

... with Roxane L. Gervais

## 'We all work for a common purpose'

### One inspiration

I would say two people, my parents. They were strong people who set and adhered to positive standards for themselves and their family. They raised their children to believe in themselves, and they ensured that they provided my siblings and me with the one thing they could, an education.

### One moment that changed the course of your career

When I realised that there were efficient and effective ways to motivate people at work and thereby increase their job satisfaction and wellbeing over the course of their working lives. I knew that any workplace could be improved once change was accepted as a natural and essential part of the work environment.

### One book that you think all psychologists should read

*Set Phasers on Stun* by Steven Casey. It is a prime example of how things can go wrong with



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technology, despite careful planning and designing. It absolutely peaked my interest in the human-machine interface. We are having to interface with machines at an increasing rate when at work, so it is useful to identify and perhaps reduce as much as possible what can go wrong when using technologies, especially the human error component.

### One challenge you think psychology faces

Creating one identity for psychologists: not easy to accomplish, I know. We all work for a common purpose of assisting individuals and thereby improving various issues within society. We should operate as one entity, which would make it easier to protect the title of 'psychologist', rather than our specific disciplines. We should focus then on educating the public on the different ways we can support them at work, at home and in the community. The majority of people do not understand the nuances across the profession, but rather trust that we can assist them as needed.

### One nugget of advice for aspiring psychologists

Believe in yourself and work

towards your goal. Network, volunteer, get involved with the BPS. You will always find someone willing to help you to progress your career.

### One film

*Up*. An animated movie that explores the perceived limitations of old age and, despite these, having the courage to follow your dream. Step out of your comfort zone and challenge yourself to attain what might not necessarily be the unattainable.

### One hero/heroine from psychology

Lillian Moller Gilbreth, the American industrial psychologist and industrial engineer, who was one of the first working female engineers to gain a PhD. She is one of the many women who combined pursuing a career with raising a family. Although her family was very large – she had 12 children – she did not let this choice restrict what she wanted to accomplish. She was not an anomaly; women have worked always and have managed to raise families and will continue to do so. So, this is important to acknowledge in the workplace when considering hiring, promoting or developing women and having concerns about their ability to perform when they have family responsibilities.

### One thing that the BPS could do better

Being aware of members' needs and engaging with members to a greater extent. Being less inward looking, especially as the world is more accessible. There is a perception that there is disconnection at present between the members and their professional bodies, especially with the BPS/APA.

Without the members, these bodies would not exist.

### One problem that psychology should deal with

To promote consistency in ethical behaviours in what we do as psychologists and how we do this. This would include ensuring that our work is evidence-based, is transparent and does not harm the people we seek to support.

### One place

Anywhere that I can be surrounded by orchids. I love gardening, but unfortunately gardening does not love me! I have had success with orchids though, thank goodness.



ROXANE L. GERVAIS

### One reason for optimism

The number of persons who continue to study psychology at universities; even if they choose not to progress with it after a first degree. The fact remains that they have studied the topic and would be able to promote it in some way in their work.

### One proud moment

Obtaining my PhD in a discipline I strongly believe can make a difference to and in the work environment. Individuals spend the most of their time at work and this should be a place for them to display their talents and abilities, while developing in their chosen career. I am proud to have the training and skills to assist in that respect.

coming soon

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