aesthetically pleasing types of software to a program which, at first, appears to over-complicate analyses with various pieces of syntax and code.

Advantages of using 'R'

Cost and support

There are a number of advantages from using R as one's primary statistics program. Chiefly, R is open-source, which means it is available to anyone who wants it, for free. This means any change in working environment will not affect a researcher's access to a familiar and practiced statistics program. Additionally, because R is an extension of the highly commercial S programming language (Chamber & Hastie, 1992) it could be considered more commercially advantageous, particularly for people who are considering research-based work or perhaps applying their academic skills in a commercial domain. However, being open-source has more benefits than purely cost and job prospects. Firstly, open-source software tends to breed very comprehensive and friendly online support networks which are widely accessible (e.g. forums, websites, guides, etc.), and R is no exception to this. A number of core online resources are instantly available with plenty of additional and supplementary materials in the forms of guides, articles, papers, presentations, and lecture notes (see Resources below). This makes it easy to find a wide variety of different approaches and explanations to one's R objective, allowing one to choose a style to suit one's own understanding of a problem. This can be considered somewhat serendipitous when dealing with statistical problems, which can often be expressed in many guises. Secondly, being open-source means it is extremely easy to obtain and is available on many different platforms and

operating systems, such as Macintosh, Linux and Windows).

Flexibility

R employs a command-line (interpreter) whose job it is to communicate with the computer's operating system (OS). This means if one were to type '2+2' into R and hit enter, the computer would reply with '4' – simple. This enables the user to define their own functions which may be likened to creating a personal button or tab in SPSS to perform the exact command intended. This is accomplished in R through the use of some basic functions and programming arguments which can easily be learnt from the resources available. Although at first this may appear to complicate the analytical process, it actually makes it much easier in the long term. The ability of R to accept the user's syntactical input is what lies at the heart of its raw simplicity; there is nothing unnecessary about the options presented to the user because there are none. It will only perform the types of analyses one is interested in. There are no options to confuse, as one would see in GUI-based programs, particularly where the options in such programs are labelled and defined by the software developers themselves. R on the other hand offers nothing to the user at the commencement of their R education, which means all procedures are understood from the ground-up. Thus, it can appear slow to get going on R but in the long term, understanding the 'language' of statistics through R allows one to converse rather creatively with the data.

Admittedly, creating specific functions in R via the source command (command-line interpreter) can be a somewhat arduous task for the novice programmer. However, R is yet to reveal its true *pièce de résistance* – 'packages'. R can be supplemented with additional programs that are included as 'packages' using the package manager. Most packages are directly available through the CRAN repository (see Resources below) and with the global appeal and application of R

the probability of finding a package to suit your personal task demands are very high. Packages are specific add-ons which the user will need to choose and install themselves. Each one contains a discrete set of functions which have been tailored to suit 'types' of statistical methods usually employed within a particular domain. For example, a common package used for psychometric and personality-based research is 'psych' (developed at Northwestern University by William Revelle). This package includes a number of functions which organise and manipulate data derived from questionnaires as well as calculating many routinely used reliability estimators (i.e. Cronbach's Alpha and MacDonal's Omega) and factorial analyses. However, there are also a number of built in statistical functions that will also be very useful to psychologists, including the function 'lm' (linear model). This will simply carry out a regression analysis on whatever data the user specifies (see below for an example). The number of packages that are available to the R user is constantly expanding, with there now being somewhere in the region of 1,600 differing ones (Vance, 2009). Finding the appropriate package can easily be achieved via a simple Google search and is nearly all cases each package will be accompanied by a very comprehensible guide (usually in PDF format) illustrating the order of syntax and all analytical options available to the user.

The knock-on effect of such built-in flexibility is that the pure breadth of analyses which can be performed by R out-classes most other statistics software. This is not suggesting that R can do *everything* better than *any* other program, because some programs are specifically designed to perform one type of analyses and are very efficient at carrying out such tasks. However, it does mean that researchers do not need to swap and learn additional software to perform a different type of analysis they may not be initially familiar with. The basic 'arguments' and data manipulation skills that are acquired in R will remain constant for whatever analyses one chooses to perform.

Beyond these skills the only other necessity is to recognise which package is suitable for one's research requirements and become familiar with the order in which the syntax is entered.

Enhancing understanding of statistical processes
'Languages shape the way we think, and determine what we can think about' (Whorf, as cited in Maindonald, 2008, p.i)

The above quotation sums up that which is a very important aspect of using R over GUI-type statistics programs. R will ultimately enhance one's understanding of statistics itself due to its inline syntax method of input. The syntax is specifically designed to be reflective of the statistical formula behind the procedure. Therefore the R language, as a form of rhetoric (i.e. 'arguments', etc.), cogently spells out the process behind a statistical procedure. This convention involves the user manipulating variables in a rudimentary formulaic fashion. Thus, it is not surprising that by using R one is able to 'see' what is being performed on your data set. A good example of some R syntax which illustrates this nicely is that of a regression model with a dependent variable (A) predicting three independent variables (B, C, D). The R code for this is `lm(A~B+C+D, data = your dataset)` where 'lm' is the function 'linear model' which is

already built in to 'R', and the symbol tilde '~' signifies predicting. Accordingly, this code is telling 'R' to model variables B, C and D as predictors of variable A (note: 'data =' is simply informing 'R' of the data set from which to retrieve the variables). This is very similar to the basic regression equation ($y = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \beta_3x_3$) where y is the dependent variable and the x 's represent the independent variables.

It seems that as researchers become more reliant on GUI-based programs such as SPSS there is a risk that the important underpinnings of statistics and method (i.e. the maths behind the stats) get lost through the process of repetitive 'button-pressing' analyses. As researchers we might often find that we employ the same 'type' of statistical analyses over and over again for certain pieces of research. Under these circumstances we are perhaps at risk of losing a basic understanding of exactly what it is that we are doing to the data. The impact of this may be twofold. Firstly, it can impact our interpretation of the statistical outcomes of our analyses. It will inevitably enhance one's interpretation of what the results mean in the real world if one has a better understanding of what has actually been 'done' to the data. Secondly, it can leave a researcher rigid in their statistical approach (i.e. forcing one's 'usual' methods to define the research

Resources

- The Comprehensive R Archive Network (2011). R-project. Retrieved 15 July 2011, from <http://cran.r-project.org/index.html> (for downloading the R program; you will need 'base' if you are installing for the first time; packages can also be found here).
- Verzani, J. (2002). simpleR – Using R for introductory Statistics. Retrieved 10 July 2011 from <http://cran.r-project.org/doc/contrib/Verzani-SimpleR.pdf> (overall introduction to R, including how to get your data into the program).
- The Personality Project (2011). Using R for psychological research: A simple guide to an elegant package. Retrieved 5 July 2011 from <http://www.personality-project.org/r/> (excellent introduction to 'R' in psychology, particularly experiment and personality-based research).
- Statmethods.net (2011). Quick-R accessing the power of R. Retrieved 7 July 2011 from <http://www.statmethods.net/index.html> (this is a great quick reference guide about how to perform basic t-tests and histograms to more advanced bootstrapping and probability plots).
- Maindonald, J.H. (2008). Using R for aata analysis and graphics: Introduction, code and commentary. Retrieved 9 July 2011 from <http://cran.r-project.org/doc/contrib/usingR.pdf> (introduction to using graphics in 'R').

question, rather than allowing the question to dictate the method). In light of this, R offers a range of possibilities that researchers, particularly within psychology, can make good use of. Flexibility in quantitative methods allows one to take on more varied psychological endeavours, which are not constrained by stylistic rigidity.

Conclusion

As more researchers turn to R it is proving to be a most powerful weapon in the armoury of any quantitative psychologist. Admittedly it is presented in a very different and non-aesthetic form to what many GUI-based users are familiar with. However, function over form should be the priority of any researcher wishing to remain malleable in their endeavour to carry out rigorous scientific research within psychology. Importantly, the nature of the inline-command method of R encourages researchers to be more hands-on with their analysis and take an active interest in the statistical structure behind data manipulation. It is hoped that this article has illustrated that quite often program that look quite technical and complex can be very accessible and offer a flexibility and ultimate ease of use that alternative 'get-started-quick' programs (i.e. GUIs) can never offer. The intrinsic structural characteristics of the GUI force one to adhere to a software developer's constraints and eliminate any learning processes from the ground-up. R may be a little tricky to begin with, simply because it is unfamiliar, but a little bit of leg-work initially will allow for a much more fruitful approach to analysing quantitative data in the long run. Like learning any language, the basics can get you a long way and with the online support and masses of free supplementary material one can quickly increase your R competency very efficiently. Basic data set manipulation and understanding the functions and arguments of R will allow a researcher to begin constructing their own 'sentences' and express their research ideas in a much more eloquent and robust

manner.

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The importance of interpreters in mental health practice

Lucy Czwartos & Paul Worthington

FOR MENTAL HEALTH professionals language is the most important tool in their everyday practice. It is difficult to even imagine therapy without a therapist and client using either a spoken or sign-based medium of communication. The problem arises when therapist and patient do not speak the same language. The aim of this article is to increase understanding of some of the difficulties and dilemmas surrounding the use of interpreting services in mental health care. It posits that a failure to provide appropriate interpreting services affects the quality of care received by a patient, constituting an institutional racism. It presents dilemmas such as the use of qualified interpreters versus the use of patient's friends or relatives and the requirement of 'word-for-word' interpreting versus translation of meaning. The article also discusses the effect of working in a triad on power dynamics and boundaries, the qualities characterising a good interpreter, and factors which should be taken into account when choosing an interpreter. It presents the pros and cons of using a patient's first or second language in therapy, and above all, it stresses the importance of allowing a patient to make a choice regarding the language of therapy and how an interpreter may best facilitate their needs.

The presence of a language barrier between healthcare professionals and patients occurs more and more frequently in today's world due to economic and political migration. What makes therapy possible in such situations is the assistance of an interpreter. Interpreters are used in treatment of patients who do not speak English as their mother tongue or who are profoundly deaf.

Interpreters can be also used as a form of 'cultural mediator' when a practitioner requires assistance in working with somebody from a different culture. They are the very people who make therapy possible in spite of the linguistic barrier between a therapist and a client.

