



'Media' is the page of the Society's Press Committee. This section of *The Psychologist* aims to promote and discuss psychology in the media. If you would like to comment on a recent newspaper article, TV programme or radio broadcast involving psychology, if you have tips for others based on recent experiences, or if you know of a forthcoming programme or broadcast, please contact the 'Media' page coordinating editor, Harriet Gross (Chair, Press Committee), on H.Gross@lboro.ac.uk.

From depression to happiness

NATIONAL Depression Week took place in April, and the *Guardian* covered it by looking at how employers deal with depressed employees. Some individuals reported losing their jobs as a result of their depression; however, on a more positive note, there were also stories of employers who provided appropriate support for their employees. The article also asked whether it was realistic to expect an employer to rehabilitate employees experiencing depression, but noted that following changes to the Disability Discrimination Act an employee needs only to show that their depression has lasted 12 months, and has an adverse effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities, in order to be protected from discrimination.

The article in the *Guardian* reported that depression is forecast by the World



Health Organization to be the second largest health problem worldwide by 2020. It is therefore timely that 'happiness' has found its way on to a school's curriculum (*Independent, Daily Telegraph*). While school days are meant to be the happiest days of your life, this is to be given an extra helping hand at Wellington College. The scheme has been introduced by headteacher Dr Anthony Seldon, and the lessons in positive psychology will form part of a research programme headed by psychologist Dr Nick Baylis of Cambridge University. While there were some snide comments, much of the coverage in the media was positive. Maybe there is an increasing acceptance that money cannot buy happiness. Apparently, once you reach a salary of £25,000 per annum in the UK further increases in wealth are not associated with further increases in happiness (*Sunday Times*). The path to happiness is psychological.

For many people happiness can be found in the arms of another a man or woman. However, before you reach that point the dating minefield needs to be safely negotiated. A study conducted by Professor Richard Wiseman (University of Hertfordshire) at the Edinburgh International Science Festival may be helpful in this regard (*Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph*). The study involved 100 single members of the public who took part in 10 speed dates each. Almost half the women made up their minds about the men in less than 30 seconds, compared with 22 per cent of the men. According to Professor Wiseman these findings are a surprise given that evolutionary theory suggests that women are more interested than men in long-term relationships. Clearly of more interest though are the chat-up lines that worked and those that didn't. Women who were asked by a man 'If you were on *Stars*

in Your Eyes, who would you be?' were impressed, while men were apparently impressed with 'What's your favourite pizza topping?'. So men really are like Homer Simpson and quirky chat-up lines work best. The worst chat-up line was 'I have a PhD in computing', but there was no information on whether 'I have a PhD in psychology' was more successful.

To finish, it has been a difficult time for Dr Raj Persaud as allegations of plagiarism continue. In the *Sunday Times*, Professor Richard Bentall (Manchester University) was reported to have asked the BPS to investigate allegations of plagiarism in Dr Persaud's book *the Edge of the Couch*. Professor Bentall claimed that almost 60 lines of Dr Persaud's introduction were only slightly modified from a paper he had co-authored.

Marc Jones

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