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Editorial

HELLO AND WELCOME TO THE 69TH EDITION OF THE PSYPAG Quarterly! I would like to introduce and welcome my new editorial colleagues Cherie Armour, Kyle Brown and Lesley Jacobs. They have already done a great job helping me to compile this issue in which you can learn a lot more about PsyPAG, how being involved in our events can benefit you and what our hard-working committee members have been doing over the last year.

We open the edition with research papers from two of our deserved prize-winners at this year's PsyPAG Conference. Tracey Brandwood discusses how understanding the walking trajectories of normal participants can help to inform interventions to help Neglect patients negotiate their environment. Lindsay Cooper then discusses the process of becoming expert at interpreting brain images.

Next, we have an article written by your committee members describing all the projects they have been working on over the last year. Lesley Jacobs and Lindsay Cooper reflect upon their experiences at the biggest ever PsyPAG Conference held in Manchester over the summer and tell us what persuaded them to join the PsyPAG Committee. There is also information about how to apply for a PsyPAG Conference Bursary via our new online system.

Rory Allen gives us his perspective on the value of publishing your research whilst completing your PhD and to help you on your way Graham Badley reviews James Hartley's practical handbook on academic writing and publishing. If they inspire you we also provide details of publications in which you might like to submit your own writing.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who contributed to this edition. The deadline for articles for the next edition is 2nd January.

Naomi Andrew

On behalf of the PsyPAG Quarterly Editing Team 2008/09
Naomi Andrew, Cherie Armour, Kyle Brown and Lesley Jacobs

Chair's Column

WHAT I DIDN'T REALISE BEFORE EMBARKING ON POSTGRAD psychology training is that a masters/doctoral course is about so much more than just writing a thesis. This week for instance, as well as drafting a chapter of my thesis, I have been testing participants, transcribing interviews, coding data, running undergraduate tutorials, delivering a lecture, writing a book review for a journal, giving a talk at a workshop, meeting with my supervisor, drafting my postdoctoral fellowship application, organising a training day for A Level students, working through corrections on a journal article I recently submitted, reading journal articles, responding to hundreds of e-mails and having pretty much no life whatsoever; all in an attempt to be a well-rounded postgraduate student. When I think back to September 2005, when I was just starting my MSc, never did I think that in just three years time I would be this busy or this stressed!

However, I have been attempting to incorporate some hints and tips from some recent issues of the Quarterly into my postgraduate life in a last ditch attempt to regain some much needed sanity. Firstly, as suggested by Mark Griffiths in the last issue, I have been trying to use the word "no" a bit more frequently. Although I have found this a rather empowering experience, it does sound much easier than it actually is; when you have been asked to review a book for a journal, meaning that you get a publication, a free book and a chance to expand your knowledge of a subject area, is this really an opportunity to turn down just because you have some transcription and data coding to do? Maybe not. However, I really think that postgrads need to evaluate the things we are asked to do, and to identify our priorities and the things that we can justifiably say no to.

In the same article, Mark Griffiths suggested that list-making was a useful thing to do. I have adapted this suggestion slightly by creating what my officemates call my "gimmick book". This involves writing down everything I have achieved each day into a little book so that when I look back over the day, I can rejoice in the knowledge that I am not completely useless and unproductive! For example, although it took me two hours to respond to e-mails yesterday, by writing down everything that I achieved through these

e-mails, I actually came to realise that rather than wasting time, I had, in fact, accomplished a lot of important tasks.

Another tip that I strongly advocate is to keep things varied; a few weeks ago I aimed to spend the whole day writing a chapter for my thesis. The plan was to start at 8.30am and work non-stop until 4.30pm. Although this started well, by 10am I found myself looking at PsyPAG conference photos on Facebook...certainly not the most productive way to pass the time! After deciding to ban Facebook during working hours (something which I strongly recommend!), I also realised that a very useful thing to do was to vary my activities each day; if I have to do lots of written work, I try to go to an invited speaker seminar one lunchtime or book a participant in the afternoon. It appears to be much more productive to book some time away from the computer at regular intervals than to do the written work all at once.

The final thing that I have attempted to incorporate into my daily routine is to make the most of the postgraduate community. One of the great things about being Chair is having a fantastic committee around me who work so hard in delivering support and provision for psychology postgraduates. In addition, I get several e-mails each day from committee members (past and present) talking about PsyPAG issues, as well as giving me the chance to hear what they are up to. This week, for example, I had several e-mails that made me smile; Rebecca, our Learning and Teaching rep, letting me know that her PhD on hypnotism was going well and offering to hypnotise me to relieve some stress; Naomi, our lead Quarterly editor, telling me about her nice mini holiday (on her advice, a short break also appears a good way to get out of a rut and to enhance PhD focus!); Tracey, our Welsh rep and conference organiser, relaying her excitement about wedding dress fittings; John (our information officer) updating me on the situation with our ongoing bet that we will fill up every PsyPAG committee position before the annual conference in July in Cardiff. So, the point of this is that I would thoroughly recommend making the most of the postgrads around you; they are a unique bunch in that they are some of the only people who understand exactly what you are going through and just how draining a PhD is, and can also help in alleviating a little bit of the PhD stress!