In terms of accessing services, Department of Health policy indicates that where English is a second language, accessing mental health services can be very difficult (DH, 2007). The lack of appropriate language skills amongst mental health professionals and difficulties in accessing appropriate interpreter services make psychiatric care problematic, especially as mental health assessments and interventions are crucially dependent on language (NIMHE, 2003). A DH positive practice guide (2009) indicates that non-English-speaking people may not be able to communicate their needs effectively if the service lacks appropriate language capacity. The language barrier combined with differences in symptoms among different cultures (Hansell & Mechanic, 1985) and differences in beliefs around mental health (Abu-Ras & Abu-Bader, 2008) may increase the risk of misdiagnosis.

According to DH guidance on the use of translators (2007), interpreters should be trained in mental health issues and family members, friends or staff without any training in interpreting should not interpret on clinically important issues. It is a concern that despite the above guidance, the translation role performed by the client's close friends, relatives or non-qualified staff members continues to be commonplace (Fleischer, 2002; Fountain & Hicks, 2010).

Family members and friends know the patient and the patient's symptoms and their presence can be highly reassuring for a distressed individual. On the other hand, patients may not want to divulge personal information to a family member and they may fear that their words would be deliberately misinterpreted, with justification that it was 'in their best interest'.

Interpreting is a highly specialised skill that will not suit all linguists (Sande, 1988). It is also a different skill to translating or speaking a foreign language. Languages are not interchangeable; their grammatical structures differ, and some English words or phrases simply don't exist in other languages. An interpreter has to be able to fluently transfer what is being said from one language to another under the pressure of time. They must possess a very good short-term memory to be able to remember what has been said and an in-depth knowledge of both languages with regards to a subject matter, in this case mental health. They simply won't be able to accurately interpret without a good understanding of what is being said. Using people who are not qualified interpreters reduces the quality of care received by 'Black and Minority Ethnic' (BME) patients (Karlner et al., 2007). It contradicts one of the key aims of *Delivering Race Equality in Mental Health Care* (DH, 2005): equality of experience. Hence it may constitute a form of institutionalised racism, resulting from ignorance; institutional racism is 'the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin' (Macpherson, 1999). Institutional racism is displayed in processes, attitudes and behaviours, which lead to discrimination through ignorance, unwitting prejudice and racist stereotyping of minority ethnic people.

In contrast with the guidelines of the Department of Health (2007) and the British Psychological Society (BPS; Tribe & Thompson, 2008), which state that only qualified interpreters should be used for

clinical purposes, the results of the study conducted by Alexander et al. (2004) found that participants mostly preferred their family or friends to interpret for them. They stressed the importance of ongoing relationship with family and friends leading to emotional commitment and loyalty. Ultimately, a patient should be able to make an informed choice about whether they wish to use the assistance of qualified interpreter, or whether they prefer their friend or family member to interpret. They must, however, be offered services of a qualified interpreter with both knowledge and experience of interpreting in the area of mental health so that they have an opportunity to make an informed choice.

What type of interpreting is most suitable in the area of mental health is another dilemma. There is a potential conflict between the requirements of some organisations (Bristol City Council, 2005) and individuals (Hudelson, 2005) to provide 'word-for-word' interpreting and demand to provide the most accurate interpreting at the same time. Word-for-word translation or interpreting is often impossible, or results in sentences which sound awkward in the patient's language. Moreover, word-for-word interpretation may itself be a source of miscommunication (Hudelson, 2005). Leanza (2006) indicates that the interpreter is not a translator of words, but an intermediary who helps with the construction of meanings between two linguistic worlds in the search for conflict resolution. Tribe and Morrissey posit that in the psychological domain we should be more concerned with 'the meaning/feeling of the emotions and words' (2004, p.131). Thus, rather than focus on linguistic aspects, the role of an interpreter is to ensure that the meaning of patients' words and emotions is accurately communicated.

An interpreter not submitted to the rigidity of a strict translation of words could enrich the alliance creation through their life experience, cultural knowledge and professional/personal resources (Singy &

Guex, 2005). However, there is a risk in this instance that the interpreter may alter the meaning or content of interventions used. This could be especially problematic if an intervention has strict conditions, as in the case of exposure therapy in which ambiguity of the instructions could lead to the intervention being ineffective (Richards & Whyte, 2008). Again, the interpreter's experience and understanding of therapeutic intervention is crucial for the success of the treatment.

Another area of potential dispute is the requirement of impartiality of interpreters (Bristol City Council, 2005) and patients' expectations. Alexander et al. (2004) report that study participants preferred proactive interpreters who empathised with them, helped with understanding procedures, and pleaded their case. Such expectation of an interpreter 'to be on the patient's side' and act as the patient's advocate is in contrast with institutional requirement to remain uninvolved and impartial.

When evaluating the use of interpreters it is important to consider how power dynamics and boundaries within the therapeutic setting are altered when working in a triad. Some therapists view an interpreter as a 'black box' or as an unfortunate necessity, while others view them as an integral part of a three-person alliance (Miller et al., 2005). The latter are more likely to consult interpreters on cultural context. It's common for some patients to initially form stronger relationship with the interpreter than with the therapist. They turn to the interpreter first in times of crisis because the interpreter can communicate directly with them. Development of patient-therapist relationship is a more gradual process if an interpreter is involved. Miller et al. state that mental health interpreters should possess the same core qualities as those possessed by effective therapists: a high degree of empathy, good interpersonal skills, and a high level of psychological mindedness. Similarly the study by Alexander et al. (2004) emphasises the importance of trust and relationship with an interpreter, who is not only a medium of

communication but also a part of the therapeutic process. This, therefore, highlights the importance of choosing an interpreter carefully to increase the chances of good relationship building and using the same interpreter throughout the therapeutic process. Perceived quality of an interpreter is strongly associated with patients' assessment of quality of care (Green et al., 2005).

A recent study by Boss-Prieto et al. (2010) considered the differences in the level of alliance evaluated by a client, a therapist and an interpreter concerning the client-therapist, client-interpreter, and therapist-interpreter dyads. The therapeutic alliance was evaluated differently between therapist and client but not evaluated differently between the interpreters and the clients. The interpreter shares some meanings with the client (concerning help, understanding, trust, agreement on goals), and some meanings with the therapist (concerning understanding and collaboration). This study suggests that the interpreter has an important role in assisting a therapist to 'reach' the client.

Caution is advised when using an interpreter (Costa, 2008). Tribe and Morrissey (2003) indicate that mistrust may exist towards an interpreter; they may come from the same country as the patient but if they hold completely different political views they might be seen as political enemy. This view is reflected in BPS (2008) guidance which advises practitioners to be mindful of issues of confidentiality and trust when working with someone from a small language community, as the client may be anxious about being identifiable and mistrustful of an interpreter's professionalism.

It is also important to consider the context of the work undertaken. Some writers have suggested that it can be helpful to match for gender, age and religion between language interpreters and clients when possible (Nijad, 2003). This can be particularly relevant, for example, in the case of sexual assault or domestic violence or when discussion of taboo areas may be necessary.

A patient may have anxieties about being dependent on another person to act as their voice and to explain their emotions. Some clients have reported feeling infantilised by this process (Tribe, 2007). For BME patients who speak some English the use of interpreter might be a potentially disempowering experience, reconfirming their inability to cope. Costa (2008) highlights the benefits of not using an interpreter and allowing patients to speak for themselves. This can be a valuable and empowering experience of conversing in English in a safe place and without a fear of being judged, which can help a patient to regain a sense of self-efficacy and ability to negotiate the world outside the consulting room.

As a result of the barrier to direct communication it can be difficult to incorporate common factors skills into an assessment when using an interpreter (Richards & Whyte, 2008; Myles & Rushforth, 2007). Shonfeld-Ringel (2001) describes empathy as an essential factor when establishing a therapeutic alliance in multicultural practice. It can be argued that in the absence of shared verbal language, practitioners need to be mindful that non-verbal (eye-contact and facial expression) common factor competencies have greater importance. The use of a brief and a debrief between therapist and interpreter could help to ensure that the two parties have an opportunity to plan strategies to compensate for barriers in communication (Razban, 2003). Research by Tribe and Morrissey (2003) indicates that interpreters play a major role in facilitating the expression of painful feelings and thoughts of clients, and they frequently come from non-psychological cultures. This can have implications for transference between the interpreter and client, for example disclosures on the part of the patient could evoke the interpreter's own painful immigration experiences.

Even if patients speak English fluently it is important to consider the potential impact of using only their second language in therapy. For example, using only the non-

dominant language in counselling has been found to be insufficient in accessing patients' emotions (Marcos & Urcuyo, 1979). The so called 'detachment effect' means that second language might provide emotional distance (Pavlenko, 2002; Mount, 2007), and thus it can be used as safety behaviour. According to Rozensky and Gomez (1983) learning of a second language is very formalised and rationalised. Therefore the second language is often not involved in the emotional conflicts in the way that the mother tongue is. Consequently, feelings, repressed emotions and emotional awareness are more likely to reside in the mother tongue and are best expressed in that language. According to the 'mother tongue hypothesis' an individual should retrieve memories from their childhood in greater detail and with a richer emotional vocabulary in the language that was spoken during childhood (Schrauf, 2000; Larsen et al., 2002). In terms of the cognitive psychology concept of state-dependent learning, 'the state is, in fact, the language context in which the event was originally experienced' (Altarriba, 2002). Using the same language expressed during an experience adds contextual relevance and might therefore facilitate better recollection of past events. In the light of the above, the concept of state-dependent learning might have significant implications in the treatment of trauma. If life events are easier to recall in the context (i.e. language) in which they were experienced, this has possible implications for treatment of conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It is questionable whether a patient suffering from PTSD would be able to relive trauma if the treatment is carried out in a language other than the language contextually linked to the trauma.

Since an individual's second language, as a language of distance, may serve as a safety behaviour, it is important for a practitioner and a patient to discuss the role of a language used in therapy and collaboratively agree on how it can be used to facilitate

treatment success. For example, speaking English might enable a patient to talk about subjects which are highly stigmatised in their culture but it might prevent them from fully re-experiencing the events which happened to them in the context of their mother tongue. The importance of a language for not only carrying out our emotional states but also constructing our experiences cannot be underestimated. A concluding example to re-emphasise these points is a case of a patient who was brought up by deaf parents. The patient could speak English fluently, however, her first language was the British Sign Language. Not only did she feel that she could not express her experiences of childhood sexual abuse in her second language but she also felt greatly misunder-

stood by the monolingual English speaking staff members, who did not seem to understand her difficulties. Thanks to this patient I have realised how hugely important it is that we are offered a choice of which language we want to use in therapy and that we offer that choice to our patients.

