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The application of a qualitative approach to adult attachment research: A short report

Pregnant women, mothers, mother and baby units and mental health in prison

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HELLO AND WELCOME to the centenary issue of *PsyPAG Quarterly*!

Thank you to those who attended the summer conference, it was lovely to see so many of you there. I thoroughly enjoyed the vast array of posters, presentations and workshops given. As well as the conference, we’ve been very busy behind the scenes this quarter, attending workshops and developing new guidance for submitting authors. We therefore have an issue packed full of thought-provoking articles for you, many offering some fantastic reflections and advice on a number of practical aspects of postgraduate study in psychology.

I would like to take this opportunity to promote a new type of article that we are introducing to the *PsyPAG Quarterly*. This is called ‘guest author’ and is aimed at those with a PhD in an area related to psychology that would like to write for us. Guest author articles can be any one of our other types of articles, such as a reflective piece or hints and tips article (please see the *Quarterly* website for a full list of article types – http://www.psypag.co.uk/the-quarterly/). We feel this a great opportunity for established researchers to share their knowledge and experience with more junior researchers. The guest author section will be officially launched in the December special issue on the Psychology of Sexualities, lead edited by Jimmy Couzens. This issue will feature the first guest author article, and we couldn’t be more excited about it!

The editors of *PsyPAG Quarterly* have also recently put together a document of ‘writing top tips’ for those thinking of submitting an article. We see many simple mistakes in the articles we receive, and hope that these tips will provide some extra guidance to anyone submitting an article. These writing tips apply to all types of articles we accept, and cover a broad range of topics, from content and style to references.

We now turn to a synopsis of the articles featured in this issue of *PsyPAG Quarterly*. We kick off with some thought-provoking discussion papers. Firstly, Melissa Colloff tells us how police line-ups based on scientific evidence can help improve the accuracy of eyewitness identifications. Deborah Rodriguez introduces us to how her doctoral work taking a qualitative approach to adult attachment research will surely expand upon current knowledge which is based on quantitative research methods. Kate Leech then takes us through the negative psychological impact of living at home on young adults.

Two of our editors, Ryc Aquino and I, recently attended the Peer review: The nuts and bolts workshop, hosted by Sense About Science in May. Peer review is an essential part of any academic career, whether you are a reviewer of a paper or the author of a paper being reviewed. In this issue you can read our review of this workshop, and we hope that it will increase awareness surrounding the importance of peer review. We also give some tips on how to begin developing this part of your personal academic profile. This article goes hand in hand with a reflection piece by Ryc Aquino about what the exercise of peer reviewing has done for her and her PhD. If peer review is something you’d like to know more about or develop, these articles are well worth a read.

We then move on to an article by Olivia J. Kirtley, who tells us how the Integrated Motivational-Volitional model of suicidal behavior can help clinicians to better predict who will go on to attempt suicide, out of those who think about suicide. Rachel Dolan introduces us to mother and baby units in prisons in England, describes the positive short and
long-term effects of these on mothers and babies, and ultimately argues for increased availability of these as an alternative to separation. Also, Aris R. Terzopoulos describes how he created a child-specific word frequency database in Greek. Aris has very kindly made this database freely available online for researchers and educators to use. Lee J. Curley, Jennifer Murray and Rory MacLean discuss the evidence suggesting that heuristics (rule of thumb techniques for decision-making) do not always have negative effects, but have potential value in increasing the accuracy of decision-making and allowing people to ignore irrelevant information.

Picking back up on the practical nature of this issue, Giorgia Michelini convinces us of why students should consider a study visit to another institution during their PhD, and provides practical tips on how to arrange and make the most of this experience. Kevin Teoh reviews the PsyPAG funded workshop ‘You mean the data has already been collected? Using secondary data in psychology’. The use of secondary data is becoming increasingly popular within psychology, and from Kevin’s review it sounds like those in attendance found this workshop extremely helpful. This is also the perfect time to point out PsyPAG’s bursary opportunities. The next round of bursary applications closes on the 10th of October, so if you are thinking of attending a domestic or international conference, have an idea for a workshop you’d like to run, or need help with travel, research or study visit costs, then please do consider applying. If you have an idea and want to discuss it with someone before submitting an application for funding, please contact info@psypag.co.uk. More information on bursary opportunities can be found on our website http://www.psypag.co.uk/bursaries-2/

Finally, we have some fantastic hints and tips for the recruitment and testing of older adults by Amy Atkinson, and how you can use crowdfunding to support your PhD research by Jane Blackwell. Obtaining funding to complete a PhD is extremely competitive nowadays, so the latter article suggests an intuitive way to fund your research. This issue finishes with two conference reviews; one by Elle Wadsworth on the Society of the Research of Nicotine and Tobacco 16th annual conference, and one by myself on the 21st Annual Scientific Spring meeting of the Psychosocial Aspects of Diabetes study group.

Happy reading!

Victoria Whitelock
On behalf of The PsyPAG Quarterly Editorial Team
Twitter: @Vicky_Whitelock
HELLO AND WELCOME to the September issue of *PsyPAG Quarterly*. I have just returned from PsyPAG’s 31st Anniversary Conference in York, and look forward to sharing the details of our flagship event with you.

I would firstly like to thank outgoing Vice Chair Bernadette Robertson for her invaluable support to PsyPAG. Bernadette’s amazing organisational skills have been key to ensuring that PsyPAG runs smoothly, including organising our rep recruitment, committee meetings and supporting with recent Annual Conferences. She has been the fount of all knowledge for myself and the Core Committee over the past year and will be sorely missed. We wish Bernadette all the very best with her remaining PhD studies! I would also like to welcome Ryc Aquino as our incoming Vice Chair. Ryc will also continue acting as a *PsyPAG Quarterly* Editor, so now has a few PsyPAG hats! Finally, I’d like to welcome Emily Pattinson as our new Communications Officer. Emily is also our Wessex Branch rep and will be working with the committee to help increase PsyPAG’s web and social media presence.

Our 31st Anniversary Conference at the University of York was a huge success, with over 70 excellent oral presentations and over 30 poster presentations across the programme. The packed event contained a wide range of hands-on workshops run by postgraduates and PsyPAG alumni, ranging from systematic literature reviewing to employment tips. We were also lucky enough to receive four keynote presentations from the following esteemed psychologists: Dr Harriet Over (University of York); Professor Alan Baddeley (University of York); Professor Andy Young (University of York) and Professor Daryl O’Connor (University of Leeds). On the Thursday of our conference we were also joined by the BPS Trainee Conference for the first time. This enabled trainees and postgraduates to gain insight into the experiences and logistics behind each other’s different yet complimentary forms of psychology qualifications. We thank BPS Trainee Conference organiser Dr Kathryn Waddington for leading the programme and look forward to working with the team again in future years!

We also enjoyed a social programme which allowed us to explore more of the historic city of York. A personal highlight was the spooky ghost walk! The conference dinner was held at the Hilton in York city centre and provided a formal opportunity to celebrate the gathering of so many psychology postgraduates. The conference would not have been possible without the focus and dedication of Conference Chair Jennifer South Palomares and her conference team over the past year. I would also like to thank the many sponsors of the conference for their generous support. The range and quality of keynotes, talks, workshops and posters was truly outstanding and we would like to thank delegates for their abstract submissions. I am pleased to announce that our 2017 32nd Annual Conference will be held at Northumbria University (dates TBC), organised by joint Conference Chairs Kerry McKellar and Sarah Allen. We are already very excited for this event and look forward to seeing many of our readers there!

A number of PsyPAG’s dedicated and hard working committee representatives stepped down from their positions at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) following their terms, of up to two years, volunteering their time to support psychology postgraduates. I wish to once again thank all of
these past committee members and warmly welcome the new committee members that were elected during the AGM. We still have some vacant committee positions available, with details found towards the back of PsyPAG Quarterly. If you would like to apply, please contact Vice Chair Ryc Aquino at: vicechair@psypag.co.uk

At the start of a new academic year I would like to remind readers of our PsyPAG book: A Guide for Psychology Postgraduates: Surviving Postgraduate Study. This is available free of charge to UK psychology postgraduate departments across the UK via our website (http://www.psypag.co.uk/psypag-book/). The book contains articles to help navigate challenges typically experienced by postgraduate psychology students. Articles are both newly commissioned and recent PsyPAG Quarterly articles, written by current postgraduates and PsyPAG alumni. Although billed as a psychology postgraduate guide, it has helpful articles for all postgraduate students of any discipline.

As always, please consider applying for our range of funding opportunities, for workshops (http://www.psypag.co.uk/workshops/) and our range of bursaries (http://www.psypag.co.uk/bursaries-2/). We received over 200 applications for our June 2016 bursary round, all assessed by our fantastic team of volunteer PsyPAG reps. We look forward to continue supporting many more postgraduates in the future.

Finally, thank you to the BPS Research Board for their continued support and best wishes to all postgraduates in this new academic year.

Emma Norris
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New Guest Author section added to the Quarterly

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

PsyPAG Quarterly is seeking contributions for a new article category, called Guest Author.

We welcome established academics who already have a PhD to write for PsyPAG Quarterly under our new Guest Author section. Articles submitted can be any one of our other article types, such as discussion papers, reflection pieces or hints & tips. Articles can be on any psychology-related topic.

The Guest Author category will be officially launched and first featured in the upcoming December 2016 (Psychology of Sexualities) special issue of the Quarterly. We are also seeking Guest Author articles for consideration for future issues of the Quarterly.

Please see the website for more information http://www.psypag.co.uk/the-quarterly/

For queries or further information please email quarterly@psypag.co.uk
Discussion paper:
The real mark of madness?
Melissa Colloff

Criminal perpetrators often have distinctive facial features (e.g., tattoos, bruising, scars). Yet, psychological research has not thoroughly investigated the best way to construct police lineups for suspects with distinctive features. This article outlines current lineup procedures in England and Wales, reviews recent advancements in the eyewitness identification literature, and suggests fruitful areas for future study.

Eyewitness identification procedures in England and Wales have made great strides over the past 20 years. No longer does a petrified victim edge nervously along a lineup parade, summoning the courage to cautiously tap one person on the shoulder. Nor does a witness stand behind one-way glass alongside a burly police officer, feeling under pressure to select the suspect. Today, most identification parades are conducted electronically by an officer not involved in the case and witnesses are instructed that the culprit ‘may or may not be present’ (Police and Criminal Evidence Act, Code D, 1984). A vast body of psychological research guides current identification practices. Indeed, a quick search of the phrase ‘eyewitness identification’ on Google Scholar generates 43,000+ results. A substantial portion of this research is experimental – researchers tend to manipulate various factors, such as the lineup configuration, the race of the culprit, or the presence of weapons, to examine the conditions in which identification accuracy is enhanced or impaired. In these studies, subjects typically act as mock-witnesses; they watch a mock-crime video and then attempt to identify the ‘culprit’ from a group of similar-looking faces. This is undoubtedly good scientific practice. It allows researchers to study cause and effect relationships and permits selection of well-controlled stimuli. But, what if the stimuli are too controlled?

In a review of 290 eyewitness identification studies, Flowe and colleagues (2010) found only one that included unusual or distinctive facial features; lineup members either had a chipped tooth or wore an Elvis wig (Searcy, Bartlett, & Memon, 2000). The paucity of research involving suspects with distinctive features is surprising, given that in a sample of over 700 felony cases in the United States of America, distinctive physical features were noted in the arrest reports for over one third of suspects. Of these distinctive suspects, 63 per cent had tattoos, 17 per cent had scars, 11 per cent had tattoos, scars, or some other unusual feature on their face, and 3 per cent had missing, broken or gold-capped teeth (Flowe et al., 2010). It is therefore pertinent to consider the influence of distinctive facial features in police lineups.

In England and Wales, a police lineup usually consists of showing the witness a short video clip in which the suspect looks forward, to the left and then to the right, along with similar video clips of at least eight other people who physically resemble the suspect. These other lineup members are selected from a large database of faces and are known to be innocent. They must look

1 The Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984), applies in England and Wales but not in Scotland or Northern Ireland. However, both countries have also introduced video identifications and follow similar guidelines.
similar to the suspect so that they are plausible matches to the witness’s memory of the culprit. If they look very dissimilar they are thought to be ineffective, because they do not reduce the likelihood that the witness selects the suspect by chance alone. Accordingly, legislation states that a suspect with a distinctive feature should not stand out. To this end, police either digitally add the suspect’s distinctive feature onto the other lineup members (referred to hereafter as replication), or they conceal the area of the feature on the suspect and then conceal the same area on the other lineup members. In practice, there are two methods of concealment. Police officers either pixelate the area of the feature (hereafter, pixelation), or cover the feature with a solid black rectangle (hereafter, block) (Police and Criminal Evidence Act, Code D, 1984). These image-editing techniques are frequently used. For example, in England and Wales, over one third of all lineups are digitally manipulated to prevent the suspect from standing out (P. Burton, West Yorkshire Police, personal communication, November 3, 2008 as cited in Zarkadi, Wade, & Stewart, 2009).

Some people fail to understand the rationale behind these procedures. In 2009, the Daily Mail ran a story with the headline: ‘Mark of Madness: Police Refuse to Show Suspect’s Birthmark in ID Parade’ (Schlesinger, 2009). Yet, there are good reasons to believe that preventing distinctive suspects from standing out is sensible. Yes, the suspect may be innocent, so the procedure must be fair. And yes, identifying a feature the police already know about offers little in the way of new information. Psychological science, however, can tell us more. Studies suggest that these techniques may reduce erroneous identifications because when the suspect stands out, witnesses are more likely to pick the suspect (e.g., Luus & Wells, 1991). Furthermore, a new model of eyewitness identification predicts that leaving a suspect to stand out will also make witnesses prone to confuse who is innocent and who is guilty (Wixted & Mickes, 2014). My own research has found empirical support for this prediction (Colloff, Wade, & Strange, under review). In short, psychological research indicates that something should be done to prevent distinctive suspects from standing out. But what exactly should be done? Which technique, replication, pixelation or concealment, should police use?

To date, only two published studies – both from researchers at the University of Warwick – have examined how the police should prevent distinctive suspects from standing out. The results converge to suggest that replicating a feature may enhance eyewitness performance more than removing it (Badham, Wade, Watts, Woods, & Maylor, 2013; Zarkadi, Wade, & Stewart, 2009). Replication boosted correct identifications by approximately 20 per cent when the culprit was in the lineup, without increasing incorrect identifications when the culprit was not in the lineup (Zarkadi et al., 2009). Although there seems to be no replication advantage for older adults (aged 61–91), replication enhanced identification performance relative to removing the feature in younger adults (aged 18–24; Badham et al., 2013). These studies address important questions and signify a positive advance in this area. However, in practice, the police do not simply remove features from suspects, they conceal them by using pixelation or block techniques. However, it is possible that concealing a feature using these methods is functionally different from simply removing the feature from the face of a suspect. A prominent distinctive feature may be a central aspect of a witness’s memory, and the absence of that feature may lead a witness to automatically say that the culprit is not in the lineup. Conversely, concealing the feature may indicate that there could be a distinctive feature underneath, which may make a witness more likely to make an identification decision.

