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British  
Psychological  
Society

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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

### Gerry Mulhern

Contact Gerry Mulhern via the Society's Leicester office, or e-mail: [thepresident@bps.org.uk](mailto:thepresident@bps.org.uk)

I must confess to never having liked zoos. Even as a child, any sense of wonder or novelty was short lived as I began to reflect on the predicament of the creatures on the other side of the fence. This view was cemented several decades later by a visit to the atrocious, and happily now defunct, Causeway Safari Park in Northern Ireland, a shabby excuse for a tourist amenity, displaying toothless, geriatric lions and other ageing creatures, large and small. The 'highlight' was a chimpanzee squatting in a featureless concrete enclosure, smoking lit cigarettes and munching Mars bars thrown freely by moronic patrons.

Although, undoubtedly, things have improved since those ghastly days, I was nonetheless surprised to find myself, on a recent visit to Spain, queuing for admission to Valencia's Bioparc (pronounced 'bee-oh-park'). Hailed by reviewers on Tripadvisor as the 'coolest zoo ever', the much-vaunted 'Bioparc experience' is a must for any visitor to Valencia.

And, I have to say, I was seduced by the modern, vibrant, spotlessly clean facility divided into four zones – Equatorial Forest, Wetlands, Madagascar and Savannah, all carefully engineered to provide authentic habitats for the staggering array of healthy-looking creatures.

What a pleasure, relaxing with a café solo no more than a few feet away from perambulating giraffes, strolling zebras, and all manner of exotic deer-like animals whose names escape me, all cohabiting in a beautifully landscaped area – no barriers with the public, save an attractive moat containing myriad fish. African music and tropical animal noises piped throughout added to the safari-like ambience.

Gradually, however, the bile of my childhood unease began to rise as I meandered along the cleverly fashioned paths bordered by low mud walls. My more jaundiced schemata took hold upon seeing the lone male white rhino ('they are solitary creatures' we were informed), corralled off from the small groups of more sociable females, spending his time wearing a circular track in the exquisitely authentic red clay. Hmm, not a good sign I thought.

Further along, two magnificent silverback gorillas looked utterly miserable (sneering howls of anthropomorphism!), although I'm pleased to say that neither was smoking, or

unwrapping a Mars bar. Then there was the aviary – very large and packed with trees and other shrubs, but migration from one side to the other took seconds. And how did they manage to ensure that the many large, exotic, non-enclosed birds stayed put? I think I know the answer. I could go on, but you get the idea.

Don't get me wrong, Bioparc is as good as it gets. The undoubtedly attractive and natural environment is impressively authentic, but only, I was forced to conclude, for humans. Although I am happy to attribute all sorts of cognitive abilities to animals, I have never considered them to be aesthetes, not even our closer cousins. So, although we may find an attractive moat much more pleasing than a high fence or metal bars, there is a fair chance that the

animals couldn't give a fig – they still can't get out.

There are of course compelling arguments in favour of zoos for the purposes of conservation and education, but

unquestioning acceptance of these functions risks complacency. There are surely alternatives. It would be my hope that psychology would be at the forefront of challenging conventional wisdom, devising and promoting alternatives to the status quo.

Not entirely unrelatedly, psychologists involved in research on animals should seek to avoid the risk of complacency afforded by Home Office certification or relatively benign scrutiny by departmental research ethics committees. Undoubtedly, there is excellent research carried out by animal psychologists – timely, relevant and offering significant contributions to knowledge and alleviation of human suffering. But let's not delude ourselves that all animal research in universities up and down the land meets these standards.

We should ensure the criteria used by ethics committees set the bar high in terms of demonstrable benefits within specified timeframes – higher indeed than that for research involving non-vulnerable humans who can withhold or withdraw consent. Vague or speculative claims about contribution to knowledge are insufficient. We must do so if we are to retain the moral and ethical high ground against those deplorable individuals who would seek to justify direct action against animal researchers.

"Vague or speculative claims about contribution to knowledge are insufficient"

## Accreditation through partnership

Over the past two years the Society has been engaged in extensive development, consultation and evaluation work in relation to its accreditation function. Following successful piloting, the Society is pleased to announce the launch of its new *accreditation through partnership* scheme.

