



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

The links between psychological science and practice in psychology were very much in evidence at the British Psychological Society's Annual Conference, held in London in April. The keynote speakers Diane Halpern, Dan Gould, Chris Brewin, Dorothy Bishop and Wendy Hollway covered a wide variety of topics including trauma and memory, gender differences and the development of athletic talent. During the three days of the Conference around 800 delegates registered to attend.

As ever, at events like the Annual Conference, it is always tempting to attend sessions with a clear link with one's own area of interest or work. But it is much more rewarding to take a more eclectic approach. I found the keynote address on specific language impairment and developmental dyslexia, presented by Professor Dorothy Bishop, particularly inspirational.

I was delighted to present 11 awards for outstanding contributions to the discipline and the profession of psychology. Of particular note was the Public Engagement and Media Award to the broadcaster, writer and psychology lecturer Claudia Hammond. She is the current presenter of BBC Radio 4's *All in the Mind*, which reaches an audience of around 1.2 million listeners each week. While she appeals to the general public she also maintains clarity and critical awareness in the topics she covers.

The Award for Excellence in Psychology Education went to Professor John Pearce from Cardiff University. Like Claudia Hammond he was one of the seven award winners who gave special lectures at the Conference; he was both entertaining and instructive. I'll never look at pigeons in the same way again!

The Division of Sport and Exercise

Psychology; the Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section; the Division of Academics, Researchers and Teachers in Psychology; and Student Members agreed to run their conferences alongside the Society's Annual Conference, helping to make this year's event one of the most successful yet. Professor Ken Brown, Chair of the Standing Conference Committee, would like to encourage other member networks to run their conferences in conjunction with the Annual Conference in 2013, which will be held at the International Conference Centre, Harrogate (9–11 April 2013).

A number of speakers have already confirmed: Professor Peter Fonagy, Professor Susan Gathercole and Professor Alex Haslam. Member networks who would like hold events at the same time and benefit for the organisational skills of the conference team

should contact Ruth Raven (BPS Conference and Events Manager) as soon as possible (ruth.raven@bps.org.uk).

This is my final column as President before I hand over to Peter Banister after the AGM in June. It has been an incredibly busy and interesting year as President. My special thanks go to staff in the BPS office, my fellow Trustees for all their input and also to Jonathan Calder from the Press Office who has provided me with the support to get this monthly column written.

As part of my preparation for my keynote address at the Annual Conference, I looked back on previous Presidential addresses, which are available

at www.bps.org.uk/presidents. It is, of course, instructive to see how long-running are many of the issues that confront us today. Registration was first mentioned in 1934. In 1967, Grace Rawlings, who described herself as the first applied psychologist to be elected as President, talked about the importance of maintaining productive links not only between theory and practice, but also between academics and practitioners.

My favourite Presidential address was given



The keynote speakers at Annual Conference covered a wide variety of topics



Going for gold

The greatest psychological show on earth

As the London Olympic Games draw near, an online portal developed by the British Psychological Society's Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology (DSEP) aims to show the part psychology plays in making the Olympics and Paralympics the greatest psychological shows on earth.

Professor David Lavallee, coordinator of the project, said: 'We aim to build an information resource for those interested in sport, and psychology, to explain some of the ways psychology informs sport and exercise performance and how it helps. As well as news, information and videos about sport and exercise psychology, visitors to the portal can participate in an online experiment devised by Chartered Psychologist Dr Iain Greenlees. We want to include a wide base of participation in this experiment, so please tell your friends and colleagues.'

Sporting folklore is littered with examples of competitors who have claimed that the time before a sporting encounter starts can be decisive in determining the result of the competition.

In many sports, competitors actively attempt to intimidate and 'psych out' their opponents in order to achieve an advantage once the competition is under way. This, it is argued, is because the early impressions we form of the people we interact with, and compete against, have the power to influence our emotions, our cognitions and, ultimately, our behaviours. If this is the case then it may be important for sport psychologists to understand how people form impressions of their opponents and the sources of information that they use.

This is the aim of a research project inspired by the Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology and coordinated by the Universities of Chichester, Staffordshire and Stirling. The research project contains

an online mass participation experiment. Participants are asked to walk in the shoes of a judo player preparing for a bout and to see the world from their eyes. Each participant will view a series of videos of a judo pre-bout scene and another clip of a player preparing to compete against them. Their task will be to provide their impressions of these opponents (for example, how nervous, intimidating and capable they look) and to rate how confident they would be of defeating their opponent in a judo bout.

Dr Greenlees (University of Chichester) says: 'Increasingly, sport psychology research is showing that initial impressions can influence the behaviour of coaches, officials and performers. We hope that this experiment, by sampling a wide pool of sporting performers and sports enthusiasts, will add to our knowledge of how we form impressions in sport.'

