

... with Siân E. Jones

## 'the best projects can be serendipitous'

### One turning point

Design technology – woodwork and metalwork – was my favourite subject at school, and the one I did best in when it came to exams. The secondary school I was at didn't run an A-level course in it though, and I wanted to stay there, so I opted to take A-level Psychology instead.

### One memorable moment

Career-wise, that would have to be when a project student, following a lot of hard work and several rejections, got her research paper into press with a journal. Her delight was palpable, and made me remember why I love teaching psychology.

### One thing I want to do better

Representation. I'm a social developmental psychologist. My research is into prejudice and bullying towards children. I look especially at minority groups – those with disabilities, immigrants. I want to be able to do a lot

more, both to represent these children – among my research participants for sure – but also to make sure that my research findings reach them, and those who look after them.

### One diversion

Swimming. There is nothing I have found that compares to trusting yourself to the water, and moving gently through it after a hard day's work. The best times are when I can go to the coast, and swim in the sea. The power of the waves helps keep everything else in perspective.

### One hope for psychology

That its depth of presence will increase. The various branches of psychology have so much to offer in response to crises facing the world today. Yet it is not often psychologists who are called upon to help explain people's behaviour. Psychology, as the science of brain and behaviour, will, I hope, find a louder voice when it has something of relevance to say.

### One cultural recommendation

That has to be Tim Minchin's

take on Roald Dahl's *Matilda*, currently playing at the Cambridge Theatre, London. Magic, hilarious, beautifully cast and acted. A deeply satirical look at what it really means to grow up.

### One inspiration

Frère Roger, of Taizé, a neo-monastic community in France. Not only because he displayed true courage in hiding Jews in occupied France during the Holocaust, but because, following the war, he cultivated a community of reconciliation, in spite of the divisions in the Church and the world. Taizé is, for me, a

are an easy way for me to keep my finger on the pulse of new research findings. I am watching with interest to see how social media changes the way we do 'impact'.

### One book

*Cat's Eye* by Margaret Atwood is a must-read for anyone who wants to look at the psychology of bullying. Without ever mentioning the b---- word, it captures the terror that can be girls' friendships. In Atwood's words, 'little girls are cute and small only to adults. To one another they are not cute. They are life-sized.'



The emblem of Taizé

still and beautiful place. And God, as Fr. Roger said, speaks in silence.

### One important discovery

The reach of social media. My main academic use of social media is through Twitter (I tweet from @Sian\_Goldsmiths): from there I have had lots of interest in my work from industry, from parents, and from other media outlets. What is more, with ever-increasing pressure on my time, the links that others post

### One final thought

*Sometimes not getting what you want is a wonderful stroke of luck.* Success feels great, but not succeeding has led me to unusual opportunities. Some of the most fruitful, fun collaborations and projects can be serendipitous, coming about while not working on the project I had been hoping for.

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Siân E. Jones PhD, CPsychol, FHEA is at Goldsmiths, University of London

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