Tips on conducting effective online research

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly about the fMRI world

Conscientisation and identity: Reflections on being a community psychologist

Also in this issue:

Psychology People in Profile: Dr Rusi Jaspal

Conference and workshop reviews
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Welcome to the 89th issue of the PsyPAG Quarterly. This issue is packed full of wonderful discussion and research-based articles, hints and tips, and reviews, which we hope will make for an interesting and informative read!

We open with a series of articles which explore research methods and analysis; Fayme Yeats challenges readers to consider how quality can be assured and maintained within quantitative research, and presents the results of a thought-provoking study exploring psychological researchers’ understanding of statistics. On the quantitative theme, James Grange provides us with a great introduction to Bayes and Bayesian statistics, and why it may be far more applicable to the sorts of issues psychology is interested in, compared with traditional methods (which may not be all they are cracked up to be). Greg Maciejewski examines the fMRI world – the advances and the pitfalls, and how not everything that glistens is gold. The next article, by Rosemary Kingston, will be useful for anyone with an interest in conducting research online – providing useful hints and tips on how to get the most out of your research. Following this, in ‘On a date with secondary data: Things you should know before asking someone else’s data out’, Patrycja Piotrowska presents a great introduction to secondary data, where to find it, and the things you need to consider when using this approach.

Next we have a variety of conference and workshop reviews, which each help to show postgraduates the benefits of attending. In a combined conference review and hints and tips article, Fiona McBryde provides an insight into her experiences of presenting at a conference, and the benefits which writing presentations can provide for your thesis.

Carolyn Plateau takes us through her experiences of attending an international conference – the International Conference on Eating Disorders: from organising everything to be able to attend, to presenting her poster, to being able to explore the city (Montreal) in which the conference was held. The review will be useful for anyone thinking about attending an interdisciplinary conference. Jenny Watts’ review of the Royal College of Nurses International Nursing Research Conference provides a fun account of a different approach to networking, and some of the issues affecting nurses’ development of economically viable health care innovations. Laurien Nagels-Coune and Madeleine Dalsklev review the 2nd Junior Researchers Programme Conference; the final phase of the Junior Researcher Programme, which is a branch of the European Federation for Psychology Students Association (EFPSA). The conference is an international affair and represents a fantastic opportunity for undergraduate and postgraduate psychology students to network, present and enjoy psychology. Laura De Molière reviews SoDoc – a workshop started and supported by the German Psychological Society’s Social

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Psychology Division. This review helps to show why presenting at workshops, and picking the right workshop in the first place, are so helpful for developing your research. Samantha Rowbotham, Melissa Noke and Ruth Butterworth review a workshop they developed and delivered for postgraduate psychology students, to introduce them to Outreach (i.e. activities to promote psychology to individuals from less privileged backgrounds and communicating psychology to the public). This provides a great insight for anyone thinking of developing their own workshop. Rebecca Wray’s review of the F-Word in Contemporary Women’s Writing Conference follows; a lively and supportive forum for discussing the ‘F-Word’ conference was to examine the diverse and varied ways in which contemporary women’s writing (post-1970s) has engaged with, approached and contributed to contemporary feminist discourse. Finally, Kathryn Fackrell reviews the 7th International Tinnitus Research Initiative (TRI) Tinnitus Conference, which focused on tinnitus diagnosis, treatment and management.

Continuing the auditory theme, Harriet Smith presents a fascinating discussion of the use of ‘earwitness testimony’, in ‘Unfamiliar voice identification as forensic evidence: Can you believe your ears?’

Angelos Kassianos next discusses the experience of being diagnosed with cancer; how research has overlooked the positive outcomes that people may achieve, which may help people cope with their experiences and the implications this has for clinical interventions.

We have a glimpse into the working life of a community psychologist in Michael Richards’ article, which explores ‘Conscientisation’ and a reflection on a smaller project he co-ordinated, which aimed to help develop a training programme for volunteers to build relationships with people labelled with learning disabilities.

Finally, we are treated to an interview with Dr Rusi Jaspal, by Kate Doran. Dr Jaspal was the recipient of the BPS Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section’s Outstanding Research by an Early Career Scholar Award. In the interview we learn about Dr Jaspal’s career and research interests have developed, and how his approach integrates social psychology and linguistics to understand Identity.

If you have any comments on this issue, please feel free to get in touch by email, or Twitter.

Laura Scurlock-Evans
On behalf of the PsyPAG Quarterly Editorial Team
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Chair's Column
Laura Neale

WELCOME to the winter 2013 edition of the PsyPAG Quarterly. I hope you are all adjusting to the cold weather and dark nights and that all new postgraduates are settling into their studies well. There has been a lot of PsyPAG activity over the last few months since I was elected as Chair. Of particular note are the two workshops which PsyPAG has funded with our workshop fund. A pre-conference workshop entitled ‘Advice and Inspiration: Getting Published and Planning your Career’ was held at the beginning of the joint Cognitive/Developmental Conference in September at the University of Reading. The workshop aimed at providing advice for getting work published as a PhD student, planning early careers and to provide an opportunity for an open discussion concerning general issues that PhD students experience. The workshop included presentations from Professor Robert Johnson (University of Kent), Professor Margaret Harris (Oxford Brookes University) and five early career academics all within ten years of completing their PhDs (Dr Dan Lamport, University of Reading; Dr Alana James, Royal Holloway, University of London; Dr Claire Monks, University of Greenwich; Dr Bhismadev Charkrabarti and Dr Nicholas Holmes, both from the University of Reading). The second PsyPAG-funded workshop was held in October at the University of Manchester entitled ‘Research in NHS contexts’. The keynote speaker was Dr Sara Tai from the University of Manchester and there was a Twitter discussion throughout the workshop which can be viewed at #PGNHS-research. Both workshops were over-subscribed and received positive feedback and we hope to fund similar workshops in the near future. If you have an idea for a workshop on another topic to benefit your fellow postgraduates then please get in touch as we would love to hear from you. We accept applications for workshop funding throughout the year and this is an important way in which PsyPAG can benefit our members. More information about our workshop fund and how to apply can also be found on our website: www.psypag.co.uk/workshops/

I am delighted to announce that PsyPAG’s 29th Annual Conference is to be held at Cardiff Metropolitan University from 23–25 July 2014. Registration for the conference will become available shortly at our low cost, postgraduate rates, so be sure to keep an eye on our website (www.psypag.co.uk), Twitter (@PsyPAG2014) and Facebook (facebook.com/PsyPAGAnnualConference) for all of the latest information. PsyPAG’s annual conference is our flagship event where approximately 150 delegates over the three days come together, including psychology UK postgraduates who are currently studying for MSc’s, PhD’s and practitioners in training. The conference is a fantastic opportunity to not only network with other postgraduates but to present your work to a supportive audience comprised of your peers. There will also be the traditional planned social events including a wine reception and conference dinner. We hope to see many of you in Cardiff next July!

We have also recently launched a PsyPAG newsletter to help keep you up-to-date with our latest news and activities including the conference, bursaries, awards and information regarding upcoming issues of The Quarterly with details regarding submission. We are initially aiming to produce three newsletters a year which will coincide with our committee representative reports so that you are informed of latest developments. The newsletter has been distributed via our mailing lists which include our departmental contacts to ensure we reach as
many UK psychology postgraduates as possible. Hopefully you have received this but if you did not please contact me at chair@psypag.co.uk as we are keen to link with all UK psychology postgraduates and we are aware that not everyone is based within a traditional psychology department. You will also be able to find the PsyPAG newsletter on our website.

We are always keen to hear from postgraduates who have suggestions, feedback or ideas as to how PsyPAG is able to provide further support for UK psychology postgraduates, so please contact me at chair@psypag.co.uk if you have a contribution.

Thank you to the British Psychological Society’s Research Board for their support and the PsyPAG committee for their continued hard work and dedication in supporting UK psychology postgraduates.

Best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year.

Laura Neale
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ON READING THE TITLE OF THIS ARTICLE one might imagine it is concerned with evaluating or perhaps encouraging the amalgamation of qualitative methods alongside quantitative ones. Whilst worthy of academic interest, this is not the concern of this research, which presents data that are concerned with the quality of the quantitative research that psychology is producing. Increasingly, psychology has found itself under serious scrutiny with high profile contemporary cases of fraud, false positives and misconduct gathering attention at pace within the discipline itself and in the wider public conscience. As a third-year PhD student on the (ever hopeful) cusp of an academic career I find myself wondering: is the credibility of my discipline at stake? If so, what could I possibly do about this?

Perhaps the most infamous contemporary example of malpractice in psychological research would be Diederik Stapel, once professor of social psychology based at Tilburg University. Stapel was sacked in September 2011 after admitting to using faked data in his publications (Enserink, 2011), with ‘55 publications in which it is certain that Stapel committed fraud’ (Tilburg University, 2012). His work includes a (now retracted) Science paper (Stapel & Lindenberg, 2011) and it is believed that he both manipulated and fabricated datasets: either manipulating data collected by assistants, interns or undergraduates before passing them for analysis to PhD students; or providing co-authors with data and results when no study whatsoever had been run (Levelt Committee, 2012).

Consequently the attention of both academics and the media has been drawn to the discipline. Higher profile cases of gross misconduct are in turn drawing attention to the ‘greyer area of bad or lazy scientific practice’ (Jha, 2012). Psychology as a discipline is under serious scrutiny, as Cardiff University psychologist Chris Chambers asserts: ‘Psychology is at a crossroads – the decisions we take now will determine whether or not it remains a serious, credible, scientific discipline along with the harder sciences’ (Chambers, cited in Jha, 2012).

So, what are these decisions that we must make? We could discuss a huge variety of research culture issues – the influences and demands upon psychologists that might encourage deviant or slip-shod practices. The review process, quantity demands on academics, open access data and replication studies (Yong, 2012) are all strong candidates for deliberation. I encourage you to engage with these debates in any which way you can, influence them and anticipate change – but these are not the topics I will discuss in this article. Nor am I beginning a lengthy sermon on candor, corruption and academic integrity in the vain hope that I would catch you, red handed, just about to change that \( p > 0.05 \) into a \( p < 0.05 \) and turn your wicked heart to one of pure, scientific gold. I am assuming you have already made this decision. The pursuit of knowledge, truth and understanding is what gets you out of bed in the morning, right?

This paper is not concerned with our active or intentional mistreatment of science, or indeed more general issues of the publication process or other demands on academics. What I would like to consider is: how much of research is of poor quality simply because we don’t actually know what we are doing? To what extent do we, or should we, understand the quantitative...
methodologies that are often integral to the conclusions that we make, publish and use to direct future research? To what extent can we accurately evaluate our own understanding? As postgraduates we are all capable of running the tests and reading off the output that we need – but how much do we understand about this particular test in the first place? This paper seeks to explore the extent that (postgraduate) researchers understand statistics.

To this end a simple test will be used to assess understanding of what a simple $p$ value of 0.01 means. Six true-or-false questions regarding such a $p$ value are presented in Dienes (2008) and taken from Oakes (1986) and I was shocked when confronted with my own (lack of) understanding. I was also surprised that out of the 70 researchers that Oakes (1986) investigated, only two demonstrated a sound understanding of statistical significance. Please take time to test yourself now (the answers are revealed in the results section) – see Table 1 and circle the correct answer to each statement.

I present here the findings from a survey (involving these six questions) of PsyPAG members and postgraduates from across the UK. The paper intends to produce contemporary figures regarding the proportion of researchers entering psychological academia that have a sound understanding of statistical significance. My aim is to use these results to build a picture of the extent to which postgraduates demonstrate understanding of core principles involved in quantitative research. I intend, therefore, to both highlight any gaps in understanding, discuss their consequences and provide recommendations as to what decisions we need to make to ensure that psychology ‘remains a serious, credible, scientific discipline along with the harder sciences’ (Chambers, cited in Jha, 2012).

### Table 1: Questions taken from Oakes (1986) and reproduced from Dienes (2008) with permission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>You have absolutely disproved the null hypothesis (that there is no difference between the population means).</td>
<td>True</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>You have found the probability of the null hypothesis being true.</td>
<td>True</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>You have absolutely proved your experimental hypothesis (that there is a difference between the population means).</td>
<td>True</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>You can deduce the probability of the experimental hypothesis being true.</td>
<td>True</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>You know that if you decided to reject the null hypothesis, the probability that you are making the wrong decision.</td>
<td>True</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>You have a reliable experimental finding in the sense that if, hypothetically, the experiment were repeated a great number of times, you would obtain a significant result on 99 per cent of occasions.</td>
<td>True</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Method

Participants
Ninety postgraduates were recruited through the PsyPAG facebook page, twitter feed and mailing list.

Design
The survey comprised of an online survey made up of optional questions. Demographic information was taken simply in the form of current institution and qualifications currently or previously studied. The regularity and type of statistical tests that participants use were measured, as well as where participants sought information about statistics. A seven-point Likert scale was used to measure interest in statistics (from 1 ‘not at all interested’ to 7 ‘very interested’); understanding of statistics (from 1 ‘no understanding’ to 7 ‘very confident in my understanding’); and engagement with literature on statistics (from 1 ‘no engagement’ to 7 ‘very engaged’). Finally participants were asked to select either true or false to the six statements following a hypothetical t-test result (see Table 1).

Results
Of the six true or false questions assessing participant knowledge regarding statistical significance, five of the 90 participants answered all of the questions correctly as false (six per cent of participants). The distribution of correct answers is shown in Figure 1, with both the modal and mean correct answers equal to 3 – which is half of the total questions.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of responses for each statement in particular. Of these statements participants found i and iii easiest to falsify, both resulting in 76 correct answers (84 per cent of participants). This aligns with Dienes’s (2008) suggestion that most people are happy with the idea that statistics do not give us absolute proof or disproof. Over half of the participants in the study also rejected statement ii (62 per cent), which refers to the null hypothesis being true. However, statement iv, which also refers to truth, this time in the context of the experimental hypothesis, collected only 26 correct answers (29 per cent of participants) and the lowest accuracy. The p value does...
not refer to the probability of a hypothesis, null or otherwise being true. Whilst Dienes (2008) suggests that statement v is a ‘sneaky one and often catches people out’ (p.68) around half of the participants in the survey (N=50, 55 per cent) answer correctly to this question. Indeed it suggests that a single event (the wrong decision) is the subject of the p value, when this refers to a collective of events. Statement vi is a description of power and not statistical significance – which just under a third of participants answered correctly as false (N=28, 31 per cent).

The participants answered a variety of other questions, including self-rating their interest in statistics on a scale of 1 (‘not at all interested’) to 7 (‘very interested’), mean=5.00, SD=1.56. Participants also self-rated their understanding of statistics on a similar scale between 1 (‘no understanding’) to 7 (‘very confident in my understanding’), mean=4.34, SD=1.36. Self ratings of engagement with literature on statistics from 1 (‘no engagement’) to 7 (‘very engaged’), mean=3.46, SD=1.61. None of these self-report measures correlated with the number of correct answers on the test.

We also asked participants to select from 32 common statistical tests or methods employed within psychology which they had used. The number of tests reported, mean=9.44, SD=4.84, positively correlated with number of correct answers on the test, r(90)=.308, p=.003, suggesting a possible relationship between the number of statistical tests and methods that participants report that they use and the number of correct answers given. There was also a relationship between the number of correct answers and the number of sources participants reported that they used when seeking information or advice on statistical methods,

Figure 2: Distribution of correct, incorrect and withheld responses across statements.
\( r(90) = .254, \ p = .016, \) suggesting a possible relationship between seeking information on statistics and understanding statistical significance.

**General discussion**

Whilst slightly more than the two out of 70 psychologists (three per cent) that Oakes (1986) reports can answer these questions correctly, the picture here is very much the same. If one assumes that those five postgraduates who answered all the questions as false did so with informed intent, then it leaves a further 70 participants who reported that they regularly use \( t \)-tests (the subject of the example) yet could not answer all of these questions correctly. This suggests that 93 per cent of postgraduates using \( t \)-tests to understand their findings do not fully understand the interpretation of the outcome. This is a worrying but not unexpected result. It lends support for the idea that a large proportion of psychologists employing quantitative methods do not fully understand them.