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The 18th Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading: 'Writing for publication' workshop

Katherine L. Wheat

St Pete Beach, Florida, 13-16 July 2011

WITH THE HELP of the PsyPAG International Conference Award, I attended the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading's annual conference. The purpose of the society is to disseminate information regarding reading and related areas such as language and literacy. To this end, around 500 delegates from various countries and disciplines made their way to gloriously sunny Florida. During the conference, I saw symposia on diverse themes from emerging literacy in young children to neuroimaging of adult skilled readers and research conducted in languages from English to Arabic to Chinese. With five symposia running at once it was impossible to see everything, but the wide range of themes gave a great flavour of the breadth of current research in reading and language. The conference provided an opportunity to move beyond one's own specific research area and be inspired by other methods, populations and languages. The conference dinner also afforded ample time for forging new collaborations against the backdrop of the truly stunning Salvador Dali Museum.

In this review I would like to focus on the pre-conference workshop, specifically the session on 'Writing for Publication'. This session made a lasting impression on me, despite being the very first session in four long days of lectures, symposia, posters, dinners, discussions, coffee (all you can

drink, provided by the conference) and the odd glass of wine (also readily available). As a final year PhD student, I hope to put into practise some of the tips I heard during the session while writing my thesis, but I'm sure at least some of them would be helpful for anyone writing anything for almost any purpose.

The workshop was aimed at early career researchers and included 'Writing for Publication' and 'Finding and Achieving Post-Doctoral Funding' in the morning, by Hélène Deacon and Peggy McCardle respectively. After lunch Carol Connor gave an instructional demonstration of the Hierarchical Linear Modelling statistical method. The morning sessions would be of broad interest to anyone planning a research career in a scientific discipline, but the afternoon session was of quite specialised interest and wasn't of particular use to me.

I found the whole day to be a perfect advert for attending this type of training workshop. It began with an opportunity for informal discussions between the delegates and was split into three manageable lectures with refreshment breaks and lunch. The workshop was an excellent opportunity for meeting peers in related research areas, which allowed us to share hints and tips but also to empathise with the sometimes painful reality of scientific writing.

Hélène Deacon gave some excellent

advice on how to write clearly. It would be impossible to relay the whole session here, but one very practical piece of advice relates to planning an article. As an undergraduate I was always taught to plan my work, and have stuck to this idea somewhat religiously, but never had a clear or consistent idea of how to plan. H el ene's planning advice is simple but effective; write a list outlining the article, but using only one sentence per paragraph. Considering that a paragraph should contain one key idea – a rule that in itself provides clarity of writing – it is then easy to chop and change the order of ideas and to view an entire article on a single page or in just a few lines. The plan can later be fleshed out with bullet points of the key references that support each idea and can be a useful starting point for discussions between collaborators. Furthermore, for those of you who, like me, enjoy ticking off lists, a print out of this plan is an ideal tool to keep track of the writing progress.

Another tip H el ene provided is this; start strong and end strong. Particularly for journal articles, it is often the case that a reader will skim through many articles in a search. H el ene's advice is to make sure your article is the one they choose to read by choosing a strong title and by investing time and attention in your abstract. Assuming the 'start strong' approach has paid off; the reader still may only skim the article for the main points. Therefore, the main themes and conclusions should be clearly summarised at the start and end of the article and at the start and end of each section, where appropriate.

The final piece of advice I would like to share from this session sounds like common sense, but I wonder how many of us actually put it into practice. The idea is this; get more writing done by making a writing appointment with oneself. When it comes to writing there are often so many 'more important' tasks; suddenly the laundry can't wait any

longer, an e-mail requires an immediate response, and I can't remember the last time I phoned my mother... If this ever applies to you, try making a writing appointment. Appointments can be short, one to two hours, but they must not be missed. Consider them to be of equal priority to other appointments that you would not miss, such as giving a lecture or attending a meeting. Prepare in advance if possible so that you are on time and in the right frame of mind. Tasks such as making a coffee and clearing your e-mail list should be done before the appointment starts. Keep writing for the length of your appointment, or fill the time with appropriate writing-related tasks such as planning and reading so that future appointments will be easier. The time and place can impact on productivity so take this into account when making appointments. Identify small goals and keep track of their achievement and remember that the specific end point of an appointment is as useful as the specific start time when implementing this method.

Despite having arrived in Florida at 10pm the previous day after a 24-hour journey, I found myself full of energy and enthusiasm during the workshop. Now I have returned home armed with new ideas and a strong desire to write, to inform and to publish. Perhaps this workshop struck a chord with me in particular because I am in near-constant despair at the slow rate of progress of my thesis, but I was rejuvenated by the revelation that I am not the only one who hates dusting, ironing and filing my paperwork, but will find any excuse to do any of these instead of writing.

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The XIIth European Congress of Psychology

Nesrin Gokcen

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THE EUROPEAN CONGRESS of Psychology (ECP) is a biennial conference which brings together researchers and practitioners across all areas of psychology. Over the years, the ECP has grown from a modest European conference to a diverse international gathering, attracting participants from all corners of the globe from Australia and Japan to Russia and the United States. This year's Congress, held in the bustling metropolis of Istanbul, included 760 oral presentations, 1800 posters and 35 invited speakers in addition to a wide range of symposia and roundtable discussions.

The opening ceremony included an address by European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA) President Robert Roe. His speech, which highlighted the question 'Why do we need psychologists?', assessed the socio-historical circumstances in which psychology emerged as a profession. It was interesting to consider that all disciplines emerge as a result of human need. For psychology, two world wars and an increased interest in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness have been important in the formation of a discipline that needs to assist in finding solutions to a plethora of current social problems. It was also interesting to note that even today, despite the wealth of psychological knowledge of human behaviour and mental processes, governments instead choose to consult economists and lawmakers to shape social policy. Robert Roe's address concluded by asking delegates to think about the role psychology plays in

both today's Europe and today's wider world and about the ways in which psychological research may be of more use to social progress.

This year's Congress included a vibrant mix of research presentations on topics as diverse as neuropsychology, cognition, pro-social behaviour, creativity, psychometrics, pregnancy and motherhood, mental health, stress and resilience, and culture and identity. Also of interest were the large collection of education-related papers and symposia which focused on both the teaching and learning of psychology and the role of psychology in improving learning in all academic subjects. The diversity of topic areas ensured a wide range of research interests were catered for and that there was 'something for everyone'.

Philip Zimbardo, one of the most popular speakers, gave an excellent lecture about research on 'time perspective' (how past-, present- or future-oriented our thinking style is). In an elaboration of his infamous 'marshmallow study' (after Mischel et al., 1988), Zimbardo explained the significant predictive power of childhood time perspective on academic success and a variety of personality characteristics 14 years into the future. A related symposium brought together an international team of researchers who presented work linking time perspective to personality variables such as perfectionism and tolerance of ambiguity. Thinking about the presentations, I realised that my current PhD research, which focuses on defining and measuring the concept of

student 'flourishing' in Higher Education, would benefit from considering students' time perspective as a potential predictor of student flourishing. After his address, Zimbardo was subsequently mobbed by fans for autographs and photos!

A symposium on 'psychoquackery' was another popular event and opportunity for interesting debate. Presenters invited delegates to think about the concept of 'evidence-based practice' and its place in the development of credible tests and treatments. Evidence-based practice was identified as simultaneously accounting for research, clinical expertise (practice) and patient values. Although most diagnostic tools and therapies today are research-based, it was argued that a research-only base is insufficient to constitute either evidence-based practice or evidence-based decisions. I found this discussion particularly useful in terms of developing my own scale which will attempt to measure flourishing in Higher Education students. In developing types of test such as psychometric scales, it was interesting to learn that research-based reliability and validity alone cannot give credibility to a test without consideration of practice and patient values. This served to highlight the significance of the applied nature of psychological tests and treatments.

Education was a frequently discussed topic throughout the Congress. A symposium on 'what people want and what institutions offer' unravelled a debate on the question 'Why does education exist?' Use of humanistic versus materialistic or instrumental management styles in education is a key cultural factor in enabling the nurturance of diverse human talent or, conversely, teaching culturally biased or factual knowledge to arrange society into a hierarchical structure. A simple inductive study carried out in a Turkish university by convenor Ekrem Düzen, in which students were asked to write what they wanted in their education, surprisingly produced many of the same results (e.g. social relationships, learning resources) that emerged from my own

undergraduate dissertation, which addressed what contributes to happiness in UK university students. This provided an excellent opportunity to network with researchers who shared my own research interests.

I had the opportunity to present my paper, based on my undergraduate dissertation, to a small audience at an oral presentation session. The paper was adapted from my undergraduate dissertation completed in 2010, and had two primary aims: to investigate happiness and its socioeconomic predictors in a university student population and to explore the antecedents of happiness from students' perspectives using a qualitative approach. My results indicated that none of the socioeconomic variables examined (domicile status, income, accommodation, tuition fee payment method, work experience) significantly predicted happiness in a sample of 160 students. However, the qualitative aspect of the study revealed some interesting perspectives on the sources students attribute their own happiness to. A content analysis of short written accounts from 148 students indicated that apart from established sources of happiness such as social relatedness and positive affect, many students also mentioned academic engagement, success, and satisfactory academic services as important sources of happiness. After the presentation I was able to discuss my findings with other presenters also researching in the area of Higher Education, and was interested to learn that student well-being is a current issue in Higher Education systems in numerous other European nations. I was also fortunate to be able to discuss my ongoing PhD work on flourishing with my co-presenters and other colleagues and was left with some novel perspectives on my topic area and related research ideas.

Overall, the Congress was an excellent learning opportunity and a chance to hear about recent research developments in my own area and across psychology and related sciences. The general, 'all-inclusive' nature of the Congress meant that research from across literally the whole social scientific

spectrum could be presented and debated, making the event particularly great for post-graduates who have eclectic research interests or who just enjoy keeping up to date on developments outside their own research area. However, those wanting to interact in a more 'specialised' environment may find that a subject-specific conference with a more defined scope may cater better for their needs.

ECP 2013 was briefly introduced by its president, Lars Ahlin, in the closing ceremony. It will be held in Stockholm, Sweden, and promises to be another diverse and engaging meeting point for psychologists and researchers across Europe and the world.

Thank you to the School of Psychology Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee at the University of East London for providing funding in addition to my PsyPAG bursary to enable my participation at ECP 2011.