### New guidance documentation

Ending in July, the pilot scheme was warmly received and feedback has helped shape the final standards documentation. The new standards, accreditation through partnership handbooks, and other guidance information for education providers and their students, can be downloaded from [www.bps.org.uk/partnership](http://www.bps.org.uk/partnership).

As well as changes to the accreditation model itself, a number of practical changes have been introduced aimed at providing clearer information to prospective students and trainees. Our online database of accredited programmes has been updated to reflect the launch of accreditation through partnership: all currently accredited programmes are now listed as carrying Society accreditation on an open-ended basis. Education providers offering accredited programmes are also able to download an 'accredited by The British Psychological Society' logo for use in their advertising and publicity materials.

### Key outcomes from our evaluation

We received feedback from a total of 15 education providers and 45 visiting team members who had participated in pilot partnership visits, some of which were undertaken jointly alongside the Health Professions Council's approval process. Feedback was collected via an online questionnaire, with a view to establishing the extent to which the pilot visits promoted the principles of accreditation through partnership. Our respondents agreed that the approach used encouraged education providers to show their programmes off at their best, with over 90 per cent of respondents agreeing that the visit provided an opportunity to consider future enhancement in a constructive way. The Society's role in course accreditation is developing as that of the 'critical friend';

one visiting team member commented that 'the role of the "critical friend" seemed to be extremely welcomed by the course team, and gave the BPS panel an opportunity to be creatively professional'.

Visits undertaken concurrently with HPC approval were experienced less positively than stand-alone partnership visits – perhaps this is only to be expected of a new process for both programmes and visitors. However, despite some negative feedback, 64 per cent of the



visiting team respondents enjoyed working alongside the HPC, and 67 per cent of the education providers would recommend that other programmes plan for a joint visit.

### Further development work

We received many recommendations that we will take forward to improve accreditation through partnership. We have been able to immediately take on board some recommendations, predominantly relating to the pre-visit planning stage. Our new suggested timetables incorporate a number of short scheduled breaks in response to visiting team members' feedback on the lack of time available to reflect on and process information. Immediate priorities include considering how to revise the final feedback session so it is more interactive with the programme, and finalising our plans for initial and ongoing training for visiting team members to consolidate the

accreditation through partnership approach. The guidance materials we have produced for education providers aim to address many of the points of feedback made, but we will continue to seek to improve our approach to working with education providers and their partners, as well as with the HPC.

Dr Steve Jones, Department of Psychology, Leeds Trinity University College, who took part in one of the pilot visits, commented: 'For both reviewers and universities, accreditation through partnership offers a new emphasis on quality enhancement and the sharing of good practice that, along with the accreditation process itself, can only benefit psychology students.'

Professor Tom Cox CBE, Chair of the new Partnership and Accreditation Committee, which will oversee implementation of accreditation through partnership, said: 'Thanks to all the education providers and visiting teams who took part. Their feedback has been invaluable and their input will help facilitate quality enhancement and to promote a constructive dialogue between the Society and education providers in the future.'

*Lucy Kerry, BPS Education and Professional Development Manager, and Lucy J. Lovell, trainee clinical psychologist, University of Sheffield*

**I For further information on accreditation through partnership, including the full evaluation report, please visit the website ([www.bps.org.uk/atp](http://www.bps.org.uk/atp)), or contact the Partnership and Accreditation Team (formerly the QA team) at [pact@bps.org.uk](mailto:pact@bps.org.uk)**

## SOCIETY NOTICES

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## CONSULTATIONS ON PUBLIC POLICY

September has been one of our busiest months this year, with eight responses being submitted – at least one in each of the devolved nations. We were very pleased to include comments from several members who hadn't contributed to responses before, and hope that even more members can be encouraged to take part in the future. Thank you to everyone who took part – we couldn't have done it without you!

Brief points from each of the responses are below, with full details available on our website – [www.bps.org.uk/consult](http://www.bps.org.uk/consult).

**Draft Welsh Language Scheme for Consultation (Health Professions Council)** It was strongly recommended that the HPC make it a priority to employ Welsh-speaking staff to deal with clients who wish to communicate in Welsh.

**Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting police and the people (Home Office)** The Society recommended that more details be made available regarding how vulnerable groups locally would have access to the qualitative or quantitative policing arrangements to support them adequately.

**Draft National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (Scottish Government)** We welcomed some of the changes suggested in the guidance, which include a move away from categorisation in order to focus more on the needs and risks to the child.

**Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy Guidance (Welsh Assembly Government)** The Society was pleased to note that the outcomes for the strategy included psychological well-being, and emphasised the need for greater provision of health psychologists in Wales.

**Children & Young People's Plans Interim Guidance 2011-2014 (Welsh Assembly Government)** The importance and relevance of principles such as social inclusion were highlighted and a number of points were made regarding clarity of the document.

**Success through Skills 2: The Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland (Department for Employment & Learning, Northern Ireland)** The Society generally agreed that the analysis and supporting strategy acknowledges some important factors to allow Northern Ireland to compete globally and build a fairer prosperous society.

**Call for Evidence on the Role of Doctors in Child Protection (General Medical Council)** Our response stressed the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach to child protection, recommended the use of a risk assessment tool, raised concerns over the medical concept of 'clinical primacy', and suggested that GMC guidance on child protection be brought up to date.

**2010 Drug Strategy (Home Office)** One of the many points made was that drug and substance misuse is a symptom, not a cause, and it is therefore necessary to look to the causes to prevent the problem.

*The preparation and submission of the Society's responses to consultations on public policy is coordinated by the Policy Support Unit (PSU). All those holding at least graduate membership are eligible to contribute to responses, and all interest is warmly welcomed. Please contact the PSU for further information ([psu@bps.org.uk](mailto:psu@bps.org.uk); 0116 252 9926/9577).*

## Sex, drugs and rock'n'roll

The Division of Clinical Psychology's Faculty of HIV and Sexual Health gathered at the London office on 24 September for a one-day conference entitled 'Sex, drugs and rock & roll: How far from the tombstone have we come?' that set out to use critical and positive psychology to explore sex in the age of pleasure and infection.

The morning opened with a Foucauldian exploration of the meanings behind condomless sex to gay men with HIV. Discourses uncovered included the stigma of sex becoming a crime, focused on disease, or about mental health. Other discourses were of natural love and rebellion. Following from this were preliminary findings from a research project into crystal methamphetamine use amongst men with HIV, indicating the importance of the drug in facilitating sexual expression, the performance of sexual identities, and going beyond the margins of what users would normally do.

After the break, a talk covered modernisation of sexual health services, with 56 Dean St used as an exemplar of integrating NHS and private sector ideologies, with the service-user firmly at the centre. Gay Men Fight Aids then gave an overview of sex-



positive approaches to sexual health promotion, such as their 'Hot Sex' and 'Better Sex for Gay Men' booklets. Sigma Research then closed the morning looking at HIV prevention, encouraging us to ask not just what the risk is in our clients' sex lives, but also how happy they are with them: in this we were reminded to see sex and risk as spectrums, not discrete acts or people that are 'safe' or 'unsafe'.

The afternoon included feedback from 'AIDS 2010' held in Vienna, reviewing 'the pleasure project' and international youth perspectives, which are rare examples of work looking for 'pleasure in prevention'. The importance of childhood abuse as a risk/vulnerability factor was also highlighted, reminding us of the importance of intervention at an early stage, and at every level. Workshops then garnered much discussion and debate, as to how the future could and should look for sexual health: from an ideal service with sex as a state of well-being, to practical steps that could be taken back to our teams and clients the next day.

So, how far from the 'tombstone' have we come? To paraphrase from the plenary: we may have come quite a way, but in the ever-changing (and sometimes conflicting) worlds of the NHS, sexual health, sexual pleasure and HIV, we need to be mindful not to return.

*Dr Alexander Margetts, Clinical Psychologist*

# Research seminars on music and language



Middlesex University's Language & Communication Research Group won the 2009 BPS seminar competition to hold a series of seminars entitled 'Music of Language, Language of Music' exploring new directions in the study of language and music. These share many features: both are composed of sub-units organised according to conventional rules; both vary pitch, temporal and rhythmic features to convey meaning; they utilise

specific writing systems; and they organise coordinated or joint social actions. However, the debate is still open concerning the evolutionary relationship between language and music, their boundaries (what is unique and specific to each) and whether or not they belong to separate domains/modules. Such issues are being explored through these seminars, with a focus on: 1. Development and Evolution; 2. Meaning and Entrainment; 3. Literacy and Interaction/Pragmatics.

