



The British Psychological Society
Promoting excellence in psychology

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The Society has offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow and London, as well as the main office in Leicester. All enquiries should be addressed to the Leicester office (see inside front cover for address).

The British Psychological Society

was founded in 1901, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965. Its object is 'to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge'.
Extract from The Charter



President's column

Carole Allan

Contact Carole Allan via the Society's Leicester office, or e-mail: thepresident@bps.org.uk

I recently sat in on an induction meeting for a new member of staff and was struck by the quality and variety of tasks undertaken by BPS staff. The office supports the work of 900 committee members, who are involved in a wide range of member networks as well as supporting 35 different member network publications. Last year over 70,000 calls were handled by the help desk, which is the first point of contact for members at the Leicester office. This can vary from a fairly simple question about membership fees to an extremely complex query about an ethical issue.

We continue to expand and improve the benefits we offer to members. Over the last year we have redesigned and rewritten the Society's website, which now features easier navigation, news feeds and a community directory, where

members can link up with other members according to interests. The impact of these improvements is shown by the fact with the site receiving 11 per cent more visits than it did a year ago. Other online benefits members now enjoy include free access to journals provided by Wiley and EBSCO. Meanwhile, Society and member network events – we organise more than a hundred workshops and conferences every year – are increasingly covered on Twitter, creating more of a buzz around the event and encouraging more people to attend in future years. Other ways we work to increase our influence are public engagement grants, which this year see £60,000 available to projects designed to bring psychology to wider audiences, and the work of our consultation response team, which replies to a substantial number of official consultations every year.

I was pleased to be invited to the AGM of the Wessex Branch at Southampton Solent University, which has almost 5000 members distributed across five hubs in Surrey, Sussex,

Dorset, Solent and the Thames Valley. The Branch has an explicit aim of uniting and connecting psychologists within the region both professionally and geographically. The outgoing Chair Kathryn Fielden and the incoming Chair Gene Johnson and the committee clearly devote a significant amount of time and effort in

working towards this aim. The programme of events planned for the forthcoming year covers a wide range of topics and I was particularly interested in the one-day conference on 'The psychological welfare of current and military personnel and veterans' they hope to hold in the autumn of 2012.



The formation of a Trauma Psychology Section would provide a focus and impetus for further work

Professor Bill Yule, Emeritus Professor of Applied Child Psychology at the Institute of Psychiatry and an international expert in the field, proposed the formation of a Section on Disaster, Crisis and Trauma Psychology (Trauma Psychology for short). The Society's Trustees have endorsed the proposal and the next stage is to get the support of the membership.

Why have a Section? Like Bill Yule and the committee members of the Wessex Branch, I think that psychologists of all specialisms have important roles to play both in planning for disaster management and in mitigating the effects of disasters, terrorism and traumatic events. By establishing a forum for trauma psychology, the Section would aim to promote cross-disciplinary research to understand reactions to crisis and provide evidence-based interventions, help develop teaching in this area at both introductory and advanced professional levels and facilitate discussion among psychologists of all specialisms, via meetings, symposia and websites



Award for Outstanding Doctoral Research Contributions

Dr Helen Fisher

Dr Helen Fisher is the winner of the Society's Award for Outstanding Doctoral Research Contributions to Psychology 2011.

Supported by Professor Terrie E. Moffitt and Professor Peter McGuffin, both from King's College London, Dr Fisher was selected for her PhD research into the role of nature-nurture interplay in psychosis. This work was jointly funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Medical Research Council

The award recognises outstanding contributions to psychological knowledge by postgraduate research students whilst carrying out research for their doctoral degrees in psychology. She will receive a £500 prize and commemorative certificate. Dr Fisher has also been invited to deliver a lecture based on her research at the Society's Annual Conference in 2013.



Dr Helen Fisher

Dr Fisher, a Chartered Psychologist, said: 'I am absolutely delighted to accept the 2011 BPS Award for Outstanding Doctoral Research Contributions to Psychology. I am extremely honoured to receive this award on behalf of my many collaborators from a range of disciplines who made my doctoral research possible. I look forward to sharing my research at the BPS Annual Conference next year.'

Her study looked at the potential relationship between child abuse and later psychotic illness. She found that child abuse may be one of the causes of psychosis. The findings were published in *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, *Psychological Medicine* and the *British Journal of Psychiatry* and have attracted interest from agencies in the European Union and USA, in addition to the major funding bodies in the UK.

Professor Moffitt said: 'Not many of us launch a whole new field of inquiry as a PhD student. Helen is extremely bright, conscientious, ambitious, energetic and personable. She is highly creative and a clear thinker. Prestigious doctoral awards must go to young scientists who are on a clear trajectory towards becoming the next generation of leading British psychology professors. Helen Fisher is definitely such a person.'

For a list of previous winners see www.bps.org.uk/hopc

Much has already been achieved by researchers, clinicians and practitioners, but the formation of a Section would provide a focus and impetus for further work. Under the Society's rules, 1 per cent of the membership must support the formation of a new Section for it to be formed. This number has almost been achieved, so if you are interested in the Trauma Section being created, and perhaps becoming a member, please register your vote at <https://web.questback.com/britishpsychologicalsociety/traumasection/>.

I opened the BPS Scottish Undergraduate Conference at the University of Glasgow on 17 March; the event was a collaboration between the Scottish Branch and the Psychology Department at the University of Glasgow. This was an opportunity for final-year undergraduates from across Scotland to present their research in a relaxed and friendly setting, network with other students from around Scotland and to find out more about the benefits of joining the BPS. Psychology is a very popular subject: more than 46,000 undergraduates were enrolled on a full-time psychology degree, the number rises to 77,000 if we include those enrolled on part-time degrees in 2009/10. Only law and business degrees are more popular. Our challenge is to attract this group into becoming members of the Society.

