

Psychologists get busy at The Hub

The first residents of The Hub at Wellcome Collection, a flagship new space for interdisciplinary projects around health and well-being, will investigate the busyness of modern life. Bringing together a rich network of scientists, artists, humanists, clinicians, public health experts, broadcasters and public engagement professionals, the group will explore states of rest and noise, tumult and stillness, and the health implications for lives increasingly lived in a hubbub of activity. They have been awarded £1 million to develop the project over two years.

The group is led by social scientist Felicity Callard (Durham University) with core contributing members comprising psychologist and writer Charles Fernyhough (Durham University), psychologist and broadcaster Claudia Hammond (BBC's *All in the Mind* and *Health Check*), neuroscientist Daniel

Margulies (Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences) and poet James Wilkes (University of East Anglia). The group will start their occupancy at Wellcome Collection in October 2014, as the venue opens new spaces and galleries after a £17.5m development.

The ambitious project will be nourished by the research resources of Wellcome Collection, the Wellcome Library and the Wellcome Trust and will embrace the noisy city beyond and the people who live in it. The group, selected from 55 applications, will have freedom to develop ideas and outputs over their residency. The Hub will gather international experts investigating hubbub and rest at different scales, to breathe new life into the questions we ask about rest and busyness. Should we slow down, or



The group is led by social scientist Felicity Callard (centre) Charles Fernyhough (bottom right), Claudia Hammond (top left), Daniel Margulies (bottom left) and James Wilkes (top right)

COMBATING '...ISMS' IN FASHION

Natalie Fernandes and Carolyn Mair report from Better Lives 2014, London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London

This year, as last, London College of Fashion's (LCF) Better Lives series has focused on the relationship between fashion and psychology as part of LCF's initiative to use the discipline of fashion to drive change, build a sustainable future and improve the way we live. The 2014 series, concerned with '...isms in fashion', was curated by Dr Carolyn Mair (LCF), Reader in Psychology and Course Leader of the MSc Applied Psychology in Fashion and MA Psychology for Fashion Professionals.

The first seminar brought together Dr Ros Jennings (Gloucester University) and Professor Paul Matts, a Research Scientist from P&G. Dr Jennings presented thought-provoking case studies from a sociocultural perspective of two women in popular culture, Dame Shirley Bassey and Petula Clarke, demonstrating different approaches to ageing. Professor Matts presented data from studies demonstrating the importance of skin appearance on perceived attractiveness.



He argued that skin is an indicator of both health and youth. Therefore, taking an evolutionary psychology perspective, Professor Matts claimed that men are attracted to younger-looking women because they signal fertility and the potential to increase their chances of reproduction and survival. He argued that what is perceived as attractive is also perceived as healthy. The talks were

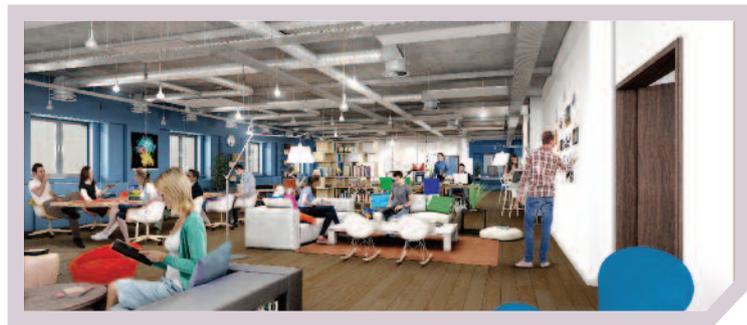
followed by an audience discussion whereby the main conclusions were that although evolutionary processes are difficult to overcome, cultural influences can affect behaviour. Given the increasing population of people aged over 50, the fashion industry needs to address this population's needs as well as those of the very narrow demographic currently catered for.

The second seminar looked at racism in fashion. Jody Furlong, director of The Eye Casting Company and The Eye Models, demonstrated how stereotyping develops in childhood using a YouTube video replication of Kenneth and Mamie Clark's 1940s experiment (www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybDa0gSuAcg). Furlong criticised the lack of black models in *Vogue* and on the catwalk in New York, Paris, Milan and London. However, his optimism that change could happen was supported by the second speaker, James Lyon, a photographer and spokesperson for Models of Diversity. James claimed that consumers could influence change by supporting designers

should we embrace intense activity? What effects do each of these states have on the health of our bodies and minds? The space at Wellcome Collection will provide a base for the group to perform rigorous, creative research and to stage scientific and artistic experiments, data-gathering and public events. While neuroscientists study the 'resting' brain and mind, artists will explore the borders between signal, sound and noise, psychologists will track people's bodily activity, and social scientists will map the city's noise and silences.