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The British Psychological Society

History & Philosophy of Psychology Section

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The conference's Keynote Speakers will be **Professor Larry Weiskrantz** (Magdalen College, Oxford) and **Dr Charlotte Sleigh** (University of Kent).

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The conference is open to independent and professional scholars in all relevant fields, not just Section or British Psychological Society members. A limited number of bursaries will be available to students who have had their paper accepted for presentation.

All submissions (abstracts of 200 words) should be sent via email to Dr Geoff Bunn: g.bunn@mmu.ac.uk by **Monday 9th January 2012**.

Further information is available from the website:
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Loneliness and health: An integration of complex systems

Rebecca Harris

The importance of social connection for health and well-being has been discussed at great length by psychologists. People experience the aversive state of loneliness when they perceive that their social connection needs are not met. This literature review aims to present current research outlining potential mechanisms that may link loneliness to poor health. The article also highlights the complex relationship between loneliness and health, involving a number of interacting physiological, neural, psychological and cognitive mechanisms. Cacioppo and Hawkley's (2009) recent model of loneliness and health is identified as encompassing the complexity of these interacting factors; however limitations to the model are also highlighted.

HUMAN BEINGS are social animals and experience pain and distress when separated from others. Baumeister and Leary (1995, p.499) have argued that a need to belong, that is, 'to form and maintain at least a minimum quality of interpersonal relationships', is an innate drive. This involves the need for human contact, but also the need for close relationships with others. These close relationships are associated with lowered physiological responding to stress (Heinrichs et al., 2003) and beneficial effects on cardiovascular, endocrine and immune systems (Uchino et al., 1996). Loneliness occurs when these social needs are not met, and is considered to have a functional purpose (Cacioppo & Hawkley, 2009). It is viewed as an aversive state experienced when one perceives a discrepancy between the interpersonal relationships they have and those they wish to have (Peplau & Perlan, 1982). It is a particularly distressing experience activating the same brain regions as physical pain (Eisenberg, 2003), resulting in a desire to alleviate this pain and discomfort by seeking social interactions and connections.

But what happens when things go wrong and alleviation of this pain does not occur? In contemporary society loneliness becomes maladaptive when people are unable to meet their social connection needs. This article

examines the role of loneliness in health and well-being and considers the importance of this question as increases in loneliness have been noted. The article outlines the potential mechanisms associated with loneliness and health and examines limitations of a recent model (Cacioppo & Hawkley, 2009).

Does loneliness matter? Impacts on health and potential mechanisms

The prevalence of loneliness appears to be increasing. In a recent survey of 2,256 people carried out by the Mental Health Foundation in the UK (Griffin, 2010), one in ten people (11 per cent) felt lonely often and only 22 per cent reported that they never felt lonely. One in three (30 per cent) responded that they would be embarrassed to admit to feeling lonely and four in ten (42 per cent) reported being depressed because they felt alone. Almost half (48 per cent) suggested that people are getting lonelier in general. The problem is particularly prevalent in children; a report published by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC; Hutchinson & Woods, 2010) found that in 2008–9 almost 10,000 children were counselled by Child-Line about loneliness. Half of this number telephoned about loneliness as their main problem, and this has tripled in five years, from 1,852 to 5,525. So, loneliness is a signif-

icant problem for a large number of people, but does it actually have any impact on overall well-being and health? And if so, what mechanisms might underlie this relationship?

Health behaviours

It has been suggested that lonely individuals take part in more activities that are detrimental to health. There is evidence to suggest that lonely individuals are more likely to participate in smoking, have higher BMI and more likely to be obese (Lauder et al., 2006). In another survey Bonin et al. (2000) demonstrated an association between problem drinking behaviour and psychosocial variables, suggesting that loneliness may interact with depression and coping styles to increase health risk behaviour. However, studies that have demonstrated associations between loneliness and health risk behaviours have used retrospective surveys to collect data and rely on self-reporting measures. Also, they do not always demonstrate an impact of loneliness independently of other psychosocial factors. In comparison, where daily measures have been recorded using diary reports and beepers, no difference in the health behaviours between lonely and non-lonely is evident (Cacioppo et al., 2000) and other studies using questionnaires have not replicated the survey results (Steptoe et al., 2004). The evidence that lonely individuals participate in more health risk behaviours is therefore not strong.

However, there is some evidence to suggest that lonely adults are less likely to participate in physical activity than non-lonely adults (Hawkey et al., 2009). Loneliness is associated with poor emotional self-regulation, which is also associated with lower physical activity (Hawkey et al., 2009). Other studies have demonstrated that the threat of social exclusion impairs self-regulation of hedonic processes such as eating (Baumeister et al., 2005). Thus, it may be that lonely individuals have poor self-regulation which can result in difficulties in maintaining healthy practices.

Stress buffering

It has been suggested that lonely adults lack others who could provide support, acting as a buffer against stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Cohen and Wills argue that following a stressful event, an interaction with another person may result in an individual re-assessing their situation, resulting in an attenuation of the appraisal of stress. Social interaction may also influence the stress response by offering alternative methods of coping. Heinrichs et al. (2003) demonstrated that when participants were enabled social support of a friend prior to a stress inducing laboratory task (Trier Social Stress Test) they reported less stress and released lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol than participants without the support of a friend. There is some argument against the social buffering theory as social interaction may in some circumstances be harmful to health. Studies have demonstrated that positive and negative aspects of social interaction have different patterns of arousal. Positive interaction predicts lower levels of physiological arousal and negative interaction predicts increases in arousal (Uchino et al., 1996). So, it is not the mere presence of others that influences stress but the quality of the relationship with the other person. Studies have shown that lonely people do not differ in the amount of time spent with other people (Hawkey, Burleston et al., 2003), indicating that it is the attributes of the relationships and the perception of whether these meet a person's needs that is important.

Prolonged activation of physiological systems

There is evidence to suggest that lonely individuals have a prolonged activation of physiological responses and the cumulative effect of this may result in poorer health. Lonely individuals do not report a greater number of stressful events in daily life but rate these incidents as more stressful (Hawkey et al., 2003). Loneliness is related to differences in cardiovascular response patterns (Cacioppo

et al., 2000), higher cortisol levels in response to a stressor (Cacioppo et al., 2000), and higher systolic blood pressure (Hawley, Thisted, Masi & Cacioppo, 2010; Cacioppo et al., 2000). This evidence indicates lonely individuals may have a heightened reactivity to stress; this is supported by research showing that lonely individuals are on a heightened alert for social threats which may result in more frequent assessment of stressful situations (Cacioppo & Hawley, 2009; Qualter et al., under review).

Recent studies indicate that there may be genotype for stress reactivity (Gotlib et al., 2008), demonstrating a polymorphism in the serotonin transporter gene associated with biological stress reactivity to stressful life events. Serotonin has been implicated in the activation of the hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis which is responsible for release of the stress hormone cortisol (Gotlib et al., 2008) and a polymorphism of the serotonin transporter gene (5-HTTLPR) has been implicated as a susceptibility factor for loneliness (Van Roekel et al., 2010). Therefore, it may be that individuals who report loneliness have a genotype that increases stress reactivity; this coupled with social circumstances may result in poor health outcomes.

Diminished repair and restore mechanisms

Loneliness may be associated with poor health because lonely individuals may have fewer opportunities for repair and restore processes as they lack sleep efficiency (Hawley, Preacher & Cacioppo, 2010). Sleep studies in both the laboratory and everyday life have demonstrated that although lonely individuals spend similar amounts of time in bed to non-lonely, they spend more of this time in bed awake (Stephens et al., 2004). Hence, lonely individuals do not receive the same quality of sleep and the restorative processes that sleep would provide. In addition, lonely individuals derive less restore and repair from similar sleep periods to non-lonely (Hawley,

Preacher & Cacioppo, 2010).

Other studies have demonstrated that the immune system is also influenced by loneliness (Pressman et al., 2005). Complex alterations in the pattern of gene expression relating to immune system response has been found in lonely individuals (Cole et al., 2007), increasing the risk of inflammation related diseases and the ability to fight off disease and infection. However, when students were given a wound in the mucous membrane within the mouth there was no significant association between wound healing and loneliness (Bosch et al., 2007). Therefore, evidence suggests there may be a relationship between loneliness and impaired functioning of the immune system but loneliness may affect specific aspects of the system.

Theoretical models

The theory of ‘allostatic load’ proposed by McEwen and Stellar (as cited in McEwen, 1998) suggests that cumulative wear and tear across physiological systems (such as the HPA axis and cardiovascular system) from repeated exposure to stressors is a significant contributor to increased health risk. Greater social integration and emotional support is associated with lower allostatic load in older people (Seeman et al., 2002). Lonely individuals are likely to experience repeated perceived threat situations in daily encounters with others, hence, they are likely to have a higher allostatic load in everyday life, which may contribute to poor health.

As the relationship between loneliness and health is complex and is likely to involve a number of interacting mechanisms at different levels, social neuroscience (Norman et al., 2010) may offer an explanation. Such explanations propose human behaviour is the result of a number of biological and social mechanisms, arguing for an interpretation of behaviour that involves interaction between the social world and physical processes (Norman et al., 2010). Cacioppo and Hawley (2009) have suggested such a model of the potential

mechanisms of loneliness on health. They argue the perception of loneliness results in a hyper-vigilance for social threats in everyday life, which leads to attention, memory and confirmatory biases altering the likelihood of social interaction. These dispositions impact on behaviour resulting in confirmation of the necessity for heightened vigilance for social threat. In turn they also activate neurobiological mechanisms increasing activation of the HPA axis and diminish sleep quality. Repeated and chronic activation of threat surveillance systems heighten cognitive load, diminish executive functioning, dysregulate brain and physiological systems and lead to broad based morbidity and mortality.

Literature discussed in the preceding paragraphs indicates that the association between loneliness and health involves an activation of the HPA axis and a difference in the neural processes which may control physiological systems in lonely people (Van Roekel et al., 2010). What hasn't been discovered is how this occurs; it could be that an over-activation of the HPA axis results in a down-regulation of receptors for specific neurotransmitters or that lonely individuals have a different phenotype for such systems.

Further research is necessary to address this question, but it would be essential that models proposed to explain the relationship between loneliness and health incorporate the role of variations in neurotransmitter systems on reactivity to stress.