My PhD research was prompted by disparities between techniques tested
in research and the procedures used by the police in practice. Specifically, I am examining the efficacy of using replication, pixelation and block techniques to construct lineups for distinctive suspects. Which of these lineup techniques increases the likelihood that a witness will identify the culprit, while also decreasing the likelihood that they will identify an innocent suspect who has a similar distinctive feature? I am also interested in how these lineup techniques affect the confidence-accuracy relationship. Usually, when a witness identifies a person from a lineup, their confidence judgement reflects how likely they are to be accurate (e.g., Brewer & Wells, 2006; Palmer, Brewer, Weber, & Nagesh, 2013). An identification of a lineup member made with 100 per cent confidence, for example, is much more likely to be accurate than one made with 5 per cent confidence. Given that confident witnesses are very influential in the Criminal Justice System (Brewer & Burke, 2002; Wells, Lindsay, & Ferguson, 1979), it is important to understand how these digitally manipulated lineups influence the relationship between confidence and accuracy. Additionally, I am examining whether any of these techniques may be more effective for particular age groups; whether the procedures could be useful even if the witness did not encode the culprit’s distinctive feature at the time of the offence; and whether replication is more or less effective when the replicated features are more or less similar-looking (see, Fitzgerald, Oriet, & Price, 2015).

Of course, this is just the beginning. There are many more essential applied and theoretical questions that need to be addressed before recommendations can be made to the legal system. For example, perhaps the effectiveness of certain techniques depends on the size and location of the distinctive feature, or the delay between witnessing the crime and viewing the lineup. What is clear, however, is that police procedures that are built on robust scientific evidence, can help to improve the accuracy of eyewitness identifications. This can surely only enhance the current system. The real mark of madness would be to disregard the necessity for research.

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The real mark of madness?

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Creating fair lineups for suspects with distinctive
ATTACHMENT THEORY provides a framework for understanding how individuals form close relationships, first as children and later as adults. A central concept is that of ‘internal working models’ (Bowlby, 1988), which reflects a child’s internalisation of a relationship with an attachment figure. Through her research, Mary Ainsworth developed this notion and distinguished three attachment styles which reflect differences in mental representations. If the child’s relationship with the attachment figure is characterised by consistent support and comfort in times of distress, it may result in the development of a secure attachment style. Those children whose attachment figure responded inconsistently or insensitively may develop an anxious-ambivalent attachment style. Those children whose attachment figure was consistently unresponsive may develop an anxious-avoidant attachment style (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). These attachment styles are thought to affect the formation and maintenance of close relationships for the rest of the individual’s life (Bowlby, 1973; 1988). However, internal working models are also dynamic and provisional: if an attachment figure persistently behaves in ways that do not match expectations, the internal working model has to be revised. They remain open to change during the lifespan, particularly in the context of close relationships (Howe, 2011). Typically, a partner or a close friend serves as an attachment figure in adulthood, with secure adult relationships characterised by the capacity to relate to others in a mutual and reciprocal manner. Insecurely attached adults may be anxious-ambivalent, with this attachment style characterised by a focus on negative emotions and a need for more support than others are able or willing to provide. Insecurely attached adults may also be anxious-avoidant, with this attachment style characterised by the suppression of attachment-related thoughts and the use of coping strategies that involve distancing rather than seeking support (Howe, 2011).

Adult attachment research tends to be investigated within two distinct methodological traditions. One tradition, mostly represented in social and personality psychology, is based on self-reports that assess adult perceptions of relationships, mainly romantic relationships. Adults are asked to rate their level of agreement with statements that describe differencing relational styles which purportedly correspond with attachment styles (Hesse, 2008), such as the Relationship Questionnaire (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). The other tradition, mostly represented in developmental psychology, is based on standardised semi-structured interviews with a classification coding system based on numerical ratings – the most popular being the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George, Kaplan & Main, 1985). The AAI explores an adult’s mental representation of attachment by eliciting descriptions of childhood relationships. Based on ratings, each
interview is assigned to a specific classification (Hesse, 2008).

These methods of exploring adult attachment belong to a generally positivist and reductionist approach. However, social constructionism places emphasis on context and interpersonal processes, where meanings are seen as co-constructed and identity is seen to be fluid and shifting. Beliefs, schemas and attitudes are seen to be connected to particular contexts and relationships rather than intrinsic to an individual (Dallos, 2006). This view of identity is consistent with an attachment perspective that considers internal working models to be created in relation to different relationships.

The use of qualitative methods to explore adult attachment facilitates a deeper and more accurate understanding of an individual’s experiences, by giving context to identified attachment behaviours, taking into account both conscious and unconscious processes. Further, it does not reduce an individual and the complex variations in their life experiences into a basic category.

Changes in attachment styles are likely to occur when individuals face life events that expose them to new information that contradict the core assumptions of their internal working models (Bowlby, 1973). Attachment theory has been applied to explore the transition to parenthood, but mainly in an attempt to predict particular changes to attachment styles rather than exploring how these changes may occur. Moreover, most of the literature focuses on the transition to first-time parenthood, with a significant shortfall of research focusing on when individuals become parents to more than one child. However, the few studies that have focused on the transition to second-time parenthood have found differences from the transition to first-time parenthood (e.g., Frost, 2006), highlighting the need for further research in this area.

Therefore, my doctoral work-in-progress research aims to explore the nuances and changes in attachment behaviours in different relationships across the transition to second-time parenthood. I have recruited one heterosexual couple for this longitudinal and prospective case study. Data collection consists of several phases that follow the couple from when they are expecting their second child through to when the second child is one year of age. Relationships and life consist of multiple layers, dimensions and perspectives; therefore, this study uses a qualitative mixed methods approach as this generates multidimensional material (Gabb, 2009). Multiple methods of data collection are used, where each partner of the couple is interviewed both separately and together. In the pregnancy phase of the research, the separate interviews consist of a biographical interview to elicit their attachment histories. This is followed by a semi-structured interview, with questions designed to prompt information about their current adult attachment behaviours and close relationships. Participants also keep individual diaries which allow them to represent themselves and their everyday life in yet another manner. The joint method consists of a photo-elicitation interview whereby the couple take 4–6 photos that represent ‘a day in their life together’. These photos are then discussed in an unstructured interview, generating additional insights.

The subsequent phases of data collection repeat these methods with the exception of the biographical interview. The data is analysed using a qualitative mixed methods approach, namely qualitative pluralism, which combines throughout both analysis and interpretation in order to gain a more holistic insight. This approach provides multidimensional perspectives into understanding a person’s experiences (Frost, 2011).

Presently, the ongoing analysis of the first phase of the research from the mother/female participant of the couple has yielded some preliminary findings. Thus far, I have applied a psychosocial analysis called Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method.
Deborah Rodriguez, Nollaig Frost & Andrea Oskis

(BNIM) to the biographical interview, which considers how a participant’s inner world (e.g., a person’s psychological self) has changed in relation to their outer world (e.g., life events) and vice versa (Wengraf, 2001). I have also completed a structural narrative analysis on the semi-structured interview as its purpose is to explore how people make sense of events within their lives, and to investigate the manner in which these stories are told (Riessman, 2008). I will subsequently carry out an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) on the same semi-structured interview to further explore personal lived experiences and their subjective meanings (Shinebourne, 2011). The structural narrative analysis and IPA will also be applied to the unstructured photelicitation interview.

I now present a very brief snapshot of the preliminary findings of each method used so far. Before doing so, I introduce my participant: at the time of the interview, Claire is 26 years old and is 5 months pregnant with her second child. Originally born in America, and having lived most of her life there, she now lives in the UK with her husband Jack and their first-born child Shane, who is 3-years old. When Claire was born, she was the sixth child, and lived with her siblings, mother, father and paternal grandmother. All names have been replaced with pseudonyms in order to protect individual’s identities.

Commencing with the psychosocial analysis (BNIM); in terms of Claire’s very early relationships with her mother, father and grandmother, each relationship is characterised by different qualities. At the time, Claire experienced both her mother and father to be consistently unavailable during times of need, unloving and rejecting. Claire’s attachment strategy with her mother and father at that particular time was to over-regulate her affect by suppressing her needs as they would go, and remain, unmet. Nevertheless, Claire experienced her grandmother as consistently available, loving and supportive during times of need. Claire’s attachment strategy at that particular time with her grandmother was to ask for protection and comfort with ease, secure in the knowledge that she would receive it. During the course of her life, Claire seems to have used different attachment strategies in different relationships, and in different situations. These findings highlight the multifaceted variation of relational experiences, both within relationships and across relationships. With regards to the analysis of her present sense of self, it seems as though Claire has a current sense of security, and at times, her sense of self and of others are increasingly enacted in secure attachment behaviours such as having a sense of reflection, autonomy, and seeking help when needed. However, at other times, it seems as though she has a sense of self and of others that is more in line with avoidant attachment behaviours, such as downplaying the importance of relationships. Here, behaviour and talk is directed away from anything that may threaten or distress her emotionally. Again, this analysis illustrates the complex variation of Claire’s sense of self and of others.

Although BNIM’s method facilitates an understanding of an individual’s past situated states and present sense of subjectivity, this is just one way in which to look at the phenomenon under investigation. I subsequently applied a narrative analysis to the semi-structured interview designed to elicit information on current attachment behaviours and close adult relationships. One of the key findings is that Claire considers she currently has several close adult relationships she turns to for support during times of need. This analysis revealed that the characteristics of each close relationship she has are different, and they each fulfil different functions in terms of closeness and support. Further, when she experiences difficulties or feelings of stress or distress, Claire perceives that she turns to close others, such as her husband Jack or her friends, for support in coping with this. However, when Claire
is by herself and experiencing a difficult situation, she becomes completely self-sufficient and operates in an extremely efficient manner. At this point, Claire relies on herself to get her through the difficult experience and there is no margin for error as she has no one to fall back on. Nevertheless, Claire actively seeks support from Jack during these types of circumstances, indicating that she can both cope with difficult situations by herself, and can also seek support from others when they are available, signifying a balance between autonomy and dependency. It seems that Claire engages in a range of coping strategies, which appear to be dependent on the particular context of each situation, illuminating the complex variation of her relational experiences.

Whilst the BNIM findings offers insight into Claire’s past relationships and how they were experienced at the time, as well as an understanding of her current situated subjectivity, the narrative analysis provides an additional perspective with regards to how Claire (re)constructs her sense of self as an individual and how she (re)constructs her sense of relationships. This provides further understanding of her current attachment behaviours in terms of her sense of self and sense of others.

In addition to the narrative analysis, the next step is to also apply IPA to the same semi-structured interview. This provides an additional layer of insight by exploring, in detail, the meaning of Claire’s personal lived experiences of her relationships. Combining both the multiple analyses and interpretations will paint a multi-layered and more holistic picture of my participant, which will highlight the nuances and complexity of attachment behaviours enacted in different relationships and in different contexts. This process will subsequently be repeated with Claire’s husband’s data, followed by the application of narrative analysis and IPA to the joint photo-elicitation interview to see how they jointly construct their sense of selves and relationships as well as to explore in detail their joint personal lived experiences. The phases of the research following the birth of the second child will also repeat this process, with the exception of the biographical interview and BNIM.

My doctoral study aims to extend the limits of research into attachment theory by using qualitative mixed methods to further the understanding of adult attachment; this study is designed to be innovative in its methods, and as a result, pioneering in its findings.

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References


Introduction

WHEN DO WE consider ourselves ‘real’ adults? The answer to this question depends on whom you ask, but it is probably not on our 18th birthday when we are still going to school or college. Instead it could be when we first have bills to pay, when we get a mortgage or when we have children. In recent years there has been an increase in young adults who are living at home with their parents. Currently 26 per cent of young adults aged 20–34 are still living at home, which is 5 per cent more than 10 years ago (Office for National Statistics, 2014). When these statistics were released in January 2014, they hit the headlines. With descriptions such as ‘mummy’s boys’ and ‘failed fledglings’ being thrown around, there seems to be some negative representations of young adults living at home. But is it really the case that people are living at home because they love getting their washing done and are all lazy? This paper sets out to argue against this claim, and asks the more important question of what the psychological impacts of staying at home are when trying to make our way into independent adulthood.

Why are young adults living at home?
There are many reasons why more young adults are staying at home and it seems that the economic climate has played a vital role in this (Stone et al., 2011). In order to move out of the parental home, young adults need to be financially independent. Unemployment is one reason why young adults may continue to stay at home. To illustrate, in 2013, 13 per cent of young adults who lived at home were unemployed compared to 6 per cent who did not (Office for National Statistics, 2014). Furthermore, even when these young adults are employed, they may not be earning enough to move out, particularly given that the age of leaving the parental home is related to income level (Iacovou, 2010). Another possible reason why more young adults are staying at home with their parents is the cost of buying a property. Over recent years the ratio of house prices to incomes for first time buyers has increased, and along with this, so has the number of young adults staying at home with their parents (Office for National Statistics, 2014).

Forming an adult identity
There are many possible implications of living at home with parents as a young adult and one important issue is the process of developing an adult identity. Many well-known theories of adult identity development emphasise a period of exploration and change, one of which is Erikson’s (1968) theory of identity development. This theory suggests that young adults have a variety
of choices available to them, so this stage of their life is a time of exploration. This theory also introduces the idea that our identity development can affect how adjusted we become (Erikson, 1968). Marcia’s (1980) theory of identity development builds on Erikson’s (1968) earlier work and suggests that there are processes of ‘exploration’ where alternatives are considered and ‘commitment’ when choices are made. Extending this work, Luyckx and colleagues (2006) extended Marcia’s (1980) theory by splitting the processes of exploration and commitment into two dimensions each, including evaluation of, and confidence in, our identity commitments.

All three of these theories emphasise periods of identity exploration and commitment. It is therefore important to consider how these processes are affected when young adults are staying at home with their parents for an extended period of time. Living at home may be affecting the process of exploration as they may not have the freedom or opportunities to explore their options and choices. Living at home may affect social and romantic relationships, as it can clearly be more complicated inviting friends and partners around to their parents’ house. Therefore, suggest that it is possible that the commitments and decisions based on this altered exploration could be affected. Young adults therefore may end up with an unstable identity. There is some evidence supporting this idea from Sistito and Sica (2014) who suggest that young Italians living with their parents can experience a ‘delay syndrome’ where the adult identity consolidation is hindered and is unstable. It is however more common for young adults to live at home in some Mediterranean countries so we need to consider if, and how, this may be different in the UK.