Felicity Callard said: 'Our team is enormously excited to take up the first residency of The Hub, and to work with this extraordinary physical and conceptual space to showcase what can be achieved through experimental interdisciplinary endeavours. Our collaborative work on rest and noise will have members of the public at its heart and will create new possibilities for people from all backgrounds to find their own kinds of rest in the busy city. Through our research activities and creative adventures we want to transform how rest and its opposites are understood - and give us all an urgently needed intimacy with a hidden but vital part of our lives.'

Charles Fernyhough said: 'We're thrilled to be the first team to occupy this extraordinary research space in the heart of the busy city. Psychologically speaking, "rest" is a puzzle, with debates about whether the mind is ever actually still or silent. Our project will see neuroscientists working with psychologists on new ways of assessing subjective experience during rest, integrating it with what we know about the resting brain, and feeding into broader interdisciplinary experiments that draw on insights from the humanities, arts and social sciences to explore how people mentally and physically negotiate the boundaries between rest and busyness.'



For Claudia Hammond, the exciting thing about the project is 'the number of different ways that members of the public will be able to get involved, from watching poetry performances in the Restmobile (a specially-adapted campervan) to lying on a couch in Wellcome Collection telling us their daydreams.'

Clare Matterson, Director of Medical Humanities and Engagement at the Wellcome Trust, said: 'In a field of exceptional applications, Felicity Callard and her team inspired us with a topic of rich potential and pressing concern. The pressures and health implications of unrelenting activity are an inescapable but underexplored part of the environment of modern life. We look forward to the process and outputs of their collaborative curiosity and anticipate their work leaving rich a legacy for academic and creative inquiry, clinical practice and public policy and for The Hub's future as a crucible for innovative interdisciplinary research.' JS

who embraced diversity and boycotting those who didn't. Audience members agreed with this and were passionate about the importance of education. Dr Mair stressed that education is a continuous process and encouraged those present to take forward the seminar's message to others.

Three speakers presented at the third seminar, Ablism in Fashion. Listening to paralympian and model Stef Reid describing how she had successfully adapted to becoming disabled, following a boating accident aged 16, was inspirational. Stef articulated the problems of striving to conform to the narrow stereotype of 'normal' and encouraged the audience to challenge the current paradigm. She emphasised the need for the fashion industry to celebrate difference rather than view it as a reason for exclusion. Michael Shamash, Chairman of the Restricted Growth Association, writer, researcher and self-described disabled person pointed out that disabled people consume fashion with as strong a sense of style as anyone else; however, they are typically ignored in the industry. He suggested that for change to happen, disabled people needed to occupy positions of power within fashion and that education needs to embrace diversity. Finally, Kelly Knox, winner of 2010's Britain's Top Missing Model, actress and ambassador for

REACH, The Association for Children with Upper Limb Deficiency, spoke about how reaching out to others who were struggling with confidence issues had made her aware of her 'disability'. 'I am disabled by the attitudes in the fashion industry, not by my missing arm.' The audience discussion covered the lack of diversity behind as well as in front of the cameras. Again, the consensus was for a more inclusive attitude from the fashion industry. Dr Mair concluded by referring to Donald Norman's work on inclusive design: design for all people.

The final seminar was a panel session chaired by Dr Phil Sams (LCF, and Visiting Professor at Northumbria University). The panel comprised Caryn Franklin MBE, James Partridge OBE, Zowie Broach, Dr Chris Pawson (University of East London) and Dr Carolyn Mair. Each speaker was given a few minutes to make a point before the audience discussion. Caryn Franklin is a Visiting Fellow at LCF, broadcaster, fashion editor, co-editor of *i-D* magazine, and co-founder of All Walks Beyond the Catwalk which challenges the fashion industry's dependence on unachievable body ideals by promoting diversity and inclusivity. She spoke about the importance of educating designers, stylists and journalists. James Partridge OBE, Founder and CEO of Changing Faces, the leading UK charity supporting and

representing people with disfigurements, presented the audience with statistics demonstrating the large demographic on people with disfigurements in the UK. He argued that children are exposed to stereotyping through games in which the 'baddie' is scarred. He also showed how 'disfigurements' can be considered beautiful. He stressed the importance of fashion in developing social norms and argued for an industry that represented and respected individuals regardless of their appearance. Zowie Broach (LCF) is a partner in Boudicca, a design house respected for its integrity, depth of design and attention to detail. Zowie spoke about the beauty of images that were created to be different. Next was Chris Pawson, who spoke about the importance of clothing not only for other people's perceptions of us, but for our own cognitions and mood. Giving examples from his own work, he emphasised the importance of fashion in well-being. Finally, Dr Carolyn Mair summed up the other speakers' comments and reiterated the recurring theme of the narrow focus of 'beauty' and 'normality' currently promoted by the fashion industry. The concluding remarks emphasised the uniquely important role held by the fashion industry and the mission of LCF which is to use fashion to drive change, build a sustainable future and improve quality of life.