A rich and deep understanding of why participants responded correctly or incorrectly is lacking from this report. This is the first criticism of the true or false questions asked, which are problematic for a variety of reasons. It is impossible to qualify understanding as responding at random, correct or incorrect reasoning could all underlie any given answer. Conclusions about (a lack of) understanding may be based on the demand characteristic of all the questions requiring false answers (participants may assume one answer at least should be true). Conversely, the chance nature of the questions may mean participants have guessed their correct answers where we assume understanding. Also, the question refers to only one aspect (albeit a hugely central premise) of statistics, so does not provide a full assessment of the sample’s breadth of understanding.

The subject of further research could involve asking what postgraduates in psychology actually know about statistics? While intention of this paper was not to address the precise flaws in reasoning for each individual, we can observe a general trend as to the gaps in understanding, suggested in the distribution of correct answers. Whilst most postgraduates demonstrated an understanding of the concept of proof within statistics, they struggled with the idea of truth; single versus collective events; and power. This is perhaps something to take home, to read up on and consider as part of your training. Have you ever been taught about power, or was it rolled in with significance as pretty much one and the same? Is there a difference between proof and truth? What is a \( p \) value?!

The relationships observed between the amount of statistical tests are initial findings and no direction has been proposed for these relationships. To me it seems equally as possible that a postgraduate who regularly interacts with statistical tests and information would have greater understanding, or that a postgraduate with greater understanding would use a wider variety of tests and methods and seek information from a wider variety of sources. A greater engagement with methods, literature and greater discussion of statistical principles would do nothing to damage understanding (and may encourage self-reflection at the very least).

It is possible that the uncorrelated self-report measures of understanding, enjoyment and engagement with statistics were not the best way of assessing these predispositions. The predicted correlation between self-reported understanding of statistics and performance on test was not apparent in the data, but I would be interested to investigate further whether there is any link between perceived and actual understanding. It is worth considering the possibility that this results suggests that we ourselves cannot accurately assess our knowledge. How might this interact with our understanding and approach to further training? If we indeed lack the ability to accurately assess our own knowledge, why would we seek further training or information on something we already use regularly and seem to understand?
It seems that we should be assessing our own understanding of what these tests do and actually mean, as well as engaging with training, improving our understanding as well as increasing our awareness of alternatives and novel ideas. We should be taking advantage of our current status as postgraduate students by learning, by checking our knowledge now with supervisors and senior colleagues. Statistics shouldn’t be seen as set laws; tests to feed input to and get a yes-no answer output. We need to step out of such a constrained understanding of what is so integral to our research decisions and embrace a more grown up, critical approach to quantitative methodologies.

Right now you might be thinking that this all seems like a lot more (useless) work, because if you run a t-test, say what you are supposed to say about it and leave it at that, it will do. Here it comes back to the question as to why we need to improve our understanding in the first place. As we embark on our careers in academia, where we will not only be producing research but relaying our understanding to more students, isn’t this the time to make sure you do understand what you are doing? To understand what you are going to be teaching to future psychologists and what conclusions you are making about research: your own as well as others? We could all misunderstand a \( p \) value and miss an entire phenomenon, reject a possible solution, or accept and chase the wrong idea entirely. At the extreme we may end up claiming fraudulent findings and results, entirely by accident.

I hope (without a shred of ill intent) that you got at least one question wrong. I hope that, like for myself, this resulted in an epiphany. We all have an obligation to our discipline, colleagues and the public to make sure what we produce is of the highest quality, which I suggest that this starts with increased engagement and self-evaluation. Whilst this by no means is constrained to quantitative research, I think statistical methods suffer from their attachment to the mysterious world of mathematics – where proof and truth exist and even the thought of basic concepts give most psychologists a headache. We find it easy to accept what we consider to be universal truths about statistics, when they like any method or theory are just one possibility and are not certain. This is meant to be the sort of article you get to the end of and think ‘Wow. I didn’t know that. I really should do something about it’ and for the good of psychology, I hope that you do.

**Acknowledgements**
The author would like to thank Zoltán Dienes for his permission to reproduce the examples presented in his book *Understanding Psychology As A Science* (2008), the BPS Mathematical Statistical and Computing Section for hosting her as a PsyPAG representative and PsyPAG for generously providing a conference bursary.

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What’s all this business about Bayes?
James A. Grange

AS READERS OF contemporary psychology journals may well know, you can’t help but keep reading about something called ‘Bayesian statistics’. This article aims to give a very broad introduction to Bayesian statistics to whet your appetite, and highlight avenues for interested readers to explore the world of Bayes further.

Researchers ‘in the know’ seem to extol Bayesian statistics as a superior method of making inferences from data compared to traditional, ‘frequentist’, methods (yes, Mr p-value, I’m looking at you!). But what is it? What can it do that standard methods can’t? It turns out the answer is just about everything you’ve ever dreamed of (well, as a researcher, anyway!).

The problem
This article will highlight the problems with standard methods of analysis using the p-value. There are many problems with p; it is a test of a null hypothesis, but the null is never really true; it depends on sample size; it doesn’t answer the questions we, as researchers are interested in, etc. Furthermore, it is not well understood. Very few know the correct definition of the p-value. It is not the probability that the results occurred by chance. It is the probability of observing results as extreme (or more so) as the ones you have obtained, if the null hypothesis is true.

The problem is that hidden in this definition lies the fact that it is a conditional probability – the key part is ‘...if the null hypothesis is true’. Thus, the p-value only provides information about the probability of your data, assuming the null is true; formally, p(D|H0).

However, as a researcher, shouldn’t you be more interested in the probability of your hypothesis, given the data, p(H|D)? We might assume that this is the same thing; however, we cannot use the p-value to infer the probability of our (null) hypothesis.

To illustrate, take the example given in Kruschke’s (2011) book on Bayesian statistics: what is the probability it is raining given you can see clouds, p(rain|clouds)? Alternatively, if you know that it is raining (because you are soaked), what is the probability there are clouds, p(clouds|rain)? The answers to these two questions are not the same, and by inference, p(D|H) is not p(H|D).

Introducing Bayes’ rule
Thomas Bayes – a mathematician who lived in the 18th century – provided a solution to the problem of ‘reversing’ conditional probabilities. Bayes’ Theorem allows you to turn p(X|Y) into p(Y|X):

\[
p(y|x) = \frac{p(x|y)p(y)}{p(x)} \quad (1)
\]

The following example is again adapted from Kruschke (2011). A person has a deck of cards in front of them. If they were to pick one at random and declare that it was a King, what is the probability that it is also a club; that is, what is p(♣|K)? It is not too tricky to work out that it is ¼, as there are only four suits a card can take. After replacing this card and shuffling, the person draws another card and declares that it is a club. Given this information, what is the probability that the card is a King; that is, p(K|♣)? Again, it is trivial to show that it is 1/13, as a card can only have one of 13 values.

Now it is clearer that p(♣|K) does not equal p(K|♣); extrapolated to psychology, p(D|H) does not equal p(H|D). Bayes’ rule tells us the mathematical relationship between these probabilities, and allows us to switch them around.
The following example calculates $p(K|♣)$ using Bayes’ rule. From this we know that

$$p(K|♣) = \frac{p(♣|K)p(K)}{p(♣)}$$

(2).

So, if we know $p(♣|K)$ and $p(♣)$, we can work out $p(K|♣)$.

It is already known that $p(♣|K)=\frac{1}{4}$. We also know – because there are only four kings in a pack of 52 – that $p(K)=\frac{4}{52}$. Also, as there are only 13 hearts in a pack of 52, thus $p(♣)=\frac{13}{52}$. With this information, $p(K|♣)$ can be calculated:

$$p(K|♣) = \frac{\frac{1}{4} \cdot \frac{4}{52}}{\frac{13}{52}}$$

(3).

Working through this equation will confirm that $p(K|♣)=\frac{1}{13}$, which demonstrates Bayes’ rule works.

**Application to psychology**

Obviously, the example provided is much simpler than real life research; but this does not detract from what Bayesian analysis is trying to do: give you the probability of your hypothesis, given the data. This, after all, is what we are interested in as researchers, and something the $p$-value fails miserably at.

Bayesian analysis also allows you to directly compare competing hypotheses. For example, we can work out $p(H_0|D)$ – the probability of the null hypothesis – and $p(H_1|D)$ – the probability of the alternative hypothesis. Which one is more likely, given the data? Finally, we have a statistic that really gets to the point of what researchers want answers to.

This article is really just to whet the readers’ appetite to find out more about this fascinating subject; Bayesian statistics does so much more than is justifiable in this article. The complexity of Bayesian analysis is aided by recent publications aimed at bringing Bayesian statistics to the masses. Many typical statistical tests can now be implemented using Bayesian statistics. For readers new to Bayes, start off with implementing Bayesian $t$-tests (see Rouder, Speckman, Sun, Morey, & Iverson, 2009; Kruschke, 2012) or correlations/partial correlations (Wetzels & Wagenmakers, 2012); the authors provide user-friendly tools to calculate the necessary statistics, bypassing the at-times daunting mathematics of Bayes.

**In conclusion**

As the techniques used to conduct Bayesian analysis become simplified for researchers, we will undoubtedly see more of it in psychology publications. It is, therefore, perhaps worthwhile for psychologists to be familiar with the concept.

Or, if you are like me, just dive head-first into the wonderful pool of Bayesian statistics. Swim around, and enjoy yourself… I just hope it isn’t contaminated with $p$.

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**References**


NOT SO LONG AGO, the only way to understand how the brain executes different mental processes was to examine individuals who had sustained brain damage. It was this kind of research that has shed the very first light on the functional organisation of our most important organ. However, studies on brain-damaged patients soon turned out to be limited and did not reach our great expectations. This sort of ‘scientific constipation’ fortunately had not been long when neuroimaging methods surfaced.

One of these new tools, functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), was particularly promising and provided exactly what many cognitive neuroscientists had been impatiently waiting for. In short, fMRI provides both structural and functional images of the brain, and rests on the assumption that neural activity is correlated with temporary changes in blood flow and oxygenation and that the magnetic properties of oxygenated and deoxygenated blood are different. It should then come as no surprise that fMRI has become the tool that scientists interested in brain-mind relations want now to learn and use.

Aue, Lavelle and Cacioppo (2009) found that, since the beginning of systematic fMRI research in 1991, the number of studies using the method has increased drastically. From merely a few papers in 1994 to almost 3500 in 2007 (Medline search). Many scientists, including Gazzaniga and Heatherton (2003), regard fMRI as a breakthrough that will soon permit us to answer the most central questions of psychological phenomena. And while I must admit that fMRI studies advanced our knowledge in a way that has been nothing short of revolutionary, the fMRI world is not really happy as a clam at high tide. Aside from various technical and methodological issues in fMRI studies, there are many other, equally worrisome, things.

The first thing that strikes me about fMRI studies is how some neuroscientists over-interpret their results and end up with misleading far-reaching implications. This is particularly dangerous for many psychologists, not to mention the media, who do not know much about the process of fMRI research and may easily accept these claims at face value. My favourite example is from the Daily Mail – ‘Women feel pain more than men, scientists say after studying brain scans’ (Hope, 2011). The article rants from the very beginning, saying ‘the long-running battle of the sexes over who feels the most pain has been won’, as if the findings clarified everything in this research area.

A group of scientists studied brain activity in the anticipation and processing of pain. They investigated sex differences in response to chronic pain in 16 men and 16 women with Irritable Bowel Syndrome. The results ‘prove’ that in females, the activity of areas related to processing fear and those involved in pain avoidance was smaller and greater, respectively. During a painful event, the opposite reaction was observed among men as they were more pain avoidant. Compared to males, women showed greater activity in brain regions that have been previously linked to feeling pain and processing emotions. The researchers concluded that females attribute more emotional importance to painful stimulus, which in turn affects their perception and response to pain. What is wrong with that?

Well, plenty of things. Firstly, brain scans give you nothing but a three-dimensional
image of hemodynamic changes that accompany a particular activity/task. It cannot measure emotional stimulation nor directly reflects neural activity. Secondly, most mental activities rely on interactions within brain networks that vary from person to person in both brain structure and function. Consider not the brain, but another organ – the skin. There are some many reasons for which we sweat. Now some researchers might think that I am sweating because I am anxious, whereas the truth is that I have just had a spicy curry for lunch. Just because two things co-occur it does not mean you can infer causality. While it is a good idea to study neural correlates of mental functions, conclusions on complex psychological phenomena based on some ‘blobs’ are a different story. I do not really understand the fad to favour fMRI over psychological data; these two offer completely different levels of description.

It seems that each week fMRI scans ‘prove’ something that is far beyond their explanatory power, from political views to belief in God. Just because fMRI looks ‘cool’ and integrates many disciplines of science, it does not necessarily mean it is right. If this is the sort of knowledge we offer to a wider audience, no wonder some of my friends, researchers with no experience with neuroimaging, fall for this high technology.

There is some hope though. Other researchers begin now to explore the potential of fMRI. For example, Coleman et al. (2009) conducted a speech processing study on 41 patients, who were once diagnosed as being in a vegetative state. There were two speech conditions (sentences of high or low semantic ambiguity), unintelligible noise, and a silence condition. Before the experiment began, all patients’ ability to hear was confirmed with electrophysiological assessment of the auditory pathways. What is interesting is that while one of the diagnostic criteria for the vegetative state is the inability to process speech, fMRI showed that the brain of 19 patients responded to both sound and speech. Four of the patients had intact semantic processing, and two demonstrated a pattern of cortical activity that was the same as in healthy subjects processing difficult high-ambiguity sentences. What is more, Coleman et al. found that the level of patients’ performance at the time of scanning was a significant predictor of their recovery. All patients who had previously indicated high-level speech processing progressed to a minimally conscious state six months after the study.

This study emphasises the issues concerning the diagnosis of the vegetative state, in which patients are neither comatose nor fully conscious. Problematic behavioural assessment, lack of clear-cut diagnostic criteria or indication of pathophysiological aetiology all contribute to the terrifyingly high rate of misdiagnosis – 43 per cent (Andrews et al., 1996). Coleman and colleagues have shown us that not only are so many patients, who are actually aware of the self and environment, ‘warehoused’ without adequate rehabilitation, but also that fMRI has much more to offer than simple condition-activation relationships.

Overall, the fMRI world much resembles the Disney-like world. There are heroes who explain the neurological basis of complex psychological phenomena. But there are also villains who got carried away with neuroimaging tools and have left us a mess that, I fear, will soon need to be cleaned up.

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References
Tips on conducting effective online research
Rosemary Kingston

There are many reasons why you may wish to conduct research studies online, and online research is becoming increasingly prevalent (Buchanan & Hvizdak, 2009). Perhaps you want to recruit a large number of participants, reach a broader population beyond staff and students at your institution, or target a specific group of individuals who it may not be practical to meet in person. Perhaps you are aiming to conduct 'paperless' research (even when I am in the lab, I often use online questionnaires administered on a laptop rather than hard copies).

In this article, I share some ideas that came from my own experiences of conducting cross-sectional and prospective research online. There are many approaches to internet-based research, and the most suitable approach will vary from project to project. This is not intended to be a one-size-fits-all, authoritative account of the best way to do online research; instead, I present some suggestions you may find useful when conducting internet-based research, with a particular focus on online questionnaire studies.