Feeling like a ‘real’ adult
An issue to consider is how young adults feel about themselves. In the past, young adults have tended to move out, get married and start families much earlier than they do today (Arnett, 2011). One way of determining ‘adult’ status therefore could be to examine the completion of certain life events. However, if young adults do not move out or start families as early, do they still perceive themselves as ‘real’ adults?

In an interesting study, Benson and Furstenberg (2007) investigated whether role transitions in life were markers of adult identity and found that some role changes influenced feelings of being an adult. For example, they found that events such as moving out of the parental home, paying rent and having financial responsibilities were significant indicators of feeling like an adult. Staying at home, therefore, may be a barrier to feeling like an adult. On the other hand, Arnett (2000) argues that it is not life events that matter the most to adult identity, but individual characteristics and qualities such as accepting responsibility for yourself and making your own decisions. Arnett (2000) suggests that young adults want to demonstrate to themselves and others that they can be self-sufficient before embarking on major life events such as choosing a long term career, marriage and starting a family. If this is the case, it may be that living at home longer into adulthood hinders young adults from feeling self-sufficient, thus being unable to commit to these major life events.

Self-esteem
How successful we judge ourselves in becoming a ‘real’ adult will inevitably affect how we feel about ourselves, and therefore may affect our self-esteem (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). Support for this idea comes from a meta-analysis conducted by Ryeng, Kroger and Martinussen (2013), which indicated that high self-esteem is linked to committed identities. Moreover, Luyckx and colleagues (2013a) found a bidirectional relationship between identity formation and self-esteem. An especially interesting finding was the
Blurred lines: When do we become ‘real’ adults?

A bidirectional relationship between low self-esteem and ‘ruminative exploration’. Ruminative exploration is an identity process which hinders identity development where people perceive they have made insufficient progress towards their identity goals (Luyckx et al., 2013a). In other words, if young adults feel they are not making progress toward their goals, their self-esteem will be lower, and vice versa. This may be especially important to these young adults who may want to reach certain goals, but do not feel they can as they are living at home.

In a further study that looked at these processes over a wider age range, Luyckx and colleagues (2013b) found that identity exploration processes were related to identity commitment in people in their teenage years and early twenties, but the exploration processes were more related to ‘ruminative exploration’ and depressive symptoms as age increased into the late twenties. This suggests that the longer we are exploring our identities in our twenties, the more negative outcomes it can have. This is clearly an issue for young adults living with their parents, as many do so in to their late twenties and beyond.

Another issue to consider is that living at home may, itself, contribute to low self-esteem. To demonstrate, research from YouGov commissioned by Shelter (2012) found that 35 per cent of the young adults asked said they felt embarrassed to admit that they lived with their parents. This implies that feelings of shame are associated with living at home thus affecting self-esteem. This may then in turn affect identity formation processes. Figure 1 displays the relationship between living at home, identity development and self-esteem.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this paper suggests that living at home for an extended period of time may reduce the opportunities for identity exploration, resulting in a delayed or unstable identity. It may mean that young adults do not actually identify themselves as adults as they are not reaching traditional milestones, or are unable to display characteristics of responsible adults. As a result of altered identity processes, their self-esteem may be affected. Furthermore, there are possible implications such as depressive symptoms for those not developing an adult identity early enough.

Living at home as a young adult is becoming increasingly common in our society, and this paper highlights some potential psychological impacts of this. Although we cannot easily change the economic or political environment for young adults, there may be other things we can do to support

Figure 1: Relationships between living at home, identity formation, identity commitment and self-esteem
them. I recommend that the first step is to do further research to assess the psychological impact of living at home on young adults, particularly on identity formation and self-esteem. The current generation of young adults is different to previous generations, so we are yet to really see the impacts of living at home for longer. I am sure there are many young adults in the UK that are very grateful that their parents can support them as they enter adulthood. However, it seems to be an evolving and complex process, which we do not yet fully understand. Our traditional answer to ‘when do we become “real” adults?’ may need reconsidering.

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Workshop review:

Peer review: The nuts and bolts

13 May 2016, Sage Publishing House, London, UK
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This article summarises and reflects on a peer review workshop hosted by Voice of Young Science and Sense about Science held in Sage Publishing House, London (UK) in May 2016. As editors of the Quarterly, we found this a very informative workshop, and hope that by sharing our experiences, postgraduates will have an increased awareness of peer review, learn a thing or two about the peer review process, and how to begin developing this part of your personal academic profile.

Peer review is the process by which research outputs are evaluated by experts in the field prior to publication in scholarly journals (Hames, 2012). Peer review, therefore, plays a crucial role in determining what research is made accessible to the scientific and wider community. Postgraduates will know the importance of having a broad range of skills on their CVs, including teaching experience and publications. Experience of peer reviewing is, arguably, a less well attended to skill that postgraduates seek to add to their CVs. On 13th May 2016, ‘Sense About Science’ hosted a workshop in collaboration with a number of organisations, entitled ‘Peer review: The nuts and bolts’, aimed at early career researchers and PhD students. The workshop explored the nature of peer reviewing, debated the challenges of the peer review system, and discussed peer review’s role for researchers and the public. As current editors of the PsyPAG Quarterly, we were very enthusiastic about this workshop and hoped to learn something new about peer review. We reflect here on our experiences of this workshop, and in doing so hope to spread the word about the role of peer review in scholarly work, how you can get involved, and add peer reviewing as a skill to your CV.

The workshop hit the ground running with a small group discussion on the advantages and limitations, and ultimately alternatives, to the peer review process. Presented advantages included ensuring the quality of published research, developing trust in research, and benefits to reviewers, such as developing critical thinking and writing skills. Limitations included delays to science, human error, bias, and the lack of transparency in the review process. This small group discussion fed well into the first panel session.

Peer review: Warts and all

This part of the workshop critically examined peer reviews in academic publishing through brief presentations from four panellists and a question and answer portion. It covered several areas, including the rationale behind peer review in science, its strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities for early career researchers to engage in the process. Emily Jesper, the Head of Governance and Partnerships of Sense about Science facilitated the discussion.

Dr Mike Smith, Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Maps, based at Kingston University provided an overview of the publishing process, from submission to print. He first explained that, from the publisher’s perspective, a journal’s
impact factor is the driver for the requirement of peer review. Citation indexes, from which impact factors are derived, were first proposed by Garfield in 1955 to serve the purpose of assisting researchers in identifying reputable scholarly works, and eliminating those of poorer quality. Since then, impact factor has become a benchmark of quality and prestige, and it is generally accepted that higher impact factor journals produce higher quality outputs. Journals therefore rely on the process of peer review to ensure that the articles they publish are reputable and utilise sound methods. Relatedly, journals generate income in two ways: author fees for open-access articles and journals, and downloads and subscriptions. Whilst neither reviewers nor authors receive remuneration for reviewing and writing, respectively, Dr Smith highlighted the importance of publishing and reviewing research outputs. First, publication of research output means that our work becomes part of permanent records. Second, publishing promotes our work to other academics, professionals and enthusiasts in the field. Finally, as early career researchers, publishing our research output is critical to career development and progression.

From an editorial perspective, Dr Smith stressed that authors should adhere to journal submission guidelines. Indeed, authors who do not adhere to these usually get rejected at the first stage of the review process. He also mentioned that some editors appreciate knowing whether the article has been rejected before. He then reminded the audience of a very important, but often forgotten point: journals have page budgets so articles need to be as good as possible because competition for these finite pages is fierce. Dr Smith also suggested picking reviewers who you know can provide a fair review, particularly reviewers from different institutions where possible, as well as those who you have not co-authored with to eliminate conflicts of interest.

Dr Smith concluded with a brief discussion on why we should engage in the peer review process. First, through becoming reviewers, we get the opportunity to see what forms a good journal article and we get to practise our own writing, too. He advised that a good review is made up of 1–2 sides of A4. Second, all reviewers are also authors, which means that we can gain perspective from this practice. From our own experience, it is usually beneficial to start with a brief summary of the article (similar to an abstract, only a few sentences or a paragraph long). This allows the author to see that you have thoroughly read and understood their article. This is commonly followed by a list of issues, queries and suggestions that you have about the article; this may be split into major and minor points, or could be split by sections (e.g., abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion). It is critical to be as specific as possible about your points, giving page and line numbers where possible, as this helps the author to easily understand and address your responses.

Following this, Tom Gaston, Managing Editor for Wiley, presented on the varying models of peer review (e.g. single-blind, double-blind, open, public, transferable, collaborative, and post-publication review). Single-blind reviewing is where the author does not know the identity of the reviewers; in double-blind, the reviewers are also unaware of the authors’ identity. Open review is the opposite, where both reviewers and authors are known to each other. In a public review, the manuscript is made available on a review server and anyone can comment on the work. Transferable review allows authors to forward reviews received following rejection to the next journal they submit to. This can also include a standardised scorecard. Collaborative peer review can take a number of forms. One form is where two or more reviewers work together to provide a single unified review. Alternatively, collaborative review can be where reviewers and authors work together until the paper reaches a publishable standard (the model which the Quarterly espouse). Finally, there is post-publication review, where articles are immediately published and are living documents that are reviewed by the
Peer review: The nuts and bolts

wider scientific community rather than two or three specific experts in the field. Importantly, post-publication review does not necessarily exclude other forms of review, and is often supplementary to pre-publication review. Post-publication review has so far taken the form of blogs, comments and structured forms (e.g. PubMed Commons and Open Review by ResearchGate). Post-publication review is a very broad topic, but perhaps the most common at the moment is the use of online comments that the public can see. These are not necessarily directly addressed in the form of a revised manuscript, although the authors may be able to reply to the comments.

Finally, Dr. Hollydawn Murray, Editor of *F1000Research*, discussed how we can reduce bias in referees and editors. She provided some examples such as retractionwatch.com who identify not just fraud, but also methodological and statistical weaknesses. Some of the key limitations of the current peer review process put forward by Dr. Murray included the delays to publishing research, concealed bias, heterogeneity in reviews and the lack of reproducibility. The lengthy process of peer review typically results in a delay between the completion of research and when it reaches the wider community. This is an important concern if, for example, health interventions and treatments are delayed because the scientific evidence showing their efficacy is not made available to the public for a long time. There is also wide heterogeneity between reviewer comments. Dr. Murray presented an example from reviews of her own work where one reviewer said ‘The authors present a well-written, novel study on the potential metal toxicity of crops grown in mildly contaminated soils…’, whereas another said, ‘Must be checked by a native English speaker’. This begs the question, how truly effective and reliable is the current peer review process if reviewers can provide such wildly different reviews?

A discussion followed the presentations by the four panellists. One of the more interesting discussions that took place started with a member of the workshop group asking what the point of journals are in this day and age. Unsurprisingly, the debate was very lively, with people presenting different points both in support of and against academic journals. Another discussion was how postgraduates and early career researchers can get involved in peer review. A member of the audience made the very useful suggestion that students can co-review a paper with their supervisor. This fosters a learning environment whereby the student can review the paper independently and then discuss this with their supervisor. The student therefore learns how to write reviews in a supported environment, where supervisors can ensure a good quality review is provided, while giving the student experience of reviewing. It is key for supervisors to inform the journal that they co-reviewed the paper with their student, to ensure it is on record and the student gets credit for this contribution.

We then moved on to a second group work session which focused on the role of peer review to the public, and how we assess evidence put forward by the media. People had diverse ideas and these were all presented to the large group which provided the opportunity for further questions and comments. The groups tended to agree that the peer review process ensures that only good quality research reaches the public, telling them what research can be trusted and hence protecting them from bad science to an extent. Many people said that when they read science claims in the media, they often question the source of the information, and for good reason! Both group work sessions worked really well, there was rich discussion on both topics. We particularly liked that groups were already assigned (signified by a shape on name badges – circle, square, triangle or diamond). This took away some of the pressure of trying to create a group with strangers, and also allowed us to meet other people involved in peer reviews like those working in publishing. However, we did feel that less time was needed on both group work sessions, as both of our groups were done before time was up.
I don’t know what to believe
The final presentation of the day was from Joanne Thomas from Sense about Science. Joanne explained the importance of peer review to the public, and told us about the work that Sense about Science does to help the public understand and engage in scientific research. This organisation have provided a number of guides aimed at helping the public assess the balance of evidence and come to their own conclusions about research claims. Two examples are their guides I don’t know what to believe and I’ve got nothing to lose by trying it. The former is a guide to how the public can judge the quality of research claims (e.g. by asking if it has been peer reviewed). The latter provides guidance on how to weigh up claims and make decisions about trying new therapies. Sense about Science are also running a campaign called ‘Ask for Evidence’ that encourages people to challenge anyone making claims and to ask for the evidence behind these claims. You can even go to the website (askforevidence.org) and submit your own request for evidence, and see other requests for evidence that have been answered (or not) by those making the claims.

Drinks reception
The day was finished off with a drinks reception. As a postgraduate student at any event it is good to make the most of networking opportunities – you never know who you might meet and what career developments this could lead to. Regardless of whether or not you are working in a similar field, talking to other post-graduate students can give a great sense of social support as we go through the process of our PhD studies. It was during the drinks reception that we met a representative from Publons, a website similar to other academic websites like ResearchGate and LinkedIn. The aim of Publons is to allow researchers to keep a record of and obtain credit for peer reviews of academic publications. This is really easy to do. Once you forward the email confirming submission of your review, Publons then facilitates this verification process. You can then adjust the settings to make your review public or private (NB: they also consider journals’ policy on this).

On the whole, this event was really useful for us as early career researchers. For instance, we are now more aware of the issues around peer reviewing and publishing more generally. However, the workshop could have benefitted from more practical exercises to demonstrate peer reviewing. This has since led us to consider avenues through which we can share our learning with the rest of PsyPAG – watch this space!

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IT IS KNOWN that peer review of scholarly work is integral to the academic community and involves the critical assessment of research by those with expert knowledge in the field (Hames, 2012). The opportunity to do peer reviews first presented to me when one of my MSc supervisors suggested that I apply to become a reviewer for a journal that had put out a call for reviewers. So I applied, fortunately got accepted, and then soon after was sent what would be my first-ever review. I remember being rife with imposter syndrome! I remember spending such a lot of time on this first review, but I managed to get through it in the end. And the rest, as they say, is history. Here I reflect on the last 18 months of my involvement in the peer review of scholarly work, highlighting its benefits whilst also considering the challenges that this exercise presents.

There are a number of advantages to doing peer reviews from a personal development perspective, such as improving one’s writing and thought formulation through experiential learning, strengthening one’s methodological knowledge, and having the ability to keep up-to-speed with the latest innovations in research. Finally, from a career development perspective, peer reviewing research outputs are a great asset to one’s CV. I discuss each of these briefly in turn.

**Updating knowledge of current research**

As part of our professional development, we are expected to keep up-to-date with the latest innovations in our area of work. Besides engaging in continuing professional education, another way to be informed of the latest research is through doing peer reviews. As a reviewer, you are invited to read work that the wider community has not yet seen. To me, this is an exciting opportunity, particularly because I gain new knowledge in my area of work, and become exposed to (sometimes novel) methods. Best of all, the research outputs you get sent are curated by an editorial committee according to your areas of interest or expertise, which means the chances of getting something completely irrelevant or uninteresting is unlikely.