Although Cacioppo and Hawley's (2009) model is a useful one as it incorporates a number of interacting mechanisms it does have some limitations. The model is presented as a cycle of social perceptions and interactions that overtime leads to a dysregulation of physiological processes which impacts on health. What it does not address is how lonely individuals become lonely in the first place or whether the heightened vigilance for social threat precedes loneliness. It may be that this hyper-vigilance for social threats is the direct result of social rejection. This is particularly important when addressing interventions for lonely people as the current model only explains the cycle of interacting factors that lead to poor health and not when and how intervention could occur. It is important that future research addresses trajectories of loneliness and risk factors involved in the development of loneliness.

A sufficient theoretical model of poten-

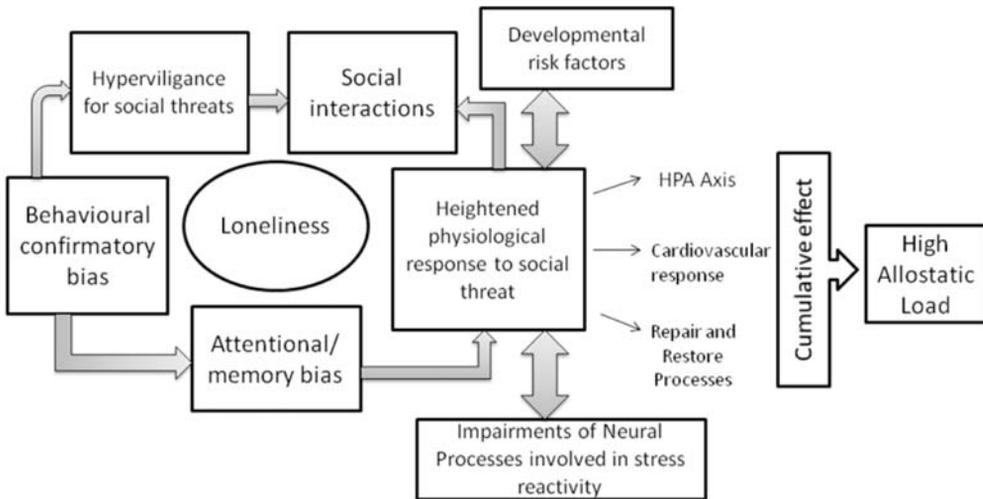


Figure 1. Framework of integration of complex systems involved in loneliness and health (adapted from Cacioppo & Hawley, 2009)

tial mechanisms of loneliness and health needs to attempt to incorporate such a range of factors. An adapted model for loneliness and health is proposed in Figure 1.

This model incorporates Cacioppo and Hawkley's (2009) suggestion of hyper-vigilance to social threats but also incorporates the possible involvement of developmental and genetic/hereditary factors which may explain the likelihood of developing loneliness.

Conclusion

This literature review has outlined the complex interplay of physiological, cognitive, neural and psychological factors involved in the relationship between loneliness and health. The relationship can be

viewed rather simply using allostatic loading theory. However, some explanation of why lonely individuals perceive increased stress from social encounters is necessary.

Further research is necessary which examines and identifies genetic and developmental factors that lead to loneliness. This line of research will result in evidence that will lend to development of intervention strategies for lonely individuals to prevent the cycle of loneliness and social cognitive perceptions that Cacioppo and Hawkley (2009) suggest leads to poor health.

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Psychology People in Profile

Phil Loring

BPS Curator of Psychology, Science Museum



In the first of two interviews, **Kate Doran** speaks with the BPS Curator of Psychology at the Science Museum in London, Phil Loring, about his work. This first interview, focusing on the nature and context of Phil's job, took place by telephone. The second interview will take place face-to-face at the Science Museum. The topic of the second interview will be how, in his role, Phil promotes public engagement with Psychology.

Kate: As BPS Curator of Psychology at the Science Museum, what does your job involve?

Phil: My main alliance is with objects. On a day-to-day basis, I work with the set of objects that we have in store and the set of objects that we have on display, and I think about ways to expand that by getting more objects as well. I'm constantly thinking about what's the best way to get people to engage with these objects, whether that's in the form of public events, putting things on display, opening the collection to researchers or looking for ways to expand what we already have.

Kate: Tell me more about the objects you currently have.

Phil: The collection that I tend to is made up of mainly three different kinds of things. The first is psychiatric artefacts. There are things which we got either in the 1930s because we had a very active collector back then, Henry Wellcome, or in the 1980s when a lot of mental hospitals closed during 'care in the community' and so these are artefacts that date from the 19th century and the mid- to late-20th century and they represent a lot of different pieces of the way mental health care worked throughout that time.

The second set is tests. We have a lot of

different sorts of tests that includes industrial aptitude tests and intelligence tests from the early 20th century. Then, from the latter 20th century those two categories kind of merged, and we get personality tests as well. Some of the tests are paper and pencil. Some of the tests are nice and chunky; they involve hands on work either with objects like geometric shapes or involve manual work such as wiring something.

The third category we've got is experimental psychology instruments. We have some classic things from animal psychology, like a few animal cages and Skinner boxes then we have some good old-fashioned brass instruments from late 19th century psychology, things like Hipp chronoscopes and sound pendulums, that sort of thing. We also have a variety of mid-20th century items. We've got a lot of EEGs for example, and a lot of audiometers for some reason; I'm not quite sure why.

We have probably the most extensive medical collection in the world, and not too many people realise that the Science Museum is sitting on top of that collection.

Kate: How did you come to be the BPS Curator of Psychology at the Science Museum?

Phil: I happened to be very well placed. When I was completing my doctoral work, I was looking for a job. I was also at that point a new father. I was American so there wasn't much room for me as a graduate student getting health care for my new son. So, in order to get some health care, I ended up working in a small museum associated with the History of Science Department at Harvard University where I was doing my PhD. It was only when I took this job in the small collection at Harvard that I really began to fall in love with objects and with the different stories that you could pull out of artefacts. With my doctoral training in the history of psychology and practical experience of museum work, I was uniquely positioned to take up my current position, when it became available.

Kate: You've been in post two years. How has your role developed since you came into post?

Phil: One thing I've realised is how very difficult it is to acquire new objects for the collection. That's something that you as a curator need to be committed to – to spending some of your time every week figuring out exactly what kinds of things you can acquire, and also to be open to offers that occasionally come in of people who do have something that's been lying around for a time that they would actually like to give up or occasionally we'll get things from people who have an interest in the National Museum acquiring something because they themselves have invented it, and they think it's important. So part of the process of acquisition is actually developing the links with as many people as you can so that somebody at some point might actually think 'oh wait, instead of putting this item in the skip, we might be able to donate it' and may also be aware that there is a museum out there that has a vested interest in acquiring psychological artefacts. The main focus of my collecting right now is animal psychology and animal experiments. That's a project which wasn't on my radar when I first joined the museum but was



A straitjacket, one of the exhibits in the Science Museum's Brought to Life collection
Picture: Science Museum, London

something that I decided at a certain point was something worth doing. I had a feeling for our collection and I realised that these kinds of objects which are in many ways part of the public image of 20th century psychology (rats in mazes, that kind of thing), we don't have them; they're not well represented in the collection. And so, one thing I'm finding is just how challenging it is to acquire things like that. I want to go out and get them but finding the kind of people who have them and who would be willing to donate them is quite a job.

Kate: Why do you think that is a particular challenge?

Phil: Specifically with the animal research, I've become aware that people are rather sensitive about doing any kind of animal research. People don't, funnily enough, trust that I am who I say I am; people will have to double check that I am curator of the Science Museum because people do expect that someone who is asking a question like

this will have an ulterior motive. They may be trying to figure out where the animal research is happening. So that's one of the things; how to approach these people and both make myself credible as a curator and also to convince them that the kind of story I want to tell with objects like these is not going to reflect badly on them. This particular topic that I've chosen happens to be a particularly sensitive one that way.

Kate: How far did your job within the History of Science Museum at Harvard prepare you for your current role?

Phil: Oh, I think there are two answers to that which are contradictory. One is that it prepared me not at all. It was fundamentally such a different kind of institution. It was tiny. There were four full-time and part-time staff there. And each of those people did work that here at the Science Museum would be done by an entire department full of people. The scale of the museum here is so different from where I came from that it's very hard to say that my current job overlaps in any fashion with what was going on there.

In other respects, it gave me some very important things; for example, loving what instruments are. That is not something that necessarily comes naturally to everybody. There are some people who are complete geeks around astrolabes and sundials, and I've never been one of those people who've

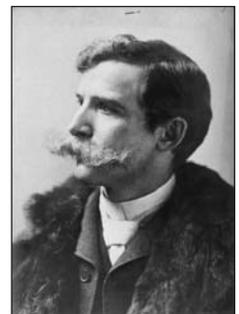
been fascinated by the objects in that way. One curator at one point explained to me what a Helmholtz resonator (an object from late C19th acoustics and psychology) did, and having him explain what this thing did if you held it up to your ear was astonishing. It was one of the things that made me realise that if you communicate to somebody else about what one of these objects does, you really get a buzz from that. Just holding on to that has been very important for me.

Kate: What do you find on a daily basis is the most stimulating aspect of your job?

Phil: It changes. Some days I'm really particularly fascinated by engaging with members of the public. That can take the form of either an evening event where I'm working with people and showing off different objects to an audience; it could mean I'm giving a tour to a small group of visitors or even one visitor who's interested in one particular thing. It could also mean, for example, I've worked with a group of people with learning disabilities who came to the museum to look at our asylum artefacts. That was a unique group that doesn't often get involved in museums at all. And the focus was working with that particular community. So that's something that gives me energy on a given day, but it's only one of the things that I tend to do.

Kate: What skills do you need to do your job?

Sir Henry Wellcome (1853–1936) came over from America to run the pharmaceutical company Burroughs Wellcome. He made an immense fortune and spent a lot of his money collecting objects as well as on funding scientific research with the aim of improving human health (Bailey, 2008). Wellcome's aim in collecting was to 'bring together a collection of historical objects illustrating the development of the art and science of healing throughout the ages' (Henry Wellcome, as cited in Bailey, 2008). He was interested in creating a museum of mankind, which reflects the breadth of his vision of medicine; it started with pharmacy and was expanded to include surgery, radiography, physiology, and all the different imaginable parts of both scientific and unscientific medicine. Within the Wellcome Collection, the Science Museum houses a lot of Christian saints as well as Buddhist statuary, exhibits that are not always easy to relate to modern medicine.