Familiarise yourself with the basic languages of the web
You don’t need to be fluent in web languages like HTML and CSS to display material on the internet in an attractive and coherent way. Much of the time, you will be able to use visual interfaces that allow you to edit the appearance of your work by simply pressing a button (much like in Microsoft Word), using survey packages such as LimeSurvey (https://www.limesurvey.org/). However, if you can learn a few basic bits of HTML and CSS, you will find this useful for occasions when you need to write the code yourself. For instance, when formatting text, using <p> tags for paragraphs and <strong> tags for bold text will enable you to present material clearly. The internet is full of useful guides for beginners that will help you get to grips with the basics, such as W3Schools (http://www.w3schools.com), CodeAcademy (http://www.codeacademy.com/), or the beginner HTML and CSS course at TutsPlus (http://learn.css.tutsplus.com).

Create a simple website that acts as an online hub for your research
Build a basic website that clearly states who you are, what your research is about, and how to participate in your research (see Figure 1 for an example). It is really useful to have a website that contains all of the information that a potential participant will need to know. Once created, you can reuse your website for future studies, simply updating the text as you go along. I use my website for all of the studies I run, not just online ones. When I’m emailing around my department to recruit participants for a lab-based study, it helps to have a single place that has all of the relevant information (e.g. how to sign up to the study, where to go for the experiment, how to contact me, etc.). Many universities will allow you access to free webspace. Hosting your website on their servers (e.g. exeter.ac.uk) will help it look more professional and credible.

When recruiting, be systematic about how you advertise your study.
Think carefully about who you contact to advertise your study. You will need to explain your recruitment strategy for publication and so your rationale must be clear.
Be methodical in deciding whom you will contact. Don’t introduce bias into your recruitment by being haphazard in the way you advertise your study.

Think carefully before publicly advertising your research online (e.g. public Facebook groups, discussion forums). One disadvantage of this approach is that as anyone could potentially view the study advertisement, it can be difficult to describe your sample or restrict participation to the population you wish to target (Birmbaum, 2004).

Craft a brief, polite and informative email to advertise your study

If you are recruiting on a large scale, it is sensible to write an email template that can be copied and pasted to each person that you need to contact. Keep the email as brief as possible, and clearly state who you are, what you would like them to do, and what they need to do to help you. Make things as easy as possible for them as they are doing you a favour! For instance, if you want someone to forward an email advertising
your study, have the email that you want them to forward displayed underneath your original contact message, ready to be sent out. Get someone with a good eye for detail to proof-read your message to make sure it is clear – ideally, someone who doesn’t know anything about your research.

**Personalise your emails**

Whilst it is fine to use a well-written template, where possible, you should personalise your emails, as this can increase response rates (Heerwegh et al., 2005). For instance, address it to a named contact person if there is one, and briefly edit the text to mention their institution and/or department.

**Keep records of who you contact with recruitment requests**

It is important to keep a log of who you contact to prevent duplication and to enable you to clearly describe your recruitment strategy when writing up your research. I recommend creating a spreadsheet containing the name of the person and/or organisation, the date you contacted them, the email address you used, and what response, if any, was given.

**Be prepared to be flexible when recruiting**

Many organisations are happy to forward around details of a research study, however some prefer to display posters. Have a PDF version of your poster available to email them, and have hard copies of posters that you could be posted on request. On your poster, you could consider displaying a QR code that links to your research website that can be scanned with a smartphone. Websites such as QRStuff (http://www.qrstuff.com) will generate the code for you.

**Don’t infringe copyright**

If you are planning to administer standardised questionnaires on the internet, you need to check that you have permission from the copyright holder to do so. If you’re unsure, email and ask.

**Don’t breach data protection laws**

It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss data protection in detail, but it is surprisingly easy to breach data protection laws without intending to do so! Familiarise yourself with the Data Protection Act (there is a ‘plain English’ guide here: http://www.ico.org.uk/for_organisations/data_protection), and check with a knowledgeable person in your department if you have any questions.

**Carefully consider ethical and participant risk issues**

As with any research, make sure that you are fully compliant with the Society’s ethical guidelines, but for internet research, you should also consult their guidelines for conducting research online (http://www.bps.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/conducting_research_on_the_internet-guidelines_for_ethical_practice_in_psychological_research_online.pdf).

When conducting research about highly personal or sensitive topics, you need to make sure that you have an appropriate risk policy that has been approved by your departmental ethics committee. If the research is highly likely to cause distress or have lasting effects on your participants, the BPS advise against conducting the research online.

There are a number of ethical considerations pertinent to online research (Buchanan & Hvizdak, 2009). For instance, make sure participants know how to withdraw from the study. Many people exit the browser window, but you may wish to have an ‘Exit the Study’ button that explicitly offers the opportunity to quit the study on every page. With longitudinal research, consider in advance how many reminder messages you will send to participants who fail to respond to initial follow-ups. This is something that will need to be ethically approved and clearly stated in advance to participants (so that they know they will be contacted a certain number of times if they do not respond to the initial follow-up).
Keep clear records of participation, particularly if your study is longitudinal

If you are running a longitudinal study that requires you to contact participants again in the future, consider keeping a spreadsheet of who has participated at each stage, and the dates of their participation. If you are manually sending emails to invite participants to complete future parts of the study, include the dates for when each participant needs to be contacted, and get into the habit of checking the spreadsheet daily. As well as helping you to keep organised, this approach also allows you to easily calculate the mean time between participation at different time points (useful to include when writing up the research). Some online survey packages allow the automation of follow-up emails, but make sure to thoroughly test this facility before you launch your study.

Think carefully about participant remuneration

With large-scale online studies, it is often not possible or practical to offer remuneration to every participant. For this reason, many researchers choose to conduct a prize draw and offer a reward to one or a small number of participants. It is also worth thinking about other non-material ways in which participants can benefit from your study (e.g. learning something interesting about themselves; giving them the option to hear about the results of the research), so make sure to promote these.

Run a pilot study to test your online materials

Pilot your study with people who can give you detailed feedback about whether the online materials work properly, and whether things are easy to understand. Piloting will also give you an idea of how long it takes to complete the study, so you can give an honest and realistic time estimate to prospective participants. Accurate time estimates are important as many online study participants take part in their own time, and are less likely to have time set aside as in a traditional lab-based study.

Consider the design of your study with online presentation in mind

A number of articles have been published containing further suggestions and guidelines for designing internet studies (e.g. Reips, 2002a, 2002b); below are a selection of specific points to consider. If you are using online questionnaires, think about the way these are presented to participants (e.g. text formatting, length of each page). Use as few measures as you can to assess your variables of interest. You are more likely to have missing data if your study takes a long time to complete and has lots of measures (McKnight et al., 2007). If you are conducting a questionnaire-based study, think about the order in which your measures are presented. Attrition can be high in online studies, with one possible reason for this being because of the relative ease of terminating participation: Unlike a lab experiment where a participant would need to excuse themselves, internet participants can simply exit the webpage, free from embarrassment or social pressure (Birnbaum, 2004).

As such, you may wish to put the most important measures first. If you think there may be order effects, consider randomising the order in which your measures are presented (most online survey packages will allow you to do this). Consider whether you want any questions to be mandatory so that participants are alerted to complete them if omitted. Remember that you may not be present when participants are completing the study, so be extra careful in ensuring that all of your instructions are extremely clear.

Thoroughly test that your data collection methods (e.g. questionnaires) work

Before launching your study, repeatedly test that your measures work and that responses are being recorded to your satisfaction. This sounds quite obvious, but it is sometimes easy for online materials to look correct at a glance, but actually record the data incorrectly (e.g. if you have set up response codes

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Rosmery Kingston
for particular answers to questions). If you are using logic rules to display certain things to certain participants (e.g. if participant answers A, display Question 1, if participant answers B, display Question 2), check rigorously that the information displays correctly in all possible iterations.

Think about how participants can ask you questions
Give very clear information about how participants can ask questions before consenting to participate, and at any time during the study: As a minimum, you should provide your email address, and give timely responses to any questions.

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References
What do we mean by ‘secondary data’?  

This term refers to already existing datasets that were either collected by someone else or for a different purpose. Secondary data analysis is a practice encouraged by many research councils and other research funding bodies which have been actively advocating the re-use of already existing datasets. For example, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) introduced the Secondary Data Analyses Initiative which aims to deliver high impact policy through deeper exploitation of existing data resources. This £10.8 million initiative started in 2012, and the second phase has opened in 2013 inviting proposals for innovative and creative projects of up to £200,000 each (www.esrc.ac.uk/funding-and-guidance/funding-opportunities/).

Many datasets are freely accessible to researchers via data archives and repositories (you simply need to register!) and can also be requested from local experts, international institutions and charities working in the area of interest.

The UK has an incredible collection of datasets such as the world-leading cohort studies (e.g. Millennium Cohort Study, www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/mcs), Census datasets (www.census.ac.uk) and other longitudinal studies (e.g. Scottish Longitudinal Study, www.lscs.ac.uk/sls/). There is relatively little qualitative secondary data; the two main resources are: Timescapes – a longitudinal study of the relationships with significant others (www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk) and Qualidata (www.esds.ac.uk/qualidata/).

Popular misconceptions about secondary data analysis

‘Saves time collecting your own data’

Although secondary data analysis may be time- and cost-effective, the time needed to evaluate and prepare a dataset is often underestimated. It depends on the scale and quality of the dataset as well as specificity of the research topic, but it may take from a couple of weeks of intense work to many months of preparation and data cleaning.

‘You can always find some significant results’

Datasets available are often very large and as such have a lot of power in estimating the strength of relationships with reasonable precision; however, they also have good power to estimate significance. Due to the risk of cherry-picking of variables or trawling data for significant relationships, many repositories require researchers to present the social case and rationale for their project before any data are revealed to them. This emphasises the importance of having clear research questions before approaching the data. The choice of dataset must be directed by a research question, and the appropriateness of the dataset to answer this question.

‘A monkey could do it’

More often than not, analysing large scale secondary datasets requires advanced statistical and analytical skills as well as thorough understanding of the chosen dataset. Large dataset collections always involve experts and professionals in the area which often results in sophisticated sampling and weighting techniques. Some funding bodies offer specialist workshops to help researchers...
familiarise themselves with chosen dataset and advanced statistical techniques (e.g. ESRC National Centre for Research Methods, www.ncrm.ac.uk/).

‘I’m in control of my research project’
Although a project is based on your own research questions and ideas it is also heavily dependent on the data available. When working with a dataset someone else collected, not all the information you would have liked may have been included or questions may have been asked in a different way to what you would have preferred. As a researcher you lose the chance to choose your own measures and may find yourself working with the data you have, not the one you wish had been collected.

Not all that bad…
Despite quite a few not so positive things you should consider before starting your journey with secondary data, there are numerous advantages of this endeavour.

High-impact output
Large-scale projects are often more easily generalisable due to the breadth and type of the data. They are also a unique tool to study questions that you could not possibly address with primary data such as time trend analyses which require comparable cohort studies, life course development, or behavioural genetics studies based on twin or adoption designs; this could not be done from scratch as a single research project within one research team.

Self-development
As with any research project, use of secondary data will require you to learn new techniques and methodologies; it will also help you develop resilience as the volume of data is often quite overwhelming and cleaning procedures daunting (but extremely important too!). It will also increase your awareness of the importance of high-quality data management (there is nothing like the joy of figuring out how the data were coded or why the same coding scheme was not applied to the whole sample).

Networking
Due to the multidisciplinary nature of many datasets, you may find yourself working alongside researchers from other departments such as economists or statisticians. This enhances new cross-disciplinary collaborations and helps create knowledge exchange environment.

Funding
With the existing and upcoming secondary data initiatives and the UK’s largest national birth cohort study – Life Study around the corner (www.lifestudy.ac.uk/), many funding bodies happily welcome proposals involving the re-use of existing datasets (e.g. Nuffield Foundation, www.nuffieldfoundation.org)

Employability
Abilities to perform and relay complex statistical procedures as well as analyse large-scale datasets are increasingly desired by many employers, not only within research but also commercial services.

Go and find an interesting dataset!
Secondary data analyses are important for research integrity and the future of many disciplines. One day you may also be asked to share your data (which will surely increase the number of citations for your own research). With that in mind, it is always useful to have a clear and accurate data management plan in place.

There are many pros and cons of secondary data analyses, but being aware of them is the first step to making an informed decision whether one wants to get involved in secondary data projects. The key, not only to success but also to ensuring you make the most of all the opportunities offered by secondary data, is to stay extremely focused on your goals and research questions, choose a high-quality dataset, and remember that while it is not going to be easy, it will be worthwhile.
Useful resources
Economic and Social Data Service
www.esds.ac.uk/
UK Data Archive
www.data-archive.ac.uk/
ESRC Research Catalogue
www.esrc.ac.uk/impacts-and-findings/research-catalogue/index.aspx
Office for National Statistics
www.ons.gov.uk/ons/index.html
HM Government
www.data.gov.uk
World Health Organisation
www.who.int/research/en/
Social Data Sources (US)
www.socialdata.info/
Census (US)
www.census.gov/

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This year, the conference has tailored the theme ‘Investing in the Future’ into eight smaller streams, giving you a wider variety of sessions to choose from. You can take part in a choice of professional workshops, career sessions or discussion forums that is of most interest to you!

Benefits of attending for you include:

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- Learn about the most cutting-edge research insights from both a practitioner and research point of view.
- Networking with peers, employers and renowned guest speakers.
- Interactive programme including presentations, symposiums, bitesize sessions ‘Meet the Keynotes’ etc.
- Discover the latest developments with what companies have to offer by visiting the conference exhibitors’ stands.
- And most importantly, a relaxed informal atmosphere which give you an invaluable opportunity to have a quick chat with some of the leading practitioners and researchers in the UK.

What's more!
First time attending the DOP? Then be sure to join our Conference Ambassador Programme. It is especially designed to make sure you feel welcomed at the conference. On top of that, our exciting programme will match you with a Conference Ambassador who will introduce you to their network, making it an effective way to expand your own professional contacts and a chance to meet with others who have shared interests.

And that's not all! The conference will also be having a Career's Surgery for early career psychologists and fresh graduates to ask questions relating to the profession, as well as hearing about the experiences, advice and views on career planning from a senior occupational psychologist.

Last year, our Career's Forum was a huge success! Companies like SHL, Zircon, Saville, Criterion Partnership, Cubiks and many others participated in the session. This is a chance to hear snappy presentations from various organisations relating to job openings for a range of positions.

Subsequently, delegates are given some time to mingle and discuss with the representatives from the organisations, which of course, is normally extended throughout the entire conference.

See the value our 2013 postgraduate attendees derived from the conference:

'This was my first time attending a DOP event. As a postgraduate student, attending this conference not only gave me the opportunity to learn about others’ exciting developments in the field, but also the exciting chance to meet the big names that we always reference for our assignment in real life! I'm delighted that I attended this event and looking forward to upcoming conferences in future.'

Dana Ho, MSc Work Psychology and Business Student, Aston Business School

'As this was my first conference, I wasn’t too sure what to expect, however, I found it to be very useful and interesting. The talks were engaging and the careers forum gave both practical advice as well as providing the opportunity to meet recruiting organisations. Presenting my dissertation findings was a little nerve-wracking but a great experience and I would definitely recommend it. I would encourage other graduates to attend as I feel it was beneficial and insightful.'

Helen Baker, MSc Organisational Psychology Student, Leeds University Business School

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If you have any queries please get in touch with us at: dopannual@bps.org.uk.

Issue 89 December 2013
Hints and Tips/Conference Review:

Presenting at a conference for Trainee Educational Psychologists: Reflections on the benefits for the research process

Fiona McBryde

In my first year training as an Educational Psychologist at Newcastle University, I was lucky enough that the BPS Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP) held their annual conference in Gateshead. Unencumbered by a hefty rail or aeroplane fare (which was more keenly appreciated after becoming a student for the third time), I was able to bus over the Tyne with my colleagues to the one-day event, that the DECP arranged specifically to celebrate the research of Trainee Educational Psychologists (TEPs) from across the country. Four months into my course, the final submission of my own research seemed an eternity away, so I was able to relax into the day and marvel at the range of topics, methodologies and contexts which the research presented covered. It was stimulating to see colleagues at the end of their training and it has been an event which I have reflected upon and been grateful to have attended throughout the whole of my own training.

