Cognitive Section Annual Conference being hosted at Keele in September and we very much look forward to welcoming cognitive colleagues from the UK and abroad to our lovely campus. More details can be found inside and on our website.

Looking to the future, we look forward to the arrival of Dr Josie Booth who will be joining us as a Research Associate working with Dr Claire Fox on the ESRC funded Humour and Bullying project.

Finally, and again with an eye to the future, I have been involved in producing these newsletters since their inception 4 years ago and have been solely responsible for the last 2 issues. It is time to move over and let a fresh pair of hands take over. I would just like to thank colleagues for providing me with such rich material to present and to everyone who takes the time to read it.

So, sit back, make yourself comfortable, and enjoy the latest offering from the Keele Psychology Research Centre.

Ed (aka Sue Sherman).
We held an event to formally name several of our rooms after three illustrious individuals who have made major contributions to the development of the School over the past sixty years.

They included Professor Ian Hunter, who was the first Chair of Psychology at Keele. He was appointed in 1962 and retired in 1982. The others were Professor James Hartley (appointed in 1964 and retired in 1997) and Professor John Sloboda (appointed in 1974 and retired in 2008).

The event was attended by over 40 current and former staff of Psychology and other areas of the university. It included a forum on the 'The past and future prospects for psychology teaching and research', chaired by Professor Chris Cullen, former President of the British Psychological Society.

Illustrious professors!

(L to R) Michael Murray (Head of School), John Sloboda, James Hartley, Chris Cullen
Ian Hunter was the first professor of Psychology at Keele. He was appointed 1962 to head the department at age of 35. Ian was famous for his textbook *Memory: Facts and Fallacies* (1957) and his work on establishing how rapid mental calculation was achieved in his studies of mathematical genius Alexander Aitken.

Note: he was imported in to build up a department already started by Alan Iliffe and Paul Halmos. This procedure was common in the 60s in many new departments. Once a department had been established a star performer was parachuted in to run it…

Ian spent 1962 –1963 implementing the first year programme and in planning for Year 2, and writing the second edition of his book. This time called *Memory* – which went on to sell 250,000 copies.

There were four of us in 1964 – Ian, Graham Hemmings, Geoffrey Stephenson and myself.

It was an exciting time.

In those days there were many fewer universities and many fewer psychology departments. So a new psychology department at a new Institution that had an excitingly different approach involving a four-year course, the Foundation Year, students completing two Principal subjects and a subsidiary one across the three disciplines of the arts, social sciences, and the sciences was a huge step forward.

One thing that I was – and still am – extremely grateful to Ian for – which is a bit surprising - was that when I was appointed he would not tell me what he wanted me to do. After I had asked him about three times before I arrived and getting no helpful replies I ended up designing a course on learning on my own. Can you imagine today being appointed to a new lectureship and being left to get on with it – without any requirements from administrators, and course-evaluation forms etc…

In those days academics were trusted, and there was no need for deans, pro-vice-chancellors, and the like!

One problem of course, with new departments, was that they had no tailor-made premises, no money and no equipment. No one had any research grants. Unfortunately Ian had strange views about what psychology entailed. All lab classes and experiments, he believed could be conducted using paper and pencil… [and perhaps a bit of string].

Indeed I think Ian was forced to spend money by the Administration. He once told us in one of his rare and much avoided staff meetings, that Finance committee had awarded him a sum of money to be spent on another member of staff. Should we, he asked, have a technician, or should we have another member of staff? One by one we went round the table and said ‘technician’, ‘technician…’ And so we had Harry! (Harry Birchall was the first technician in the department.)

Harry was very keen and helpful – but a bit deferential. He insisted on calling all of the male members of staff Sir. But he was a good technician and a splendid photographer…

A History of Teaching Psychology at Keele
By James Hartley

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*Ian Hunter, first professor of Psychology at Keele*

*James Hartley (aged 25), photo by Harry Birchall*
Setting up a precedent for all of our technical staff ever since…I sometimes think that few people appreciate the work of our technical and secretarial staff, yet the department could not run without them. Let me use this space to thank them properly here.

Also, of course, Ian was able to draw upon his fame (together with Donald Mackay, also at Keele) to invite various notables to the department.

Thus we had George Miller, B. F. Skinner, and Jerome Bruner, to name but three.