Teachers to be trained in neuroscience

Teachers look set to receive training in neuroscience, after members of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) voted for a motion calling for materials and policies on applying neuroscience to education.

Perhaps prompted by the announcement earlier this year of a government-backed Education Endowment Foundation and the Wellcome Trust's launch of a £6 million scheme that will fund neuroscientific research into learning, members at the union's annual conference narrowly supported the motion. However, the news brought a mixed reaction.

Dr Catherine Loveday, a neuropsychologist at the University of Westminster, told us: 'I am delighted about the recent financial support for educational neuroscience research, and I very much welcome initiatives to integrate robust and relevant neuroscience into educational practice. However, I think we have to be careful about how this is done. There is a real tendency for neuroscience to be taken out of context, misunderstood and misapplied. Julia Neal, member of ATL and supporter of the motion, is quoted as saying that an

understanding of neuroscience could help teachers support creative "right brain thinkers", a concept that would fill most neuroscientists with horror [see tinyurl.com/73h2xan]. Applying good, up-to-date empirical knowledge of the brain and mind to educational processes is an utterly vital step forward, but any training must be done carefully, appropriately and by the right people.'

We also spoke to Helen Knowler, a Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Bristol, who said: 'I am not a neuroscientist, but I have been a teacher who has attended countless hours of "training" over the years. Some of it was excellent and some of it was very poor! It is not uncommon to read in research literature or mainstream media that teachers need more "training". My feeling is that this has become something of trope which obscures what we know about the complex and multifarious ways that teachers learn to do their work. There is plenty of evidence that neuroscientific insights can be useful for teachers. There is also, however, plenty of evidence that teachers have been exposed to a range of "neuromyths" whereby spurious and even bizarre approaches to teaching and

learning have been adopted in classrooms in the name of "brain science"! More "training" sounds like a good thing, but research tells us that in order for teachers to participate in high-quality professional development that has the capacity to transform experiences for learners, this needs to be more than a superficial round-up of everything we know about, in this case, the brain. Professional development for teachers, when done well, is a powerful and important tool for school improvement. Poorly designed courses, that do not attend to the cognitive, affective and ethical dimensions of teaching are likely to be a waste of time in the long run, and will not endear teachers investing time to learning more about the ways that neuroscientific insights can promote pedagogical innovation. I wholeheartedly support the idea of carefully evaluated professional development in the field of neuroscience for teachers, but would argue that it needs to be in-depth, long-term and offer some robust practical examples of the ways that this understanding translates into practice.' JS

I Share your views by e-mailing psychologist@bps.org.uk

FILM AWARD

Devil in the Room, the sleep paralysis film that featured in our November 2013 'Big picture', has won the Best Documentary Prize at the Cineglobe International Film Festival at CERN, Geneva. The biennial festival is based in the Globe of Science and Innovation, in the heart of CERN, which is home to the Large Hadron Collider, birthplace of the World Wide Web and one of the seats of modern science. The festival accepts films that are 'inspired by science', and the 2014 theme was 'Beyond the Frontier'. Filmmaker Carla MacKinnon said: 'It was a great honour to receive the award and have the film played in such a beautiful and meaningful location.'

Memories on cue

A new €2 million collaboration has launched, partnering the Department of Psychology at the University of Essex and computer scientists at Lancaster, Stuttgart and Lugano. The 'RECALL' project aims to use wearable technology to improve and augment human memory.

Professor Geoff Ward told *The Psychologist*: 'Technology has always had a direct impact on how and what humans remember. This impact is both inevitable and fundamental – technology radically changes the nature and scale of the cues that we can preserve outside our own memory in order to trigger recall. Such change is not new – we have seen the transition from story-telling to written books, from paintings to photographs to digital images and from individual diaries to collective social networks. However, in recent years technology has opened up entirely new ways of augmenting human memory – near-continuous collection of memory cues has become possible through the use of technologies such as Microsoft's SenseCam, social networks and interaction logs; advances in data storage and processing now enables widespread mining of stored cues for proactive presentation; and the presence of ubiquitous displays (both in the environment and

via personal devices such as Google Glasses) provides many new opportunities for displaying memory cues to trigger recall.'