This year I had the opportunity to present my own research, on Teacher Self-Efficacy and Teacher Practice in the Philosophy for Children classroom, at the DECP TEP conference at the other end of the country. As my course involved three days a week on a professional practice placement and the other two days working on my research and a practice portfolio, it was somewhat of a luxury to be able to commit myself for long stretches solely to my research. Preparing for the conference presented one such opportunity: a chance to immerse myself over the Christmas holidays in my research. As someone who works better when having deadlines in place, the conference provided a useful focal point to consider where I was with my research, where I was going and what it was all starting to mean. It was a chance to have some ‘cool’ reflection (Eraut, 1995), one step removed from the everyday carrying out of my research plan, and consider what this meant for the next steps in my analysis.

Preparation: The value of immersion, cool reflection and imposing deadlines

The experience delivered on all fronts. As my course involved three days a week on a professional practice placement and the other two days working on my research and a practice portfolio, it was somewhat of a luxury to be able to commit myself for long stretches solely to my research. Preparing for the conference presented one such opportunity: a chance to immerse myself over the Christmas holidays in my research. As someone who works better when having deadlines in place, the conference provided a useful focal point to consider where I was with my research, where I was going and what it was all starting to mean. It was a chance to have some ‘cool’ reflection (Eraut, 1995), one step removed from the everyday carrying out of my research plan, and consider what this meant for the next steps in my analysis.

Refining the research narrative

Taking a step back and putting my ideas into a logical structure, in the form of a conference presentation, was also a chance to critically consider what ideas were essential. Fox suggests that we can become ‘attached cognitively, and emotionally’ (Fox, 2011, p.325) to perspectives that we have formative experiences with, such as those ideas that help us take next steps in research. I initially wanted to cling to the safety and familiarity of these perspectives when going in to the new and challenging situation of communicating to
others about my research; yet, it can be valuable to look back from points on the research journey and think about whether these same ideas are necessary for others in order to understand the messages of your research. Preparing this and other presentations was a really useful tool for me in helping to evaluate whether these ideas were still part of the narrative that gave my research meaning for those less familiar with it.

Taking this step back was also part of the process of determining what should be going in to my ‘elevator pitch’ for the research and what could be left out. By the time it came to my Viva I felt I had managed to distil the key messages of my research and the background ideas that were necessary to make it meaningful to anyone who had not lived with it for two years like I had. Finally, by laying out the narrative of my research through a PowerPoint presentation, I ended up with a really useful resource for reference to use throughout the remainder of my research. I found myself constantly returning to my slides in the following months when writing memos, reflecting upon and writing up my research.

**Engaging in a professional development event: Experiences of efficacy and social construction of knowledge**

In addition to the process of preparing my presentation, being and talking at the conference on the day itself brought many benefits. First of all, the experience of standing up in front of interested colleague who are nevertheless mostly strangers was immensely reassuring: yes I did know what I was doing, yes I did know why, and yes, I was able to relax in the face of this knowledge and allow myself to share my enthusiasm for my topic. Personally, I found this valuable to know, as when it came to my Viva I could remind myself that I knew my stuff in the face of potentially tricky questions.

Secondly, attending some of the other workshops in the day was a wonderful opportunity for seeing other TEPs at a similar stage of their professional and research journeys. Like Bandura’s (1997) vicarious experiences leading to positive self-efficacy, seeing others succeed in both presenting and in contributing to new knowledge for the profession was motivating. Even seeing those at the start of their TEP training, with all the research still to come, was a valuable experience; perhaps as it put me back in touch with the person I was at the start of my Educational Psychology Doctorate in Gateshead, wondering what I would end up researching.

Thirdly, attending and presenting for a profession-oriented conference helped me consider my research in terms of its professional context. Partly this was through tuning in to my audience’s reaction and their thoughts about my research as a piece of applied psychology. Hearing and seeing others go through the same process of making links between their research and their practice prompted me to continue to reflect on this.

Finally, my thesis was rooted in a social constructivist perspective and so I felt that interaction with others around my research topic was a key process for creating the new knowledge at the heart of my research. Taking it to the highly social environment of the conference was an opportunity to ensure that I took advantage of this perspective in creating my research. In addition, I had the chance to take part in discussions about other TEPs’ research, which I know will have sparked new ideas for the participating TEPs in a way that sitting alone with your laptop and data for hours on end cannot.

From a continuing professional development perspective, I gained new knowledge of research methodologies, such as Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, insight in to the topics which my colleagues have been researching, including parents’ views on supporting their children with reading at home, and ways of using technology innovations in applied psychology settings, such as using iPad apps to gather children’s views in assessments of their educational needs.
An event such as the TEP conference is a valuable reminder of the incredible and exciting range of new ideas, people and passions that are coming into the profession of Educational Psychology every year. If I could have gone to all the presentations available on the day, I would have, which makes me excited to now be going in to a profession of applied researchers with their own research passions and stories to tell. I wish everyone who presented at the conference, and the other TEPs currently finishing their training, all the best in continuing to disseminate and put into practice the research that you have loved and laboured over. For those who have their Educational Psychology or other Doctorate research to come, I highly recommend engaging with relevant professional development conferences and presenting where possible: the benefits really are numerous and invaluable.

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**References**


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**PsyPAG Bursaries**

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ALTHOUGH it is not an essential part of a PhD to attend an international conference, it is something that seems to be becoming the norm, rather than the exception. I had watched other PhD students in my study year jet off to a variety of places from Scotland to Portugal and from Texas to Indianapolis; it was difficult not to feel even a little bit jealous! When my supervisor suggested submitting some of my work for the Academy for Eating Disorders (AED) conference in Montreal, I certainly didn’t imagine attending; after all, a PhD student’s budget will only go so far, and Montreal isn’t somewhere you can just pop to for the day. We were very fortunate to secure support from the Graduate School at Loughborough University and from PsyPAG, which made my attendance possible once the abstract had been accepted.

I hadn’t quite realised how much there was to organise when attending a conference; needless to say there was plenty to keep me busy in the run up to the trip, with the logistics of fitting a poster into a suitcase just one of the things that provided some entertainment. I was also under no misconceptions that this would be a holiday, spending most of the seven-hour flight from London to Montreal working on my thesis.

The International Conference on Eating Disorders (ICED) is the largest annual eating disorder conference in the world, with more than 1000 eating disorders professionals gathering for the 2013 three-day conference in the beautiful city of Montreal. Attendees were from a wide range of backgrounds, including researchers, psychiatrists and therapists, as well as a significant student presence. One of the primary themes of this year’s conference was crossing interdisciplinary boundaries, and in particular recognising what can be learnt from other fields in order to further our understanding of eating disorders. In reflection of this, the keynote speaker was Professor David Barlow, who spoke about some of the parallels that can be drawn between diagnostic and therapeutic approaches for neuroticism and eating disorders. He proposed taking a more global perspective on mental health and its underlying psychopathology, questioning the validity and usefulness from a therapeutic perspective of categorising disorders in fine detail. In terms of treatment, he suggested an approach of tackling the traits that are common across mental health issues, such as neuroticism. It was refreshing to consider some of the broader issues within mental health research and therapy, and prompted us to reflect on our current focus on the symptoms and manifestations of eating disorders. Up to two-thirds of eating disorder patients are diagnosed within the category of Eating Disorders Not Otherwise Specified, (Fairburn et al., 2007) as they fail to meet the specific criteria for anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa; a reminder that the classification system is not always as successful as we might hope.

ICED 2013 also had a strong clinical focus, in addition to presenting some of the cutting edge research within the field. Alongside every scientific paper session
a number of clinically relevant workshops were held, focusing on bridging the gap between research and practice. The programme was, therefore, tailored to meet the needs of both the clinician and the research delegates, although it often represented quite a challenge in deciding which to attend. There was so much going on concurrently, it was easy to feel like you had missed out on something important. I prioritised attending sessions that had particular relevance to my PhD work, which is in the area of eating disorders in sport, but otherwise tried to experience a variety of sessions and topics to gain an insight into the depth and diversity of current research.

One of the really exciting things about attending ICED 2013 was being able to network and talk to people currently doing research within my area. When presenting my poster (entitled ‘Coach experiences of identifying disordered eating amongst athletes’) I enjoyed talking to several people with similar research interests; a few of whom I have been in touch with since our return to the UK, with the hope of collaboration in the future. The AED also hold a series of Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings at ICED, which allow researchers with specific interests to come together and discuss salient issues within that particular field. At ICED 2013 there was a meeting of the Sport and Exercise SIG, with a presentation from Ron Thompson and Roberta Sherman about their new specialist treatment centre specifically for athletes. It also represented a fantastic opportunity to discuss my PhD research with people at the forefront of the field.

It was nice to have a small amount of time at the end of the conference to explore the city of Montreal. The French and American cultural influences complemented each other extraordinarily well, with some wonderful architecture on display and fantastic food on offer. The weather was also a real bonus, with some beautiful sunshine for the three days that we were there; a pleasant change from the drizzle in the UK at the time.

The conference environment and incredible volume of cutting-edge research on display meant that I returned from Montreal very motivated about my work and a future in research. It was inspiring to hear about the wide range of research being conducted within a relatively small field, and served as a reminder that we can often get caught up in our own ‘niche’ area when doing PhD research, and risk becoming oblivious to the leaps and bounds of research within the field as a whole. As I come to the end of my PhD and consider what my next steps will be, attending ICED 2013 provided a fantastic opportunity to witness the extensive amount of research being done, but also still to be done within this field.

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Due to the snowy weather traffic was moving very slowly and I arrived just after the morning’s presentations had started, so I took the opportunity to set up my poster and attempt networking. There is something about this term which makes my toes curl, chatting over coffee – no problem, networking – no thank you! Although, like many postgraduates I have attended the training, it can still seem difficult or awkward to approach a stranger to ask about their work. Especially if the person you wish to talk with is very senior, successful or well-known and as a PhD student it can feel as if everyone else meets these criteria! I decided to try something different and rather than opening conversations with topics I felt I should be discussing (new NHS policies), I began with something less heavy-fashion.

This new strategy was working well and I began to relax and enjoy the conference. Yet had I known that the stylish couple approaching my poster were an award winning specialist heart-failure nurse and a successful economic researcher I may not have called out ‘great shoes!’ However, for me it was a much easier and more relaxed networking strategy than ‘Do you think the Francis Report will bring about lasting change?’ After discussing conference fashion choices we moved on to motivations for attending and I took the opportunity to ask if they thought change to organisational culture was possible. As a result Dr Chi Hoong Sin and Jill Nicholl invited me to their afternoon symposium: ‘Generating Clinically Relevant Impactful Evidence in Practice’.

The symposium, Chaired by Janice Smyth (Director of the Royal College of Nurses for Ireland), explored the theme of nurses developing economically viable health care innovations. The presenters argued that in times of economic austerity it is vital that health care is efficient and good value, rather than hampered by ill-informed spending cuts. As a result the Royal College of Nurses launched ‘Front-Line First’, a campaign to publicise cuts to front-line services and unnecessary waste and also promote nurse-led innovations. Their website details small changes that nurses have made to their working practices to improve patient outcomes and provide a more cost-effective, efficient service. In the first paper, Ann McMahon, described one such example, in which how nurses collaborated with a non-profit organisation (the Office of Public Management) to demonstrate both the clinical effectiveness and also cost benefits of redesigning older adult care provision, hereby increasing the impact of this innovation.

Conducting an economic assessment and demonstrating the business case for organisational change can be challenging and therefore the second paper, presented by Dr Chi Hoong Sin, explained how the Office of Public Management, provides appropriate logistical support during the evaluation process. In the final paper Jill Nicholl presented an economic assessment of the Heart Failure Nurse Liaison Service (HFNLS) in Tayside, Scotland. This service
offers specialist support to at risk patients hereby reducing the duration of hospital stays and also the likelihood of readmission. Jill Nichols’ assessment of costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, demonstrated that the HFNLS saves nearly £500 per patient. Therefore, the presentations argued that informed decisions made by front-line staff can yield significant clinical and monetary benefits. Overall the conference was informal and informative and I am glad I took the opportunity to present my research. I left with some useful references for my final thesis chapter and talking with fellow delegates proved to be invaluable viva preparation. In hindsight, would I advise attending in the final hectic weeks before submitting your thesis? This would depend on how hectic! Yet having a fixed commitment helped ensure that when back in England my remaining days were well-structured and the remaining time was not wasted.

Attending a conference in the final stages of your PhD can provide the opportunity to reflect on the wide issues within your field, gain new perspectives and take a break from the thesis, yet still remain productive. If you are a conducting general health care research, or research with nurses and seeking a relevant conference I strongly recommend attending the next RCN Research Conference to be held in Glasgow in April 2014. Michael West, Professor in Organisational Psychology at Lancaster University, will be one of the keynote speakers.

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Together with 51 undergraduate and postgraduate psychology students we attended the 2nd Junior Researcher Programme Conference in Cambridge. The conference is highly international: students attending represented 25 EEA countries together with Brazil, Canada, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and the US. The conference was a truly inspiring event with a mix of science, knowledge-sharing, networking and a diversity of cultures. In this review we will elaborate on some of the highlights from the conference and hopefully motivate you to engage in this programme yourself.

The Junior Researcher Programme (JRP) is a branch of the European Federation for Psychology Students Association (EFPSA). The programme is led by the Director, Dr Kai Ruggeri, from the University of Cambridge. The Research Officer for our cohort was Luís Miguel Tojo from Maastricht University. Although the JRP is a programme run under EFPSA, it has collaborations with researchers from the University of Cambridge and RAND Europe. The programme offers a professional and academic network for its delegates.

The conference represented the final phase of the JRP, which started, for our cohort, in the European Summer School held in July 2012 in Vila Nova de Foz Côa, Portugal. During the European Summer School, we were divided in small groups of five to seven students. The theme of the summer school was ‘The Biased Brain: Research in Decision Making’. Under the watchful eye of a PhD supervisor, we conducted a literature review, formulated a research question and came up with a research proposal. In the following academic year all students conducted research in their home countries and discussed progress via online communication tools. After a year of hard work, the students assembled in Cambridge to further analyse the collected data and discuss the results. Consequently, the focus was placed on methodology, analysis and discussion of outcomes during this conference. The research projects were presented in a poster symposium, at the Department of Psychology of the University of Cambridge, and through oral presentations, at Corpus Christi College.

On day one of the conference, 24 JRP delegates presented their research posters. We were excited to take part in this poster session since it was our first poster presentation. Together with our fellow students, we had worked hard on this extracurricular research project and were curious as to what our peers’ comments would be. Our research (Tekin et al., 2013) looked into the role of self-construal in eyewitness memories and the susceptibility to different sources of information. Similar to the well-known Loftus study (Loftus & Palmer, 1974), participants watched a clip of a theft and were subsequently misled by a written testimony that deviated from the clip. The phenom-
енон where memory is distorted by new information, contradicting the original memory, is commonly referred to as the Post-event Misinformation Effect (PME; Loftus & Palmer, 1974). We also wanted to look at cultural differences in memory distortion. One such dimension is independence and interdependence. People with high independent self-construal scores strongly believe in their own memory, while interdependent individuals place greater value on information received from others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and, therefore, might be more likely to incorporate others’ information into their own memory. We predicted that people with interdependent self-construals would be more susceptible to the PME than people with independent self-construals, especially when it comes from an authoritative source (e.g. a police officer off duty as compared to an anonymous bypasser). Participants watched a video clip of a theft, after which they were presented with a testimony, containing the misinformation, from a police officer or an anonymous bypasser. Memory distortion was assessed with a multiple choice test and participants filled in the Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994). Preliminary analysis of 237 participants revealed no interaction effect between self-construal and the authoritative level of the source but hinted to a possible main effect of source of misinformation. The authoritative source elicited less susceptibility to PME than the non-authoritative source. Through discussing with our peers during the poster presentation, many interesting interpretations for our strange findings came up. For example, it could be the case that police officers are perceived as untrustworthy in certain countries. Our peers advised us to use a different analysis method and to conduct country specific analyses in the near future.