But in those days we had to do research outside of the university because there was no research money or facilities available within it – so I developed contacts with the local education authority and set up studies throughout the county on programmed learning… Having no inside support meant that you had to apply your psychology outside – and so began my development as an applied psychologist.

Later on in 1973, in order to boost the research output of the department, the administration again forced Ian to appoint a second Chair in the person of John Hutt, who came with his wife Corinne. They set up a research team in one of the bungalows and conducted research on the efficacy of play, early childhood sex differences and the effectiveness of different forms of preschool education. Research income duly rocketed! But unfortunately Corinne unexpectedly died, in 1978.

So the department developed from these small beginnings to what it is today with approximately 50 teaching and research personnel.

And from various trips aboard – to Memorial University in Canada and to Bell Labs in New Jersey I learned that all the things that people said we couldn’t do in university education in England were carried out quite happily overseas.

Multiple-choice examinations could be used successfully. Short answer essays were not necessarily quick and dirty. Courses could be the responsibility of individuals and not the department as a whole. One could teach, test, and assess how you liked with little reference to anyone else.

Actually at Bell I held a research position – working along with luminaries such as Saul Sternberg, John Tukey, and Ernie Rothkopf. It was terrifying. But there were lighter moments… Especially when I criticised John Tukey’s book in a talk I gave on text design – but he – like most of the well-known psychologists that I know was very generous and interested in what others have to say.

In conclusion, I find it interesting to comment on how the degree structure that we created in the 60s is still very much with us today.

We still have 3 lectures a week, a weekly lab class, and require essays and lab reports. And our 3rd year students spend a good deal of their time on their projects.

But the numbers are different of course.

In my day when I was a student there were 8 students in our year and 4 members of staff. We wrote a fortnightly essay and a weekly lab report. Our finals examinations (10 3hr papers in one week) were all essay-based, and coursework played no part.

There were more men than women students in psychology in those days and few if any overseas and/or mature students.
And there were no students with A level qualifications at that time – ‘A’ level psychology had not yet been invented.

This means that the amount of personal attention a student can receive today is vastly diminished, and so too is the amount of written work that he or she can do.

Exams are simplified. Reports shortened. And, horror of horrors, I gather that some universities are now getting together to work out how they can drop the project from the requirements of a psychology degree…

In a recent paper on 50 years of teaching psychology that I have written (Hartley, in press) I noted that nothing much fundamental appears to have changed — except that we use more modern approaches to do what we did before and to cope with the larger numbers of students and staff.

This I saw as a criticism when I wrote the paper. Now I am not so sure. If a method like the lecture has lasted for hundreds of years — and similarly, if tutorials are still delivered — although in different forms — and essays are still written — this seems to imply that there is something about all of these activities that we value.

What might this be? Well, for lectures and tutorials, I submit it is the notion of being an academic that is at the heart of them. What holds together a good lecture and an exciting tutorial is the experience of being with an effective academic. What leads to an exciting essay is feeling the development of the burgeoning academic in oneself.


(Abridged version of talk James gave at the room naming event. See James below with Profs Chris Cullen and Michael Murray outside the newly named James Hartley Room).

It is enough to make one go grey.

(James wrote the captions, honest! Ed.)

Photo by John Coleman
It is a great honour to have a laboratory named after me at Keele. The fact that Psychology is a laboratory science that places at its heart the practice of data gathering and analysis is one of its most important merits.

I have always considered the final year dissertation to be the crowning pinnacle of the undergraduate degree, and supervising research projects, at undergraduate and postgraduate level has been the only kind of teaching I have really found fulfilling.

But I have to say that I would not have stayed in academia so long if teaching had been the centre of my working life. Like so many other subjects, research has always been the thing to light the fires of motivation and creativity. Now that I have retired, and do a number of free-lance things, it is hard to describe myself in one word. But if forced, I have no hesitation in saying what that one word is. It is a researcher!

Pat Rabbitt’s dictum

I can’t remember the exact context, but some words of one of my early psychology tutors, Pat Rabbitt, have always stayed with me. Rabbitt advocated:

Settle on an interesting and important question first and then determine the best method for answering it.