This project has been put together by the DSEP through the Society's Public Engagement Grants scheme (see www.bps.org.uk/pepg). The results of the online study, as well as a full explanation of the research project and the sources of impressions revealed by respondents, will be published on the Society's website shortly before the Olympics close.

Dr Greenlees notes: 'For me, one of the great things about events like the Olympics is that they are a natural environment in which we can readily observe many of the concepts, performing under pressure, social interactions, group dynamics, aggression that psychologists of any discipline are interested in. With this study and the Division's public engagement activities, we hope to highlight some of these concepts in action.'

Get involved in the online experiment, and visit the sport and exercise psychology resource at www.bps.org.uk/going-for-gold to find out more about the greatest psychological show on earth.



by David Legge in 1987, part of which describes the evolution of Chartered status. He describes how 'Compromise after compromise was worked out through over a thousand person-hours of debate. A series of interlocking priorities emerged that were designed to navigate a path through a way strewn with special pleadings, exclusive interests and parochial considerations' which was hammered out despite, 'the diversity and firmness of view bordering on truculence that prevailed in the Society'.

I can vouch for the fact that robust debate still surrounds these and many other issues today. Finally as I bow out I will borrow from his final paragraph – 'The Society stands at a critical point in its history. It has been a very great honour to stand, albeit briefly, alongside it.'

Scottish Branch Undergraduate Student Conference

The BPS Scottish Branch Undergraduate Conference provides a platform for fourth-year students to present a short talk on their dissertation projects to fellow psychology students and staff. This year the conference was hosted by the University of Glasgow on Saturday 17 March, with a record number of 250 students registering online to attend. Six themed sessions ran in parallel to accommodate the 72 speakers, who covered a diverse range of topics such as biological and evolutionary, cognitive, social, health, and forensic psychology

topics. If you wish to learn more about the inspiring research carried out by presenters, the abstracts are at tinyurl.com/bv2saaa

This year we were fortunate to attract delegates from all across the UK, including all Scottish Universities, Cardiff, UCL and Belfast. The conference was warmly opened by the Scottish Branch Chair, Dr Zoe Chouliara. Zoe introduced the BPS President, Carole Allan, who was the first of two excellent keynote speakers. Carole spoke to delegates about the important skills psychology graduates



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have to offer employers and described some of the resources and support the BPS provides for its members. Following lunch Dr Rob Jenkins, previous winner of the Joseph Lister award for Scientific Communication and Senior Lecturer at Glasgow University, presented an enthusiastic synopsis on 'The future of psychological studies'. In this engaging talk, Rob spoke about the importance of psychological research and the benefits of pursuing a research career.

The 2012 conference incorporated

many changes suggested from feedback from previous years: for the first time the conference took place on a Saturday in order to accommodate dissertation deadlines; the BPS generously paid for registration and lunch for all delegates; and a stewarding system was efficiently carried out by second-year psychology students. Furthermore, following the event, attendees were invited to the union bar where a complimentary drink was provided by the University of Glasgow.

This proved popular, giving delegates the opportunity to meet students who presented on their areas of interest and to socialise with like-minded peers from all over the country, as well as with lecturers and BPS representatives.

Many thanks to all those who attended and made the day a success – to those who presented and those who came to listen; also the Chairs, Stewards, Working Team, and the University of Glasgow. I hope the undergraduate conference is able to run for many more years, meeting the needs of current

undergraduates and allowing us to network, collaborate and



The 2012 conference has demonstrated that there is much that can be learnt from our fellow students

encourage each other in our interests in psychology. Of course, as student members of the BPS we also have a role to play – to be enthusiastic about the opportunities we are provided with, and vocal about what we would like in the future. The 2012 conference has demonstrated that there is much that can be learnt from our fellow students, we merely have to seek the opportunities.

Hopefully, see you at next year's Undergraduate Conference at Abertay University!

Hannah Ellis

*Undergraduate Representative, BPS
Scottish Branch*

I remember attending the BPS Undergraduate Conference in 2008. I also remember being incredibly nervous. For those brave enough to present that day many are now, like myself, rapidly approaching the end of their PhDs, and I am really pleased to see the BPS continuing to support the undergraduate conference. As Hannah points out the event has grown considerably by building on previous years successes.

Presenting is often encouraged by supervisors and departments for the simple fact that it looks good for the student, but I think choosing to stand up and talk about your own research goes beyond a line on a CV. Along with a handful of other events during my time as an undergraduate, the experience helped convince me that I wanted to become a psychologist.

David A. Ellis, University of Glasgow

Spearman Medal 2012

Dr Angelica Ronald

Dr Angelica Ronald has been awarded the Society's Spearman Medal 2012.