Picture: Wellcome Library, London

Phil: Oh, goodness! This is something I've just been thinking about because I've been trying to figure out if there's an entry level of what curators do. I think I draw on a standard level of computer knowledge and I draw on an entire education in history of psychology. I draw on history of medicine as well. One set of skills which is fairly easy to circumscribe is the set of museum skills which involve object handling and how you treat objects, how you conserve objects against pests and damage from use, and all the things you need to keep in mind to conserve the life of these objects because the idea is to keep these objects for posterity. So object handling is an important piece. Also, very basic stuff like knowing how to work as part of a team, because you're not going to get very far in a large institution like this working just as an individual.

Kate: What do you hope to achieve as curator in the five years of your current appointment?

Phil: In terms of the legacy of the museum, I want to grow this collection in ways that represent 20th century psychology more accurately. Accuracy is of course subjective and depends on which perspective you're coming from. I have a less disciplinary orientation towards psychology; I mean I was trained not specifically as a historian of psychology but a historian of science. I've got a slightly broader notion of where psychology begins and ends than oftentimes the BPS has, and so I'm much more interested in the ways psychology relates to neuroscience and linguistics and other, you could call them, related or parallel disciplines. I'm not sure, but I think all these different disciplines study 'the mind' and 'the mind' is not so much the province of psychology but a contested object that gets tossed around. So when I say I want an accurate representation of psychology, I mean I want a representation of psychology that represents my vision of what 20th century psychology is about. I don't mean to say that I'm focused exclusively on the 20th century, but I think most of

what I have a prospect of collecting is going to be from this era.

I would also like to create a terrific temporary exhibit before I finish here. What that's actually going to mean is still up in the air. It could be something on animal experiments; and that depends on how many objects are out there and what I'm able to find during the acquisition process. It could be something on 'colour', which would definitely involve more than just the Science Museum. Then we'd be looking at colour from a wide range of different perspectives and psychology would be one among many. So, the actual shape of that exhibit is not well-defined at this point, but it's important for me to make that happen.

I'd also like to include more mental illness within the context of the museum. That partly means bringing people with experience of mental illness into the museum both on a project basis and potentially on a more extensive basis as in recruiting them to serve as volunteers and also perhaps into jobs to serve in this field. And also, as we represent the story of medicine, we don't simply break it up into mental health versus other health but we incorporate that into the single, unified story we're telling with the medical collection here at the museum.

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Publish or perish

Carly Sarah Jim

THERE IS an old saying that ‘if you want to know the measure of a man you simply count his friends’. Whilst this may be true in the real world, in academia it is an undeniable fact that a person’s worth is calculated by their number (and quality) of outputs. If one was to be overly negative it could be stated that the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE, to be replaced by the Research Excellence Framework – REF) has turned production of outputs into something of a ‘singing for your supper’ arrangement whereby the funding coming into the institution and the job security that is associated with it are directly related to the quality of **published** peer reviewed research.

The eagle-eyed amongst you will have noticed that the word ‘published’ in the previous paragraph was written in bold. This is not a typo (hopefully there won’t be any in this article); it is in fact a lead in to the real meat of this piece which is the assumption that unclassified research outputs, according to the RAE (2008), are those that ‘fall below the standard of nationally recognised work’. Maybe it is just the arrogance of youth (I am pleased that I am still considered young in academic circles) but I do not think my research does fall below the required standard; after all, it did get me a PhD. In fact I think it is considerably better than some of the research published in the area. However, try as I might, I have not managed to convince any high impact journals to publish it – so far. Personally I am not disheartened. I am persistent and determined and I will get published eventually. After all, Freud did not sell many copies of the first version of his *The Interpretation of Dreams* and it is now widely considered to be his most important contribution to psychology.

Despite my confidence that my persever-

ance will eventually pay off, a number of my postgraduate peers are temporarily employed in other occupations or have left research all together because their lack of publications is making them unemployable. Taking into account all the anecdotal evidence, I have reached the conclusion that although we are responsible for our own careers it would be nice if it was somewhat easier for early career researchers to get published. I therefore think that supervisors and line managers, journal editors and employers also have a role to play.

The early career psychologist

I have used the term ‘early career’ as I view this as encompassing MSc level through to five year post-doctoral. MSc students should be informed of the importance of producing outputs and encouraged to present at conferences and submit to peer reviewed journals if the quality of their research is high enough. Universities that require final year undergraduates and Masters students to write up their dissertations in journal format are to be commended. At PhD level students should see beyond merely obtaining the PhD and work with supervisors on publications from their first study. This will not only maximise their chances of being published prior to the end of their PhD but the process of preparing manuscripts for publication will be invaluable to their development as a researcher.

Following one’s PhD, in particular if lack of publications is resulting in a lack of employment, it is important for the post-doc to be motivated to publish in their own time. Whilst I do think there is a need to be aware of the quality of your research, especially for the studies conducted early on in your PhD, if you are confident that it is worthy of publi-

cation then keep trying and don't be fazed by rejections; this is your career and your responsibility.

The supervisor and line manager

I was very fortunate to have had a great supervisor during my PhD and I am still receiving his guidance to this day. I also have a great line manager in my current employment and am grateful that they are both supporting me in building up my publications list. However, I know of colleagues who have not been so fortunate. In one example a final draft of a potentially 3* output was never given sign off despite several attempts to get authorisation in a timely fashion. Ultimately another research group published results that superseded the findings and the paper was no longer considered worthy of publication. In another astonishing example, a colleague contributed to the majority of the data analysis and write-up of a paper which was published in a high impact journal, and yet their name is absent from the paper except for a small acknowledgement. This lack of recognition was due to the line manager's insistence that they wished to be the sole author. I personally would not have accepted that, but my colleague preferred not to 'rock the boat' as this was around the time their contract was due to be renewed.

For any good supervisors reading this and asking themselves 'How can I help my student to get published?' my advice is this: let them contribute to your current outputs! In my opinion this is ideal. You get an extra pair of hands to help you meet your own requirement to produce outputs and the way in which they contribute is up to you, anything from literature reviewing through to interpretation of the research findings. They get their name on a publication (and let's face it, going from no publications to first author is a bit of a jump), their confidence boosted and an understanding of how the process works, and eventually you produce a post-doc who in addition to their PhD has a good under-

standing of your research area, and a sizeable publication list – there is a ready-made post-doc if ever I saw one!

The journal editors

Publication of scientifically rigorous research is essential to furthering our understanding of the world. As the editor of a journal I accept that you have a responsibility to ensure that the papers in your journal are not only of a high standard but that they fit within the aims and scope of your journal. I wholly support this. However, in some cases a study that doesn't adhere to a strict set of criteria should not automatically be placed in the rejection pile.

I am not surprised that some PhD research is rejected. One could argue that it isn't comparable to an externally funded large-scale collaborative project and it may be that small sample sizes and less elaborate research designs make it stick out like a sore thumb. However, as I said at the beginning of this article, I still do not think this means it is actually of a lower standard and I urge you to consider the following arguments.

Small sample size does not necessarily mean non-representative

If you have highly significant results then surely you recruited enough people. Moreover I would argue that there is an ethical responsibility not to over-recruit for a study. As long as you have a large enough sample for the effect size required and the sample itself is representative of the population of interest, not only do I think that it is good enough, but morally it is preferable to gathering what is essentially unnecessary data. Furthermore, as a fellow academic astutely pointed out 'with a big enough sample, even tiny, theoretically meaningless effects can reach $p < .001$ '.

Non-significant findings are not insignificant

There is an obvious bias towards significant research findings, which to me seems rather ironic given that, as Karl Popper said, a

hypothesis can only be considered scientific if it is falsifiable. I do not think that a study that shows a non-significant finding should be rejected on this basis as a lack of group differences may be important in its own right. Statistically non-significant is not the same as clinically insignificant. Consider for example the reduction in burden to the NHS if it was consistently found that there was no difference in giving the cheap medication compared to the expensive one, or no difference to smoking cessation rates for six weeks of group therapy compared to seven. Surely scientifically rigorous research that shows non-significant results should be published, and replicated in order to see if it is a true finding.

If I still haven't managed to convince you then as a final plea let me say this; when a study has been conducted there is an ethical need to disseminate the results, and as journal editors you have a responsibility to support the dissemination process. For those of you that are still unsure, how about this for a suggestion: in each issue of your journal publish one example of research by an early career researcher that, despite not meeting all your usual criteria for inclusion, still has something useful to contribute. You can even mention how your journal is supporting early career researchers in your editorial. The process for doing this is relatively straightforward. All you would need to do is include a question on the submission form that asks if the author is less than five years post doctoral and then keep on record all such papers that are rejected and select the best one for publication. After all, despite the current economic climate, even banks provide preferential rates on mortgages for first-time buyers. You may just find authors of your early career publications are the ones producing ground-breaking research in the years to come.

Employers

I think it is important for employers to realise that just because someone applying for a post-doc position may have few (or no)

publications it is not an indication of a lack of ability to produce a number of high quality outputs once in post. After all, a number of factors may have impacted on the lack of publications, for example, conducting research that showed a different outcome to that desired by the funders, working on a longitudinal study whose outputs are anticipated but not written yet or as shown earlier having an unsupportive supervisor. A good solution is to invite applicants to bring an example of a report prepared for publication to the interview. That way the quality of the research and the writing can be assessed without the need for the research to have been published.

In conclusion

I hope this article has reinforced how important it is to publish alongside a PhD. As a student it is important to be motivated to publish and disseminate the results of your research amongst both academic and non-academic groups. However, it is undeniable that the quality of support given to early career researchers varies depending on the institution and the supervisor. Some institutions have research groups dedicated to supporting their students and staff in producing outputs and I would like to see this established in all universities. After all, just because it might be difficult for early career researchers to get published doesn't mean that it is a guarantee for established researchers either!

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A cognitive slant on some controversial plants

Catherine Gardiner

The BPS Annual Conference 2011, Glasgow, 4-6 May 2011

THERE IS increasing media coverage of the idea that smoking, drinking alcohol and consuming caffeine can be detrimental to our health, or even life threatening. Although this may be the case, the other side of the argument is rarely considered. For example, what if these naturally occurring chemicals help an individual perform everyday cognitive tasks well? What if a smoker needs nicotine to allow them to function at a level they cannot achieve long after they quit smoking? A symposium at this year's British Psychological Society Annual Conference, held in Glasgow, explored how cognitive performance can be affected by many naturally occurring phytochemicals (chemical compounds that are found in plants).