I hope I am not misquoting him, but he said something like this: what matters is not disciplinary labels or boundaries but interesting and important questions. Once you have settled on a question, you can then apply whatever means necessary to answer it, regardless of the disciplinary boundaries you might have to straddle, or disciplinary proprieties you might upset.

There are two important strands in Rabbitt’s dictum. One is about the needed expertise, and how one acquires that. The other is how you determine what constitutes an “Interesting and important” problem. And this is partly, I believe, what contemporary discussions of “impact” are trying to grapple with.

Acquiring expertise

Sometimes the way forward for a researcher confronted with a problem that he or she does not have the skills to solve is to find collaborators across disciplines. During my time at Keele, I was involved in projects that drew on expertise from music, education, social work, counselling, politics and international relations. My job was to supply the
psychology component, and to help work out how the different disciplinary contributions could complement one another.

I remember a particularly fruitful collaboration in the mid-90s between a concert pianist, a computational modeller and acoustician, and a psychologist. One of the unexpected, but memorable moments in that research was when the team members met together at Keele for a 3-day planning session. Before the concert pianist could begin to concentrate on making his contributions, we had to ensure that he could spend 2-3 hours each day locked away in a room with a piano. He told us that he literally could not function as a human being without his daily fix of solitary communion with his instrument. This for me became a metaphor for the tolerance and accommodation that people from different disciplines need to exercise when working together. Keele psychologists have been rather good at this kind of interdisciplinary research throughout the life of the department.

Sometimes you can make progress by enlisting people with expertise you don’t have. On other occasions, the best route seems to be to acquire the needed new expertise yourself. If the new expertise remains within a single discipline, that is somewhat convenient. But it doesn’t always happen like that. Keele has, over the years, provided some spectacular examples of discipline shifts.

The late Andor Gomme, for example, came to Keele as an English literature specialist. But his interest in Victorian architecture (to which of course there were all kinds of literary links) grew and grew to the point where his major academic work at the end of his life was in Architectural History. Somehow Keele — to its credit — managed to accommodate that. He did not switch departments, and he continued teaching English literature until his retirement, though with increasingly strong connections to the History Department where he became a leading light in their Victorian Studies programme.

Over the past 10 years or so my involvement in the peace movement, and my increasing concerns for the civilian victims of war, has taken me way outside psychology. Looking into these issues from a research perspective has involved me in learning how to collect and analyse data on where, when and how people got violently killed during conflict. My psychology training has provided some transferable skills, but the theoretical framework in which the data is discussed is not really psychology. It has elements of politics, elements of demography, elements of physics and medicine.

For instance, one project I’m involved with provides data on the relative lethality of different types of weapons. By accumulating a large number of reports of violent incidents containing details of weapon and victim demographics, we have been able to demonstrate that bombs of the type dropped by coalition forces in Iraq have some of the most indiscriminate effects. The proportion of women and children killed by such bombs is very high, far higher than the proportion killed during, for instance, gunfire, or even suicide bombing. One reason for this is that, even when intelligence is accurate, when you drop a large bomb in a populated area, you kill all the occupants of a house (and often neighbouring houses too —
not just the men you are targeting). The publications arising from this work do not find their way into psychology journals. Here is a partial list of some of the places where this more recent work has appeared:

- New England Journal of Medicine
- Public Library of Science Medicine
- British Army Review
- Journal of Iraqi Studies

Delivering impact

This list of journals includes one you may not have heard of. The British Army Review is a non-ISSN publication, which is only available in hard copy, and only to members of the British Army. As a civilian you can neither consult it in the British Library nor buy a subscription. But our research team decided that in order to maximise the chances of policy change based on our research we needed to get British soldiers on our side. Through networks of contacts we identified a very senior British Army Officer who seemed sympathetic to our approach. We first invited him to a private small roundtable in Autumn of 2007. We then kept up a continuous correspondence over a period of more than 2 years, to the point where we then proposed that we and he write something together. He was the one who negotiated publication in the British Army Review, and also got permission from the editor for us to reprint the article in the public domain. At the point where the article got published, our military colleague was revealed as Brigadier General Richard Iron, the person responsible for the handover from the British Army to the local forces in Basra. Richard Iron knew at first-hand what damage was done to British objectives in Iraq when British forces killed people, even if their death was unintended. Even more damage was done when the UK was not open about the fact of these deaths – which could easily be read as callousness or even hostility. So our article was an accumulation of arguments and evidence relevant to the benefits of governments engaging in comprehensive and transparent reporting on casualties in conflict.