**Research skills development**

The exercise of peer reviewing also imparts a wealth of opportunities to sharpen one’s research skills, such as writing, providing feedback, critical analysis, as well as idea formulation. In terms of writing, depending on the journal, you may be asked to comment on the writing style of the authors. This means that you will have a heightened awareness of good use of grammar, as well as articulating arguments in a succinct and logical manner. Indeed, peer reviewing has exposed me to
the full spectrum of writing practice and style, which has helped me to provide rich and full feedback to authors. At this stage, I highlight the value of having support from your supervisory team, particularly when you are a novice reviewer. PhD supervisors are great assets to building one’s skills in peer reviewing, having had extensive experience of the role. In my experience, they are willing to share their expertise, and some might even opt to co-review with you, so that you are able to reflect on the peer review report you have produced, and set a benchmark for future reviews. Not only do you get to maximise your supervision experience, but you also get an insight into what they expect from written pieces of work, and what they perceive as a good piece of research.

Furthermore, critical analysis and idea formulation are central to conducting peer reviews. I found that the more reviews I did, the more I improved in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the research I was reading. As a reviewer you are asked to reflect on your knowledge of research methods, assess whether the study contributes novel knowledge to the body of research. Regularly engaging in the practice of peer reviews has been instrumental to my own work – I have been more reflective about the decisions I made for my PhD, ensuring these are all well-justified throughout, rather than being made arbitrarily. Finally, you are expected to apply your expertise in the field, which can involve providing authors with suggestions on how to improve their paper, and providing recommended, relevant references for peers to include. As I inch closer to the end of my PhD, I feel that my improved grasp of critical analysis and idea formulation will also be beneficial when I defend my thesis during my viva. In short, peer reviewing is preparatory work for being the peer who is being reviewed!

Career progression

One cannot overlook the fact that a reason why I have been doing peer reviews is to ‘beef up’ my CV. Those who wish to pursue an academic career are also expected to carry out peer reviews and get involved in publishing, and being a reviewer during your PhD is a great place to start! My involvement, as I mentioned, started with one academic journal. Eighteen months later, I have become a regular reviewer for two academic journals, an ad hoc reviewer for a research group, and a co-editor of the PsyPAG Quarterly. These experiences are invaluable and I am confident that these will be helpful for my career development.

I acknowledge that throughout this article I have focused on the advantages of becoming a peer reviewer during one’s PhD. However, peer reviewing is not without its costs. There are several things to bear in mind before committing to become a reviewer, such as the time cost, and challenges to providing balanced reviews in areas of research (which, at times, you may not be extensively familiar with) in the midst of varying models of peer review. First, as with any other endeavour, there is a time cost to becoming a peer reviewer. It takes time to read over manuscripts, and there is also the pressure of reviewing the article within a relatively short period from the date you accept to review the piece. In addition, typically there is no remuneration involved, however, in my opinion, the gains far outweigh these costs. Also, whilst reviewing scholarly output is an enjoyable exercise during quieter times in your PhD, you can expect to receive invitations to review at any point during the year. In saying that, there is the option to decline or make yourself unavailable for a certain date range.

Second, it is difficult to provide critical yet balanced reviews, especially when one is still new to the practice (read: imposter syndrome!). I learnt to be mindful of the different models of peer review, which can influence the feedback I provide. Again, as a novice researcher, I was worried about not being knowledgeable enough, particularly when an open review model is used. Open models of peer review, whilst benefi-
cial in many respects, also presents many challenges (Ford, 2013). For example, if you have been invited to review a piece of work by an established researcher in your area, this entails publicly disclosing a critical evaluation of their work. Understandably, many early career researchers, myself included, can perceive this as a potential threat to future career prospects. However, it is during these times that I really value my supervisors’ expert advice on how to provide constructive feedback. Through this I have learnt to critically evaluate research whilst still upholding professional values.

Taken together, peer reviewing is a positive experience, which I would encourage everyone to participate in. It has enhanced my PhD experience through providing me with a new perspective on the publishing process, and sharpening my research skills. Thinking back to models of learning in education, this experiential way of learning (Kolb, 1984) through direct engagement with research outputs has encouraged deep learning of the review and publishing process; something I would not have gained from reading published work alone.

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SUICIDE is a major worldwide public health issue, resulting in an estimated 800,000 deaths globally every year (WHO, 2014), but many more people will think (ideate) about suicide than will go on to engage in (enact) the behaviour. Despite the pressing need to predict suicide and prevent increasing numbers of suicide deaths, psychologists and psychiatrists are still very poor at predicting which individuals who ideate about suicide will go on to enact the behaviour (May & Klonsky, 2014; Nock & O’Connor, 2014). Numerous theoretical models of suicide have been proposed over the years; however, few have made the distinction between suicidal thoughts and suicidal behaviours and even fewer have integrated a broad array of biological, environmental, social and psychological factors associated with suicide. Herein I will discuss the challenges faced when attempting to predict suicide and how a recent and progressive addition to the pool of suicidological theory, the Integrated Motivational-Volitional (IMV) model of suicidal behaviour (O’Connor, 2011), may provide opportunities to surmount these. I will give an overview of the IMV and discuss supporting evidence for the model, as well as briefly exploring possible future directions for research within the context of the IMV.

**Challenges of predicting suicide**

**Mental illness and suicide**

Traditional assessments of suicide risk have long been overly reliant upon the presence of mental illness as the key factor in determining risk. Whilst it is true that the vast majority of individuals who die by suicide will be experiencing some form of mental illness at the time of their death, usually a mood disorder such as depression, only around 5 per cent of individuals with depression die by suicide (Bostwick & Pankratz, 2000). For disorders other than major depression, such as schizophrenia, the number of suicide deaths is higher at 5–13 per cent (Pompili et al., 2007), but this still leaves a majority of individuals who experience mental illness and yet do not take their own lives. The presence of mental illness alone is not a sufficient explanation for why people die by suicide.

**Suicide as a process**

It is only relatively recently that the field of suicidology has begun to make a distinction between suicidal ideation and suicidal behaviour. Thus, we do not know whether some key factors identified by previous research are associated with developing suicidal thoughts or attempting suicide; a critically important distinction if interventions and treatments are to be directed to those most in need. Some large-scale studies have found that some variables long associated with suicide, for example depression and trauma, are in fact more strongly associated with suicidal ideation than behaviour (Nock et al., 2009; Stein et al., 2010). Predicting which individuals with thoughts of suicide will go on to translate those thoughts into suicidal behaviours is a key future challenge for the field.
Suicide as multi-causal

There is no single reason why an individual takes their own life; suicide is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. The majority of previous theoretical models of suicidality have focused only on single motivations, for example conceptualising suicide as motivated by a desire to escape (Baumeister, 1990), or by concentrating exclusively on specific areas of risk, for example cognitive processes (Wenzel & Beck, 2008). Joiner’s Interpersonal Psychological Theory (IPT; 2005) posits that a toxic triple cocktail of thwarted belongingness, burdensomeness and acquired capability combine to lead an individual to engage in suicidal behaviour. Yet, the model does not account for the plethora of other variables that have been reliably and consistently associated with suicidal ideation and behaviour. The success of previous models of suicidality has been limited and an innovative new strategy is required that takes a broad-spectrum approach to factors involved in suicidal behaviour, integrating previous theoretical knowledge and, crucially, differentiating between variables associated with suicidal ideation and those associated with suicidal behaviour.

The Integrated Motivational-Volitional Model of suicidal behaviour

The IMV (O’Connor, 2011) integrates existing models of suicidal ideation and behaviour, including Joiner’s IPT (2005) and Williams’ Cry of Pain model (1997), along with health psychology models of the transition from thoughts to behaviours, for example the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Furthermore, a central aim of the model is to differentiate between variables that confer elevated risk for suicidal ideation only and variables that may be associated with an individual translating suicidal thoughts into suicidal behaviours. The IMV moves away from a broad risk factors approach, including reliance upon the presence of mental illness, towards more individually-specific markers of risk. The model is tripartite and composed of the pre-motivational, motivational and volitional phases (see Figure 1).

![Figure 1: The Integrated Motivational-Volitional model of suicidal behaviour (O’Connor, 2011)](image-url)
The Integrated Motivational-Volitional Model of Suicidal Behaviour

Pre-motivational phase
The first phase of the model is based around a diathesis-stress paradigm, whereby pre-existing vulnerabilities combine with life stress to increase the likelihood that an individual will develop thoughts of suicide. Vulnerability factors can include early-life adversity in the form of childhood physical or sexual abuse, socioeconomic deprivation or personality traits such as social perfectionism: the perception that one is constantly falling short of others’ (often unachievable) high standards. These background vulnerability factors combine with life stress, for example bereavement, relationship breakdown or serious financial strain, to increase the chance that an individual will have thoughts about ending their life. Whilst these factors may be associated with thoughts of suicide, we do not expect these to differ significantly between those who think about suicide and those who go on to enact the behaviour.

Motivational phase
The second phase of the IMV incorporates variables from Williams’ Cry of Pain model of suicidality (1997), placing feelings of defeat, entrapment and humiliation as central in the pathway from suicidal thoughts to behaviours. The routes between defeat and entrapment, and entrapment and humiliation are influenced by other variables termed threat to self moderators (TSM) and motivational moderators (MM), respectively. Examples of TSMs include social problem-solving ability and a tendency towards brooding rumination. Burdensomeness and presence of positive future thoughts are considered MMs. As was the case for variables within the pre-motivational phase, factors within the motivational phase of the model are not expected to differ significantly between individuals who ideate about suicide and those who go on to enact the behaviour.

Volitional phase
The final and most critical part of the IMV is the volitional phase and it is variables within this phase of the model that are hypothesised to differentiate between individuals with thoughts of suicide and those who will go on to act upon their thoughts and make a suicide attempt. Acquired capability – of which diminished fear of death and increased physical pain tolerance are components – and the social modelling of suicidal behaviours by family or friends are known to be factors that differentiate between suicidal thoughts and actions. From Figure 1 it is evident that relative to other phases of the model, the volitional phase is somewhat sparse and this indicates the challenges that lie ahead in determining factors specifically associated with suicidal behaviour, as distinct from suicidal ideation.

Evidence to support the IMV
As discussed earlier within this article, the IMV is a recent addition to the theoretical landscape and consequently research is still at a relatively early stage. Commonalities and differences in self-harm ideation and enactment have been investigated in a large-scale cross-sectional study of adolescents (O’Connor, Rasmussen & Hawton, 2012). Findings demonstrated that, as predicted by the IMV, there were significant differences between controls and both ideation and enactment groups in pre-motivational and motivational phase variables (social perfectionism, brooding rumination, self-esteem and optimism), but no differences in these variables between the ideation and enactment groups. Volitional phase variables (impulsivity, social modelling of self-harm, and descriptive norms) did, however, differ significantly between ideation and enactment groups. Goal engagement, identified as a MM within the motivational phase of the IMV, was found to be significantly predictive of self-harm behaviour at two-year follow up (O’Connor, O’Carroll, Ryan & Smyth, 2012), supporting the IMV’s contention that the pathway from ideation to intention formation is moderated by individuals’ disengagement from failed goals and re-engagement.
with new goals. A number of other studies directly investigating the ideation-enactment pathway within the context of the IMV are currently in progress.

Conclusions and future research directions for the IMV
Early research conducted with the IMV has found support for the model, with pre-motivational and motivational phase variables being predictive only of suicidal ideation. Volitional phase variables, however, have emerged as being the key differentiators between individuals who have thoughts of suicide and those who go on to engage in suicidal behaviour. Future research should, therefore, focus upon identifying further variables within the volitional phase of the IMV as a priority. Another potential avenue of research is to examine trajectories of suicide risk within the model. Suicide is always a complex and multifaceted phenomenon and whilst the IMV clearly acknowledges that no single variable within the model will elevate suicide risk in isolation, whether specific combinations of variables from across the three phases may confer increased likelihood of individuals enacting suicidal behaviour, is as yet unknown.

The IMV represents a deeper paradigm shift within the field of suicidology; that suicide cannot be considered as a single entity, but rather as a process spanning ideation, intention formation and behavioural enactment. The model does not include an exhaustive list of variables, but rather is designed to provide an evolving framework for future research based around testable hypotheses. Emerging research findings can then be integrated into the ideation to enactment framework upon which the IMV is based, growing our knowledge of factors that are specific to either ideation or enactment and providing clear targets for intervention and treatment development.

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Discussion paper:

Pregnant women, mothers, mother and baby units and mental health in prison

Rachel Dolan

Over two thirds of women in prison are mothers and many of their children are under the age of five. No current figures exist for the number of women who give birth during imprisonment, but estimates suggest this may be between 100 and 200 women per year. There are currently six mother and baby units (MBUs) across prisons in England where women can stay with their babies up to the age of 18 months. Although there are only 65 places available, and despite the positive impact they can have, they are rarely full. It has been suggested that mental illness may have an impact on the number of admissions, as may the interpretation of the admission criteria. Despite the limited evidence of their benefits, they are the only alternative to separation for imprisoned mothers, and the evidence that is available suggests that more women and babies could benefit from admission. Further research on admissions and the impacts for mothers and children is necessary.

Mothers in prison
‘The imprisonment of parents, particularly of mothers of dependant young children, is deeply problematic, because the child is being punished along with the parent. While it is argued that the punishment of offenders always has repercussions on innocent relatives, where young children are concerned the effects can be particularly catastrophic to the children and costly to the State …’

(UNICEF, 2002, pp.124)

The most recent national study that collected data on children of prisoners reports that just over two thirds of women in prison (66 per cent) are mothers of children under 18 years, with nearly one third of these children under the age of 5, and 8 per cent younger than 18 months old (Caddle & Crisp, 1997). For 85 per cent of these women, imprisonment was the first time they had been separated from their children, and in some cases this temporary imprisonment led to permanent separation of mothers and children. Statistics on pregnancy and childbirth in prison are not routinely collected or collated (Stradling, 2014), despite the many risks and difficulties faced by these women and their babies. Between April 2005 and July 2008 a total of 283 children were reported to have been born to women in prison, an average of 1.7 babies each week, and between April and July of 2008, 49 women in prison gave birth (almost four a week; Prison Reform Trust, 2010). Many of these women are held far from home, because of the relatively small number of women’s prisons, and separated from their children. For those women who give birth whilst in prison, who do not keep their baby with them or for those who are separated because of imprisonment shortly after birth; this can have long-term consequences for both mother and child.