The first seminar, held at Middlesex University on 21 July 2010, was attended by 60 delegates from 17 British universities, five European universities, and one from Brazil. These comprised academics, music therapists/practitioners, doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows from psychology, music, linguistics, anthropology, neuroscience, and AI.

The first session, exploring language and music in development, was opened by Marcel Zentner (psychologist, York & Geneva). He reported on rhythmic engagement with music in five-month-old infants who moved more to music and other rhythmically regular sounds than to speech; furthermore, this engagement was linked to displays of positive affect. This was followed by a presentation from Karen Mattock (psychologist, Lancaster) who suggested that infants' sensitivity to the tonal features of their language becomes refined with increasing exposure – discrimination of tone contrasts is maintained for tone language infants, but declines between six and nine months for non-tone language infants. She also demonstrated that these effects are speech-specific. The importance of rhythm for children's perception and processing of language was considered by Marilyn Vihman (linguist, York) who discussed how the linguistic 'templates' that children use are constrained by the phonological characteristics of their language. Simone Falk (linguist, Munich) then presented evidence from German, French and Russian to show how the expanded vowel space in infant-directed singing carries language-specific information that children use to acquire structural aspects of their native language. The temporal structure of mother–infant interactions was explored further by Elena

Longhi (psychologist, Oxford) who showed that four-month-olds are more attentive to singing than to speaking, while eight-month-olds make more communicative attempts during speaking rather than singing. This suggests that mother–infant singing and speaking might play different roles in promoting communication according to infants' levels of development and responsiveness. Pamela Heaton (psychologist, Goldsmith's) reported differences in the way that individuals with and without autism process pitch in music and language. To conclude this session, Daniele Schon (neuroscientist, Marseille) presented data showing that sung material is learned better than spoken material; furthermore, the effectiveness of this learning is more clearly demonstrated electrophysiologically than behaviourally.

The second session was dedicated to the relationship between language and music within an evolutionary context. Ian Cross (musician, Cambridge), opened this session by explaining that cross-culturally, music has affective and pragmatic functionality that is not dissociable from language, hence they are intrinsically bound together in the evolution of human communication. Jerome Lewis (anthropologist, UCL) offered provocative insights into the possible co-evolution of ritual and speech based on his work with Yaka Pygmy hunter-gatherers in Congo. He reported that vocal deceptions initially aimed at outsiders were later redeployed 'honestly' within the group to create the conditions for the emergence of ritual, singing and language among our ancestors. Tim Wharton (linguist, UCL) suggested that the evolution of language may result from the emergence of coded signals that increased the efficiency of inferential communication among pre-linguistic humans. This 'weak communication', the communication of moods, impressions and feelings, is typical of non-verbal interaction between modern-day humans and essentially represents the same pragmatic meaning inherent in music. John Bispham (independent researcher and opera singer) hypothesised that what is unique about music worldwide is its organisational foundation – the way in which we structure our attention and social

## TOP GRADUATE

Society member Kathy Ruddy, a PhD student at Queen's University Belfast, has been named UK Graduate of the Year in Social Sciences and Humanities at the British Graduate 100 Awards in London.

The awards promote Britain's highest-achieving graduates and undergraduates across all academic areas. Over 13,000 students were nominated by universities across the UK before being shortlisted to the top 100 graduates.

From Pomeroy in Co Tyrone, Kathy graduated from Queen's with a first class honours degree in psychology in July, obtaining the top mark in the class for her final-year thesis on the way. She is now continuing her studies at the University with a PhD in motor control and stroke rehabilitation. Kathy said: 'I am delighted not just for myself and my family but also for my lecturers in the School of Psychology at Queen's who supported me throughout my course.'

Professor Carol McGuinness, Director of Education in the School of Psychology said: 'Kathy is an outstanding student and her academic record across her undergraduate years speaks for itself. She has shown commitment and motivation for her studies in psychology through participating in a summer research studentship at the end of her second year and a wide range of volunteering activities.'

interaction. He echoed previous speakers by suggesting that it is these organisational features which enhance music's ability to regulate mood, particularly in group ceremonies.