We have good evidence that Iron’s collaboration with us has opened further doors. When I took these arguments to a meeting of senior UK military officers, Iron’s name undercut the natural prejudice against civilians (particularly “peaceniks” such as me) and there was remarkably little dissent from the thrust of them.

Who to dialogue with

I spend most of my time, not with the people who I know agree with me - peace activists and the like – but with people who do not share all aspects of my world view. I take a lot of time cultivating middle ranking civil servants who may be advising ministers. I get to know senior journalists who write opinion pieces in the major papers – sometimes they are able to slip some of our ideas and recommendations into their pieces! But I have to say that I don’t spend a great deal of my time justifying or fine-tuning my stance as a result of reading the latest psychological research on attitude change, far less doing any such research. And I suppose one of my justifications for this is actually that in my view the important research on this topic was done many decades ago. This research delivered clear results, and I am more interested in ap-
plying its insights than fine-tuning them through further research. You could say, in a way, that I am trying to deliver the impact.

As a pensioner, looking back on 34 salaried years in Higher Education, I can, of course, assume the privilege of saying “it’s not my problem – over to you”. But I do appreciate, as many of my generation does, that the “class of 68” had it remarkably easy.

I would not like to be entering the profession today, and I take my hat of to those of you who are here, grappling with these enormous challenges, and somehow managing to retain humour, creativity, and inspiration for your relationships with each other and the huge number of students who rely on you. My years at Keele, fully inside academia, were good years. But the years since Keele, much more outside academia, have also been good. If I do have any regrets, it might be that I didn’t find a better balance earlier. I turned 60 last year. 49 of those years were spent full time in the education system, 19 years as a student, and 30 as a Keele staff member. If I were given the opportunity to have that life again, I think I might have spent more of it outside academia.

And although Michael might not thank me for saying it, I want to finish by saying to the academic staff members at Keele, do consider a career change, and do consider spending some of your time outside academia. It will enrich you, and it might also make you a more impactful researcher! But, unlike me, don’t leave it till your 50s. Do it earlier if you can!

Abridged version of talk John gave at the room naming event.
The Centre was well represented by Alexandra Lamont, Jodie Underhill and Geraldine Leighton at the Seventh International RIME conference at Exeter University in April.

Alex gave a keynote presentation to 180 delegates (the largest of these conferences to date), entitled The Beat Goes On: Music education, identity and lifelong learning. She drew on her own recent research with a range of amateur adult musicians at various stages across the lifespan, as well as recent studies with Michael Murray and Becky Hale on older choirs in the local area. The focus of her keynote was to consider what music education needs to do in order to provide lasting experiences of value to a whole range of people, not just those who go on to become professional musicians. She ended the talk with a short clip of her own Keele-based string quartet, the Mars Quartet (pictured), playing a piece by Frank Bridge. Alex’s keynote follows in the illustrious steps of John Sloboda, who gave a keynote to the same conference 10 years ago, and will be published in an issue of Music Education Research later this year.

Jodie and Geraldine each gave spoken presentations to good audiences in the busy programme of sessions. Jodie presented her ongoing PhD work on school musical cultures and how these can help to promote positive attitudes towards music education amongst pupils. Geraldine presented a different aspect of her ongoing project, exploring the development of children’s musical identity through children’s drawings of ‘a musician’.

The conference drew delegates from all over the world and from different disciplines, including music psychology researchers, music teacher trainers, music teachers and teacher researchers, giving a wide audience for our presentations. The setting at the University of Exeter’s St. Luke’s campus made the conference very friendly, with ample opportunity to talk to people between sessions and share different ideas about research and practice, and ended with a barn dance where delegates were twirled around as much as their ideas had been in the rest of the conference!
The second edition of Dr Andrew Rutherford’s book ANOVA and ANCOVA: A GLM Approach is published by Wiley this summer.

Wiley state that “this new edition continues to provide a contemporary look at the nature of GLM (general linear model) analyses, describing how to implement such analyses throughout the experiment design process, from data examination to the testing of hypotheses. The book begins with a brief history of the separate development of ANOVA and regression analyses, and then goes on to demonstrate how both analyses are incorporated into the understanding of general linear models (GLM).