The project aims at a targeted breakthrough to create a memory augmentation technology that provides the user with the experience of an extended and enhanced memory, but is based on improvements in the collection, mining, and presentation of appropriate information to facilitate cued memory recall.

Professor Ward says: 'One of our proposed activities, to be undertaken in the next six months, includes booking out a very large country holiday cottage, and inviting volunteer participants to wear all kinds of wearable sensors, cameras, et cetera., and then to see how the data captured can be used to test, supplement and modify memory. He adds that 'the project is high risk – numerous technical and societal challenges need to be addressed before augmented memory systems are possible; and potentially high pay-off – if successful, the project will contribute to our fundamental understanding of human memory and have a transformational impact on all spheres of life – the workplace, family life, education, and psychological well-being.' JS

'Play' is not a four-letter word

Jon Sutton reports from the Idea Conference in Billund, Denmark

There is a serious issue with the way our learning environments are fostering empathy, creativity and social cognition. We need to redefine play and reimagine learning: 'play' has a stigma that is robbing our children of an opportunity, to experience, to experiment, to explore.

That was the message from Randa Grob-Zakhary, Chief Executive Officer of the LEGO Foundation, launching this two-day event. The Foundation, endowed by LEGO's founding family, is committed to 'inspire the world to recognise, appreciate and take action to support the transformative role of play in learning'. They do this through philanthropic activity and through the funding and dissemination of academic research in the field.

After a pop science quiz on how the mind learns, I enjoyed a breakout session with Professor Peter Gray (Department of Psychology, Boston College) on 'freeing the play instinct'. Gray referred to evidence suggesting that children's sense of control over their lives has continuously decreased over the past 35 years, before going on to attempt a causal link between this and declining opportunities to play. The first half of the 20th century, Gray said, was the golden age of play, as child labour laws freed the young from the workplace. Beyond 1955 or so, adults began to take over children's non-labour activities and hobbies were replaced by classes. 'When I talk about what my childhood was like,' said Gray, 'young parents are shocked. When I was five, as long as I had a responsible six-year-old with me I was free to roam.' Play is how children learn to solve their own problems, take control

of their lives, regulate their emotions and get along with peers, and Gray argues that we need to create the 'optimal context for self-education' – learning how to learn rather than a formal education based on storing facts and

know how their brain works. Achieving this 'mind mastery' – which Whitebread describes as a combination of skill, will and thrill – appears to predict a whole range of lifespan outcomes (such as high school grades, earnings, arrest

about what you can do'. 'Just dig in and go figure it out' is the only job description you need, yet schools and workplaces are not set up to encourage 'disciplined play' of their personnel. 'Just imagine if our schools followed the Google rule – 20 per cent of your time given over to exploration, to be the architect of your own learning.' Instead, Wagner argued, we penalise mistakes, leading to a fear of failure and subsequent risk aversion. 'Fail early and fail often', Wagner advises. 'It's about iteration – reflect on what you have done, and set new learning goals.'

These themes continued on the second day, with a conversation between psychologist Kathy Hirsh-Pasek (Director of the Infant Language Laboratory at Temple University) and Mitch Resnick (Director of the Lifelong Kindergarten Group, MIT). We can't just open up the head of a child and pour in facts, in a world that is constantly changing; instead, the emphasis should be on projects, peers, passion and play. In his later talk, Jack Shonkoff (Director of the Centre on the Developing Child at Harvard University) agreed: Colleges need to consider what their 'value added' is, in an era of the Massive Open Online Course. It's about coaching, not teaching.

Putting their money where their mouth is, the LEGO Foundation launched the #play2learn Re-imagine Learning Challenge. This is open to individuals, organisations, and partnerships who are using play or playful approaches to enrich learning. The deadline is later this month – see www.changemakers.com/play2learn for more details.



assessment. He points to a number of curriculum-free, 'democratic schools' across Europe and suggests that these produce more rounded individuals, rather than the increasing levels of narcissism found in numerous academic studies. 'Playmates can't tolerate someone thinking they're the centre of the universe', Gray concluded.

A second session led by Professor David Whitebread, a developmental cognitive psychologist at the University of Cambridge, asked how children become 'self-regulating' and why it is important. Self-regulated learners know what to do when they have a problem; enjoy solving problems; and

history), better than measures of early literacy. Yet education policy retains its focus on the ends rather than the means. 'The thing is', says Whitebread, 'it's not difficult – I can train a group of teachers to support playful education in five or six weeks. It's about making metacognitive and learning strategies explicit, and encouraging children to reflect upon and talk about their learning.'