In the final workshop session, Fabia Franco (psychologist), Simone Falk, and Joel Swaine (musician) presented ideas regarding how maternal singing may facilitate language development in infancy. Mike Forrester (psychologist, Kent) presented video data on musical wordplay in two-year-olds, while Simone Dalla Bella (neuropsychologist, Warsaw)

illustrated his Sung Performance Battery which is designed to provide precise measurement of singing accuracy in imitation and memory tasks. Stefanie Stadler-Elmer (psychologist, Zurich) presented her own notation system for representing and analysing early singing in children. Finally, Roberto do Carmo Jr (linguist, São Paulo) speculated on what musical instruments can teach us about the evolutionary divergence of music and language, while Christian Huyck (computer scientist, Middlesex) described the development of his computational

model of natural language parsing.

This first seminar was extremely successful, generating several preliminary collaborations, and it is anticipated that the remaining seminars – in Cambridge, 13–14 December 2010, and Middlesex, July 2011 – will build on this success.

*Fabia Franco, Nicola Brunswick and Paul de Mornay Davies (Middlesex University, London)*

**I For further information, and to download the proceedings of the first seminar, see [www.mdx.ac.uk/research/areas/psychology/language/music/index.aspx](http://www.mdx.ac.uk/research/areas/psychology/language/music/index.aspx)**

## Qualification in Counselling Psychology and the HPC

When HPC became the regulator for practitioner psychologists all of the training programmes that were approved as leading to registration as a Chartered Psychologist needed to be approved by HPC. In the first instance they gave approval to all BPS-approved programmes, but said they would visit all programmes within the first three years of regulation in order to determine whether or not the programme met the HPC Standards of Education and Training and whether, therefore, the programme could be granted ongoing approval. This is really important for programmes

because only graduates of HPC-approved programmes will be eligible to apply to the HPC for registration.

In September, the Qualification in Counselling Psychology (QCoP) received HPC approval, putting the programme on an equal footing with Practitioner Doctorates. This significant achievement is the culmination of around 18 months of dedicated collaboration between the Board of Assessors in Counselling Psychology (BoA) and staff at the Society.

The HPC approval process began with a two-day event at the Leicester office, supported

by the Society's Qualifications Manager and Qualifications Officer and senior members of the Society representing the President and the Membership and Professional Training Board. Placement hosts, Co-ordinators of Training, Supervisors and a sample of candidates met at the Leicester office for the event, which closely resembled a validation process in a university. Verbal feedback at the end of the event gave ongoing approval and the right to continue to recruit candidates, as well as a number of conditions that had to be fulfilled within a time frame. This was unsurprising as psychology training had not previously been subject to the HPC Standards of Education and Training, so some changes were made in order to align our qualification with the expectations of HPC. More information about these changes can be found at [www.bps.org.uk/qcop](http://www.bps.org.uk/qcop).

The conditions have now been met, and ongoing approval has been formally confirmed. This makes the Qualification in Counselling Psychology the first counselling psychology training route to complete the HPC approval process. Applications to train towards chartered membership via the qualification remain buoyant,

and there are normally 70–80 candidates enrolled at different stages in their training each year; between 10 and 20 candidates complete their training each year.

Reflecting on the whole process, the officers on the Board of Assessors (now called the Counselling Psychology Qualifications Board) are pleased that the process has been successfully completed. An enormous amount of time and commitment has been given by the Society's Qualifications Manager and Qualifications Officer, without whom the end point could not have been reached. We are aware that colleagues in courses and qualifications across the Society are also at various stages in the HPC approval process.

Finally, the Board will be welcoming all current and potential new QCoP candidates to the Qualification Information Day on 28 October at the Society's London office in Tabernacle Street and looks forward to meeting current and potential coordinators of training on 2 December. Details plus a booking form can be found at [www.bps.org.uk/qcop](http://www.bps.org.uk/qcop).

*Professor (Emeritus) Pam James, Chair of the Counselling Psychology Qualification Board; Dr Barbara Douglas, Registrar; Paul Hitchings, Chief Assessor*

## Society vacancies

### Committee on Test Standards

#### Member

See advertisement p.885

#### Contact

*Mala Pancholi mala.pancholi@bps.org.uk, 0116 252 9536.*

Closing date 19 November 2010

### Division of Clinical Psychology

#### Chief National Assessor

See advertisement p.924

#### Contact

*Lynn Hartshorn lynn.hartshorn@bps.org.uk, 0116 252 9529.*

Closing date 30 November 2010