The chapters that follow are clearly organized by the nature of the experimental design and its analyses, detailing conventional statistical concepts of ANOVA and ANOVA and interpreting them in GLM terms. The book proceeds to cover the main single- and multi-factor designs as they relate to ANOVA and ANCOVA. All chapters have been revised, as each area of coverage now concludes with discussion of tests of main effects and type I error issues. Furthermore, a new chapter on hierarchical models introduces the use of this technique to methods in experimental psychology.

Additional topics that have been expanded upon and added include: different approaches to the different effect analyses, optimal experimental designs, a review of Wilcoxon’s arguments, normality violations and their consequence for experimental analyses, and the issue of inflated Type I error due to multiple hypotheses testing.”
An indication of the influence researchers are able to have on the research community and beyond can be seen by their membership of organising committees. Currently we have members on 10 committees of national and international organisations. Following the popularity of our editorial board feature last time, we thought we’d put together a quick round up below.

The British Neuropsychological Society

**Dr Nicky Edelstyn** is the Secretary of the British Neuropsychological Society. Her role is to manage membership, publish 4 newsletters per year, prepare agendas and minute the executive committee meeting and AGMs, assist in preparation for the 2 conferences they have in the autumn and spring each year.

Dr Alexandra Lamont has been a member of the Society for Education, Music and Psychology Research (SEMPRE) committee since 1999 as its marketing and development officer, and currently administers an online discussion forum and Facebook page for the society. SEMPRE is the only organisation in the world to combine music psychology and music education, was set up at the very start of the academic discipline of music psychology back in 1972, and organises various conferences as well as publishing the journals Psychology of Music and Research Studies in Music Education [http://www.sempre.org.uk/](http://www.sempre.org.uk/)

Alex was also elected onto the Executive Committee of the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music (ESCOM) as a general member in 2009. ESCOM brings together European researchers in music psychology and associated fields, holds a triennial conference, and publishes the trilingual journal Musicae Scientiae [http://www.escom.org/index.html](http://www.escom.org/index.html)
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<th><strong>CCYP : Counselling Children and Young People</strong></th>
<th><strong>Dr Maggie Robson</strong> is a member of Executive Committee of The Children and Young Peoples Division of British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).</th>
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<td><strong>Mathematical, Statistical &amp; Computing Psychology Section</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dr Andrew Rutherford</strong> is Chair of the British Psychological Society, Mathematical, Statistical &amp; Computing Section. Andrew says “a lot of the Chair’s work is administrative and much of it seems to be generated by the British Psychological Society (BPS). With the BPS no longer fulfilling the role of a professional council, it has started to try to re-engage with academic psychologists.” “The BPS MS&amp;C Section is one of the oldest BPS Sections and traditionally holds its Annual Scientific Meeting in London, on a Saturday, in the first half of December. The BPS MS&amp;C Section is an extremely friendly group and its Annual Scientific Meeting is very supportive. I would encourage anyone with any interest in topics such as computational and mathematical modelling, new and established data analytic techniques, psychometrics and measurement theory to experience the Annual Scientific Meeting and contemplate joining the section.”</td>
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<td><strong>Cognitive Psychology Section</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dr Sally Sargeant</strong> was elected onto the committee of the International Society of Critical Health Psychology (ISCHP) in April 2011. Her role is to help develop interests of and contacts for psychology postgraduate students working on critical health projects.</td>
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<td><strong>Dr Sue Sherman</strong> is a member of the BPS Cognitive Section Committee. Her role includes attending regular meetings, chairing sessions at the annual conference and this year she is Chair of the 2011 BPS Cognitive Section Annual Conference which is being held at Keele University from the 6-8th September (see Cognitive Section News for more details). <strong>Dr Andrew Rutherford</strong> is also a member of the Section Committee with the special role of Cognitive Section Announcement Mail-List Manager.</td>
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**Professor John Sloboda** has been a member of the Psychology Section (S6) of the British Academy since 2004. In 2009 he was elected to the Council of the British Academy which is its governing body. He serves for three years, until 2012. The role of a trustee is to oversee and approve all aspects of the work of the Academy, which is a registered Charity.