UNICEF (2007) states that young infants should not be separated from their mothers because of imprisonment, as this does not serve the best interests for the child and interferes with the child’s right to a family life. However, when there is no alternative to the mother’s imprisonment, children should be accommodated with their mothers ‘whenever possible’ (UNICEF, 2007). Because of the balance that needs to be achieved
between the best interests and rights of the child, and the requirements of the criminal justice system, mother and baby units (MBUs) have emerged as the only current option to prevent separation in England. A woman gives birth to a child in prison, or shortly before, has only two options; to apply for a place with her child in a prison MBU, or to have her child placed in alternative care outside prison. Women are allowed to live with children up to the age of 18 months in prison MBUs, which are located in six different prisons, and currently offer a total of 65 places for women and 69 for children in England. Women need to meet certain criteria and applications must be approved by the prison and social services before a place is offered, with length of sentence, type of crime and previous childcare history being some of the issues taken into consideration (Ministry of Justice, 2011).

Despite the limited number of prison MBU places, they are rarely full. The most recent figures available for MBU occupancy state that the average number of women in prison MBUs between June 2010 and May 2012 was 49 (Hansard, 2012). During that period there were more places available than there currently are (75 places for mothers and 79 for babies), meaning that often these MBUs were just a little over half full. Evidence suggests that some women who apply are turned down, and that others are not informed of the possibility or are discouraged from applying, and that many do not apply (Dolan et al., 2013; Gregoire et al., 2010). There are many reasons as to why women are not offered a place at a MBU, including prevalence of mental health disorders in the prison population, and the current admission criteria for MBUs.

**Mental health in prison and during pregnancy**

Prevalence of mental disorder is much greater in the prison population than the general population and is particularly high for women in prison. Research suggests that over half the female prison population (51 per cent) have a serious mental illness (SMI); almost half (47 per cent) suffer from a major depressive disorder, 6 per cent psychotic disorder and 3 per cent schizophrenia (Offender Health Research Network, 2009). This results in over half (57 per cent) having a personality disorder (Stewart, 2008). For those who arrive in prison with pre-existing mental health problems, these may be further exacerbated by imprisonment (Gregoire et al., 2010).

Stressful life events and other difficulties during the perinatal period are associated with an increased risk of antenatal and postnatal depression (Eberhard-Gran, Eskild, Tambs, Opjordsmoen, & Samuelson, 2001) and pregnancy itself may be considered a stressful life event, as is imprisonment. Other important risk factors include a previous history of depression at any time, which leads to a significantly increased risk (Di Florio et al., 2013), and level of social support, (Razurel et al., 2013) which may be lower in prison than the community. There are other moderate risk factors including lower social status (e.g. Goyal et al., 2010), unemployment, and being a lone parent (Birmingham et al., 2006; Gregoire et al., 2010). Consequently, this increased risk of developing perinatal depression or other perinatal mental disorders may impact a woman’s ability to make appropriate plans or preparations for the care of her infant (Gregoire et al., 2010).

**MBU applications and admissions**

Practice across MBUs varies in terms of provision of information and admissions procedures, and prison service policy is not always followed (Children’s Commissioner for England, 2008). The differences in practice have been linked to limited resources, the low priority given to MBUs within the prison service and inadequate information provided to admissions boards (Children’s Commissioner for England, 2008). Whilst
the MBU admission criteria do not exclude women with mental disorders from applying, there are three criterions which appear to be open to interpretation:

- It is in the best interests of the child/children to be placed in a mother and baby unit.
- The mother is able to demonstrate behaviours and attitudes which are not detrimental to the safety and wellbeing of other unit residents.
- The mother’s ability and eligibility to care for her child is not impaired by poor health.

(Ministry of Justice, 2011)

The ‘best interests of the child’ may mean a number of issues are taken into consideration and this is open to the subjective judgement of the decision makers. References to behaviours and attitudes, as well as ability related to poor health, as outlined in the MBU criteria may mean women with mental health problems are prevented from applying or are not admitted, when in fact they may well be able to care for their children. The majority (90 per cent) of the women in the Gregoire et al. (2010) study who did not apply or were not accepted for an MBU place did have a mental disorder, and higher levels were found in mothers who were separated (Gregoire et al., 2010) than those who were placed in MBUs (Birmingham et al., 2006). However, the presence of mental disorder would not necessarily limit ability to care for their child, particularly if the mothers were receiving appropriate treatment and support. Whilst mental disorder may play a role in the decision to apply for or to offer a woman a place on an MBU, it may also be related to the separation from their child or children.

Women reported that the main reasons they did not apply for a place at an MBU are that their children are already in social services care (24 per cent), that prison would not be the right environment for a young child (23 per cent), or that the child was already living with a family member (16 per cent; Gregoire et al., 2010). The remainder had a child close to the age limit of 18 months or were unaware that they were eligible to apply. Of those who applied and had not been given a place, the main reason given for refusal was the length of their sentence (30 per cent), but 37 per cent reported that they did not know why their application had been denied. The remainder were refused because of the nature of their offence, previous childcare history or their behaviour in prison (Gregoire et al., 2010).

Positive impacts of MBUs

Lower socio-economic status, mental disorder, social exclusion and being a victim of abuse are all risk factors for poor parenting. They may also impair the developmental outcomes of children, and are prevalent in prisoners (Department of Health, 2010). Without early intervention, these problems may not be addressed and outcomes for children may be poor (Department of Health, 2010). Prison MBUs offer the possibility for early intervention (Edge, 2006) and allow treatable mental disorders to be addressed in a safe environment (Gregoire et al., 2010). There is extensive evidence to support the key importance of the attachment between a baby and their mother or primary caregiver on a child’s physical and emotional development (e.g. Bowlby, 1969). If this attachment is broken between the age of six months and four years – or possibly earlier – this can result in major psychological damage (Bowlby, 1969). A strong attachment is a protective factor against other negative influences and reduces the impact of other risk factors (e.g. family dysfunction and parental unemployment, many of which will be present in children of imprisoned mothers) on later negative outcomes in life (e.g. mental illness, offending, Schore, 2001). Prison MBUs can prevent separation and the ensuing damage to the mother-child attachment.

In England, 38 mothers of children eligible for MBU placement who were previ-
ously interviewed in prison were followed up in the community. Only 20 per cent of the children who had been separated from their mothers were living with them approximately 2–5 years after they had first been interviewed. For those who had been in prison MBUs, 77 per cent of the children were living with their mothers approximately 5–7 years after they were first interviewed. In addition, those who had been separated from infants were significantly more likely to have reoffended than those who had not been separated (Dolan et al., 2013). Whilst this suggests more positive outcomes for those who spend time in MBUs, this was a small-scale study, and only offers limited insight into the impacts of MBU placement. However, research in the United States on the impacts of a prison nursery programme suggest similar positive impacts (e.g. Carlson, 2009), as well as evidence for levels of mother-child attachment equivalent to community samples (Byrne, Goshin, & Joestl, 2010).

Conclusion
Whilst there is only limited evidence to date of the positive impacts of prison MBUs, the evidence suggests that they offer a supportive environment that can have positive benefits for mothers and babies, both in the short and longer term. In light of the fact that there are no alternatives currently available for pregnant women and new mothers in prison other than separation, better access to and utilisation of such places is essential. Few would argue that prison is the best place for a child, however prison MBUs are separate to the main prison and are currently the only option, other than separation, for mothers of young children who are sentenced or remanded to prison. Although further research is necessary, if more women and children could be admitted then this could have real long-term positive impacts in developing and maintaining the bond between mother and child in those early critical months of life, reducing re-offending, and possibly reducing the incidence or severity of mental disorder in the mother.

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Discussion paper:
The importance of psycholinguistic databases for research with children: The case of HelexKids, a Greek word database for children
Aris R. Terzopoulos

Psycholinguistic research with children requires child-specific word databases, as adult word databases are not appropriate for a number of reasons. While some child-specific word databases do exist, they are not available in all languages. This article describes the development of a child-specific word frequency database in Greek. This database, named HelexKids, provides standardised values for word frequency, dispersion and contextual diversity. HelexKids is freely available online for all researchers and educators to use. The advantages of using child-specific databases in research with children and future directions for further development of this database are discussed.

Introduction

In monolingual and bilingual studies that involve word stimuli, it is important for researchers to use psycholinguistic word databases that provide accurate values for a number of critical variables, for example, frequency of occurrences, number of orthographic neighbours, and contextual diversity. The contribution of such databases comes from the fact that they provide standardised figures for words extracted from a wide variety of texts and that they are freely accessed by all researchers, making stimuli selection comparable across studies. Commonly, modern databases provide objective frequency values (i.e. the number of occurrences of a word in the texts) either as raw numbers or standardised values (i.e. per million or logarithmically transformed). In addition, they provide the researcher with orthographic neighborhood size (how many neighbours a word has after substituting, deleting or adding one letter, or even changing the position of letters, known as transposition neighborhood). More elaborate databases provide values of bigram frequency, phonological neighborhood, stress patterns and phonemic transcriptions. Some of the databases widely used in the psycholinguistic field include the CELEX database for English, Dutch and German (Baayen, Piepenbrock, & Gulikers, 1995), The Hellenic National Corpus for Greek (2009) and the LEXIQUE for French (New et al., 2004). More recently, large databases have been constructed from the internet (e.g., HAL; Lund & Burgess, 1996); Google (Brants & Franz, 2006) or from television subtitles (e.g., SUBTLEX for French; New et al., 2007; SUBTLEX-US for American English; Brysbaert & New, 2009).

However, these databases are not appropriate for research with children. The same words have different objective frequency and neighborhood size values for adults and children. Even between children there is variation from one age group to another, which signifies the importance of having grade-based databases. Therefore, for research
with children it is important to use databases compiled from multiple large-scale contemporary texts, preferably textbooks used in the educational system by as many schools as possible. This is particularly relevant now that a large number of studies involving children use computerised and online processing tasks (e.g., fMRI, MEG) to investigate developmental language differences. Child-specific databases have been developed for various languages, for example the Educator’s Word Frequency Count for American English (Zeno, et al., 1995), the Children Word Printed Database for British English (Masterson, Stuart, Dixon, & Lovejoy, 2010), MANULEX for French (Lété, Sprenger-Charolles, & Colé, 2004), LEXIN for Spanish (Corral, Ferrero, & Goikoetxea, 2009) and ESCOLEX for Portuguese (Soares et al., 2014).

Development of a Greek child-specific database
For research into the Greek language, only adult word databases are available. These are: the Hellenic National Corpus (1999–2009) developed by the Institute of Language and Speech Processing (ILSP), GreekLex (Ktori et al., 2008) and SUBTLEX-GR (Dimitropoulou et al., 2010). The lack of a child-specific Greek word database hindered the selection of appropriate stimuli for the first stage of my PhD project, which aimed to examine word representations in bilingual children. Stimuli selection from these databases resulted in including items whose frequency or neighborhood size values did not correspond to the amount of print exposure the children in that sample would have had. Not surprisingly, the stimuli had significant differences in terms of their psycholinguistic variables. In particular, half of the words in this first study that were non-cognates (i.e. translation equivalents that have form overlap, e.g. salad – σαλάτα/ salata).

For this reason I decided to examine the possibility of constructing a word database for Greek children. First, a search was conducted for textbooks that are used in the Greek and Cypriot educational system. These were all freely available online and therefore it was possible to download them. All textbooks identified were part of the mandatory curriculum for schools, which suggests that all children were exposed to them. Another advantage was that they represented a wide variety of topics, from Mathematics and Science to Literature and Arts.

The next step in the process was to remove spelling errors, punctuation, symbols (e.g. mathematical symbols), acronyms, and names and generally items of no psycholinguistic interest. A conventional spelling checker was used to do this, followed by a special program, the Symfonia software, developed for the Greek language by the ILSP in Greece, which was kindly offered to me. Finally, all information not usually read by children was excluded, for example notes for the teachers and bibliographies.

After the clearing process was finished, word frequencies were obtained with a Java program algorithm. The returned word lists were then copied into Excel files and transported to SPSS where other variables were calculated, such as: Zipf – a standardised frequency value (van Heuven et al., 2014); frequency per million and log frequency per million; contextual diversity (a value corresponding to how many different textbooks a word appears in) and other more specialised indices (e.g., dispersion, standard frequency index, estimated frequency per million). The total corpus consisted of 1.3 million words extracted from 116 different textbooks and contained 68,692 different word types. This resulting final database has been made freely available online at www.helexkids.org (Terzopoulos et al., in press). Here, the user can search for the words in
one of the seven lexicons provided (one for each primary school grade and one total). There are also various filtering options and the possibility for the user to upload their word lists to obtain the sought values and then to download the returned list.

**Future directions**

Future development of this database will include the addition of more psycholinguistic variables, such as number of orthographic and phonological neighbours, Levenshtein distance neighbours, part of speech, stress pattern and word structure. The authors also intend to translate the website into Greek, include textbooks that are used only in Cyprus and to continuously update the database with new textbook editions. Finally, a database for Greek–English bilingual children will be developed (HelexKids-bilinguals).

**Conclusion**

HelexKids is a powerful psycholinguistic tool that provides values necessary for conducting research with Greek-Cypriot monolingual and bilingual children. It is the first child-specific database in Greek, with a freely available and user friendly website that provides frequency values. It will be of great use to psychologists conducting research with Greek children, for educational practitioners when selecting the appropriate stimuli for their lessons in Greek (either when Greek is the first or the second language) and for special educational needs tutors when organising interventions for children with reading and spelling difficulties. There is also a dynamic aspect to the database, as it is designed to be able to incorporate new findings, measures and new features.

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Discussion paper:

Heuristics: The good, the bad, and the biased – what value can bias have for decision-makers?

Lee J. Curley, Jennifer Murray & Rory MacLean

This discussion paper will look at heuristics (rule of thumb techniques for decision-making) (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974) and their potential value. Typically, heuristics have been viewed negatively (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996), with research suggesting that heuristics bias how individuals think, which may create suboptimal performance (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). However, researchers, such as Gigerenzer and Goldstein (1996), have highlighted that a bias in decision-making may not necessarily be a negative feature of heuristics. This paper will look at two main areas of research in an attempt to show whether the biases that heuristics cause are always detrimental. The first area of research that will be focused upon is the heuristics and biases programme (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). This approach to researching decision-making proposes that heuristics are quick and cause biases that have a negative impact on decision-making processes. The second area of research is the fast and frugal approach (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). The fast and frugal approach has shown that individuals can make accurate and quick decisions using a small amount of information. The article aims to create some debate over the usefulness of heuristics and the potential value that biases may have.

Biases cause sub-optimal decision-making

The discussion will start off by looking at the heuristics and biases programme by Tversky and Kahneman (1974). This will be the first area of research that will be focused upon for two reasons. One reason is because this approach revolutionised decision-making research as it highlighted that human decision-making has the potential to be flawed (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). The second reason is because the research from the heuristics and biases programme has influenced many areas of society, from finance to law (Korobkin & Ulen, 2000). Nevertheless, the heuristics developed by Tversky and Kahneman (1974) were unconscious rule of thumb techniques, which suggested that decision-makers sometimes emphasised speed over accuracy. Two of the most famous of these heuristics will now be explained.