The session began with David Kennedy (Northumbria University) introducing the many effects that simple molecules in plants can have on human cognition. Plants metabolise a number of different phytochemicals that are not involved in a plant's immediate survival, including alkaloids (e.g. drugs such as caffeine, nicotine and cocaine), terpenes (e.g. herbal extracts from rosemary and sage) and phenolics (e.g. tea and St John's wort). All of these chemicals are active in humans and each has a unique effect on cognition, which is why the effects of secondary metabolites have been investigated. Much previous research in the area of phytochemicals has explored the effects of toxic alkaloids. However, researchers argue that it is important to start observing the

effects of a variety of different plant chemicals on human cognition, whether toxic or part of our everyday diet (Kennedy & Wightman, 2011). For example, Kennedy presented data on the effects of sage, which has been found to lift moods, have a significant positive effect on cognitive processes such as word recognition and number recall, and decrease mental fatigue (Kennedy et al., 2011). Should we be reaching for the herbs rather than caffeine next time we need a lift?

Another substance that has been the focus of recent research is tea, which has been shown to be the second most frequently consumed drink. Dr Crystal Haskell and her team (Brain, Performance and Nutrition Research Centre, Northumbria University) have explored the effects that tea may be having on our bodies aside from the well-documented effects of caffeine. Caffeine has been shown to have a positive effect on cognition by increasing the speed of cognitive processes (James & Rogers, 2005). However, it is interesting to note that this drug can also have negative effects such as vasoconstriction resulting in a reduction of blood flow to the brain. Although tea contains caffeine it also has other beneficial properties. Decaffeinated tea has been shown to decrease hypertension whilst regular caffeinated can reduce anxiety and heart rate and induce relaxation (Kennedy & Haskell, 2011). These additional effects may be due to the amino acid L-theanine found in the drink. Researchers from the BPNR Centre explored the effects

of different combinations of caffeine and L-theanine levels on participants' mood, cognition, salivary caffeine levels, blood pressure and heart rate. Results showed that the effects of caffeine on vasoconstriction were reduced when used in conjunction with higher levels of L-theanine, suggesting the beneficial properties associated with this amino acid. Furthermore, the effects are more pronounced for tea than coffee.

The ability of drinks to provide benefits was also discussed in relation to red wine. Emma Wightman (Northumbria University) explained that grapes contain resveratrol, a polyphenol that can increase cerebral blood flow to the frontal cortex. It not only increases vasodilatation but also the amount of haemoglobin oxygen uptake. Therefore Wightman and colleagues hypothesised that compounds found in red wine may have a beneficial effect on cognitive tasks that occur in this region of the brain, such as serial subtraction. To explore this, they carried out double-blind, placebo-controlled studies whereby participants were randomly allocated into different groups and asked to consume varying concentrations of resveratrol before performing a selection of cognitive tasks that activate the frontal cortex (Kennedy et al., 2010). Cerebral blood flow was measured using near-infrared spectroscopy. Results showed that although there was an increase in blood flow to the brain, no significant differences in cognitive task performance were found. This could be due to individual differences in rates of metabolism, and thus needs more investigation. Further studies exploring cocoa and peanuts are being conducted to examine other effects of polyphenols. It is important to note that polyphenols may have to work in conjunction with other substances to have significant positive effects and therefore different combinations need to be explored.

It is widely acknowledged that smoking is bad for your health. It significantly increases the risks of various types of cancer as well as inducing a very strong addiction to the drug nicotine (Stolerman & Jarvis, 1995). This is a

type of alkaloid (a definite toxin) and can therefore have negative effects on the body. However, evidence presented by Lynne Dawkins (University of East London) suggests that nicotine may allow the smoker to increase their overall cognitive performance. By testing smokers when still smoking, a week after quitting, a month after quitting, then finally three months after quitting, their cognitive performance could be mapped and compared. Results highlighted that there was still a significant reduction in an individual's cognitive performance even after quitting for three months. It is unclear whether this increase in performance when smoking may be due to smoking itself or whether individuals who choose to smoke require nicotine to perform at this higher level.

It should be noted that other factors may affect the validity and applicability of these findings. It is important to consider individual differences such as tolerance of various chemicals, an individual's genetics, metabolism and environmental factors, as these may influence how the phytochemicals affect cognitive processes. Due to suggestions that different combinations of these chemicals can produce different effects, researchers must also consider (and where possible control for) an individual's diet when undertaking experiments of this kind. This symposium was an interesting and thought provoking insight into the physical effects of natural chemicals on human cognitive performance. It highlighted that there are many natural chemicals that can have both positive and negative effects on cognition.

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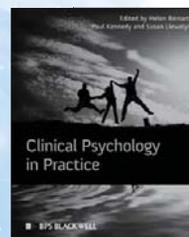
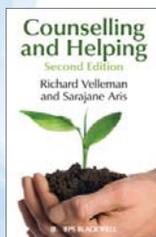
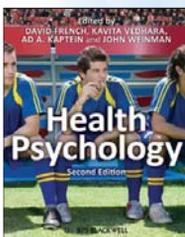
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Psychology and austerity: Finding creative ways to research and collaborate in a cost effective way

Michael Richards

MAINSTREAM psychology has traditionally focused on the individual level of analysis (Orford, 2008). For example, brain structures (neuropsychology), psychopathology (forensic psychology) and structuring thoughts (cognitive psychology). Most theories of personality emphasise individualistic perspectives of behaviour and individual applications of change such as medical diagnosis or one-to-one psychotherapy or counselling. However, in these times of austerity we know that one-to-one services will be closed down or people will not be able to afford counselling or specialised psychological interventions such as psychotherapy. In addition, with socio-economic change, it is the same people and groups who will suffer more, i.e. the poor (Doran et al., 2004), the disabled (Smith et al., 2004), the unemployed (Gallie et al., 2005), ethnic minorities (Nazroo, 1998) and women (Women's Budget Group, 2008). Focusing on the individual level of analysis is costly and does not always work.

In this article, I want to explore how community psychology and disability studies is a productive relationship, which can inspire hope and change with little cost, whilst making a big difference. I want to demonstrate that for psychology to make a difference during these economic difficulties, it needs to build a rapport with other developing disciplines and community groups. With that idea in mind, I will use my current research as an example, which concerns a community group of men labelled with 'learning disabilities' and their

determination to improve their health in collaboration with Manchester Mencap and the Museum of Science and Industry.

What is disability studies?

Disability studies is a relatively new discipline concerned with how we understand people and disability (Shakespeare, 1999), which emerged from the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Disability studies emerged in parallel with 'queer theory' and the feminist and black civil rights movements, at the same time when psychology was going through a 'crisis' in terms of being criticised for being too reductionist, individual focused and ethnocentrically being American (see Kim, 1999). For people labelled with 'disability' it galvanised them to organise collectively to make change and give themselves a 'voice' and a place in society (Goodley, 2010). Society has a dreadful history of discriminating against people with disabilities; therefore, the Disabled People's Movement was revolutionary in shaping how we now understand disability. It enabled their experiences to be a source of knowledge and identified disability not as a medical, pathological problem, but one created by society and society's constructions of disability, which need to be tackled through socio-political interventions at the micro and macro levels. Furthermore, the problem of moral, medical, psychological approaches is the promotion of an individual model of disability, which reduces disability to the 'tragic' individual person being left to be treated by charities and healthcare profes-

sionals (Oliver, 1990). Traditional interventions have been about ‘person fixing’ rather than ‘context changing’ (Goodley, 2011). For example, neuropsychologists primarily use drug treatments to change the functions of the brain, aiming to change or re-change personalities, whilst community psychologists will work in collaboration with community groups to change their social conditions.

Nevertheless, people with disabilities are expected to suffer more than most from Government cuts. For example, the Government’s proposed benefit reforms will see 3.5 million disabled people lose £9.2 billion by 2015 (Grant & Wood, 2010). It is predicted that the number of adults with learning disabilities known to services will rise from 11 per cent during 2001–2011 to 14 per cent over the two decades 2001–2021 (Emerson & Hatton, 2008). Therefore, more people with disabilities are expected at a time when there will be less service provision, money and support. In addition, less than 10 per cent of people with learning disabilities are in employment (Department of Health, 2001). This might well cause stigma for people with disabilities who are reliant on the benefits system, when in fact the welfare state is changing towards people with disabilities, who are getting less. Moreover, only 36 per cent of individuals with learning disabilities are undertaking some form of education or training (Emerson & Hatton, 2008). Many do not, which hinders personal development and the development of social networks.

So, psychology’s a problem, society’s a problem, and the government austerity measures are a problem. How can we bridge the gap between people with disabilities and psychology?

Community psychology and ‘manpowered’

I argue that community psychology could play an important part in strengthening links between psychology and disability studies (See Goodley & Lawthom, 2005; Lawthom & Goodley, 2005), leading to creative ways to collaborate in a cost effective way. Both

community psychology and disability studies were born out of the social movements, are relatively new compared to the traditional sciences and both are driven by the need to change the contexts surrounding individuals rather than the person themselves. Therefore, in the context of improving the lives of people with ‘disabilities’, community psychology looks to work with disabled people, not on them. Through collaborating with disabled people, it seeks to break down barriers created by society such as not being able to gain employment and not having access to certain public resources.

Community psychologists have used various methods to enable disabled people to empower themselves. A good example of collaborating in a cost effective way whilst making a difference is a project I facilitate in central Manchester. In collaboration with the Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester Mencap (a learning disability charity) and Manchester Metropolitan University, a men’s group was set up with the aim to improve the health of men and to challenge the labels associated with ‘learning difficulties’. From the outset, some of the members were part of the decision-making process including drafting risk assessments and creating a member’s forum. Here, we discussed and debated what kinds of activities we could use to make the most of this opportunity and to make their lives better. It was during this process that they named the group ‘Manpowered’. This reflects the idea that these are vulnerable men who want to be empowered and liberated from the shackles of everyday life, in line with the values of community psychology. In addition, we agreed with the museum that in February 2012 we will display a six-month exhibition at the museum, which will incorporate all of their work including films, poems, sculptures, photography and art work. Thousands of people who visit the museum will be able to view and experience the feelings, emotions and thoughts of these men, which is something these men have rarely or never been able to do in their lives. They will get

the chance to be creative and collaborate with people who have faced similar hardships. This is a good example of empowerment and inclusion, which both community psychology and disability studies strive for in collaboration with their community partners.