In 2010 John was asked by the Section to represent Psychology on a new “Public Policy Fellows Group” which is an internal “think tank” to help the Academy decide which issues of UK policy are ripe for some intervention (report, meeting) from the Academy, and which sub-disciplines can offer relevant expertise.

As from October 2011 John will serve on the steering committee of the section. One of the main jobs of steering committee members is to review grant applications to the Academy that fall within the remit of the Psychology Section.

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**Dr Richard Stephens** is a committee member of the BPS Biopsychology section. He is also the BPS Biopsychology newsletter editor. As well as having its own annual scientific meeting, this year being held near Ambleside in the Lake District, the section also organised a very well attended and enthusiastically received symposium at the BPS Annual Conference in Glasgow last month. Regular topics at these meetings include influences on human cognitive function (e.g. drugs, alcohol, herbal extracts, foods, chewing gum) and effects of stress on people.

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**Dr Mark Trueman** is a member of the Undergraduate Education Committee of the BPS. This committee is responsible for evaluating UK psychology programmes and their resource base to ensure that they meet the criteria necessary for their students to be eligible for the Graduate basis for Chartered Membership (GBC).
News from the Applied Group

Dr Helena Priest’s book ‘An introduction to psychological care in nursing and the health professions” is published by Routledge this summer.

Routledge say the book “explains and promotes the importance of psychological care for people when they become physically ill, giving a sound theoretical basis to ensure care is evidence-based. It encourages the reader to think about the effects of illness and disability on patients, and to understand what can be done to identify and minimise any difficulties they might be experiencing in these areas. This text contains key learning points, practical activities, reflective exercises and case illustrations. It is ideal for student and practising nurses, and health professionals who would like to improve their care for patients in this essential area.”

Successful bid on health literacy and diabetes

Stoke Healthy City Partnership has awarded a £49,000 contract to a group of researchers from the Centre for Psychological Research to facilitate an action research project on health literacy. The team will be led by Dr Emee Vida Estacio (pictured, left), with Professor Robert McKinley, Professor Michael Murray and Dr Sally Sargeant as co-investigators.

This project aims to develop and evaluate an intervention to help individuals in Stoke-in-Trent to better understand health information and to navigate the healthcare system more effectively. This project will initially focus on diabetes management, with an intention to transfer key learning to other long term health conditions. Two specific groups will be prioritised: 1) Young men under 25 years of age; and 2) South Asian men. The project will involve mapping of existing services, assessment of current health literacy levels and community engagement exercises using Photovoice, the World Café and stakeholder events.

For more information, email e.v.g.estacio@psy.keele.ac.uk

Invited lectures Down Under

Dr Sally Sargeant visited Australia where she delivered two invited lectures at the Group of Eight coalition of leading Australian universities.

The first was about adjustment to chronic illness, at Monash University in Melbourne, which contributed towards a programme of study for first year undergraduates.

The second talk was for the University of Adelaide School of Psychology seminar programme, for which Sally presented “The Method for the Madness: the use of narrative in primary care mental health”.

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**Keele Psychology Research**

**Applied Group Funding Success**

**Dr Alexandra Lamont**
(with Nicholas Reyland, Music), has recently been awarded £6,831 from British Academy small grants scheme for a 7-month project to explore the effects of pace and intensity in television programmes on young children’s viewing and behaviour.

**Dr Emee Vida Estacio**, together with Professor Robert McKinley (Primary Health), **Professor Michael Murray and Dr Sally Sargeant** has been awarded £49,000 by NHS Stoke and Stoke City Council, for a project entitled “Action on health literacy: Engaging target populations” (see page 15).

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**Applied Group Publications**


(Cont’d overleaf)


Estacio, E.V. (2011, June). Life as a migrant nurse in the UK: A session with nursing students. School of Nursing and Midwifery, Keele University, UK.


(Cont’d overleaf)


News from the Cognitive group

Many of us have appeared in the media from time to time—interviewed on the radio or having our research written up in the weekend newspapers, but one man in particular is taking this to new levels. I asked Dr Richard Stephens what he had been up to since the last newsletter in December, here is what he told me:

17th May 2011 – Took part in a TV shoot for a Channel 4 programme “Secrets of Buildings” presented by Times architecture critic Tom Dyckhoff. My role was to explain the psychology of pain and to oversee a demonstration experiment assessing the effects of different built environments on the ice cold water pain challenge.