Another interesting poster was presented by Robert Blakey (Blakey, 2013) with the title: Are two heads better than one? The effect of expert/novice interaction on estimation accuracy. In this study they investigated whether experts and novices estimate quantities more accurately alone compared to together. Further, they wanted to investigate how the expert/novice interaction could affect the subsequent estimation accuracy of experts and novices alone. The results are still being analysed, but the study has important implications in educational settings in deciding whether or not to lecture in mixed or streamed ability classes.

Oral presentations took place on the second day of the conference. The group led by Samuel Lins (Lins et al., 2013) kicked off the day enthusiastically with their study on the role of need for cognition, hedonism and materialism in impulse buying. They conducted a questionnaire study in adolescents, an age group under-represented in research on impulse buying. Their most interesting hypothesis concerned the need for cognition, which refers to deriving pleasure from effortful cognitive activity. This concept was sparsely studied in relationship to impulse buying tendency (IBT). The only study that examined the relationship between need for cognition and IBT so far, found a correlation in the right direction, however, not statistically significant (Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001). The presented themselves found that need for cognition was only negatively correlated with IBT in one out of five countries. Additionally, need for cognition did not seem to moderate the link between materialism and IBT or hedonism and IBT. These interesting results made us think the following: impulse buying affects ‘thinkers’ as well as ‘non-thinkers’ because there is no act of thinking involved in impulse buying. An interesting topic to keep an eye on in the future.

A related presentation, this time on decision-making in sports as opposed to in shopping, was given by the group led by Vanda Correia (Correia et al., 2013). Their study aimed to answer the question: Do basketball players rely on previous observation of opponents or decide during on-going interactions? Although their study was well designed (they planned to videotape profes-
sional basketball players from three different angles while performing two different tasks), they experienced many practical set-backs during their data collection. Their openness on the many experienced practical constraints, resulted in a fruitful discussion that installed hope for their future data collection. We regard the opportunity to discuss research findings in an open and relaxed environment as an especially positive aspect of the JRP Conference.

Several participants from the previous cohort, 2011–2012, presented how their research projects further developed after the JRP. An important study was conducted by Dafina Petroval and colleagues, entitled: Not all information is good: Young women’s experiences with communication about the Human Papilloma Virus vaccine in four European countries. With young adults being the highest risk of infection, it is important to explore the experiences with the HPV vaccine among young women. They found that communicating about the risk of HPV in general, and the HPV vaccine was valued by young women. Being a cross-cultural study, another important finding was that it seems to be beneficial for campaigns to incorporate culturally tailored communication.

For the final presentation in the conference, the Director’s Talk, a vision for the future of the programme was laid out by Dr Ruggeri. In it, he covered a brief history of how everything was developed and key milestones – and setbacks – faced thus far. He noted the considerable increase in visibility and strategy for establishing the scientific foundations moving forward. He also remarked on the extensive stability in terms of administrative support and willingness to contribute amongst JRP members. The new alumni have an important role in developing the programme in the future, both through supporting new members and connections to academic institutions across Europe and beyond. In closing, he made it clear that the programme would continue to provide professional development opportunities for both the top young psychologists in Europe and the most motivated students who might not otherwise have such chances.

As you have read, the diverse domain of human decision-making was tackled from diverse backgrounds and viewpoints. After two very busy yet inspiring conference days, a beautiful formal dinner was held in Corpus Christi College. The reception took place in the old court yard and subsequently we were served a supreme three-course dinner in the imposing main dining hall. During this dinner the JRP programme was officially closed for our cohort. When we look back at the past year, we feel proud to have reached such an advanced level of scientific research and writing. We got the unique opportunity be a part of a cross-country collaborative research project, and were guided by professionals in the field. Next to the academic aspect, we truly appreciated the social side of the programme. Friendships and mutual appreciation were the driving forces that made this project possible. As a student, networking in the academic world is very valuable for professional development, and enhances the likelihood of academic opportunities in the future. Many of us are looking eagerly forward to hear about the research projects of the next JRP cohort, where the overarching topic will be research in well-being.

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Workshop Review:

SoDoc 2013 Workshop
Laura de Molière

Cologne, Germany, 21–23 June 2013

The SoDoc is a workshop initiated and supported by the German Psychological Society’s Social Psychology Division. Since the first workshop in 2003, set in Würzburg, the SoDoc has gained popularity amongst junior researchers and is now held annually. This year’s workshop was set in beautiful Cologne, a city known for its impressive cathedral, buzzing party life and grand carnival. The workshop’s aim is to provide a platform for PhD students from Germany and the rest of the world to present their research in a relaxed environment, whilst gaining valuable feedback from peers and renowned experts. A total of four senior researchers (Mario Gollwitzer, Roland Imhoff, Jon Maner and Johan Karremans), supervised a small group of eight to nine PhD students each. I had the honour to be supervised by Mario Gollwitzer, an expert in aggression, morality and research methods.

I was interested in participating in this workshop since my PhD research crosses over the fields of decision making and social psychology: I am examining how far interoceptive awareness moderates the impact of negative utility on probability judgments. Thus, the SoDoc offered me the opportunity to present my research in front of an audience interested in social psychology, which I hoped would help me develop my research further.

One of the best parts of the conference was the vast variety of different topics presented by students: my group consisted of social psychology PhD students researching in the fields of ethics, social influence, politics, education, social dilemmas, legal expertise and process accountability. Each student had 40 minutes to present their research as well as to lead the discussion (sometimes with concrete questions for future studies, sometimes asking for feedback regarding current experiments). This format proved to be extremely productive – participation was lively and Mario Gollwitzer guided the discussions with much thought and valuable input. With regard to my own talk, I profited from the feedback that I received and was overall very satisfied with the discussion.

Throughout the two days, each of the four experts also gave a keynote speech. Johan Karremans presented work on how individuals in a relationship deal with attractive alternatives. Johan and his research team showed that if individuals are high in self-control and in a relationship, attractive opposite sex others are perceived as less attractive than when individuals are low in self-control or not in a relationship. Roland Imhoff’s keynote was titled: ‘Distrust your measures! An excursus on the internal validity of (in-)direct measurement approaches’. Roland urged students to assess critically in how far measures really measure what they claim, and gave interesting examples from his own research. Jon Maner gave a very motivating keynote with the title ‘How to get your manuscript published’. Jon shared insight knowledge starting from sentence formation and content to where to send your journal, and how to be strategic in the reviewing process. Finally, Mario Gollwitzer discussed the individual and social functions of revenge. Mario presented his research showing that revenge is not satisfying to avengers if the message does not
come across – revenge is only ‘sweet’ to the punisher if the wrongdoer understands why the act of vengeance has happened.

On top of that, an ‘Ask the expert’ session was organised, giving students the opportunity to ask questions about the expert’s career in academia (‘According to which criteria do you chose your Postdocs?’, ‘How do you keep a work life balance?’, ‘How many hours a week do you spend on bureaucratic matters?’).

Another focus of this workshop was laid on the social activities: visiting a traditional beer garden as well as a brewhouse, students had the chance to network and to ask the experts for personal guidance whilst enjoying the traditional Cologne beer (‘Kölsch’).

Overall, I can warmly recommend PhD students in social psychology or related fields from the UK to attend this workshop (fully held in English). Whilst the research discussed was very interesting, I think the main benefit laid in the endless chances to discuss issues one experiences when doing a PhD with experts and to share experiences with peers. This workshop gives junior researchers confidence, insight knowledge, and the opportunity to network – I truly enjoyed participating and am looking forward to next year’s workshop which I hope I will be able to attend.

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Development and delivery of an Outreach training event for postgraduate psychology students

Samantha Rowbotham, Melissa Noke & Ruth Butterworth

University Outreach programmes are important for providing opportunities for talented individuals from less privileged backgrounds to participate in higher education as well as communicating science to the public more broadly. In addition to this, it is an enjoyable and worthwhile way for postgraduates to boost their CVs while gaining valuable experience in communicating their topic to different audiences. The School of Psychological Sciences at the University of Manchester has a thriving programme of Outreach activities but sometimes struggles to find postgraduate students to be involved in the development and delivery of these activities. As such, we decided to develop a training session to introduce postgraduate students to Outreach, with a view to increase knowledge of the kinds of activities they can get involved in and boost their confidence in developing and delivering new activities. Here we report on the format of the workshop and the feedback received from delegates as well as suggesting improvements and providing tips for people wishing to set up a similar project.

Background

It is widely acknowledged that universities, and those working within them, have a duty to be socially responsible and ‘give something back’ to the public. Two key streams within the social responsibility domain are those of Widening Participation (WP) and Public Engagement (PE). The aim of WP is to provide the opportunity to participate in Higher Education (HE) to everyone that can benefit (Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2013). Thus, WP tends to focus on promoting the progression to university by talented individuals who might not have considered university as a future option due to financial constraints, no family background of higher education, or being from an area with low participation in HE. PE is concerned with communicating research to the general public and refers to the ‘the use of appropriate skills, media, activities and dialogue to produce one or more of the following personal responses to science: awareness, enjoyment, interest, opinion-forming and understanding’ (Burns, O’Connor & Stocklmayer, 2003, p.183). PE can take many forms, including museum events, stalls at science fairs, or public lectures. As well as being extremely valuable, WP and PE work is highly enjoyable and can be a refreshing change from day-to-day teaching and research activities, offering opportunities to try out new ideas and communicate your topic to people that you would not normally reach. It is also a valuable source of experience for postgraduate students and can really boost their CV.

Social responsibility is highlighted as one of the University of Manchester’s key goals, with the 2020 strategy document emphasising WP and PE as crucial aspects of this. The university promises to ‘engage widely with communities’ and ‘improve openness and accessibility by increasing the impact of our interactions with… communities’ (University of Manchester, 2011). The School of Psychological Sciences Outreach Group at the University of Manchester strives to work towards these goals through its involvement in a diverse range of WP and PE work (henceforth ‘Outreach’ for brevity). This includes a two-day ‘Big Brain’ summer school (for year 9 to 10 pupils from low
participation areas), monthly Café Scientifique events (informal talks by academics), the Community Liaison Group (service users providing input and teaching on the Clinical Psychology Doctorate), and various events for schools and families during local and national science festivals (e.g. stalls, talks, workshops). As a relatively small group (consisting of nine academic and three postgraduate members), we are constantly in need of enthusiastic people to support our work, not only to facilitate and deliver existing events but also to develop new events and activities so that we can continue to move forward in the work we do. Postgraduates are an important resource as they tend to be enthusiastic, have (a bit) more time than academic staff and can directly benefit their future careers by getting involved. Despite this, in our school at least, it is sometimes challenging to get postgraduates involved in Outreach work, particularly in the development and delivery of new events. Key reasons cited for this low participation include lack of experience and confidence, and limited knowledge of the ways that they can get involved.

To tackle this issue we decided to develop a short, informal training session to introduce postgraduate students to Outreach work and provide them with the skills and confidence to get involved in Outreach work, whether on an occasional basis as an activity facilitator, or to take a more active role in developing and co-ordinating Outreach activities. This article provides details of the format of the event and a summary of feedback from delegates.

The workshop
The workshop had two main aims: (1) to introduce postgraduate students to Outreach work; and (2) to provide students with some practical experience in developing Outreach-related activities. Thus, the workshop aimed to increase attendees’ knowledge and confidence in order to maximise the chances of them becoming more involved in Outreach activities after the event. We obtained funding for this event from the Social Activities Fund for Postgraduate Research Students, which was provided by the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences at the University of Manchester. The workshop lasted for two-hours and took place in a seminar room on campus.

Delegates
We advertised the event using posters and email notifications and interested participants were asked to sign up to the event. Of the 22 participants that signed up to attend, 12 came along to the event. All delegates were PhD students in the School of Psychological Sciences.

Networking
To promote networking and collaboration the event was kept informal, with food and drinks provided. For the first 15 minutes, participants were encouraged to help themselves to food and drink and chat with other delegates as well as event organisers and speakers. A range of activities that had been used at previous Outreach events (e.g. at science fairs and summer school workshops) were laid out around the room and delegates were encouraged to browse and discuss these, taking some of the pressure out of the ‘networking’ element.

Talks from practitioners
In the second section of the workshop, practitioners involved with various aspects of Outreach gave short talks about their area of involvement. Each speaker had a 10-minute presentation slot and delegates were given the opportunity to ask questions. The topics and speakers are presented in Box 1.

Practical experience
Delegates were given approximately 30 minutes to work in small groups (three to four people per group) to come up with a possible Outreach event that they could develop and run. They began by brainstorming ideas for possible events in their
groups before choosing a single idea to discuss and develop. We provided each group with an activity planning form on which they were encouraged to state the aim of their event, the intended audience, what the event would involve, and how they would evaluate the event. At least one practitioner facilitated each group to help with the discussion and development of ideas. We then asked delegates to feedback their ideas to the rest of the group and received feedback from the facilitators. Following this, delegates were encouraged to complete a six-month action plan detailing their next steps in terms of Outreach work in order to encourage continued involvement. This plan included stating what they were interested in getting involved with, what they needed to do and who they needed to contact to help them to take this interest further, and a date on which they would review their progress.

**Feedback and evaluation**

Delegates completed a short, anonymous feedback questionnaire at the end of the session. The questionnaire consisted of two statements (one about session content and one about future involvement) for which delegates could indicate level of agreement on a 10-point rating scale (1=not at all, 10=extremely), followed by three prompts to encourage participants to provide detailed feedback about: (1) what they found helpful and interesting; (2) what needed to be improved; and (3) the one thing they would take away from the event. A summary of the feedback is provided below, with some quotes provided in Box 2.

The statement *‘I found this workshop helpful and interesting’* received an average score of 8.5, with 85 per cent providing a score of 8 or above. The statement, *‘I am interested in taking part in outreach activities following this workshop’* received an average score of 8.8 with all delegates providing a score of 7 or above. It is noteworthy that no delegates provided a score below 5 for either of the scales, suggesting that all felt the event had been helpful and interesting. Taken together this suggests that delegates valued the event in terms of content and as a source of motivation.

*‘I found the following helpful or interesting…’*: In response to this prompt, three participants cited the practical task while six delegates indicated that they found the talks provided by the Outreach practitioners most interesting and helpful, particularly in terms of finding out more about the streams of WP/PE work that exist and projects they could get involved with.
Box 2: Quotes from delegates.

‘It was great. Really enjoyed all the activities and learned a lot. I am more clear on how to develop my own activities.’

‘Helpful to hear examples from people with experience in engagement, outreach and involvement.’

‘More time for planning/discussion to help people get further with future plans.’

‘There are lots of opportunities to suit your interests and time commitments.’

‘Putting people in groups and asking them to come up with a plan can have some good results.’

‘I think the session could be improved by’: Only five delegates responded to this question suggesting that other delegates did not perceive a need for significant improvements. Four of the responses to this prompt concerned the timing of the event, with one person suggesting that the event should be shorter overall and three highlighting the need for more time for the practical activity. One participant requested the inclusion of more real-life examples of Outreach work.

‘If there is one thing I will take away from today it will be’: Delegates answered this question with a wide range of responses, all of which were positive. In order of frequency, the things delegates indicated they would take away were: knowledge about the ways to get involved with Outreach work (6), inspiration, skills and ideas for setting up an event (3), and enthusiasm and a desire to be more proactive (2).