After lunch, 'Expert in Residence' at the Harvard University Innovation Lab, Tony Wagner, delivered a clear and passionate call to educate young people to be 'creators, not consumers'. 'The world no longer cares how much our students know', he said, 'it's

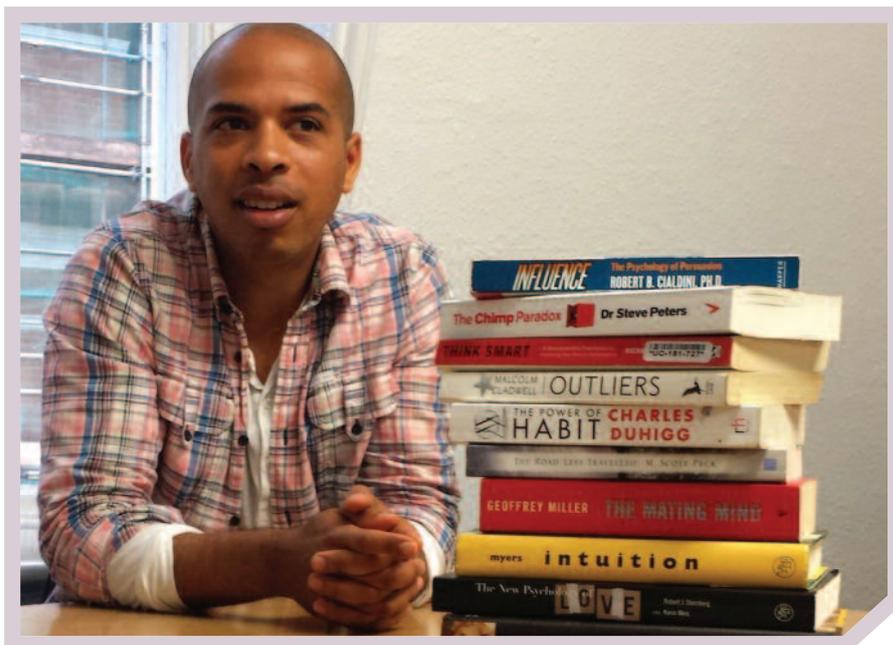
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASE CHANGE

Since the introduction of the new legal aid scheme in April 2013, certain forms of specified evidence of domestic violence, or the risk of domestic violence, are now required in order to access funding for legal aid in private family law matters. The Ministry of Justice has reviewed the evidence requirements over the first year of operation, and the definition of 'health professional' has now been expanded to include practitioner psychologists. The Ministry of Justice is currently updating the template letters and guidance at www.justice.gov.uk for victims of domestic violence and organisations responding to requests for evidence.

PAIN GARDEN

People who endure regular pain are finding some relief after using an innovative map that helps them to create a 'garden' of their suffering. Created by Professor of Rehabilitation at Teesside University Denis Martin and Animmersion, a Teesside DigitalCity company, the Pain Garden is supported by Arthritis Research UK and allows people to link up the multidimensional aspects of the impact of pain on their lives. By answering questions relating to emotion, sensory experience and well-being a digital garden, accessed via a website, is grown that thrives or wilts as a patient's health and well-being alters.

Professor Martin said: 'Pain can be confusing for people as it runs alongside different emotions. They find it difficult to get this across. Getting people to understand what chronic pain impacts is important to help them deal with it. The idea of a garden came about as pain has different dimensions – sensory, emotional and general well-being that can sit as well-defined items themselves, but they all link together. When you use the metaphor of a garden you have the garden as a whole but also within it distinct elements like plants, trees and water features. When you put it altogether you create the garden.'



Brixton reading group growing

In psychology bestseller *The Social Animal*, American journalist David Brooks describes how regularly attending a reading group can contribute to people's subjective well-being. So if you are in London, consider getting yourself down to the London Psychology Reading Group, founded 18 months ago by Brunel University PhD student Morgan Ereku (pictured above).

The reading group is supported by Lambeth Library who, keen to encourage community initiatives, provide the groups books and a room in Brixton Library where the group convenes on the last Sunday of each month. Each reading group session features a book falling into psychology, popular science or general well-being categories (e.g. recent best sellers such as *Thinking Fast and Thinking Slow* by Daniel Kahneman, *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell, as well as popular classics like Helen Fisher's *Anatomy of Love*). Occasionally the group features biographies and multicultural fiction, to explore how a psychological reading of these texts can deliver additional cognisance of the contemporary lived experience.

Morgan describes two aspects that contribute to the reading group's success. 'Firstly, the public penchant to draw on psychology to understand everyday concerns and desires that has flourished with the growing prominence of popular science books by trailblazing psychologists.