Every Thursday afternoon we meet at the museum, where we have a large room to display the men's work and to take part in activities. This is free of charge and we are able to access a budget the museum provides for resources such as paper and materials for artwork and equipment. The film equipment is provided by our filmmaker, free of charge to the group. The group consists of men labelled with 'learning disabilities' aged 32 – 64 years. Some live with carers, others alone or in residential care homes. We have approximately 8 – 10 members each week, which was always the target number because it is a good number of people for group work of this kind: not too big or small. It is open to all men, but a core group has developed overtime. Most men attend through an arrangement with 'Ring and Ride' through Manchester Mencap, whilst others make their own way to and from the group.

We have been engaged in a variety of activities including trips out for meals, art and craft, drama based on their lives, filming focusing on health related discussions, photography, poetry on childhood memories and sexuality, as well as debate. All these activities allow the men to have a 'voice', expressing who they are and what they want to do. The methods I use to record information include reflexive logs, photos, film and the work produced by the men such as artwork and their own filming, poetry and photography. With these methods I will be able to narrate the research process, which will be explained in the exhibition. It will be able to evaluate and reflect on how the project has worked and improved their health and well-being.

We hope that by using a community psychology approach, the men will be able to contribute towards their own health and

well-being, in their own way, and be able to challenge the negativity that surrounds the labels of 'learning disabilities'. For example, when one man originally came to us, he had recently experienced serious mental health issues, looked dishevelled, had low self esteem, and struggled to communicate and make friends because of his cerebral palsy. In the first week, after the first session, he did not want to return when asked if he would come back.

However, two weeks later he did return and through active encouragement from facilitators and the male members, he started to build his confidence and has come to every session since then. His family have informed us that he has been transformed since joining the group, and that it is the only time he ever really goes out and he is happy. He has taken part in all activities and has become the project's main filmmaker. He bought his own camcorder and camera because of how much he enjoys the group. He feels good, looks healthy and has developed a great sense of humour. Furthermore, another man had gone through an emotional time since coming to the project. He was initially very shy and would only speak when he was spoken to, despite encouragement. On the other hand, when one of the other member's facilitated a poetry class, he seemed to transform into someone else. He came back the following week with a poem he had written and he was asked to read it out on film in front of the group. In dramatic fashion, he revealed that he was homosexual, which in the context of a men's group was brave and rare. Subsequently, he has written more poetry and pieces of writing in relation to his sexuality and it is notable that each week the men have become more and more supportive. He speaks more often now and smiles a lot more. For a man who has been labelled with a 'learning disability' and has to deal with the negativity surrounding alternate sexualities, his progress is remarkable. Moreover, his art work has become more detailed and expressive. During filming activities, he

tends to be the main presenter and interviewer, in which he has to think on the spot a great deal, and he does it so well.

Conclusion

During these times of austerity, psychology can play an important role in cost effective, creative collaborations that improve the health and well being of people with disabilities and other 'social problems'. Research can be just as effective at a micro level with or without much financial backing. Simply bringing people together with common

goals can be just as rewarding and powerful. Combining community psychology and disability studies can be both stronger and more effective in creating change and highlighting the contextual problems of our society rather than the individual.

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PsyPAG Committee

Position	Currently held by	Due for re-election
Core Committee Members		
Chair chair@psypag.co.uk	Sarah Wood sarah.wood@unn.ac.uk	2012
Treasurer	Jen Mayer j.mayer@gold.ac.uk	2013
Vice Chair vicechair@psypag.co.uk	Emma Jackson e.jackson@worc.ac.uk	2013
Communications Officer webmaster@psypag.co.uk	Hester Duffy hester.duffy@gmail.com	2012
Information Officer info@psypag.co.uk	Jenna Condie J.Condie@pgr.salford.ac.uk	2012
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	Claire Miller psu525@bangor.ac.uk	2012
	Daniel Zahra Daniel.zahra@plymouth.ac.uk	2013
	Blaire Morgan Bem640@bham.ac.uk	2013
Division Representatives		
Division of Clinical Psychology	Fleur-Michelle Coiffait F.M.Coiffait@sms.ed.ac.uk	2012
Division of Counselling Psychology	Sarah Baker sarah@mkvie.com	2013
Division of Educational and Child Psychology	Alison Davidson pspc1d@bangor.ac.uk	2013
Scottish Division of Educational Psychology	Position under review	
Division for Teachers and Researchers in Psychology	Puja Joshi aa9040@coventry.ac.uk	2013
Division of Forensic Psychology	Ross Bartels RMB956@bham.ac.uk	2013
Division of Health Psychology	Ruth Laudler ruth.laudler@northumbria.ac.uk	2012
Division of Neuropsychology	Ralph Pawline Pss825@bangor.ac.uk	2013
Division of Occupational Psychology	Kazia Solowiej k.solowiej@worc.ac.uk	2012
Division of Sport & Exercise Psychology	Sean Webster sean.webster@uws.ac.uk	2012

Position	Currently held by	Due for re-election
Section Representatives		
Cognitive Psychology Section	Darren Lewis dsdl@exchange.shu.ac.uk	2012
Consciousness and Experiential Psychology Section	Greg Elder greg.elder@strath.ac.uk	2012
Developmental Psychology Section	Natalia Kucirkova n.kucirkova@open.ac.uk	Co-opted
History and Philosophy of Psychology Section	Elisa Carrus psp01ec@gold.ac.uk	2012
Psychology of Sexualities Section	Position Vacant	
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Psychobiology Section	Robin Kramer psp837@bangor.ac.uk	2013
Psychology of Education Section	Emma Jackson e.jackson@worc.ac.uk	2013
Psychology of Women Section	Lauren Kita LKita@bournemouth.ac.uk	2013
Psychotherapy Section	Kate Doran K.Doran@sheffield.ac.uk	2013
Qualitative Methods Section	Amy Fielden a.fielden@northumbria.ac.uk	2013
Social Psychology Section	Ruth Laidler ruthlaidler88@yahoo.co.uk	2012
Transpersonal Psychology Section	Alexander Griffiths-Moros aig3@st-andrews.ac.uk	2013
Coaching Psychology	Gareth Picknell gareth.picknell@hotmail.co.uk	2013
Community Psychology	Michael Richards michael.l.richards3@stu.mmu.ac.uk	2013

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Branch Representatives		
North East of England Branch	Tom Merrill tommym777@hotmail.com	2013
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Northern Ireland Branch	Paul Wilson pwilson23@qub.ac.uk	2012
Scottish Branch	Position vacant	
South West of England Branch	Chantelle Bailey chantelle2.bailey@uwe.ac.uk	2012
Welsh Branch	Rhian Worth rhian.worth@hotmail.co.uk	2013
Wessex Branch	Christopher Rossiter cr00107@surrey.ac.uk	2013
West Midlands Branch	Samantha Rogers Sxr822@bham.ac.uk	2013
London and Home Counties Branch	Fran Knight f.knight@gold.ac.uk	2013
Board Representatives		
Membership and Professional Training Board	Position under review	
Publications and Communications Board	Chantelle Bailey chantelle2.bailey@uwe.ac.uk	2012
Ethics	Kirsten Bartlett k.e.bartlett@shu.ac.uk	2012
Research Board (Chair)	Sarah Goldie sarah.goldie@unn.ac.uk	2012
Other Committees		
Conference Standing Committee	Lauren Kita LKita@bournemouth.ac.uk	2013
International Representative	Rebecca Monk rlmonk@uclan.ac.uk	2013
Teaching and Learning Representative	Alison Davidson pspc1d@bangor.ac.uk	2013
National Postgraduate Committee	Position under review	
Undergraduate Liaison Officer	Stephen McGlynn stephen.mcglynn@new.ox.ac.uk	2013

Dates for your diary

Event	Date	Where	Website
Division of Clinical Psychology Annual Conference 2011	1-2 December 2011	Holiday Inn, Birmingham City Centre	http://www.dcpconference.co.uk
Division of Educational & Child Psychology Trainee Educational Psychologist Conference 2012	10 January 2012	Holiday Inn, Stratford-Upon-Avon	http://www.bps.org.uk/events/division-educational-child-psychology-trainee-educational-psychologist-conference-2012
Division of Occupational Psychology Annual Conference 2012	11-13 January 2012	Crowne Plaza, Chester	http://dop-conference.bps.org.uk
Division of Educational & Child Psychology Annual Professional Development Event 2012	11-13 January 2012	Holiday Inn, Stratford-Upon-Avon	http://www.bps.org.uk/events/division-educational-child-psychology-annual-professional-development-event-2012
Behaviour change intervention design and evaluation	20 January 2012	BPS London Office	http://www.bps.org.uk/events/behaviour-change-intervention-design-and-evaluation
Psychologist in the Pub: Sue Jamison-Powell	7 February 2012	All Bar One, Newhall Street, Birmingham	http://www.facebook.com/pages/BPS-West-Midlands-Branch/114765605211885
Midlands Health Psychology Network Annual Conference	6 February 2012	Coventry University Techno Centre	http://www.MHPN.co.uk
Psychotherapy Section Annual Training Conference 2012	19-20 March 2012	BPS London Office	http://www.bps.org.uk/events/psychotherapy-section-annual-training-conference-2012
Psychologist in the Pub: Shiri Einav and Louise Bunce	10 April 2012	Worcester (TBC)	http://www.facebook.com/pages/BPS-West-Midlands-Branch/114765605211885
The British Psychological Society Annual Conference 2012	18-20 April 2012	The Grand Connaught Rooms, London	http://annual-conference.bps.org.uk/
The British Psychological Society Student Conference 2012	18 April 2012	The Grand Connaught Rooms, London	http://www.bps.org.uk/events/british-psychological-society-student-conference-2012
Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section Conference 2012	18-20 April 2012	The Grand Connaught Rooms, London	http://www.bps.org.uk/events/qualitative-methods-psychology-section-conference-2012
Division of Academics, Teachers and Researchers in Psychology (DATRP) Inaugural Conference 2012	19 April 2012	The Grand Connaught Rooms, London	http://www.bps.org.uk/events/dtrp-inaugural-conference-2012
Psychologist in the Pub: Clare Wood	15 May 2012	Oxford (TBC)	http://www.facebook.com/pages/BPS-West-Midlands-Branch/114765605211885



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 Society generally. We also liaise with the Society's Student Members Group 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.psympag.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.psympag.co.uk.

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