The first heuristic that will be mentioned is the representative heuristic (Korobkin & Ulen, 2000; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). This heuristic relates to the use of stereotypes, and the ignorance of statistics. Individuals will use stereotypes over probabilities to make decisions about certain questions (Korobkin & Ulen, 2000; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). For example, if you say someone is a sociable individual, who has a fascination for the cinema, and who is good at doing accents, and then ask people to decide whether they are an actor or a carpenter, they may say the person is an actor. This may seem a reasonable response, however, it is important to consider statistics. For instance, there are more carpenters in the United Kingdom than actors, which suggests statistically it is more likely...
that the person, in the previous statement, is a carpenter rather than an actor. This is an obvious bias. The representative heuristic highlighted to researchers that individuals are not like computers – people are not 100 per cent rational, 100 per cent of the time.

A second heuristic that was discovered by Tversky and Kahneman (1974) was the availability heuristic. This heuristic was formed on the assumption that people base probabilities on the ease at which something comes to mind. For example, someone who has just watched *Jaws* may over-estimate the probability of a shark attack. One positive about this heuristics is that it allows quick decision-making (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). However, it does bias individuals into over-estimating the likelihood of an event, or situation, occurring. Thus the availability heuristic results in quick, but biased, decision-making.

It is evident from discussing two of Tversky and Kahneman’s heuristics (1974) that rule of thumb techniques may create potentially negative biases in decision-makers. These biases may have disastrous outcomes when they happen in real life decision-making opportunities; such as a collection of jurors giving a guilty verdict based on a stereotype. However, the biases proposed by this research are not always negative. Research by Gigerenzer and Goldstein (1996) hints at quite the opposite.

**Biases cause optimal decision-making**

Inspired by bounded rationality (which suggests we make adequate rather than optimal decisions as our environment inhibits us from the latter; Simon, 1956), Gigerenzer and Goldstein (1996) produced a non-compensatory model, known as the probabilistic mental model. This model suggests that individuals may use different types of heuristics for different environments (Mellers, 1998). They coined the term ‘adaptive toolbox’ for describing the ability of decision-makers to use different cognitive strategies in various environments (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996; Mellers, 1998). Further, all the heuristics mentioned by Gigerenzer and Goldstein (1996) go through the same procedure. For instance, all heuristics start with the ‘recognition principle’. This can affect how decisions are made. For example, if neither of the choices are recognised, it could cause the individual to guess, but if only one alternative is recognised then it could allow the decision-maker to make a fast and frugal verdict.

Nevertheless, if both alternatives are recognised then the individual will continue to search for information to discriminate between the outcomes (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). This is called information search (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). If a cue is found that discriminates between the two options then search stops; if not then the search continues, and if no discriminatory cue is found then the participant will have to guess (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). The procedure that these fast and frugal heuristics follow allows the decision-maker to ignore some information, which then allows only useful information to be used. In other words, when heuristics cause a bias it allows only optimal information to be used, which allows the decision-maker to use a smaller amount of information that is more manageable (Snook & Cullen, 2008). There are many of these fast and frugal heuristics that use biases to make accurate decisions. However, one specific heuristics will now be focused upon.

The most researched fast and frugal heuristic, which was proposed by Gigerenzer and Goldstein (1996), is the ‘Take The Best’ Heuristic (TTB). This heuristic has been widely researched in many decision-making areas, from economics to sport (Andersson, Ekman, & Edman, 2003; Bröder & Gaissmaier, 2007). The ‘Take The Best’ heuristic follows the basic structure of heuristics, mentioned earlier, quite rigorously (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). The heuristic starts off with the recognition principle (Pachur et al., 2008). Then, if both alternatives are recognised then more information is needed (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). This information is subsequently searched by
starting off with the most valid piece of information, and ending with the least valid cue if no discriminatory piece of evidence has been found (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996).

This rank order is based upon cue validity (i.e. how many correct decisions can be made from that particular cue). However, information search along these ranked cues will only stop, allowing a decision to be made, when a cue with a high discriminatory value is found (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). A high discriminatory value basically means that a cue has a high likelihood of allowing an individual to discriminate between two options (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). This therefore highlights that the Take The Best approach is a non-compensatory model (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). This is because the most valid cue, with the highest discriminatory value, cannot be over-ruled by a collection of less valid cues (Bergert & Nosofsky, 2007; Bröder, & Schiffer 2003). This shows that the Take The Best approach is a heuristic that biases the decision-maker into using only valid information.

A good way of describing this popular non-compensatory heuristic is ‘take the best, ignore the rest’ (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). This ignorance of the rest has been found to increase accuracy (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). Consequently, it can be proposed that biased decision-making can lead to accurate judgements. For instance, research shows that German and American students are better at distinguishing the sizes of cities in a foreign country when compared to their own country (Goldstein & Gigerenzer, 1996). The rationale for this was that individuals would know less about cities in foreign countries (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). This has shown that sometimes using less information can be more effective (Andersson et al., 2003). It has also been found, that the Take The Best approach was equal to, and better than some linear weighted models (i.e. more rational models; Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 1996). This consequently insinuates that simple algorithms that bias the decision-maker may be more optimal, and realistic, than previous more rational decision-making models. Conversely, some argue that the Take the Best approach is flawed as it may not be sensible to assume that people count information in regards to ecological validity and then have the processing capacity to rank it (Dougherty et al., 2008). Furthermore, the Take the Best approach is promising when it highlights that bias may be beneficial. However, more research is needed to determine how conceivable these fast and frugal heuristics really are.

In conclusion, a plethora of research proposes that heuristics may be negative and may bias decision-makers into making sub-optimal decisions. Nevertheless, more contemporary research suggests that heuristics may out-perform more rational methods of decision-making because of the biases they create. This highlights that biased decision making may lead to accurate decision-making. Further, a bias is an effective way for decision-makers to ignore irrelevant information, which allows decision-makers to make use of more relevant information in an efficient way. For example, biases may allow detectives to ignore irrelevant evidence, stock-brokers to focus on the most relevant information, and voters to only consider the points most important when voting (Snook & Cullen, 2008). This article will hopefully produce some debate in the academic community and influence decision making scientists to think about the potential value that biased decision-making may have.

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Introduction

PSYCHOLOGY students often work in multidisciplinary research areas which require inputs from different collaborators and advisors, each bringing to the table some different expertise. While often the right support can be found in your supervisors and colleagues within your institution, you may sometimes need to seek collaborators from other universities in order to supplement your academic development. As a PhD student in social, genetic and developmental psychiatry at King’s College London, my research examines various topics across the domains of psychology, psychiatry, neuroscience and genetics. From the outset, I knew that to work in such a broad and exciting area of research I would need to broaden my horizons, get in touch with key researchers in the field and master cutting-edge experimental tools. I soon realised that undertaking a research visit to a different institution could be an excellent opportunity to pursue these goals. In this article I share a few practical tips for planning a research visit, which are based on my own experience of a two-month visit at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Why undertake a study visit during your PhD?

There are several benefits of visiting a research group at a different institution during your PhD. A research visit, if well planned and with the right people involved, can be one of the most exciting and productive opportunities that you will have in your career. Whether in your country or abroad, this experience will enable you to explore a new research environment and educational infrastructures to which you may not otherwise be exposed. In my experience, visiting an American institution has greatly broadened my vision of my research area, helped me to find new interesting research topics and see new empirical advances first-hand. As such, a study visit will allow you to meet key researchers in your field, who may be able to provide training and supervision on a specific project or more general advice on your PhD. Furthermore, this may open up opportunities post-PhD, as the people that you meet during your visit may be your future collaborators or post-doctoral advisors. Your trip may also reinforce the links between your home institution and the group that you are visiting, which in turn could lead to further collaboration.
How to choose a suitable institution

The choice of which research group you will visit is a crucial one. As you progress in your PhD, you will explore the literature and identify research groups that share your research interests or have the expertise you would like to gain. Your supervisors may be able to advise you on some research groups that they have previously worked with, and may put you in contact with the relevant people. Otherwise you can make contact yourself with the groups you are interested in and simply ask whether they would be interested in collaborating and be able to provide you with the training you are looking for. While some people may be already too busy to establish new collaborations or provide training, you could be amazed by the positive responses you could get from researchers interested in working and sharing their expertise with you.

When is the right time, and how long should the visit last?

The right time for your visit will depend on multiple factors, including what progress you have made in your PhD and what level of prior expertise you will need to maximise the usefulness of your trip. If you seek to achieve skills that you would require from the beginning of your PhD, it may be sensible to start making contact and plans at the earliest time possible. Alternatively, you may need to complete data collection before being able to visit another group and receive supervision in data analysis.

The duration of a research visit is similarly variable; generally between a week and several months. This will mostly depend on the amount of time you will need to complete your targets and the time availability of your collaborators at the host institution. When I was arranging my trip, I initially proposed a one-month visit, but my collaborators at UCLA suggested I could go for two months to have more time to settle in and receive more training – which worked out very well. Another important factor is represented by the availability of funds to cover the costs of your visit.

How to cover the expenses

Depending on the duration of your visit you may need to seek funds to cover travel and living expenses. You may consider combining different sources of funding, which may be offered by your home institution, your supervisor or even the group you are visiting. If these sources of funding are not available, you can also apply for various travel awards and grants, including the PsyPAG study visit bursary. Be aware that the application procedure for such funding schemes is time-consuming, and you may have to wait for a few months before you hear of the outcome. However, the experience of applying for, and the capability of receiving funding would become a marker of distinction and commitment to your research area, and is a great addition to your CV! Since travel grants are awarded competitively, you should note that your visit may be more likely funded later in your PhD studies, when you are able to evidence prior expertise, commitment and accomplishments (e.g., conference presentations, publications).

How to make the most of your visit while you are there

Making a comprehensive plan and detailed agreements with the team you are going to visit is key to making your visit productive. It may be helpful to write a short proposal (which could also be used to apply for funding) listing specific targets and goals you would like to achieve. This will help you to maximise the learning process during your visit and make significant progress in a limited period of time. In my experience, with the right support, a research visit may also allow you to learn and make progress faster than you normally would at your home institution. This is because you are away from your department and you therefore avoid or reduce important, yet time-consuming activities, such as meetings and administrative
commitments. Resultantly, this allows you more time to spend learning and achieving your targets!

**How to make the most of your visit after you are back**

Once you return to your home institution you might be able to maintain the collaboration with the group you have visited; for example, to finalise and write up a study that you have set up together, or to start new projects. If your collaborators are willing, you may have the chance to continue working together remotely, by having regular video meetings. Furthermore, you could share your expertise with researchers and PhD students, in order to strengthen collaborations within your institution. Finally, the collaboration with the visited group may lead to future work opportunities, for example a post-doctoral post, or help you to make links with other groups.

**Final thoughts**

In conclusion, even though a research visit will require much planning and funding availability, there are many advantages of visiting a different institution during your PhD. Based on my own experiences, I would definitely recommend that PhD students seek out this type of experience, if possible. My research visit at UCLA has certainly been a very enjoyable and productive experience, which has helped me to broaden my vision with regards to both my PhD and my research field in general. It has also been essential for making relevant connections and deciding on the future steps in my career. More generally, I believe that supervisors and universities should encourage these forms of collaboration, especially during students’ PhD studies. Scientific progress highly depends on the combination of different expertise and collaboration between researchers from different backgrounds. By encouraging mobility of students between research groups at different corners of the globe, both within the same field or across neighbouring fields, we may facilitate collaborations that produce solutions for most pressing problems in science, and answers to humanity’s most crucial questions. After all, researchers and scientists across all different fields and institutions are united in their quest for scientific progress.

**Acknowledgements**

The reflections presented in this article are based on my personal experience of a two-month research visit at the Semel Institute of Neuroscience, UCLA during my PhD. I would like to thank all those that made this visit possible: my PhD supervisor at King’s College London (Prof Jonna Kuntsi), the research group I visited at UCLA (in particular Dr Iman M. Rezazadeh and Dr Sandra Loo), the chair of the PhD committee in my department at King’s College London (Dr Fruhling Rijsdijk), and PsyPAG and EMBO for funding my visit.

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ONE COULD ARGUE that data collection is an integral part of research. However, this is changing within the landscape of British psychology, where increasingly we find researchers using data-sets collected, compiled, or created by other parties.

Postgraduate students from across London and beyond came together at Birkbeck, University of London, for the day to explore secondary data approaches to research in detail. The morning began with a brief introduction to PsyPAG as an organisation representing the interests of all psychology postgraduates in the UK, and acknowledging their support in funding the workshop (thank you!).

In the first session, Dr Juliet Hassard from Birkbeck, University of London, delivered a lecture introducing participants to the topic. Secondary data here refers to existing data that is made available to researchers who were not involved in the original study (Anderson et al., 2011), and while it is often perceived to be of a quantitative nature, it can actually encompass a variety of material including websites, interviews, newspaper articles, and social media posts amongst others (Piotrowska, 2014).

Juliet explained that secondary data has the potential to address a lot of the limitations in traditional psychological research, as it typically is less resource intensive to collect, contains much larger sample sizes, encompasses longitudinal designs, and allows for comparisons across comparative research samples. According to Juliet, because it is less established (particularly in the field of UK psychology) and it can easily be misused, researchers need to invest more time in demonstrating rigour and responsible use.

After lunch, Simone Croft (University of Sheffield) introduced participants to cohort sets. These longitudinal data collections provide important and rich data relevant to researchers from many disciplines. The role of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in funding these data sets was also reviewed and Simone described the four ‘jewels’ of the ESRC crown: the National Survey of Health and Development, the National Child Development Study, the 1970 British Cohort Study, and the Millennium Cohort Study. While data is again often assumed to be of a quantitative nature, these data sets also collect biomedical and qualitative data. Increasingly, as research councils become more economical, there are...
more funding calls on research relating to ESRC datasets and secondary data research in general. Participants were also given an opportunity to work in groups to review different cohort studies and plan their own research questions.

The final session of the day was a panel discussion comprised of four panellists sharing their experiences of working with secondary data. The first was Juliet, who presented the first lecture in the morning, joined by three current PhD students who were at various stages of their PhD journey. More specifically, Candy Whittome shared her experience using a dataset looking at teacher wellbeing, Jamie Priestly on using public documents including newspaper articles, while I reflected on my use of the NHS Staff Survey. The panellists shared their reasons for using secondary data, what worked well and what challenges they faced. The feedback for this session was extremely positive, as most participants felt that it gave context and real examples to some of the issues that were highlighted in the first two sessions.

The key underlying message throughout was that using secondary data is becoming more popular and important in psychological research. At the same time, while some may view secondary data as an easy approach, the reality is that the need to establish rigour while processing (often) large amounts of data means that this is no easy task.