And secondly, people's desire for a forum to meet and discuss the insights garnered from the solitary act of reading such books. In the case of the London Psychology Reading Group, doing so provides the opportunity to learn, share and discuss the daily stream of new psychological findings with other enthusiasts.'

The group has been advertised through local blogs, social networking platforms, and Lambeth Library channels, leading to a diverse range of members from north and south of the river. 'We're looking to attract a younger audience to reading groups,' Morgan explains. 'Members are mainly in their twenties and thirties, and include psychologists, sociologists, health professionals, undergraduates, as well as a fair proportion of members with no specific psychology qualifications besides a keen hobbyist interest in the science of the mind.'

Given this, perhaps we will see a growth of similar reading groups? 'I hope so,' Morgan says. 'Meeting in a relaxed environment to discuss the latest research on psychology, and reflect on what it reveals about ourselves and others, is a wonderfully rewarding way to while away a Sunday afternoon.' JS

I f you are interested in joining the London Psychology Reading Group, contact Morgan Ereku (morgan.ereku@brunel.ac.uk) or Brixton Library on 020 7926 1067 or follow @LDNPsychology

Mind Media Awards 2014

The Mind Media Awards, which celebrates the best examples of reporting and portrayals of mental health in print, broadcast and digital media, are open for entries with a deadline of 27 June.

The event, organised by the mental health charity Mind, invites journalists, broadcasters and production teams to submit work that has helped to raise awareness of mental health problems and tackle outdated stereotypes.

Last year's winners included *Newsnight's* feature on postpartum psychosis, BBC One drama series *The Village* and comedian Jon Richardson's Channel 4 documentary *A Little Bit OCD*.

Paul Farmer, Chief Executive of Mind, said: 'This year we are looking for programmes, blogs and news reports which challenge myths, misinformation and clichés about mental health, encourage positive debate and tackle stigma and discrimination. It's important that audiences are able to see people with mental health problems as they are as a whole rather than just in relation to their diagnosis and we're keen to see work that includes the voices of people who have experienced mental health problems.' JS

I For more information about the categories, criteria and how to enter, visit www.mind.org.uk/awards

Brain Prize

The winners of this year's annual Brain Prize have been announced at a ceremony in Denmark. Giacomo Rizzolatti, Stanislas Dehaene and Trevor W. Robbins CBE – from Italy, France and the UK respectively – shared the accolade for their outstanding contribution to European neuroscience.

Each year's prize recognises highly original and influential advances in any area of neuroscience, and these three scientists distinguished themselves in studies on higher brain mechanisms, motivated behaviour, social



Trevor W. Robbins CBE

interaction and cognitive and behavioural disorders.

Professor Robbins is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society. You can read about his work in cognitive neuroscience,

behavioural neuroscience and psychopharmacology in an interview in our May 2012 issue.

Chairman of the Foundation's board Professor Povl Krogsgaard-Larsen said the three winners complement each other in spanning a wide spectrum of challenging issues of higher brain function. 'We are pleased to award this year's prize to scientists who are providing us with a better understanding and better treatment of cognitive and behavioural diseases that are huge burdens to society,' he added.

FUNDING NEWS

The **International Federation of University Women** invites applications for its international fellowships and grants to women graduates from any learning discipline that are enrolled in a PhD programme. A number of awards are available for the purpose of postgraduate research, study and training, including funds reserved for graduates based in Great Britain. Applications should be received by 30 June 2014.

I tinyurl.com/qzs5z9q

The **Wellcome Trust** is accepting applications for its **Short-term Research Leave Awards for clinicians and scientists**. The awards enable clinicians or scientists to undertake a short-term period of research at a department with academic expertise in medical humanities. Applicants can be scientists, clinicians or healthcare professionals who would return to their established post on completion of the award and must be residents of the UK or the Republic of Ireland. Applications should be received by 18 July 2014.

I tinyurl.com/mlewzov

The **Society for Reproductive and Infant Psychology** invites applications its three **Conference Bursaries for Students** to attend the annual conference of the Society for Reproductive and Infant Psychology. Preference will be given to students who are presenting a paper or poster and those who have limited or no funds to attend. The bursary will cover conference fees and up to £150 towards travel and accommodation.

The SRIP also invites applications for its **Conference Bursary for NHS Staff**. Applicants will have engaged directly with the implementation of evidence-based practice and the conduct of appropriate research.

Applications are also invited for the SRIP's annual **Doctoral Thesis Prize**. The prize is for a research thesis submitted as a full or partial requirement for a postgraduate degree, the subject of which may be any aspect of reproduction, birth or infancy. The prize includes £250, a year's membership to the society and all expenses paid attendance to the annual conference.

Applications for all the above should be received by 31 July 2014.