April 2011 – My presentation at the British Psychological Society Annual Conference in May on swearing and pain received considerable media attention including a live interview with Peter Allen on BBC Radio 5 Live’s Drive-time (18th April 2011) and articles around the same time in the Daily Mail, the Independent and the Scotsman.

11th April 2011 – I took part in a live appearance on BBC West Midlands “Danny Kelly Show” chatting about the psychology of swearing in aftermath of Wayne Rooney outburst and subsequent repost by Wolverhampton senior police office blogging that anyone in Wolverhampton would be arrested for such language.

7th April 2011 – another live appearance on BBC Radio Stoke on “Mid-Morning with Stuart George”, chatting about the psychology of fear.

10th February 2011 – recorded appearance on BBC Radio Stoke on “Mid-Morning with Stuart George”, chatting about the new study by Professor Patrick Haggard, professor of cognitive neuroscience from UCL, showing that looking at the part of your body affected reduces the pain experienced.

In January 2011, I visited London’s Criterion Theatre to take part in some TV filming with Stephen Fry and Brian Blessed. The sequence, in which I ran through some psychological experiments on swearing with Stephen and Brian, will be included in Fry’s documentary “Planet Word” to be aired on BBC television in Autumn 2011.

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On a somewhat smaller scale, Dr Sue Sherman also appeared on Radio Stoke in March to discuss “why we forget things in everyday life”. In May, the New Scientist published a brief report on Sue’s research into false memories for brand names. The research reported found that you can create false memories for non-presented brand names (e.g., Carling) in the laboratory by presenting related brand names (e.g., Budweiser, Grolsch, Foster’s). Over time (a week later) false memories went up, whilst correct memories went down.

Funding successes

Professor John Wearden (pictured, right) was awarded a £4000 travel grant from the British Academy to support research, “Developmental and Cognitive studies of timing, with a Professor Sylvie Droit-Volet at the Université Blaise-Pascal in Clermont-Ferrand.

John also went on a research visit to Berlin in April supported by a grant from the German DFG.
Cognitive Group Publications


Stephens, R. (2011, March). Swearing as a response to pain. *Invited talk at the Cavern Club, Liverpool, as part of the 2011 Ig Nobel Tour of the UK and National Science Week.*

Stephens, R. (2011, April). Swearing as a response to pain. *Invited talk at Edinburgh Science Festival as part of the 2011 Ig Nobel Tour of the UK.*


Cognitive Group Presentations

News from the Social group

Humour and Bullying

Dr Claire Fox and 2nd year Psychology student, Lucy James, have been awarded a British Psychological Society (BPS) Undergraduate Research Assistantship bursary of £1600 for a project to examine the links between children’s humour styles and the problem of bullying in schools. The aim of the Undergraduate Research Assistantship Scheme is to provide up to 10 researchers with the opportunity to provide an undergraduate with ‘hands on’ experience of research during the summer vacation, to gain an insight into scientific research and to encourage them to consider an academic career. The BPS scheme is a prestigious award that marks Lucy out as a future researcher and potential academic. The project will enable Claire to pilot the process of data collection before embarking on the ESRC funded Humour and Bullying project at the beginning of the next school year. Josie Booth will be joining us from the University of Strathclyde to take up the position as the full-time Research Associate working on the ESRC project and we look forward to welcoming Josie in August 2011.