**Some personal reflection**

When I came across the invitation to apply for PsyPAG funding for organising a workshop, I thought that a workshop on using secondary data had two possible advantages. First, having just started my first year as a PhD student, I knew that secondary data was going to be an important part of my analysis of working conditions in the NHS. Organising a workshop on this topic allowed me to engage with this approach in a different manner by considering what someone new to this would want to know. It also helped expand my own network of academics and PhD students who have also worked with secondary data, as I discussed ideas and sourced speakers with them. Second, the process of writing up a funding proposal was a beneficial introduction to the funding process. It made me consider what the funder (PsyPAG) was interested in and how my proposed workshop would benefit the wider postgraduate psychology community. Moreover, based on feedback from my supervisor I worked through a few funding proposals, where I had to learn to provide a succinct introduction to the topic area as well as a rationale for the workshop.

The organisation of the workshop was fairly straightforward, and with all 30 places booked up within 24 hours of advertising. This highlighted the interest in the field of secondary data usage. However, a few weeks before the workshop things unravelled as both speakers and participants started to drop out. To deal with this, I sent out e-mails asking participants to confirm their place, as it afforded me the chance to re-advertise places. In the end, while there still were 30 people registered for the workshop, I had about 40 people who had at one point registered and then withdrew. My advice to organisers, particularly of free events, is to be prepared for high dropout rates. It is essential to follow up on participants, as it would be disappointing if a large proportion of people did not show up on the day. Similarly, as students ourselves we may be guilty of signing up for free events and not attending. From a student perspective, organisers would appreciate if you inform them that you are not able to attend, because non-attendance can cost organisers who allocate resources (e.g., packs, catering) to the number of registered participants.

Overall, organising this workshop was a beneficial experience that did not take up too much time. The positive participant feedback suggests that participants also found the workshop useful. If any reader has an idea for a workshop, particularly around
methodology and analysis, I would strongly recommend putting in an application for funding from PsyPAG. If you have any questions or thoughts on the matter, the PsyPAG Committee were supportive throughout the process. Alternatively, do get in touch with me if you have specific questions.

More resources
If you are interested in this workshop but were not present, some of the materials have been made public on the Centre for Sustainable Working Life website (http://goo.gl/QyvMML). Here you will find a short recap of the workshop, as well as the slides used in the first two sessions. Also available is a video recording of Dr Juliet Hassard's introductory lecture.

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**Hints and Tips:**

Practical tips for the recruitment and testing of older adults

Amy Atkinson

Research using older adults (typically defined as individuals over 65 years of age) is vital in many areas of psychology. The collection of data from this age group can be rewarding, but also presents unique challenges. This article provides top tips for individuals planning on conducting research with older adults for the first time. This includes the importance of being patient, informative and willing to make adjustments when necessary.

In some areas of psychology, it is vital to conduct research using older adults as participants. This typically refers to adults over 65 years of age (World Health Organisation, n.d.), but this definition may be relaxed to include individuals over 55 or 60 years old, depending upon the research question. For my Master’s thesis, I conducted a study investigating visual working memory capacity in older adults. I found this to be a very rewarding experience, but one that presented unique challenges. This article discusses some of my personal experiences and tips for the collection of data from older adults, in order to help other researchers who may be planning on recruiting from this specific population.

**Tip 1: Think carefully about where you will recruit participants**

Given that there are approximately 11.5 million adults over the age of 65 in the UK (Age UK, 2016), it would seem that it shouldn’t be too difficult to recruit older participants. However, it is important to think carefully about where you will recruit the older adults from, and whether they will meet the inclusion criteria for your study. Residential homes may seem like an attractive option because they allow you to recruit large numbers of older adults relatively easily. However, many residents in care homes have dementia or severe memory problems (Alzheimer’s Society, 2014), and resultantly are unlikely to fit the inclusion criteria set out by most studies. Instead, it may be better to target places that are likely to attract healthy, community-dwelling older adults, such as local educational or social groups. Your department may also have a database of older adults who have expressed an interest in participating in studies. If this is an option, it is certainly a worthwhile avenue to consider because individuals who have subscribed are likely to be highly motivated to participate in your study and enjoy contributing to research.

**Tip 2: Be clear on the exclusion criteria and communicate this clearly to participants**

In a similar vein, it is important to exclude participants with medical conditions that may affect their performance in a study. This is critical when recruiting older adults because over half of individuals over 60 years of age have at least one chronic condition, such as dementia, diabetes or hypertension (Department of Health, 2012). In cognitive psychology, individuals are often excluded if they have a condition affecting the brain, such as dementia, mild cognitive impair-
ment, Parkinson’s disease, a mental illness or a history of strokes. In health psychology, this may include diseases that affect food intake or the ability to exercise, such as diabetes. The medical conditions to be excluded should be clearly outlined from the start because it may be unethical to test individuals with certain illnesses, particularly if their condition makes participation difficult. This will also avoid biasing results and/or wasting resources testing participants whose data must later be discarded. It is, however, important to communicate your exclusion criteria sensitively because some people may be confused as to why they aren’t eligible.

If you plan to exclude individuals with dementia or mild cognitive impairment, you should also consider running a small test to assess cognitive functioning of those not diagnosed with such conditions. This is important because it is estimated that less than 50 per cent of older adults with dementia have a formal diagnosis (Alzheimer’s Society, 2014). The most commonly used test is the Mini Mental State Exam (Folstein, Folstein, & McHugh, 1975), which can be administered in as little as 5–10 minutes. Although it has been criticised for not being particularly sensitive, it is deemed to be an adequate screening measure (Kurlowicz & Wallace, 1999; Tombaugh & McIntrye, 1992). From my personal experience, I found that this is a nice task to begin the study with because it is relatively easy and relaxes participants. It is, however, important to have a procedure in place for if a participant fails the test (indicating cognitive impairment). This could involve telling the participant about your concerns and recommending that they visit their GP. It may also be helpful to provide the participant with the details of helplines they can contact if they are worried, such as the Alzheimer’s Society National Dementia Hotline (0300 222 1122).

**Tip 3: Be informative**
Depending on where you have recruited your sample of older adults from, they may not have participated in much psychological research before. It is therefore extremely important to ensure participants have thoroughly read the consent form and understand their ethical rights. If it is not possible to inform participants of their results (due to ethical reasons or because the task does not allow results to be viewed easily), it may also be worthwhile informing participants of this. Some of the older adults I tested were disappointed to find out that I couldn’t tell them how well they performed.

**Tip 4: Assure them that the study is not a test**
Depending on what you are researching, you may want emphasise that the study is not a series of clinical tests. This is important to make the participants feel at ease. Several of the participants I tested thought the visual memory task was a test of dementia. One participant even expressed concern that I may have been sent by their GP to test them.

**Tip 5: Be patient**
Be prepared to explain the instructions clearly and concisely. Participants may be unfamiliar with commonly used psychological tests/questionnaires (e.g. Likert scales), particularly if they have not taken part in much research before. Additional practice trials could be built in to familiarise participants with the tasks and make them feel more at ease.

Older adults may also be less familiar or confident with technology, so be sure to explain how to use the equipment clearly. If they are concentrating on how to work a computer, they will not be giving the task their full attention, which may affect their performance. However, it is important not to patronise participants who know exactly what they are doing, particularly if the interaction with the computer is minimal (e.g. just pressing a button). I found a good way to strike a balance was to ask participants whether they regularly use a computer and if they are confident in their abilities. You can then base your level of explanation on this.
Tip 6: Make adjustments
You should be prepared to make adjustments for individuals who have impairments that do not exclude them from the study, but nonetheless make participation more difficult. One example I encountered was hearing problems, where participants sometimes struggled to understand exactly what I was saying. This could be overcome by providing clear, written instructions on all important aspects of the task and giving participants the opportunity to ask any questions.

Tip 7: Be prepared to talk about your research
From my experience, older adults tend to show genuine interest in the research. I found that many of the older adults were not particularly drawn in by the financial reimbursement, but instead wanted to help advance and contribute to research. This may be particularly true if you are exploring an area like memory because many older adults seemed to be particularly interested in research investigating dementia. You should therefore be prepared to discuss your research in terms that can be easily understood by a lay person and explain possible practical implications of findings.

Tip 8: Be grateful
The older adults are likely to have gone to substantial effort to participate in your study. Whereas younger adults may participate because they are already in university, many older adults will have travelled specifically to complete your study. It is therefore particularly important to express gratitude and show your appreciation.

Conclusion
Testing older adults is vital in many areas of psychology. Although it is a rewarding experience, it can be very challenging, particularly for researchers who have not collected data from this population before. This article has discussed some tips which I hope will be helpful for researchers who are planning on collecting data from this group for the first time. I genuinely believe this experience has greatly enhanced my skills as a researcher, and I hope others experience similar benefits.

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References
Hints and Tips:

Using crowdfunding to support your PhD research

Jane Blackwell

As there are only a limited number of funding sources available to postgraduate research students, crowdfunding offers a relatively new method for generating research funds during your PhD. Crowdfunding is defined as the practice of funding a project by raising money from a large number of people who each contribute a relatively small amount, typically via the internet. I have recently set up two crowdfunding pages and held two fundraisers for my research, which together have raised almost £2000. This article includes an overview of what I have learnt since I began to use crowdfunding to support my PhD research.

When a fellow student suggested that I should ‘organise a cake sale’ to help fund my research, I have to admit I was cynical and quickly dismissed the idea. We were both in the first term of our PhD’s and we were discussing my concerns about finding funding for my research. My PhD research ‘The Paediatric Narcolepsy Project’ involves visiting children with narcolepsy throughout the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland to assess how their overnight sleep is associated with cognitive and psychological outcomes. As you can imagine, the cost of the travel, accommodation and equipment for this project soon adds up! During the first year of my PhD, I found that there are only a limited number of funding sources that you can apply to as a PhD student and although I was successful in a couple of applications, once I began my research visits, this pot of money soon ran dry. It was at this point that I started to see the potential benefits of using crowdfunding to support my research. Crowdfunding is defined as the practice of funding a project by raising money from a large number of people who each contribute a relatively small amount, typically via the internet. I am now in the second year of my PhD and I have recently set up two crowdfunding pages and held two fundraisers for my research (including a cake sale!), which together have raised almost £2000. I am extremely grateful to all those who helped to raise this money as this has enabled my research to continue and allowed many more families across the UK and Ireland to take part.

For other PhD students who are considering using crowdfunding to support their PhD research, I would offer you the following tips to ensure that your crowdfunding events are as successful as possible:

Tip 1: Set a fundraising goal
Before you begin organising a fundraising event, it is crucially important to calculate a realistic and justifiable fundraising goal. If you have already started your PhD, setting a fundraising goal involves taking into account your research expenditure to date and creating a forecast of likely total expenditure during the rest of your PhD. However, if you are about to begin your PhD, it can be difficult to estimate research costs so I recommend talking to someone who is working on a similar PhD to you. From my experience so far, you will require more funding than you originally antici-
Using crowdfunding to support your PhD research

Panted because unexpected costs always arise. I suggest setting up a spreadsheet which allows you to break down the anticipated costs by category and also enables you to track actual costs as they are incurred. This task can be time consuming and tedious, however once completed, the financial plan provides a solid base from which the project can be implemented and further fundraising applications can be made.

**Tip 2: Check your university’s policy on handling funds raised**

The next step is to check with your university and department about whether they are able to process money raised through crowdfunding. As it is still a fairly novel way to raise research funding, your department may not have a procedure in place for handling the funds raised. I contacted the School of Psychology’s Business Manager at my institution, who confirmed that any funds raised could be held in a restricted account specifically for my PhD project. Funds could be transferred to the university via cheque or bank transfer.

**Tip 3: Time management**

Once you have the go ahead from your university, it is important to check your diary, deadlines and commitments to make sure that you have the time to set up a fundraising event. It is easy to underestimate the amount of time and energy it will take to set up a successful fundraiser and your priority must always be completing your PhD work. Weighing up the cost-benefit at this point is really important.

**Tip 4: Plan the fundraiser well in advance**

A great deal of planning is required to hold a successful fundraiser and my advice is to begin organising it well in advance. I started planning a football tournament and a music tribute night in November 2015 to be held in April 2016 and I needed all of that time to finish organising the events alongside all my other work commitments. If you are arranging a fundraising event for people to attend, there are usually up-front costs to take into account, such as the venue, entertainment, advertisements and tickets. These costs can be minimised by asking for help and support from friends, family and the local community.

Another way to raise funds for your research is to set up an online crowdfunding page which enables people to sponsor someone who is completing a challenge (such as a run) on behalf of your research project. When setting up an online crowdfunding page, you will need to consider which platform is most suitable for your project type. Take into account that crowdfunding websites will typically take a fee, which on average can be 5–10 per cent of your collected funds and they may also impose a time limit for raising funds. The time limit is intended to keep up the momentum and lead more people to pledge money, therefore it is important to carefully plan when to activate your crowdfunding page so that it closes at an appropriate time.

**Tip 5: Explain why the funds are required**

It is important to clarify why the funds are required and why people should care about your research. Summarise the aims of your research in a couple of clear sentences and highlight the potential benefits of your research. Explain why you have chosen to research your particular topic (e.g. personal connection with the condition you are researching) and how the additional funding would benefit the research. Utilise all your social media accounts to generate interest in your research and upcoming fundraising events. Ensure that participants are aware of your research project’s social media pages because this enables them to follow updates about the project and connect with others that have taken part. It is very rewarding being able to connect with those interested in your work and build a network of people supporting your project. When summarising your research online, always provide your contact details so...
that anyone who requires more detailed information can contact you directly.

**Tip 6: Ask for help and support**

Do not try and set up a fundraiser on your own. Ask your friends, family, colleagues and participants for their help and support. During my first few visits to families around the UK and Ireland, I spoke to participants about the difficulty I was facing with funding my research and their response was amazing. Participants very kindly offered to help in any way they could. This help has included: promoting the research project, sharing information about my need for research funding with their own connections and setting up additional fundraising events. It takes a lot of effort to maintain an effective fundraising campaign and this has been made so much easier by having an incredible group of people supporting and promoting the cause. Many people were kind enough to give up their time to bake for the cake sale, design posters to advertise the fundraising events and organise raffle prizes. I do not know what I would have done without the generosity of those who have helped to organise the events.

**Tip 7: Enjoy the fundraiser**

On the day of the fundraiser it is likely that you will feel underprepared and anxious that everything runs smoothly. My advice is to enjoy the event, as months of planning have gone into it. Use the opportunity to talk to as many people as you can and explain a little bit about the research and why you are raising money. Fundraisers are also a great opportunity to raise awareness and increase understanding about what you are researching (e.g. a rare condition). Thank everyone for giving up their time to attend and support the event. Make sure that your contact details are available for anyone who wants to follow up and hear more about the research after the fundraising event.