I www.srip.ac.uk/funding.php

'DIABETES DISTRESS' PROJECT

People diagnosed with diabetes are three times more likely to be diagnosed with depression than people without it, and this can have a serious impact on their ability to self-manage their condition.

PsychologyOnline has secured Small Business Research Initiative for Healthcare funding to see how its approach to cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) can be used to treat 'diabetes distress', a term used to describe the sense of frustration, anger and disillusionment that can lead to neglecting the condition over time.

The collaborative project aims to improve glycaemic control and psychological well-being through integrated care. It is led by Ann Hayes, chair of PsychologyOnline, who says: 'PsychologyOnline provides one-to-one CBT via instant messaging and we use highly experienced psychotherapists. We will be working with King's College Hospital to train diabetes specialists nurses to provide CBT integrated with structured diabetes education and will pilot this approach in a small focused patient study.'

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For BPS awards and grant schemes, see **www.bps.org.uk/awards&grants**. Funding bodies should e-mail news to Emma Smith on **emma.smith@bps.org.uk** for possible inclusion

'What else can you expect from a Crappo?'

Which slur is worse: 'cracker' or the 'n-word'? After a July 2013 debate on CNN in which a panel discussed this exact question, researchers from NYU – Abu Dhabi, The Sage Colleges, and Tilburg University set out to determine why people might perceive slurs directed at some groups as more offensive than those directed at others – and whether group status has anything to do with it.

P.J. Henry, Sarah Butler and Mark Brandt first gathered over 200 college students and asked them to generate the most offensive word that they could think of for 15 target groups (like 'African-Americans', 'obese people', or 'highly intelligent people'). After generating these words, participants then had to rate the offensiveness of each word, and the relative status of each target group in American society.

As expected, there was a strong negative correlation between perceived status and offensiveness – the lower in status participants perceived a group to be, the more offensive they thought that slurs directed at that group were. For example, slurs directed against European-Americans (like 'cracker' or 'honkey') or men (like 'dickhead') were seen as significantly less offensive than slurs directed against the mentally disabled (e.g. 'retard'), obese (e.g. 'fat ass'), or African-Americans (e.g. the 'n-word'). These differences were also reflected in the perceived status of these groups. Men, European-Americans, straight people, and highly intelligent people all enjoyed perceived group statuses that averaged around 8.5 out of 9 (and the offensiveness of their group-based slurs hovered between 3 and 6 on an 11-point scale). On the other hand, groups like the mentally ill, mentally disabled, Arab-Americans, obese people, Latino(a)s, gay people, and African-Americans had average statuses below 5 on the 9-point scale, and the offensiveness of slurs against them averaged between 7 and 9 on the 11-point scale.

However, the obvious flaw in this study is its correlational nature – it is impossible to tell the causal direction, if any, that this relationship might take. Are slurs more offensive because the groups are lower in status, or do the groups possess low status because the slurs against their groups are so much worse? Or is there a separate variable entirely explaining this association?

In order to test this question experimentally, the researchers first had to somehow find a 'slur' that would be completely separated from all of the ones we already know, with their historical/cultural entanglements and

all of the confounding factors that would accompany them.

The researchers solved this conundrum by making up a brand new slur of their very own. Over 250 participants read a story about 'creative developers', a group in a hypothetical workplace that either make very good money, have very good benefits, get three-day weekends and are very important and influential (high status) or make very little money, have no benefits, have to work on the weekends and are not important or influential at all (low status). The participants then imagined hearing someone in payroll derogate one of the creative developers for not understanding something, finishing up by saying, 'What else can you expect from a crappo?' Crappo, as the vignette explains, is a derogatory combination of the words 'creative' and 'poser'. As expected, participants who thought that creative developers were a low-status group rated the term 'crappo' as significantly more offensive than those who thought that the creative developers were a high-status group. Importantly, they also thought that the 'crappo' in question would feel significantly more insulted, bad about himself, and angry if his group was low-status – and this difference in expected emotional reactions explained (at least partially) the difference in perceived offensiveness.

Overall, group status is an important determinant in how 'offensive' we perceive slurs to be. Slurs directed at lower-status groups in society are seen as significantly more offensive as those directed at higher-status groups, at least in part because we feel that lower-status group member will react to those derogatory terms with more negative emotions.

! By guest host Melanie Tannenbaum, UIUC social psychology PhD candidate and Scientific American blogger (<http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/psysociety>)



Our own vocabulary?

In History of Psychology

If you were to pick up the flagship journal from a discipline that is foreign to you and flip to an article at random, how much do you think you would understand?