From Boys to Men: Precluding the proclivity to perpetrate

Claire and Dr Mary-Louise Corr have been continuing their work on the ESRC ‘From Boys to Men’ project with the emerging findings presented at a dissemination event held at Keele on the 24th June 2011 entitled ‘Preventing Domestic Abuse: Working with Children and Young People’. The event brought together over forty delegates who represent both local and national organisations in the areas of domestic abuse research, policy and practice. The workshop’s presentations focused on working with children and young people in reducing their risk of becoming involved in domestic abuse as adolescents and adults. The presentation of the study’s findings focused on evaluation of ‘Relationships without Fear’ (RWF), a school-based intervention programme on healthy relationships and domestic abuse prevention, delivered by Arch North Staffs. RWF explores how positive and healthy relationships, free from fear and abuse, can be formed and aims to prevent domestic abuse by giving young people the knowledge, skills and advice to enable them to recognise an abusive relationship. To evaluate the effectiveness of RWF, 870 children aged 13-14 years completed the Attitudes to Domestic Violence questionnaire, using a pre-test, post-test control group design. The findings are positive with children who have received the programme showing a significant improvement in their attitudes, compared to those in the control group. Stage two of the project is now underway which involves focus groups with children and young people. Stage 3 of the project, which begins in October 2011, will involve in-depth interviews with boys at risk of becoming perpetrators of domestic abuse in later life. Claire (below left) also presented the findings from last year’s pilot evaluation of RWF at the BPS Annual Conference in Glasgow with Kate Howard, co-ordinator of RWF (below right).
In a related project, Claire and Becky Hale have begun work on the Daphne III EU funded project called READAPT - Relationship Education and Domestic Abuse Prevention Tuition. The project aims to establish how best to support and enhance the resilience of young people, so they are able to cope with the effects of domestic violence. The READAPT project is committed to helping children come to terms with domestic violence, whether that violence is perpetrated by a parent or step-parent, or occurs in the context of their own dating relationships. It seeks to help build children’s resilience so that they can build healthy relationships for themselves in adult life. The project involves a coalition of seven partners across six European countries – the UK, Spain, France, Malta, Belgium and Sweden.

READAPT is pioneering an innovative cycle of implementation, evaluation, and development work to improve the quality of domestic abuse prevention initiatives for children and young people in Europe. Evaluation and quasi-experimental methods are currently being applied to relationship education and domestic abuse prevention tuition programmes in the UK, Spain and France, while a new package of intervention will be designed, piloted and rolled out in Malta. This cycle of implementation, evaluation and development work will ensure effective and sustainable development across the partner sites involved. It is anticipated that in excess of 2000 children will take part in the research across the UK, Spain and France and that a further six secondary schools and approximately 450 children will benefit from the interventions that follow in Malta during the lifetime of the funded duration of the project. Teachers and educators located across over 50 European schools will be engaged with the project.

The evaluation involves collecting data about children’s attitudes to domestic violence at pre and post test and focus groups with children to enable them to provide feedback on specific aspects of programme content and delivery. In addition, user groups will be established to enable users to have a more direct input into how services can be improved. In addition to academic publications, the project will produce a resource kit for educators seeking to establish their own preventative education initiatives and a toolkit for researchers looking to evaluate relationship education programmes. The project’s outputs will be showcased in a brochure for policymakers and on a dedicated website. Pictured are the project partners at the launch event at Keele in March 2011.
A new special interest research group has been established in Psychology, to enable those with an interest in researching children and young people to discuss common issues and share good practice. There have been three meetings this semester which have involved Nat Golden talking about funding opportunities, Claire and Mary-Louise stimulating discussion around the ethical issues of conducting research in this area, and Dr Sarah Dean and Geraldine Leighton presenting some of their research; Sarah talked about ‘Exploring written emotional disclosure in adolescents: Why doesn’t it work?’ and Geraldine presented on, ‘Opportunity and choice - encouraging children to develop positive musical identity’.

**Social Group Papers, Presentations and Grants**


Dr Chris Stiff has been awarded a British Academy small grant for £6800 to explore “do groups view potential new members who are religious as desirable or undesirable?”

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*The Social Group, from left to right, Ken Rotenberg, Serena Petrocchi, Martin Rowley, Mark Trueman, Chris Stiff, Claire Fox, Becky Hale, Mary-Louise Corr, Sarah Dean.*
Date for your diary

BPS COGNITIVE SECTION CONFERENCE 2011

Tuesday 6th – Thursday 8th September 2011

Early Bird booking rate until: 31st July 2011

www.keele-conferencemanagement.com/bpscognitive2011

Keynote speakers:
Professor Andrew Mayes, Manchester University
Professor Andrew Yonelinas, University of California, Davis
Professor Ulrike Hahn, Cardiff University – winner of the 2011 BPS Cognitive Psychology Section Award

Confirmed Symposia:
Cognitive sequelae of Parkinson’s Disease (sponsored by Parkinson’s UK and featuring in Special Issue of Journal of Neuropsychology)
Recognition Memory, Timing, Influences on Cognition, Cognition and Music