Up to £60K for public engagement

The Society has substantially increased the public engagement grant scheme for its members for 2012. The scheme aims to help BPS members promote the relevance of evidence-based psychology to wider audiences, either through direct work or by organising interesting and relevant communications activities.

Dr Graham Powell, a Trustee of the Society, said: 'We recognise our role in supporting our members who are communicating psychology and delivering psychological services to the public. Due to the continuing success of these grants, we're delighted that for 2012 we have substantially increased the funding available for our scheme at a time when many other organisations are cutting back.'

Funding of £60,000 is available either for one project or to be shared amongst several smaller ones. All applications from members of the Society will be considered. However, applications with the following themes are particularly welcome:

Supporting people with depression

- | Psychological well-being at work
- | Applying psychology to real world problems.

More information on the 2012 public engagement grant scheme is available at www.bps.org.uk/grants. The closing date for applications is 2 July 2012.

SOCIETY NOTICES

Annual General Meeting See p.362

Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section – Seminar Competition; Undergraduate Qualitative Research Project Award; Outstanding Research by an Early Career Scholar Award See p.362

BPS conferences and events See p.379

BPS/Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology Postgraduate Award See p.379

Learning Centre CPD workshops See p.380



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CONSULTATIONS NEWS

Responses submitted in March

The Society submitted independent responses to eight consultations during March. One further consultation, UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B11: Research degrees – draft for consultation (Higher Education Funding Council for England), was responded to via the Joint Council for Psychology in Higher Education. More than 30 members were involved in preparing these responses, and the Society is very grateful for their contributions.

Brief details of selected March responses are provided below. Full details of all consultations, responses and (where available) outcomes can be found at www.bps.org.uk/consult.

Student Fitness to Practise & Registration (Health Professions Council [HPC])

The HPC sought views on a number of issues concerning the most effective way of assuring the fitness to practise of students, including the possibility of establishing voluntary registers of students for some or all of the existing HPC-regulated professions. The Society's response indicated that whilst we would not support a voluntary registration scheme, a compulsory student register could potentially yield certain benefits.

Behaviour Change: Scope consultation (National Institute for Health & Clinical Excellence)

The Society's response noted that reflective, self-regulatory approaches to behaviour change cannot be divorced from impulsive, associative and environmental approaches, and the omission of the latter from the draft scope was highlighted. It was emphasised that it is important to identify the techniques and underpinning mechanisms of action that lead to the maintenance of behaviour change.

Domestic Violence Definition (Home Office)

It was recommended in the Society's response that the definition of domestic violence be made more inclusive, in terms of both victim and perpetrator characteristics as well as of types of behaviour. It was proposed that the inclusion of coercive control in the definition would be helpful for victims, perpetrators and frontline practitioners.

Making an impact: Response outcome

The Society responded to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) consultation on Disability Employment Programmes in October 2011. The DWP's report on the consultation shows that the points raised by the Society have been largely taken into account. Three points were explicitly cited in the report, in connection with:

- I the need for Access to Work provision to be better promoted and for adequate resources in pre-employment support to be ensured;
- I the recommendation for funding to be made available to individuals to participate in work experience; and
- I the likelihood that merging Access to Work and Work Choice into a single programme could result in more coherent support provision, enhanced cost-effectiveness, personalisation and flexibility.

The preparation and submission of the Society's responses to consultations on public policy is coordinated by the Consultation Response Team (CRT). All those holding at least graduate membership are eligible to contribute and all interest is warmly welcomed; please contact the CRT for further information (consult@bps.org.uk; 0116 252 9508) or visit our website (www.bps.org.uk/consult).

FROM BPS JOURNALS

A new study by Sarah O'Neill (University of New York) and Rachel Zajac (University of Dunedin) provides empirical support for the long-held hypothesis that questioning style is the most potent factor affecting children's cross-examination responses. Furthermore, for younger children, this effect appears to be compounded by longer delays to cross-examination. The authors say: 'These results lend weight to the argument that policy makers need to address the difficulties inherent in the cross-examination interview. Any reform, however, must strike a delicate balance between accommodating vulnerable witnesses and the defendant's right to a fair trial.' (*British Journal of Psychology*)

The personalities of nations that are geographical neighbours are more similar than those that are far apart. That's according to a new study by Garry Gelade (Business Analytic Ltd) which examines the distribution of national personality dimensions in geographical space. The five factors of both the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) and the Big Five Inventory (BFI), all show a significant degree of spatial organisation. The personality factors most strongly associated with geographical location are NEO-PI-R extraversion and BFI conscientiousness; both vary with position around the globe about as much as the physical climate. (*British Journal of Psychology*)



John Turner, whose pioneering work on social identity and self-categorisation theories changed the face of modern social psychology, died in July 2011. Now a unique virtual special issue of the *British Journal of Social Psychology* celebrates Turner's life and work by reproducing a number of his key articles. In their editorial, S. Alexander Haslam and colleagues say '...these papers map out a clear and compelling vision. This seeks to explain the distinctly social nature of the human mind by showing how all important forms of social behaviour – and in particular, the propensity for social influence and social change – are grounded in the sense of social identity that people derive from their group memberships.'

Compulsive exercise is related to emotion-regulation strategies in adolescents, even after controlling for disordered eating attitudes. That's according to a new study led by Huw Goodwin (Loughborough University). This regulation of emotion can be either functional or dysfunctional. Specifically, compulsive exercise is associated with an internalised style of emotion regulation among girls. The authors call for future research to investigate whether internalised emotion regulation strategies combined with a drive for thinness is a longitudinal risk factor for compulsive exercise in girls. (*British Journal of Health Psychology*)

I Society members can access all BPS journals free via www.bps.org.uk/journals