The future

Feedback from delegates suggests that we achieved our aims of improving postgraduates’ knowledge, skills and confidence in relation to Outreach work. In terms of concrete outcomes, six delegates contacted us to get involved with upcoming activities, with one delegate helping at a recent science fair stand for National Science and Engineering week, and five signing up to help at upcoming events. Another delegate has also contacted us seeking further advice on setting up a PE activity to take place at a science and music festival. Finally, a further two delegates have contacted us to offer help in promoting Outreach work amongst other postgraduates. This is promising, and we hope to hear from more delegates in the near future.

Reflection on the content and running of the session from the perspective of the organisers (SR, MN and RB), has highlighted that the key area for improvement in the workshop programme is in terms of the timing. For future workshops, we think it would be beneficial to increase the time spent on the practical activity. Delegates engaged really well with this task had some excellent ideas and discussions about possible events. Having more time to go into the details of these events, particularly in terms of practicalities, would be beneficial in terms of meeting our second aim of equipping postgraduates with the confidence and skills to develop their own events. To provide the extra time for this activity without making the workshop longer we could reduce the number of speakers that talk about their projects. Although these talks were viewed as a valuable part of the work-
shop, we believe that the same impact can be achieved with the event organisers providing a brief overview of the various WP and PE activities (with relevant contact details for more information), followed by one or two speakers providing ‘case-study’ type profiles of their work.

Given the high turnover of postgraduate students, if we are to maintain a good network of postgraduates with the confidence and skills to sustain a healthy programme of Outreach work then we will need to repeat this workshop at least once every one to two years. Fortunately, in terms of sustainability, this workshop is relatively straightforward to set up and run and requires a minimal budget if funding is limited, with the main outgoing being the cost of food and drinks for delegates. Now that all of the materials have been prepared, it is possible for other members of the Outreach group to run this session if needed in the future (for example, once the current organisers have moved on), further increasing the sustainability of this event. Further, the simplicity of the workshop should mean that it is possible for other postgraduates wanting to increase Outreach participation in their department to use this workshop as a template to plan their own event. We hope that this will inspire a new wave of postgraduate students to get involved in this exciting and important work!

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References
Conference Review:
The F-Word in Contemporary Women's Writing
Rebecca Wray

Queen's University Belfast, 4–5 April 2013

The F-Word in Contemporary Women's Writing is the fourth biennial conference organised by the Postgraduate Contemporary Women's Writing Network (PGCWWN). The PGCWWN is a student-led research community for postgraduate students whose research is focused on the work of contemporary women writers. With snow threatening the whole of the UK in early April, the conference took place at Queen’s University Belfast and was surprisingly, though pleasantly sunny. Delegates came from a number of disciplines such as English literature, film studies, psychology and sociology; as well as from a variety of locations across the globe.

As a psychologist I was interested in attending this conference because the first part of my PhD research is focused on identifying discourses in women’s magazines and feminist blogs and in particular how feminist and post-feminist discourses are engaged with. The theme of the ‘F-Word’ conference was to examine the diverse and varied ways in which contemporary women’s writing (post-1970s) has engaged with, approached and contributed to contemporary feminist discourse.

There were parallel presentation panels running throughout both days of the conference which produced lively discussions of women’s writing across a range of media platforms including: fiction of various genres (including crime and detective novels, historical fiction, fairytales, chick lit, and young adult fiction), biographies, poetry, erotica, manga, magazines, independently-produced zines, television shows, music videos, online blogs and digital campaigns. With such a wide range of presentations showcasing the research of postgraduates from varying disciplines, I felt spoiled for choice and only wish I could have also seen the panels that were running parallel to the ones I attended.

I presented in one of the first panel sessions on the first day. I was nervous as I was discussing the preliminary findings from my first research study but found the audience supportive and encouraging, an atmosphere I found which filtered through the entire conference. I particularly liked the way the panels were organised so that presenters all take turns delivering their papers, followed by a joint questions-and-answers session. I like this set-up for two main reasons. The first is that it feels more supportive when you’re answering questions alongside your fellow presenters then answering when in isolation from the others. The second reason is that it means the audience can direct a question to some or all of the presenters at once if it is applicable to all the papers.

Diane Negra’s keynote address was held at the end of the first day. Her paper ‘Claiming Feminism: Commentary, Autobiography and Advice Literature for Women in the Recession’ was focused on how the current recession has led to cultural shifts such as public opinion on women’s ‘seeming choice’ to not occupy high-status and highly paid occupations. Diane Negra discussed how post-feminist rhetoric casts feminism as
being primarily about choice and how this then leads onto women’s capacity to self-improve and for entrepreneurship. She highlights how this shift is marked by the rise in business self-help books written by high-profile women such as Bethany Frankel, Sheryl Sandberg, Hanna Rosin from the US and Caitlin Moran from the UK. These books focus on the individual honing their careers and achievement through self-belief and perseverance.

Diane Negra discusses how these authors advocate individual choice and personal modification through the use of self-help and life coaches, rather than challenging barriers and changing structures within society. One of the interesting things Negra highlights in her talk is how these authors create and cultivate personas which emphasise positive thinking, self-promotion and an emphasis placed on the importance of displaying motherhood and appearing non-threatening in their approach to work. She was critical of how these authors ignore their position of privilege and how the narrative of female ‘choice’ leaves little room for acknowledging the way choices are constrained by life circumstances and barriers.

A key concern raised by Diane Negra, which the audience joined in discussing towards the end of the talk, was how these books are easily accessible in public spaces, in comparison to the academic feminist books which tend to be costly and printed on limited runs. Negra proposed that feminist books need to be produced so they are easier to digest and access by a general audience.

The conference, like the PGCWWN itself provides a supportive and encouraging atmosphere for postgraduates and early career researchers, through the provision of workshops and spaces for discussion. In the middle of the second day, Helen Davies shared her knowledge and experience on getting published in a workshop on publishing for postgraduates and early career researchers. I found her workshop to be very informative and useful for any post-graduate researcher looking to get published regardless of subject discipline. As well as practical advice on choosing and approaching the right publishers, Helen advised us on which stages of our postgraduate studies and careers is best to work on different types of publications such as book reviews, journal articles, book chapters and monographs. What I found particularly useful in this workshop was how Helen explained the Research Excellence Framework and what it will mean to us in relation to our careers. This gave the audience much food for thought and plenty of opportunities were provided for us to ask questions.

The F-Word in Contemporary Women’s Writing conference, also marked the departure of Claire O’Callaghan, Catherine McGurren and Amy Rushton from the PGCWWN Steering Group, who worked hard in setting up a well-organised, supportive and stimulating conference. Beginning their new roles in April 2013, James Bailey, Adèle Cook, Claire Cowling and Michelle Green were announced over cake and coffee as the new members of the Steering Group. The next PGCWWN conference will be held in 2015 and I look forward to seeing what the new Steering Group will have planned for this and other future events.

This was the first PGCWWN conference I have had the privilege of attending and presenting at and I can recommend it to students of any discipline who have an interest in gender and how feminist and/or post-feminist ideas are engaged with in women’s writing. The conference organisers provided a warm welcome and ensured delegates felt at ease throughout the event. I found the conference to be a very friendly and supportive space, allowing for stimulating discussion of the issues raised by the panels, which continued long into the evening at the conference dinner at the end of the first day’s events. I look forward to meeting everyone again at future events and continuing these conversations.
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Conference Review:

7th International Tinnitus Research Initiative (TRI) Tinnitus Conference

Kathryn Fackrell

Valencia, Spain, 15–26 May 2013

In May 2013, the International Tinnitus Research Initiative (TRI) conference, the largest annual tinnitus meeting, was being held in the beautiful city of Valencia. The theme of the TRI conference was ‘Tinnitus: A treatable disease’. The sessions principally focused on the diagnosing and treating of different subtypes of tinnitus, and on evaluating current available treatment options, including innovative treatments that are currently under development. This involved a packed schedule of a diverse range of topics including neuroscience, psychotherapy and otology, bringing together academics, practitioners (i.e. audiologists, ENT and psychologists) and PhD students from around the world; all with an interest in tinnitus research. This conference provided an excellent opportunity for broadening my knowledge on the latest developments in tinnitus research, presenting my work and gaining invaluable feedback from tinnitus researchers involved in questionnaire development.

The conference opened with a twilight lecture, which seemed fitting in the city that never sleeps, from the internationally renowned Dirk De Ridder. The lecture was entitled ‘To dream is to cure tinnitus’. Tinnitus is the conscious experience of sound in the absence of a corresponding external auditory sound; De Ridder discussed evidence that when people are dreaming they no longer perceive their tinnitus, that is, tinnitus is not perceived in dreams. The lecture included the philosophy of dreams and argued that in order to achieve the possible, we should continue to strive to dream the impossible; ‘To cure tinnitus we need to continue to dream-up new treatments for tinnitus’. This was an extremely inspiring way to start my first international conference and to continue in my PhD.

The following three days were packed with parallel sessions on different areas of tinnitus treatments and diagnosis, so I needed to plan which lectures I wished to attend. The first of which was the keynote lecture on ‘An overview of tinnitus management’. This was extremely useful for someone just starting out in tinnitus research, as it provided a quick guide to the different multidisciplinary approaches (from ENT to psychotherapy to neurosurgery) used in tinnitus management. The schedule provided me with many opportunities to gain further knowledge and insight into areas of tinnitus management that I am less familiar with. In particular, I found that the session on cognitive behavioural therapy and tinnitus retraining therapy informative and insightful. This session provided an overview on the different therapies used in clinics and the implications from these therapies. I was fascinated to discover that there is evidence to suggest cognitive behavioural self-help interventions in tinnitus are now extremely effective without the presence of a therapist at any stage. I particularly enjoyed the lecture on the new technique of ‘Mindfulness Based Tinnitus Stress Reduction’. This was an interactive workshop where we went through the steps of this tech-
nique; we were to realign our attention by refocusing our minds to just the speaker and the bell that had been rung each time we felt our minds wander. These sessions and the keynote lectures on psychotherapy are particularly memorable because they lead to interesting discussions and debates with my colleagues and other delegates at the conference, which provided me with the opportunity to learn alternative points of view and to interact with other delegates.

Finally, I presented a poster of my own research on the validation of the Tinnitus Functional Index (TFI) questionnaire; a new method of measuring tinnitus severity. Although I was extremely nervous about presenting my poster, it went off without a hitch. This was an invaluable experience that increased my confidence in my work. The poster session provided me with the opportunity to gain feedback on my work so far and meet one of the authors involved in developing the questionnaire. During the poster session, I also advised other researchers and clinicians at the conference on questionnaire development processes and validation; this was an interesting experience as I realised how much I have learnt in the last year and that there is always more to learn.

The TRI conference was a new experience that was extremely beneficial and rewarding. I have taken away knowledge on the developments in tinnitus research, a new confidence in presenting my work and explaining the validation processes behind my work to people from a variety of backgrounds. Lastly I would recommend that all first year PhD students have the opportunity to attend a conference like this, as it has inspired me to stay determined through my PhD, to continue to dream the impossible and strive for benefits to tinnitus patients.

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Unfamiliar voice identification as forensic evidence: Can you believe your ears?

Harriet Smith

In forensic situations such as masked attacks and telephone fraud, witnesses may be required to identify perpetrators at lineup by their voice. In a summary article, Wilding, Cook and Davis (2000) draw attention to a relative lack of research about voice identification, and the fact that legal professionals require guidance in using such evidence in court. These issues are still relevant today.

Despite the fact that earwitnesses perform much less accurately at lineup than eyewitnesses (e.g. Stevenage, Hugill & Lewis, 2012), voice identification evidence from lay witnesses can be admitted without expert acoustic analysis in England and Wales. Sometimes this evidence is pivotal. In 2003 the Home Office published guidelines on the use of voice parades (Home Office, 2003), in order to bring a murder case (R v. Khan & Bains, 2002) to court. Since then, voice identification evidence has comprised evidence in other Crown Court cases (e.g. R v. Robinson, 2005, and R v. Flynn and St John, 2008). Yet the latest version of the Crown Court Bench Book (Judicial Studies Board, 2010), a guide for judges summing up to the jury, highlights that there is still ‘little research’ (p.133) about the variables affecting voice identification accuracy. The Bench Book merely identifies factors which may be relevant. Since 2000, earwitness research has addressed, amongst others, factors such as accent, language and race (e.g. Phillippon et al., 2007), as well as criminal bias (Phillippon et al., 2008). Studies have also begun to investigate the effects of age (Ohman, Eriksson & Granhag, 2011). Further research is required, both to establish the effect of uninvestigated variables, and to test the robustness of findings.

In eyewitness research, variables affecting identification accuracy have been categorised into system and estimator variables (Wells, 1978). Estimator variables, such as witness age and weapon presence, are uncontrollable in a forensic setting, but affect encoding and storage processes in memory. In contrast, system variables, such as line-up structure and instructions, can be controlled by the criminal justice system. System variables affect retrieval processes. Earwitness research has disproportionately concentrated on estimator variables, despite the fact that investigation of system variables may have more applied utility (Wells, 1978). As voice identification ability is so poor, it would be beneficial to channel more research into investigating variables that can actually strengthen forensic evidence. Current voice identification procedures are based on those employed for face line-ups. However, research should be specifically targeted to earwitness situations. For example, research might consider specific lineup instructions for earwitnesses. Eyewitness research has considered ways of adapting face line-up procedures to increase hit rates and reduce false alarm rates (see McQuiston-Surrett, Malpass & Tredoux, 2006 for a review), but earwitness researchers have not investigated how adapted voice line-up procedures might improve voice identification accuracy (Hollien, 2012).

The majority of identification research is concerned with visual memory. Based on the assumption that similar memory processes operate in both face and voice identification, it may be tempting to generalise findings from the visual to the auditory modality. However, although the cognitive architec-
The feature of voice identification is believed to operate in a parallel way to face recognition (Belin, Fecteau & Bedard, 2004), marked differences between the two processes exist. When comparing retrieval of semantic information relating to familiar faces and voices, participants retrieve more information from faces than from voices (e.g. Damjanovic & Hanley, 2009). This suggests that voice identification provides a weaker route to recognition (Stevenage et al., 2012). Unfamiliar voice identification is much more difficult than familiar voice identification. Studies frequently indicate low hit rates (Yarmey, 2007) and high false alarm rates (e.g. Kerstholt, Jansen Van Amelsvoort & Broeders, 2004) on voice line-ups. Recent results, therefore, support the conclusions of Wilding et al. (2000) regarding the difficulty of voice identification.

Various hypotheses have been mooted to explain poor performance. For example, voice identification may be difficult because the content of speech takes up encoding load, or because so many acoustic features are involved (Belin et al., 2011). Voice perception involves encoding acoustic features such as rate of speech, intonation, accent and timbre. Acoustic features can vary both between utterances by the same individual, and between individuals (Hammersley & Read, 1996), making it difficult to extract features which have sufficient within-speaker consistency to indicate identity.

Owing to new guidelines (Home Office, 2003), it is now more likely that voice identification evidence will be used in court. However, research over the past 13 years has done little to undermine the conclusion of Wilding, Cook and Davis (2000) that caution is needed when admitting this evidence. If legal professionals require such evidence, research should concentrate on establishing which variables affect voice identification accuracy so that it can be used appropriately. Research should also consider how police procedures might be adapted to support higher levels of accuracy. Until such gaps in research have been addressed, voice identification evidence should be used as a very last resort, and only then with extreme caution.

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Benefit finding in cancer: The argument of being positive

Angelos Kassianos

FOR YEARS, cancer-research has been focused on negative outcomes on patients’ lives and well-being. The diagnosis itself can be extremely stressful and have severe consequences for patients, like depression, anxiety, and distress. Consequently it can worsen their Quality of Life (QoL). What makes cancer diagnosis stressful while triggering change is the uncontrollable, sudden and unexpected nature of diagnosis, which produces ongoing, and in many cases lifelong effects and stressors (Andrykowski et al., 1998). However, colorectal cancer patients in a recent study (Jansen et al., 2011) also reported positive experiences in their lives, as paradoxical as it may sound; with 64 per cent of survivors reporting they experienced moderate to high levels of benefit finding.