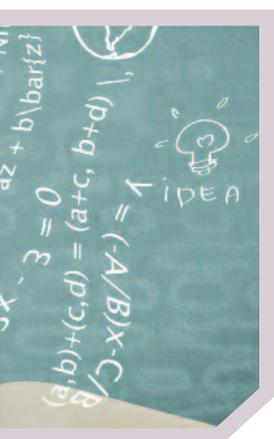
The vocabularies used by any given discipline overlap with those of many other disciplines, although the specific meaning associated with a given term may be dissimilar from discipline to discipline. Anglophone psychology, for instance, has been previously shown to share much of its vocabulary with other disciplines, especially: biology, chemistry, computing, electricity, law, linguistics, mathematics, medicine, music, pathology, philosophy, and physics. But how much of psychology's vocabulary may be said to be unique to itself?

John G. Benjafield of the Department of Psychology at Brock University [Canada] compared the histories of the vocabularies of psychology and the 12 disciplines listed above. Constructing databases for each of the disciplines using entries in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Benjafield examined the rate of primary vs. secondary words (i.e. how often a word was used for the first time by a discipline vs. how often a word was appropriated from the vocabulary of another discipline) along with the dates of first use of these terms, and the polysemy of the vocabularies (i.e. the number of different meanings held by a given word).

So does psychology have its own vocabulary? The answer seems to be... somewhat. The



In Journal of Experimental Social Psychology



Getting to grips with implicit bias

In *Journal of Experimental Psychology*

majority of the vocabularies of all 13 disciplines were formed of secondary words; that is, the bulk of their vocabularies are formed of words that were first used in the English language by another discipline (often with another meaning). But, psychology was nonetheless found to have some unique characteristics with regard to its vocabulary that you might not have expected.

First, Benjafield found that computing and linguistics have the highest percentage of secondary words in their vocabularies (97 per cent and 94 per cent respectively), while psychology and chemistry had the lowest rates (65 per cent and 62 per cent). In light of these results, psychology's vocabulary may be described as being less metaphorical in nature than previously assumed (especially when compared to computing and linguistics).

Moreover, whereas the other subjects in this study showed a collective tendency over time to increasingly assign new meanings to existing words, psychology has been following the opposite pattern – over time, psychology has tended more and more to invent new words for its purposes than the other disciplines.

Finally – and surprisingly – Benjafield's vocabulary analysis painted a picture in which psychology has been strongly influenced by the naming practices not of philosophy and physics, but of chemistry.

By Jennifer Bazar, University of Toronto.

Implicit attitudes are one of the hottest topics in social psychology. Now a massive new study directly compares methods for changing them. The results are both good and bad for those who believe that some part of prejudice is our automatic, uncontrollable, reactions to different social groups.

The implicit association test (IAT) is a simple task you can complete online at Project Implicit which records the speed of your responses when sorting targets, such as white and black faces, into different categories, such as good and bad. Even people who disavow any prejudiced beliefs or feelings can have IAT scores that show they find it easier, for example, to associate white faces with goodness and black faces with badness – a so called 'implicit bias'.

The history of implicit bias research is controversial – with arguments over what exactly an implicit bias means, how it should be measured and whether they can be changed. Now a new paper in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology* reports the results of a competition that challenged researchers to design brief interventions aimed at changing people's implicit biases. The interventions had to be completed online, via the Project Implicit website, and take less than five minutes. Samples of 300–400 people were then randomly assigned to take each intervention, allowing a high statistical power to estimate the effect of the

intervention on IAT scores.

Overall, 17 interventions were tested, and nine appeared to work, while eight had estimated effect sizes close to zero. The paper reports that interventions that focused on trying to shift the underlying attitude of the participants fared badly. Interventions such as 'instilling a sense of common humanity', 'training empathetic responding', encouraging taking the perspective of the outgroup or imagining positive interracial contact all seemed not to work.

These failures to shift IAT scores suggest that the IAT measures something that is relative stable – a real thing in our cognitive makeup, and something that can be measured in a way that can't be as easily manipulated as self-report.

The interventions that did work included some that targeted response strategies, including a straight 'Faking the IAT' intervention, a practising

the IAT intervention and several other priming and training interventions. That these worked is also both good and bad news. That IAT scores can be shifted by faking and training is bad news for the reliability of the measure, but there is some comfort in knowing that the successful interventions all relied on sophisticated knowledge of how the IAT worked – most participants in implicit bias studies wouldn't come up with these strategies on their own.

The big unknown is how long term any of the effects are. It could turn out that sustained change on implicit biases requires longer than five minutes intervention, but with more sustained interventions it really is possible to shift the underlying attitudes, and not just people's response strategies.

By Tom Stafford, University of Sheffield.



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