Nominated by Professor Mike Oaksford of Birkbeck, University of London, Ronald was chosen for her research into the genetic and environmental causes of autism spectrum disorders, and her studies on developmental mental health conditions from infancy to early adulthood. Dr Ronald has been published in leading journals, including *Archives of General Psychiatry* and *Nature Neuroscience*.

The Spearman Medal recognises outstanding published research in psychology undertaken within eight years of completing a PhD, based on its theoretical importance, originality and impact. She will deliver a lecture on her research at the Society's Annual Conference in 2013.

On hearing the news of her award, Dr Ronald, Director of the Genes Environment Lifespan Laboratory at Birkbeck, University of London, said: 'I am honoured to receive the Spearman Medal, and grateful to the British Psychological Society for this award. The medal has an admirable list of past winners, many of whom have had a big influence on me, whether as tutors, supervisors, colleagues or inspirational figures in psychology.'



Dr Angelica Ronald

'This medal reflects how fortunate I have been in my career to date, particularly with my collaborators and mentors. I would like to thank Professor Mike Oaksford, also a former recipient, who nominated me for the award.'

Professor Daryl O'Connor, Chair of the award committee, said: 'The competition for this year's Spearman Medal is best described as extraordinary. The panel received a large number of outstanding submissions from across the entire breadth of the discipline. However, the panel felt that Angelica's body of work demonstrated great innovation, originality and theoretical advances such that the impact of her research had vastly improved our understanding of autistic spectrum disorders, ADHD and related conditions.'

As well as quantitative genetic methodology, Dr Ronald's research involves genome-wide association studies, studies exploring environmental risk factors, techniques from clinical psychology and cognitive neuroscience, and measurement development.

A list of previous award winners can be found on the Society's History of Psychology Centre webpages: <http://hopc.bps.org.uk/hopc/histres/bpshistory/awards/spearman.cfm>



Psychology's 'Origins'

'Origins: The evolution and impact of psychological science' was launched at the Society's Annual Conference at the Grand Connaught Rooms in London in April. The launch reception, introduced by Professor Trevor Robbins, head of the Department of Experimental Psychology at Cambridge, saw the culmination of two years' work of a cross-departmental team of the Society.

Origins, developed in partnership with the Society's History of Psychology Centre and the History and Philosophy of Psychology Section, is a web-based, multimedia timeline of the development of psychological science and its contributions to society today (<http://origins.bps.org.uk>).

Psychology, the study of the human mind and behaviour, has a long history. Rooted in philosophy and science, the history of psychology encompasses many discoveries and theories that have helped to shape our understanding of human behaviour. The effects of some of these psychological discoveries have an impact on our everyday lives, sometimes in surprising ways. Psychology has evolved in many ways over the last 160 years and continues to evolve today.

Spanning the 160 years from 1840 to 2000, the website highlights significant developments in the history of psychology. It covers a breadth of topics including, biological psychology, social psychology and psychometric testing. From the beginnings of our understanding of brain localisation in the 1800s including the case of Phineas Gage, Origins goes on to chart the impact of war on the development of mental health

treatments, and how psychologists contributed to the war effort. Moving into the modern age, it touches on the ethical questions raised in 1950s, 60s and 70s and on to the cutting-edge technology of modern fMRI scanning, which allows us to research the brain in ways never before available.

It is hoped that Origins allows users to explore major milestones and discoveries, see how psychological science has shaped the present and find out how cutting-edge discoveries may influence our future. Visitors to the site can discover some of psychology's most famous names, unearth some unsung heroes and be inspired to delve deeper into our fascinating history.

The website is a free resource and takes the form of a searchable timeline which we hope will educate and engage the public with the history of the discipline, giving an accurate impression of the subject today and how we got here. The timeline draws together original papers, radio programmes, and the Society's archive, external web resources in one place. As well as engaging the general public, it is hoped the website will be useful for students and teachers of psychology, particularly at the pre-degree level and undergraduates for whom the history of psychology makes up part of the curriculum.

The website is also an organic resource and the team is working on sourcing and editing new content to be added later in the year. The project team are always happy to receive suggestions for new content and associated resources. Please contact kelly.auty@bps.org.uk to contribute.

OUT NOW IN BPS JOURNALS

Recent work on the composition of personal social networks suggests that they consist of a series of layers that differ in the quality and quantity of relationships involved. Alistair Sutcliffe, Robin Dunbar, Jens Binder and Holly Arrow draw on both social and evolutionary psychology to argue that relationships at different layers serve different functions and have different cost-benefit profiles. They argue: 'The trade-off between costs and benefits at a given level, and across the different types of demands and resources typical of different levels, gives rise to a distribution of social effort that generates and maintains a hierarchy of layered sets of relationships within social networks. We suggest that, psychologically, these trade-offs are related to the level of trust in a relationship, and that this is itself a function of the time invested in the relationship.'