Psychosocial implications of benefit finding

Benefit finding after cancer diagnosis focuses on the sequelae that many patients view as positive or beneficial following cancer experience (Antoni et al., 2001). Finding positive outcomes in an unpleasant situation may help patients on their personal sources and skills, enhance their sense of purpose, make changes in their spirituality and their relationships with significant others and review their life priorities (Fromm et al., 1996). Distress can be reduced when patients report positive changes in their lives after a trauma, allowing a person to move on with their life (McMillen et al., 1997).

When cancer is diagnosed, a person’s whole life-priorities change. Thus, being able to re-structure the priorities in a life is an opportunity that may improve psychological outcomes like QoL, distress, depression, etc. Affleck and Tennen (1996) suggest that benefit finding can be used as a coping strategy for cancer patients.

Studies that point out a positive outcome from benefit finding have stated a positive change on patients’ QoL since been diagnosed with cancer. It might be a possibility that the diagnosis itself, which previously was considered as a major stressor, may provide some positive changes in patients’ lives. Dirksen (1995) suggested that three positive experiences exist: a sense of ‘living for today’, a reordering of life priorities and changes in self-awareness while Cordova et al. (2001) found three positive outcomes by women newly diagnosed with breast cancer: a much greater appreciation of life, changes in spirituality and faith and improved interpersonal relationships.

Physiological implications of benefit finding

So what about the association between physiological factors and benefit finding? A groundbreaking article (Cruess et al., 2000) linked the cognitive-behavioural stress management (CBSM) intervention with reduced serum cortisol among women with early stage breast cancer. They used CBSM to test the relationship between benefit finding and changes in cortisol in women with breast cancer. The results indicate a clear physiological change during the psychological assessment. However, generalisability of such findings is difficult because of the participants’ status (healthy and highly educated women). Furthermore, the women with early stage breast cancer proceed to other treatments so it is difficult to determine which intervention was beneficial and which was
not if CBSTM is not compared to them. A previous study (Van der Pompe & Heijnen, 1996) found that psychological challenges combined with effects on endocrine regulations due to the disease or the treatment had explained various differences in plasma cortisol levels and circadian rhythm of cortisol secretion. However, the confounding effect of the severity of diagnosis needs to be established.

**Cancer avoidance and benefit finding**

Even though positive outcomes have been noted from benefit finding, there is also evidence that support exactly the opposite. For example, cancer avoidance is considered having a significant positive impact on patients’ QoL (Tallman et al., 2007). There are a number of studies reporting no positive outcomes from benefit finding (Fromm et al., 1996; Antoni et al., 2001; Cordova et al., 2001). Also, no significant associations were found between benefit finding and QoL among the colorectal cancer survivors in Jansen et al.’s study (2011).

Furthermore, studies measuring benefit finding are not without criticism. For example, they may measure positive outcomes long after treatment (recall bias), while others may lack theoretical grounding and involve cross-sectional designs (Sears et al., 2003).

People may react differently to cancer; health beliefs, illness cognitions and attitudes as well as demographics like age, gender and marital status may influence the way people react to cancer. Likewise Lazarus and Folkman (1984) provide a four-class of variables model called the ‘Stress and Coping Theory’ to explain this variability, as well as the adjustment to a stressful situation like cancer. These sets of variables are: characteristics of stressful situation (i.e. chronicity and time of diagnosis); patient’s attributes (which may influence cancer adjustment); cognitive appraisals (that may influence the extent of adjustment) and coping processes (cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage the diagnosis). Thus people who may see positive outcomes from a stressful situation (even considering their condition as curable) may proceed to efforts to reach these outcomes.

**Predictors of benefit finding**

So why don’t all people make efforts to find positive outcomes on a negative experience? Predictors of benefit finding like optimism and social support shape the characteristics of patients who may try to find positive outcomes of their diagnosis. Thompson and Pitts (1993) state that patients who were optimists reported lower levels of depression and were more likely to find benefits from their experience with cancer. At the same time social support is identified as an important predictor of benefit finding because cancer patients desire emotional support from significant others (Park et al., 1996), or because patients having social support are more likely to have an optimistic point of view. Finally Jansen et al. (2011) found that colorectal cancer survivors with highest education and higher depression scores reported lower levels of benefit finding.

**Developing clinical interventions for benefit finding**

Clinical interventions may help people to cope with cancer and experience positively from them. Behavioural interventions seem to help patients proceed to a personal growth as well. Trijsburg et al. (1992) reviewed several studies that used CBSTM and concluded on a reduction of stress and distress following the intervention. CBSTM was found to reduce levels of depression but not other emotional distress measures (Antoni et al., 2001). The same researchers discuss the possibility that these interventions provide the ability to patients to reorganise themselves and form a ‘new self’, better than the existing one. They also mention that various changes in meaning of an event may be induced using a group intervention. However, they also indicate that this possibility must be tested empirically. Penedo et al (2006) found that a 10-week
group-based CBSM increased both benefit finding and QoL among localized prostate cancer patients.

Why CBSM is an effective intervention for cancer patients? Antoni et al.'s (2001) study state that patients are influenced on their depressive state but also on two other measures of well-being: (a) reports from the patients mentioning feelings of well-being of having the cancer and which are increased post-intervention; and (b) optimism about the future which is in higher levels as well. However these results are fundamentally questioned due to a very important issue: the measure of benefit finding was not included at the beginning of the research and was eventually added. Thus there were not clear determinations as to what caused the beneficial outcomes. More research is needed to determine how clinical interventions (including CBSM) may enhance benefit finding and provide space for cancer patients to focus on the positive outcomes of being diagnosed.

To conclude with, the literature surrounding benefit finding among cancer patients is controversial. The growing interest on enhancing patients’ ability to improve their QoL and well-being by finding benefits from cancer diagnosis, has led to adjusting the focus on both positive and negative experiences due to their adversity (Andrykowski et al., 1993). Benefit finding may be a natural process for cancer patients’ unpleasant experiences and also a determined factor for personal growth and transformation (Sears et al., 2003). Researchers’ focus can point to the perspective a treatment may have for people diagnosed with cancer rather than developing a new treatment (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 1999) even though patients could also benefit from patching behavioural interventions to already existing medical ones, which may enhance benefit finding. Interventions that focus only on the negative experiences of cancer patients may miss a lot of positive experiences and outcomes that can emerge from the treatment and the diagnosis itself. So, there is hope to improve cancer patients’ QoL while at the same time focusing on the positives.

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*Benefit finding in cancer: The argument of being positive*
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Conscientisation and identity: Reflections on being a community psychologist

Michael Richards

BEING a community psychologist is a challenge that comes with unpredictability, tensions and difficulties whether working with professionals or marginalised individuals or groups. However, when it works, being a community psychologist can also bring hope and resilience and a sense of collaborative achievement which might not be experienced in other areas of psychology. There are very few ‘community psychologists’ employed as such, but there are a number of roles that community psychologists are able to fulfil (Kagan et al., 2011) such as representational (advocate, networker), educational (trainer, conscious raiser), facilitator (mediator, organiser) and researcher roles (project planner, evaluator) that encompass interpersonal and problem solving skills whilst viewing problems from a social contextual perspective. Community psychologists engage in a constant cycle of action and learning whilst critically reflecting on what they do, to encourage change in collaboration with people in the community.

In this article, I will consider some of the experiences I have encountered working in the community. I will reflect on my experiences with young people in one of the poorest places in the UK, in central Manchester. Here I will discuss the difficulties young people face in developing an identity that is positive. In addition, I will describe one person’s story on ‘coming out’ under difficult circumstances, being labelled with ‘learning difficulties’. Finally, I will analyse one group that was set up to train volunteers wanting to work with adults labelled with ‘learning difficulties’. I will connect these case studies specifically with my approach to learning, influenced by Freire’s concept of ‘conscientisation’. I will consider how the people in the case studies developed a ‘critical consciousness’ through the development of dialogical relationships that brought an awareness of their identity and their connection with their surrounding social contexts.

Conscientisation

‘Conscientisation’ emerged from the work of Freire (1972) and Freire and Faundez (1989). Conscientisation embraces a continuous process, in which awareness and action are inseparable (Kagan et al., 2011). Awareness is achieved through using a different kind of educational process, one that is not one way, formal, expertly driven, like traditional education. Instead it concerns dialogue between people for conscientisation to evolve, not on people. In other words, everyone is an ‘expert’ with knowledge or experiences to share together. Martin-Baros (1986, 1994) described conscientisation as:

‘A process where a human is transformed through changing their reality, through an active process of dialogue, in which they decode the world, to grasp the mechanisms of oppression and dehumanisation. This opens up new ways of taking action and a better understanding of self in their personal and wider contexts.’


In addition, Martin-Baros established a distinctive position on the role of theory, one that is broadly followed by those working within this paradigm:

‘It shouldn’t be theories that define the problems of our situation, but rather the problems that demand and so to speak, select, their own theorisation.’

Therefore, conscientisation is a cyclical process, grounded in different people sharing their experiences of the world through which dialogue and reflection can begin. Next, I will reflect on how this cyclical process of conscientisation has had an effect on identity with marginalised groups and individuals.

**Young people and identity**

One of my main roles as a community psychologist has been to work with young people who have been marginalised in different ways, including through exclusion from school, being in care, recovering from drugs and alcohol, self-harm or by being victims of sexual violence or abuse. One specific role I had was to deliver sexual health programmes to young people, mostly aged 16 to 18 years in central Manchester. My approach was not to simply deliver information relating to sexually transmitted infections, or to hand out condoms, but instead I wanted to tackle ‘sexual health’ by taking a contextual approach that reflected upon equality, identity, and sexuality amongst other things. However, one of the most fruitful aspects of my work was not what information or activities were delivered, but what the young people themselves would do spontaneously.

One group I worked with, young men aged 16 to 18 years, had been a group I had known for a few weeks. I got to know them and built a good relationship with them. One week, whilst attempting to initiate an activity on ‘equal opportunities’ they simply refused to co-operate and instead just kept talking with each other or generally being rowdy. In response, I stood in the middle of the room and stayed quiet. Eventually, they went quiet and I told them that there’s no point in me being here if we are not doing anything. They just stayed quiet and there was a long silence. From the silence, one of the young men, who had been bullied by some of the young men in previous weeks and did not say much, started to rap a song about himself. The song was fast and full of bad language, but clearly a reflection about what he thought about relationships, family, school and drugs that he had experienced. Myself and the rest of the group were looking at each other in shock. When he stopped, we congratulated him and spoke about what he was singing about. However, another young man started to do exactly the same thing and the same shocked reactions occurred again. Again, the rap reflected his life experiences, which were not positive and indicated that he struggled with his own identity in difficult and unsupportive contexts. One of the young men then jokingly asked if I wanted to start rapping and I politely declined.

For me this is conscientisation in practice. The young men decided to express what they thought and felt about their lives and wanted to share this with the people in the room. Consequently, it influenced another young person to rap and express their feelings. We then discussed this together and came to some collective thinking about our identities. The young men’s choice to express their feelings in such an honest and explicit way was a form of ‘capacitation’ (Carmen & Sobrado, 2000, in Kagan et al., 2011) because the music they produced was not imposed by outside experts (teachers or myself), but developed by insiders (the young men). The young men became active learners in wanting to change the perspectives they had about their lives and thus become aware of what their identity means.

**‘Learning difficulties’ and sexuality**

A big part of my work in the community has been working with men and women marginalised by society through their labels of ‘learning difficulties’. This is a label because most people I have collaborated with who are labelled in this way refuse to accept they have ‘learning difficulties’. One particular man I worked with, Stephen (pseudonym), a 46-year-old man from Manchester, ‘came out’ as being gay using poetry influenced by other members of a group I facilitated in the community. Initially a shy and reluctant
person to get involved unless asked, he soon (within a few weeks) started to express himself and talk about himself in an intimate and personal way. For example, one of the first workshops the group did was to talk about and write poetry. This was facilitated by another member of the group, who had asked to do this. The week after James facilitated this poetry workshop; Stephen came back and asked if he could read some poetry he had written. Stephen’s reading of this poem was used as an opportunity by Stephen to inform the group that he was gay. When Stephen ended his poem this way, there were chuckles of laughter and shock throughout the group. However, Stephen received a round of applause and he appeared very happy with what he had done. Later on, he shook my hand and thanked me for ‘allowing’ him to read his work out. Although I reminded him that this was his project and this was the place for him to express himself, in his own way.

Research on the process of empowerment demonstrates that people will not engage fully until they feel they have gained awareness of their own oppression and have enjoyed support from other community members (Kieffer, 1984; Lord & Hutchinson, 1993; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005). Therefore, to overcome oppression, projects/groups need to develop interpersonal and mentoring type relationships, which through this support and education people will experience consciousness raising (Hollander, 1997; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005). Stephen was able to raise consciousness about health for himself by liberating his feelings to the group and consequently raised consciousness amongst the men by getting them to think about issues related to sexuality and to express their feelings.

The dialogue and consequently the conscientisation of being aware of health issues relates here to how the group participated. Kagan (2006) suggested that bottom up participation and collective action are likely to have the greatest impact on both well-being and the potential for changing the material circumstances of life (Kagan et al., 2011, p.105). In addition, this kind of participation achieves several things (based on Kagan et al., 2011, p.105, relating to Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000; Campbell & Murray, 2004):
1. Participation develops the group’s critical awareness and critical thinking.
2. Members of the group renegotiate their collective social identity and varied perspectives on the world through shared understanding and ways of talking about themselves.
3. Participation reinforces people’s confidence and ability to take control of their lives. People are empowered to make changes.

For Stephen to have developed a positive self-identity, the process of critical consciousness was achieved through talking and understanding one another. Although developing a positive self-identity is difficult in the context of pervasive societal attitudes that have devalued people labelled with ‘learning difficulties’, Stephen overcame this by talking with others about his feelings of sexuality and for everyone involved they became more aware, therefore, conscious of how hard it is to be labelled with ‘learning difficulties’ and to be gay.

Training volunteers in conscientisation

My final reflection considers a small project I co-ordinated in which I worked with men and women labelled with ‘learning difficulties’ to develop a training programme to train volunteers to build relationships with people labelled with learning difficulties. When training volunteers or professionals, it is likely information is delivered, or you get to watch a couple of DVDs, or you might have some general discussions. However, in collaboration with adult men and women, we decided that we wanted to take a more active approach, to deliver something different. Therefore, the group came up with the idea of creating drama scenes that told a story or depicted an event that had occurred in their lives. For example, one scene they created and delivered to volun-
teers concerned the control and the abuse of control they had experienced at home. The scene involved a man who would control all aspects of his sister's life, that is, breaking her belongings, switching the TV off without asking, or hitting her. These actions are blatant forms of abuse and subtle ways to control someone. The actors wanted the volunteers to understand that their lives had been controlled in some many ways and therefore if a volunteer wanted to work with someone they needed to be aware of the feelings and difficulties people labelled with learning difficulties face.

This kind of scene, which was one of many with other topics including sexuality, relationships and equality, are good examples of conscientisation taking place. In other words, through drama and improvised speech, the actors challenged the attitudes and perspectives the volunteers had about people labelled with learning difficulties. When the scenes were completed, the volunteers and actors would debate and critically analyse the issues that emerged from the scene. Consequently, both the people labelled with learning difficulties and the volunteers became aware of one another and understood each other more through dialogue. As I stated earlier, Awareness is achieved by something that is not one way (Kagan et al, 2011) and concerns reciprocating dialogue in which all people are on the same level.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, by developing critical consciousnesses within the projects I facilitated in collaboration with young people and adults labelled with 'learning difficulties, they were able to become aware of what their identity meant to them and to each other. Through conscientisation, the people involved with my work felt empowered and included in a learning process that was cyclical and positive in the development of their identity. The groups and individuals simply talked to each other and expressed themselves in a safe space and became aware of each other, which lead to a greater mutual respect. Although being a community psychologist is clearly a challenge, it can be incredibly rewarding for the psychologist, and especially so for the people you collaborate with.