**Tip 8: Express your gratitude**

It is so important to remember the amount of time people have given to help support your crowdfunding efforts. Whether it involved training for a run, organising a tournament, baking, organising raffle prizes or selling tickets, all of these tasks require a huge amount of effort. Express your appreciation and send thank you notes to all those who have helped you during the fund raising process. Report the amount of money raised from your crowdfunding and fundraising events on your social media accounts and thank all those who helped you to achieve your target by donating to project.

**Summary**

This is an overview of what I have learnt since I began to use crowdfunding to support my PhD research. There have been many challenges associated with finding funding for my research and crowdfunding has offered a relatively new method for generating research funds. Although I have found that crowdfunding takes a lot of time and effort, it has been enjoyable and rewarding. Crowdfunding has provided an opportunity to raise awareness about the condition I am researching and the funds raised have enabled my research project to continue. I would like to thank all those who have supported and continue to support my research and crowdfunding efforts. I hope that other PhD students reading this article may be inspired to give crowdfunding a go.

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IN SEPTEMBER this year, having not yet graduated from my MSc programme in Addiction Studies, I was fortunate enough to be accepted for an oral presentation at the Society for the Research of Nicotine and Tobacco (SRNT) Europe 16th Annual Conference in Maastricht in the Netherlands.

As described on their website (SRNT, 2015), the mission of SRNT Europe is to 'stimulate the generation of new knowledge concerning nicotine and tobacco at any level of research, from molecular to societal'. My supervisors and I felt my research fitted in with this mission and thus I applied to give an oral presentation. The research I presented was an extension of my MSc thesis focusing on a qualitative exploration into smokers' and ex-smokers' initiation of e-cigarettes. The aim of the research was to find out what enables and disables the behaviour change to start an attempt to quit smoking using e-cigarettes.

This conference brought a lot of firsts; it was my first conference, my first international conference and I was presenting. I felt nervous yet fortunate to be presenting as a student. Around 200 delegates attended the conference in Maastricht and it was fascinating to see and meet some of the academics I referenced in my work.

Nicotine and tobacco research has many branches; science, clinical and political among others. Cigarettes and smoking have recently been in the public eye; the controversial plain packaging (Perraudin, 2015) and the increase in popularity of electronic cigarettes have been in and out of the national headlines. The conference was therefore not without a healthy debate. My presentation was on one of those highlighted topics. What was quite obvious at this conference was that everyone was clearly on the same side, the side against cigarettes and tobacco companies. Yet the introduction of e-cigarettes seems to have split the view of many. While all remain against cigarettes and tobacco, views as to whether e-cigarettes are the new hope or the new tobacco cigarette differ. The evidence base is continually expanding, changing and adding to both sides of the debate. For the most up to date research in the UK, see Public Health England’s review of the evidence (McNeill et al., 2015).

The conference began with a welcome reception in Maastricht’s city hall in the market square. It was a beautiful old building and we were provided with drinks, nibbles and a chance to network with the delegates. In addition, it allowed us to explore outside the conference building into the city that was hosting us.

Across the three days of the conference
there were a total of 11 symposia, including topics on e-cigarettes, smoking and mental health, genetics and innovations in eHealth technology. The themes covered all aspects of smoking and nicotine research. This brought together academics from across the field, providing a rich source for networking.

On the first day I attended the ‘Preventing tobacco industry interference in health policymaking: challenges, successes and missed opportunities’ symposium. The presentations in this symposium were based on Article 5.3 of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) (WHO, 2015). This article aims to prevent tobacco industries interfering with health policy and so the presentations explored how Article 5.3 is applied in practice and the tensions in recent policy developments across the EU, such as standardised packaging and smoke-free policies. I found this really interesting as I have a keen interest in policy, and it was fascinating to see all the work going into keeping the tobacco industry and other vested interests out of influencing public health.

The conference also hosted three themed lectures; a clinical theme, a policy theme and a public health theme. The clinical lecture was given by Professor Paul Aveyard from the University of Oxford on ‘Understanding and reducing non-adherence in smoking cessation’. Professor Aveyard discussed behavioural research and how reasons for non-adherence stem from common beliefs about smoking and nicotine replacement therapy, before he concluded with a framework of how to tackle these issues. The public health lecture was by Professor Amanda Amos from the University of Edin-

burgh on ‘Mind the Gap – reducing inequalities in smoking’. This presentation gave an overview on social inequalities in smoking in Europe, in particular how smoking is declining in the UK yet social gradient is not. Finally, the policy lecture was given by Professor Paul Cairney from the University of Stirling on ‘The five elements of the policy process that help explain tobacco control’ which explained why even when countries are committed to reducing the harms and prevalence of smoking, it takes a great deal of time to produce consistent tobacco control. The rest of the conference was made up of oral communications, poster presentations and workshops.

On the day of my presentation I was nervous, but as it was the final day I think people had had their fill on e-cigarettes; the room was visibly quieter than the rest of the week. I was happy with this outcome as I felt less pressure, and I was just happy to have an oral presentation. I executed my presentation clearly and answered all questions asked successfully. It was over in a flash, and I feel the experience has given me a great stepping stone to do more conferences, comfortably and confidently.

I had a great experience at SRNT Europe in Maastricht; it was the perfect introduction to international conferences and the world of research. I was able to submerge myself in a field for a short yet intense amount of time. I cannot wait for my next one!

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References
The 21st Scientific Spring Meeting of the Psychosocial Aspects of Diabetes
Würzburg, Germany 15–17 April 2016
Victoria Whitelock

The 21st Spring Meeting of the Psychosocial Aspects of Diabetes is a relatively small, yet stimulating conference. Encircled in a very welcoming atmosphere, I had the opportunity to present some work in progress that will be a part of my PhD. Here I review the 21st Spring Meeting held in the historic city of Würzburg, Germany. The emphasis of this conference on providing supportive feedback and an engaging programme made this one of the most enjoyable conferences I have attended.

The Psychosocial Aspects of Diabetes study group (PSAD) is an official study group of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes. It is a relatively small conference compared to other international conferences, allowing a maximum of 45 delegates. This limit on attendance enables the meeting to address the aims of the group, which are to stimulate communication between researchers and clinicians in the field of psychosocial aspects of diabetes, to improve the quality of psychosocial research in diabetes, and to stimulate dissemination of effective psychosocial interventions in diabetes care. In the 21st PSAD meeting, this was achieved through discussions and debates, as well as ‘completed work’ and ‘work in progress’ oral presentations – different to the traditional oral and poster presentations employed at many conferences. ‘Work in progress’ suggests research that has already begun and may have some preliminary findings. However, presenters were in fact encouraged to speak for a maximum of five minutes and bring their own questions for the audience. This session was therefore more conducive to presenting ideas for future work and seeking the audience’s expert opinion and advice. The discussion of work in progress is thought to achieve the group’s second aim (improving the quality of psychosocial research in diabetes). This was a presentation format that I had not experienced before, however, it appealed to me as a PhD student as it allows for the presentation of one’s own ideas and getting useful feedback that can be implemented, rather than presenting completed work that is relatively inflexible to change. I decided to make the most of this and submitted an abstract to present some of my ongoing work.

The unusual format of this conference continued, with the conference starting at 4:30pm on the Friday and finishing at noon on the Sunday. The Friday late afternoon session was short and sweet, with the keynote speech by Professor Thomas Skinner entitled ‘Walking backwards into the future and other lessons from the Diabetes Bush’ followed by a brief discussion about his work. This provided insight into the extensive amount of work Professor Skinner has done on the psychological aspects of
diabetes care and management. One piece of advice I took away from Professor Skinner’s talk that was particularly relevant to my own NHS-based intervention was to design the intervention for implementation from the very beginning. That is, consider how the intervention would be implemented in real-life outside of a randomised controlled trial, and this will make for a much more successful intervention in the first place. For example, if your intervention requires health care professionals to do something, first ask if this would be something they would be able to implement on a daily basis, and not just for the purposes of a one-off research study. In relation to my own neuropsychological intervention that requires 25 online brain training sessions, perhaps spreading the training out over a longer period with occasional breaks might have meant patients were able to include it into their lives more easily.

The PSAD conference packed a hefty social program, starting on the first evening with a tour of the town centre by a local night’s watchman, and ending up at a local restaurant for dinner. The watchman showed us the town hall and told us stories about the local chapel and local pubs.

Saturday morning kicked off with a session of oral presentations on completed work. The common theme across much of the research in this session was the relationship between depression and diabetes. This was followed by a debate, with the statement ‘medical doctors will fail to achieve quality diabetes care unless they receive adequate psychological training’. Attendees were split into two groups: one had to provide arguments that were in favour of this statement, and the other arguments against the statement. Arguments in favour of psychological training for medical doctors included the positive impact of psychological care on diabetes control. Arguments against this included the need to bring in psychologists to take on this role instead of adding to the already very busy workload of medical doctors. I found this a very stimulating debate, and everyone had their own experiences and expertise to bring to the debate. The last session before lunch involved two parallel sessions on works in progress. This is where I presented my work using the UK-BioBank cohort to investigate the relationship between working memory and food intake in people with type 2 diabetes. My hypothesis is that working memory will be a strong predictor of food intake in people with type 2 diabetes, after controlling for other factors known to influence food intake (e.g. sex, age, socioeconomic status). One particularly useful piece of feedback I received was on my analysis approach, which suggested structural equation modelling instead of regressions as I had planned. While it is unlikely I will have time to learn this new and advanced technique prior to completing my PhD, I feel I am now prepared for future questions (such as in my viva) on alternative analysis approaches, and the future work I can do with this dataset. I also received advice on other factors I should consider controlling for in my analysis (for example, head injury and food security). I now see clearly the benefits of presentations of work in progress, as I feel the quality of my research has improved as a result.

Although the ‘post-lunch dip’ is a classic phenomenon where people feel sleepy during the mid-afternoon, associated with difficulties focusing during post-lunch presentation sessions (Monk, 2005); this wasn’t an issue at this conference as lunch was followed by two roundtable discussions. One was on psychological interventions in diabetes education and the other on translating research into policy and practice. I attended the latter, and professors of psychology and PhD students alike shared ideas on how we can extend our research into the field of vision of diabetes policy and practice decision-makers. I left this discussion with the realisation that there is a focus in academia on publications and citation indexes, but what do these
really mean if publications lack real-world impact? One particularly interesting point was how we can get policy makers to read the systematic reviews and meta-analyses that we conduct. A potential solution to this is to work with governing bodies to conduct reviews on topics they feel need addressing. This is already being done in other areas of psychology, and perhaps we need to start working with major diabetes charities and organisations to do similar work.

The Saturday evening social program was even more eventful than Friday’s, starting off with a sightseeing boat trip down the river Main and a tour around Veitshöchheim Castle and the Rococo gardens – considered one of the most beautiful in Europe. Dinner was a traditional Franconian meal in the Town Hall restaurant next to the castle. One of my favourite things about this conference was the friendliness of all those attending. At many of the other conferences I have attended, I tended to be the first to approach researchers whose work I have read and admire. At the PSAD, those researchers were the first to approach PhD students, taking off some of the pressure of attending a conference as a novice researcher who has a limited network of colleagues. The conference was concluded on Sunday morning with a session on completed work and closing remarks by the conference chair Professor Arie Nouwen. With a highly stimulating research presentation, discussion and social program I highly recommend the PSAD meeting to all those interested in diabetes research.

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References
Psychology of Sexualities Section Annual Conference

&

Annual General Meeting

Friday 2 December 2016
British Psychological Society’s London Office,
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Conference Theme:
Innovations in Psychology and Sexualities

Keynote Speaker: Dr Katherine Johnson

Presentations / Posters / PechaKucha / Prizes

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Special Issue Psychology of Sexualities Review

Bisexualities / Non-Binary Sexualities
Edited by Nikki Hayfield & Adam Jowett

A number of scholars have highlighted how bisexualities and non-binary sexualities have been marginalised both within and outside LGBTQ psychology. This special issue, to be published in 2017, seeks to highlight work that addresses the marginalisation of bisexualities and non-binary sexualities. Suggestions for topics that contributors may wish to engage with include, but are not limited to:

- Bisexual (in)visibility
- Bisexual and non-binary identities and experiences
- Biphobia and social marginalisation
- Attitudes towards and perceptions of bisexual and non-binary sexualities
- Social representations of bisexuality and non-binary sexualities
- Bi communities and activism
- Bisexuality and monogamy/polyamory
- Bisexuality and wellbeing

Psychology of Sexualities Review is the official publication of the British Psychological Society’s Psychology of Sexualities Section, which aims to serve members whose work is relevant to LGBTQ issues. We welcome papers from a wide range of disciplines. The editors would welcome early expressions of interest and are happy to discuss proposals for contributions. Empirical papers will be peer-reviewed, while shorter comment pieces will be accepted at the editors’ discretion. The deadline for submissions is 1st October 2016. Manuscripts (maximum 8000 words) and informal enquiries should be sent to the editors using the email address below. Further notes for contributors can be found in the publications section of our website: www.bps.org.uk/pos

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2 November 2016
BPS Wessex Branch 5th Military Psychology Conference: Defence & Security
*The Ark Conference Centre, Basingstoke.*

2 December 2016
BPS Psychology of Sexualities Section Annual Conference
*British Psychological Society London Office, 30 Tabernacle Street, London.*

12–13 December 2016
BPS Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology Annual Conference, *Mercure Cardiff Holland House Hotel and Spa, 24-26 Newport Road, Cardiff.*

4–6 January 2017
BPS Division of Occupational Psychology Annual Conference
*Hilton Hotel, Liverpool city centre.*

18–20 January 2017
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Psychology in the Pub Events
Plymouth Hub Psychology in the Pub
*Location: The Treasury Catherine Street Royal Parade Plymouth PL1 2AD*
15 September 2016, 17:30–19:30 – Spiritual Listening With Children and Young People: Professor Irvine Gersch
20 October 2016 Plymouth Hub – Welcome to the Dark Side.

Exeter Hub Psychology in the Pub
*Location: St Olaves Hotel Mary Arches Street Exeter EX4 3AZ*
29 September 2016, 18:00–20:00 – OCD and Hoarding: Professor Salkovskis
26 October 2016 – The Identity of Emotion: Andrew Livingstone
30 November 2016 – The Science of the Magic of Mind Reading: Dr Graham Edgar.

Bristol Hub Psychology in the Pub
*Location: Hamilton House, 80 Stokes Croft Avon Bristol BS1 3QY*
15 September 19:00–21:00 – Experiences of childfree heterosexual and non-heterosexual women: Stigma versus freedom: Victoria Clarke and Nikki Hayfield.
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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.

PsyPAG’s 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 Division within the British Psychological Society, with 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 tinyurl.com/PsyPAGjiscmail. 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 (twitter.com/Psypag) and add us on Facebook (tinyurl.com/Psypagfacebook). This information is also provided at www.psypag.co.uk.
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