Commenting on the article, Robert Kraut and Itamar Rosenn speculate that social network sites like Facebook have lowered the cost of maintaining ties at various intimacy levels. Barry Wellman argues that it is 'clear that human societies are different than primate bands: larger in size, diversity, spatial range, clustering, fragmentation, and links between clusters'. And Mark van Vugt writes that 'the evolution of both (political) hierarchy and social identity have played a crucial role in scaling up social networks. Together, they are missing links in the social brain hypothesis.' [In the *British Journal of Psychology*]

How do primary school teachers provide feedback during learning? Linda van den Bergh (Eindhoven School of Education) and colleagues undertook video observation of active learning lessons in Dutch primary schools, finding that about half of the teacher-student interactions contained feedback. However, this was usually focused on the tasks that were being performed by the students and on the ways in which these tasks were processed. Only 5 per cent of the feedback was explicitly related to a learning goal, and teachers tended to direct the learning processes rather than facilitating them. 'During active learning, feedback on meta-cognition and social learning is important,' the authors concluded, calling for feedback during active learning to be emphasised during teachers' professional development. [In the *British Journal of Educational Psychology*]

SOCIETY NOTICES

DCP Faculty for Children, Young People & their Families – call for papers for new publication See p.438

Postdoctoral and Postgraduate Study Visits schemes – invitation for funding applications See p.i (centre pages)

Research Seminars Competition 2012 – call for submissions See p.439

Division of Health Psychology Annual Conference 2012 See p.444

Annual General Meeting See p.444

BPS conferences and events See p.459

North East and North West of England Branch Conference 2012 See p.459

Learning Centre – CPD workshops See p.460

psychology4students 2012 (Nottingham and London) See p.479



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CONSULTATIONS NEWS

Responses submitted in April

The Society submitted responses to two consultations during April. As always, we are very grateful to members who so generously give their time to ensure that psychology feeds into public policy – if you'd like to be involved in the preparation of future responses, please do get in touch via the contact details below.

Low Secure Services & Psych Intensive Care (Department of Health)

The Society felt the guidance was lacking in detail, detracting from its utility of informing future commissioning. In particular, greater detail regarding therapeutic activity, and the inclusion of more tangible standards was recommended.

Victims & Witnesses (Ministry of Justice)

The Society agreed with the need to prioritise and provide high-intensity support services to victims of serious crime, those consistently targeted and the most vulnerable groups. It was noted that the societal costs of long-term mental health problems resulting from trauma are often large and that front-line intervention from voluntary bodies can be helpful in ensuring a more rapid recovery. Recommendations were made for the training of front-line staff, and the preparation of witnesses for giving evidence was recommended.

Making an impact: Response outcomes

Breast Cancer Quality Standard (NICE)

Many of the points raised in the Society's response were noted and acted upon, including the following:

- I Quality Statement 3 – patient satisfaction is now included as an outcome measure; the Definition now notes that breast conserving surgery may include partial reconstruction.
- I Quality Statement 4 – this Statement now includes all women undergoing mastectomy, not just those who were advised to have one.
- I Quality Statement 10 – details are now given of the frequency of mammography provided for women diagnosed when younger than 50, not just those 50 and older.
- I Quality Statement 12 – the role of the key worker now includes offering referral to psychological services.

Secure Estate for Children and Young People (Ministry of Justice and the Youth Justice Board)

The Society's main concern regarding the need to highlight the significant level of mental health need in this population has been addressed.

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).

Ethnic diversity at work prize

To promote organisational/occupational psychology's contribution to the knowledge base, the Ethnic Diversity at Work Group of the Society's Division of Occupational Psychology is offering an award for completed MSc projects that focus on ethnicity in organisations. The £1000 award will be made for a completed MSc dissertation project that is deemed to make the most valuable contribution to understanding how psychology can influence workplace practices around race/ethnicity dynamics in UK workplaces.

Submissions will be assessed on the quality of the completed research, including both theory and methodology, and potential contribution to psychological perspectives on ethnicity in the workplace. Applicants must clearly show how the research topic includes the use of psychological approaches to understanding ethnicity in workplaces.

Submissions are welcome from recent MSc graduates (enrolled in the 2010/11 academic year) as well as current students. Applicants should be/have been enrolled on a Society-accredited occupational/organisational psychology course.

Submissions should be written in the form of a



research report of around 2000 words using APA format. You should also include an explanation of why the project is worthy of consideration.

The winner will be awarded their prize at an Ethnic Diversity at Work seminar and invited to give a short presentation (15 minutes) at this event.

Closing date for submissions: Monday 30 July 2012.

Please send an e-mail to doyin.atewologun.1@city.ac.uk to indicate your interest in submitting a research report, or for any other questions.

Society vacancies

Research Board

Postdoctoral Representative

See advert p.438

Contact *Liz Beech* liz.beech@bps.org.uk

Closing date 16 July 2012