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Conscientisation and identity: Reflections on being a community psychologist

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We look forward to hearing from you.
KATE: Thank you very much for your time today. To begin, can you tell me about your academic work?

RUSI: Certainly. I’m a lecturer in psychology here at De Montfort. My responsibilities include teaching social psychology, the psychology of sexuality and conceptual issues in psychology and, in addition to teaching, I’m very research active. I’m committed to looking at pressing social psychological issues using the tools that are available to us. I try to synthesise my teaching and my research: I think that’s key in an academic career.

KATE: Tell me about your research.

RUSI: The main theoretical aim of my research is to develop Identity Process Theory (see Boxed Feature 1), a theory in which we can look at three things: social representations (the sorts of ideas that exist in society); people’s sense of self and identity; and how they cope when their sense of self is in some way threatened. This is actually quite ambitious because what we find in social psychology generally is piecemeal theorising where there’s a focus on particular elements. I’m trying to develop a larger framework in which these three things can be examined.

I try to develop this theoretical aim in applied contexts. I’ve tried to de-emphasise the focus in psychology on Western industrialised contexts, and to look at those contexts we’ve neglected, to show how our theories work in these kinds of contexts. My aim is to represent psychology as human science as opposed to a science that is very much focused on Western contexts.

In terms of the actual specific areas that I’ve looked at, I’ve probably become best known for my work on gay Muslims (see Boxed Feature 2). I’ve been interested in looking at how people who identify as either lesbian, gay, or bisexual, but also as an individual of religious faith, manage to reconcile these two important identities. Because it’s such a complex topic, I’ve looked at various issues and dimensions of the religion-sexuality interface: for example, the way that people relate to members of their religious group; the way that people associate with others on the gay scene; and the sorts of struggles they have to deal with. And I’ve found this theoretically enlightening because it sheds light on things like multiple social identities.

More recently I’ve started to look at radically different areas, using the same theoretical tools. I’ve looked at representations of climate change and how we can encourage people to change their behaviour, given the scientific evidence that climate change is happening and that we are contributing to that. Now a lot of people find it quite difficult to see a link between my work on gay Muslims and my work on behaviour change in the context of climate change but actually there is one. The assumptions in both areas are relatively similar in that our...
identities are very important. And it is important for psychologists to consider what matters to individuals if we want people to change their behaviour and attitudes.

Kate: How did you come to such an interesting and rich area of research?

Rusi: My first degree was in French and Spanish linguistics at the University of Cambridge. My undergraduate dissertation looked at identity issues among speakers of Andalusian Spanish. So I had a very specific topic, the sort of thing that linguists like to look at. But I certainly couldn’t find the answers to many of my questions within linguistics. I had to look outside of the discipline. I picked up Glynis Breakwell’s book, *Coping with Threatened Identities*. Reading that book as an undergraduate decisively changed the course of my career; it made such an important contribution to understanding the construction of identity. It seemed to complement what was being argued in linguistics. I realised that, in order to provide a holistic account of language and identity, I needed to look beyond linguistics and to go into social psychology. Social psychology itself is supposed to be the meeting point between psychology and sociology so I think my training over the years has sensitised me to the importance of bringing together disciplines, as much as is feasible.

Kate: What was your undergraduate supervisor’s response to you bringing in this whole other disciplinary approach?

Rusi: My supervisor Ioanna Sitaridou was very open-minded indeed and this question allows me to say something that I believe very passionately: supervisors have a responsibility towards all kinds of minorities within society, to try to create favourable conditions for minorities to coexist with majorities and to contribute to majority society. I feel very strongly about this topic of gay Muslims because I feel they are an ignored population, their plight is not thought about very much. I was absolutely thrilled that the QMiP Section selected my paper entitled ‘Coping with Potentially Incompatible Identities: Accounts of Religious, Ethnic and Sexual Identities from British Pakistani Men who Identify as Muslim and Gay’ for the Outstanding Research by an Early Career Scholar Award. I’m really looking forward to attending the conference in Huddersfield where I will hopefully be given some time to talk about the paper and to encourage people to engage with the topic.
because it perpetuates the same tradition of research and the same direction and there is very little scope for creative thinking. I was very lucky that my undergrad adviser was so radical that she allowed me to read a book that was outside of her remit and to write a dissertation on a very different topic from what was expected. We recently co-authored a paper that was based on my undergraduate dissertation. I feel I owe a lot to my undergraduate supervisor.

Kate: Did you go directly from your undergraduate degree to a Master’s in social psychology?
Rusi: Yes. I realised that a lot of the theory I was drawing on was social psychological. I thought, ‘Why not go in to a discipline like social psychology and learn some of their methods and theories and see how I can move my topic (language and identity) forward?’ So I completed a Master’s at the University of Surrey under the supervision of Adrian Coyle. He showed me a very different way of thinking and wasn’t at all prescriptive, allowing me to develop my own ideas. He also supervised a topic which wasn’t directly in his area of expertise. This resulted in collaborative research and some co-authored papers. The role of the supervisor is fundamental in moving our discipline forward I think.

Kate: What did you do after your social psychology Master’s?
Rusi: I decided to do a PhD in a very similar topic, under the supervision of Marco Cinnirella at Royal Holloway. During my PhD, I went to work with Professor Richard Bourhis, a leading researcher in social identity theory, who was one of Henri Tajfel’s PhD students. Again that was because of my interest in language and identity. However, his focus was very different. He was focusing on the intergroup level, whereas what I had done with Adrian Coyle and with Marco Cinnirella was very much an analysis of the total identity of the individual, encompassing things like group memberships, personality and attitudes. So this was an attempt to see what other psychologists who are looking at the same topic — but with distinct theoretical foci — were saying. That was a wonderful experience because it helped me to enrich my research with other perspectives.

Kate: How did you arrange that collaboration?
Rusi: I did what a lot of people are quite reluctant to do when it involves someone very eminent like Richard Bourhis: I wrote him an email. I asked him if he would be willing to have me in his lab for a few months while I was doing my PhD. He just asked for a copy of my CV and a brief personal statement and the next thing I knew I was on a flight to Montreal! There are schemes available from the British Psychological Society to facilitate these sorts of research trips and I would encourage PhD students to take advantage of this kind of enriching experience. It was a very different way of working from what I was used to in the UK. There was a lab focus where undergraduate students, graduate students, doctoral students and postdoctoral research fellows all work together on things collectively. It’s not really a system that we have so much in the UK. But I think it’s absolutely fantastic and if I could change something about psychology in the UK, it would be that: to develop integrative approach, an approach to get everyone to work together, to share ideas.

Kate: What is your favourite part of the research process?
Rusi: I absolutely love writing (see Boxed Feature 3). It’s my opportunity to express my views and to give my ideas some exposure. When you write, your work is read by people from all over the world, potentially, and that’s a very satisfying experience. It feels as if you’re making a contribution on quite a large scale. But I wouldn’t want this to obscure the sort of satisfaction I get from teaching and talking about my work in my teaching. It’s also highly satisfying to be able to talk to my students and to hear their views on my work and also to feel that you’re having some impact on their own thinking with regard to a topic. Also, I learn a lot from
my students. They give me great ideas; they provide very constructive criticism of my research; and I think they’re quite happy to see that people who are teaching them are research active. I think they want to feel that they are being taught by people at the cutting edge of the discipline. It’s a very reciprocal process, teaching and research, talking with students about research, and I enjoy that immensely.

### Boxed Feature 3: On writing for *The Quarterly*

PsyPAG really helped to shape my career. I had a very positive experience in publishing for the first time in *The Quarterly*. This fuelled my enthusiasm for writing and showed me that it is possible for other people to appreciate your work. We don’t always think that because we’re often working in very insular contexts, in a dyadic relationship with our supervisor, for example, which can mean that we don’t really know what other people think about our research. I’m now collaborating with people that I actually met through PsyPAG. I do feel that publishing in PsyPAG has enhanced my career.

**Kate:** What advice do you have for readers who may be thinking of pursuing an academic career?

**Rusi:** Postgraduate study is a very exploratory phase. Learn as many methods as you can. Attend lots of workshops and conferences. Make use of the time that is afforded to a research student that isn’t afforded to a member of academic staff. Learn and explore different theories. And write.

**Rusi’s twitter handle:** @RusiJaspal

### Correspondence

**Kate Doran**

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Email: k.doran@sheffield.ac.uk

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**Kate:** What advice do you have for readers who may be thinking of pursuing an academic career?

**Rusi:** Postgraduate study is a very exploratory phase. Learn as many methods as you can. Attend lots of workshops and conferences. Make use of the time that is afforded to a research student that isn’t afforded to a member of academic staff. Learn and explore different theories. And write.

**Rusi’s twitter handle:** @RusiJaspal

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Dates for your Diary

4–6 December 2013
The BPS Division of Clinical Psychology Annual Conference
*The Royal York Hotel, York*
http://www.bps.org.uk/events/conferences/division-clinical-psychology-annual-conference-2013

14 December 2013
The BPS Mathematical, Statistical & Computing Psychology Section
Annual Scientific Meeting & Annual General Meeting
*BPS Offices, 30 Tabernacle Street, London*
http://mscs.bps.org.uk/mscs/scientific-meetings-agms/scientific-meetings-agms_home.cfm

16–17 December 2013
The BPS Division of Sport & Exercise Psychology
Annual Conference
*The Midland Hotel, Manchester*

8–10 January 2014
The BPS Division of Occupational Psychology Annual Conference
*The Grand, Brighton*

8–10 January 2014
The BPS Division of Educational and Child Psychology Annual Conference
*The Oxford Hotel, Oxford*
http://www.bps.org.uk/events/conferences/decp-annual-conference-2014

20 February 2014
Midlands Health Psychology Network
*The University of Northampton*
www.mhpnc.co.uk

The BPS website lists a full list of BPS events: http://www.bps.org.uk/events
Annual Conference 2014
International Conference Centre, Birmingham

Our conference themes are:
- Psychology and war
- The psychology of family, parenting and caring
- The psychologist as expert
- New directions in human neuroscience
Plus ‘General’ category for work outside the above themes.

Deadlines
- Oral presentations, workshops and symposium submissions
  - 27 October 2013
- Poster presentations
  - 7 January 2014

Our keynote speakers for 2014 are
- Professor Sir Simon Wessely
  King’s College London
- Ben Shephard
  Military and Medical Historian,
  Oxford University
- Susan van Scoyoc
  Independent Practitioner
- Professor John Aggleton
  Cardiff University
- Professor Marinus van Ijzendoorn
  Leiden University

Registration will open on 2 September 2013
For further details see www.bps.org.uk/ac2014
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Wessex Branch | Rhiannon Barrington
rbarrington@bourneheim.ac.uk | 2015
West Midlands Branch | Sarah Hennelly
sarah.hennelly-2011@brookes.ac.uk | 2015
London and Home Counties Branch | Lynsey Mahmood
lm454@kent.ac.uk | 2015

### Board Representatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Currently Held By</th>
<th>Due for re-election</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Publications and Communications Board | Patrycja Piotrowska
Pj.piotrowska@sheffield.ac.uk | 2014 |
| Ethics | Miriam Thiel
Miriam.Thiel.1@city.ac.uk | 2015 |
| Research Board (Chair) | Laura Neale
laura.neale@northumbria.ac.uk | 2015 |

### Other Committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Currently Held By</th>
<th>Due for re-election</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Conference Standing Committee | Bernadette Roberston
b.robertston2@lancaster.ac.uk | 2015 |
| Undergraduate Liaison Officer | JJ Begum
j.begum@gold.ac.uk | 2014 |
**PsyPAG Quarterly submissions guidelines**

*The PsyPAG Quarterly* is a developing publication, which is distributed free of charge to all psychology postgraduates in the UK. It therefore receives wide readership. *The PsyPAG Quarterly* accepts articles on all areas of psychology.

**Types of articles accepted:**
- **Featured Articles and Discussion Papers:** Articles can cover a wide range of topics. Articles may describe a piece of original research; provide an overview of a theory, area or issue.
- **Research in Brief:** A short report of original research, often preliminary findings.
- **Big Interviews:** An interview with anyone connected with psychology, usually written in a question-and-answer format.
- **Conference Reviews:** Provide an overview of a conference, outlining the main themes of the conference.
- **Departmental Reviews:** An overview of a department as well as research interests of the postgraduates.
- **Book and Software Reviews:** A review of books or software relevant to psychologists.
- **Hints and Tips:** Hints and tips that will be useful to postgraduates. For example, how to apply for funding.
- **Postgraduate Research in Brief:** This is a reference list of research that has recently been published by postgraduates within a particular area or department.

**Word limits:**
The journal has a broad word limit of 500 to 2500 words excluding references. The maximum word limit is flexible for in depth discussion papers, longer interviews or hints and tips. The word count will differ depending on the type of article, for example, conference and book reviews should be shorter than featured articles.

**Formatting:**
Please submit all articles in Microsoft Word. The content, including tables, figures, and references should all comply with the most recent APA guidelines. You should also include your contact details at the end of each article in the format of:

**Correspondence:**
Name
University of X.
Email:

**Submission:**

To submit an article, please send as an email attachment to: quarterly@psypag.co.uk.

If you have any further questions, please contact the editors at quarterly@psypag.co.uk, or send in your question via twitter: @PsyPAGQuarterly.
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 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 publication, which is delivered free of charge to all postgraduate psychology departments in the UK.
- PsyPAG is run by an elected committee, which any postgraduate student can be voted on to. Elections are held at the PsyPAG Annual Conference each year.
- The committee includes representatives for each Sub-Division within the British Psychological Society, their role being to represent postgraduate interests and problems within that Division or the British Psychological Society generally. We also liaise with the Student Group of the British Psychological Society to raise awareness of postgraduate issues in the undergraduate community.
- Committee members also include Practitioners-in-Training who are represented by PsyPAG.

Mailing list

PsyPAG maintains a JISCmail list open to ALL psychology postgraduate students. To join, visit www.psypag.co.uk and scroll down on the main page to find the link, or go to http://tinyurl.comPsyPAGjiscmail.

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: http://tinyurl.comPsyPAGfacebook.

Again, this information is also provided at www.psypag.co.uk.
### Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Scurlock-Evans</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair’s Column</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Neale</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting the quality into quantitative research</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gayme Yeates</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s all this business about Bayes?</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Grange</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Good, the Bad and the Ugly about the fMRI world</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Maciejewski</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hints and Tips: Tips on conducting effective online research</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemary Kingston</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a date with secondary data: Things you should know before asking someone else’s data out</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrycja Piotrowska</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hints and Tips/Conference Review: Presenting at a conference for Trainee Educational Psychology: Reflections on the benefits for the research process</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona McBryde</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Review: International Conference on Eating Disorders 2013</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolyn Plateau</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Review: Royal College of Nurses International Nursing Research Conference</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Watts</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Review: 2nd Junior Researcher Programme Conference</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurien Nagels-Coune &amp; Madeleine Dalsklev</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Review: SoDoc 2013 Workshop</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura De Moliere</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and delivery of an Outreach training event for postgraduate psychology students</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha Rowbotham, Melissa Noke &amp; Ruth Butterworth</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Review: The F-Word in Contemporary Women’s Writing</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Wray</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Review: 7th International Tinnitus Research Initiative (TRI) Tinnitus Conference</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathryn Fackrell</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfamiliar voice identification as forensic evidence: Can you believe your ears?</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet Smith</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefit finding in cancer: The argument of being positive</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelos Kassianos</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientisation and identity: Reflections on being a community psychologist</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Richards</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology People in Profile: Dr Rusi Jaspa</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Doran</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates for your Diary</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PsyPAG Committee 2013/14</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>