Before I close this column, I just want to give you all an idea of what I have been doing over these past few months in my role as Chair. Firstly, I have attended the meetings of the BPS Research Board to raise postgraduate issues at this level and to relay any information that affects postgrads back

to the PsyPAG committee so that we can address this effectively. I have also been at various conferences helping to run stands and to distribute information about PsyPAG; a particular mention here goes to Cath Malone (our Cognitive Section rep) who did a great job of organising the stand at this year's Cognitive Section Annual Conference and moderating the 'lunch with leaders' initiative that was held for postgrad students at this event. Another priority of mine as Chair of the committee is to work with various related organisations like the Postgraduates who Teach network; in collaboration with this network, we are in the process of setting up a new award for postgraduate students, so watch this space! On a related note, John and Sue (our information and communication officers, respectively) have done a fantastic job in setting up our new online bursary system, which will hopefully make applying for bursaries through PsyPAG a lot easier and I hope many of you will apply in our next round, which closes on the 10th May.

Lastly, I just want to thank the PsyPAG committee for all their hard work over the past few months and would like to wish you all a very happy (and work free) Christmas!

Laura Crane
PsyPAG Chair

Walking Trajectories in Patients with Unilateral Visual Neglect: Insights from Healthy Controls

Tracey Brandwood, University of Cardiff

UNILATERAL VISUAL NEGLECT (UVN) IS AN ATTENTIONAL OR representational deficit, induced by lesions of the right hemisphere. Someone with UVN often fails to attend to stimuli contralateral (opposite) to the brain injury, resulting in behaviour that implies that the patient believes one half of their world no longer exists (Mesulam, 1981). Notably, it is not a visual deficit – although it is often accompanied by hemianopia (blindness or reduction in one half of the visual field), the disorders are dissociated (Halligan, Cockburn, and Wilson, 1991). Patients often show a reduced tendency to respond to, and search for, stimuli in the left side of space (Halligan, Fink, Marshall & Vallar, 2003). Such a loss of awareness is often evident even when patients are encouraged to direct certain orienting behaviours, such as eye movements (Ferber, Danckert, Joanisse, Goltz & Goodale, 2003), to the neglected region of space. Classic textbook signs of UVN include eating food from just one side of the plate and then believing it to be empty, shaving just one side of the face and dressing just one half of the body (see Halligan et al, 2003 for review). When neglect patients are able to walk (many cannot due to co-occurring paralysis of one side of the body), they have problems with navigating through their environment. The most common reports involve bumping into objects and people in the neglected field and in negotiating passing through doorframes (Verlander et al, 2000).

The real life implications of neglect can thus be devastating and since the presence of neglect has been identified as a major determinant for recovery of everyday functions following stroke (Kalra, Perez, Gupta & Wittink, 1997; Jehkonen et al, 2000) UVN has major rehabilitation implications. Consequently, several manipulations have now been developed to assist in rehabilitation, such as visual scanning training

(Weinberg, et al 1977), limb activation (Robertson & North, 1992), and feedback training (Soderback, Bengtsson, Ginsburg, and Ekholm, 1992, see Luaute, Halligan, Rossetti, Rode & Boisson, 2006, for review). Although there is evidence that many of the methods devised to help treat UVN provide significant long term benefits (Luaute, Halligan, Rode, Jacquin-Courtois, & Boisson, 2006) much of the evidence is still limited and focuses on a small number of domains for recovery such as reading and writing (Weinberg et al, 1977) and improvements on classic neuropsychological tests (Rossetti Rode, Pissella, Farne, Li, Boisson, & Perenin 1998). Very little research has considered behaviours such as improving steering while walking. This is of particular importance since bumping into objects during locomotion is considered to be a major problem in patients with UVN (Verlander et al, 2000).

The literature regarding differences in walking paths taken by UVN patients through an environment is often contradictory. Some researchers have found evidence suggesting that patients curve to the right (Robertson, Tegner, Godrich, & Wilson, 1994; Berti et al, 2002), whereas others have found that patients will tend to curve to the left while walking (Grossi, Lepore, Napolitano, & Trojano, 2001; Turnbull, & McGeorge, 1998). This is further complicated by findings indicating that deviations to both sides can occur (Tromp, Dinkla & Mulder, 1995). In order to gain more insight into the walking paths of patients with UVN Huitema, Brouwer, Hof, Dekker, Mulder and Postema (2006) performed an experiment in an environment in which most distractors were removed, using a more controlled task than that used in previous research. Patients were required to walk in a straight line sixteen times towards a target. It was expected that patients would curve towards the side of space opposite to their brain lesion while walking to their target. However, similar to the findings of Tromp, Dinkla and Mulder (1995), it was found that while half of their patients deviated to the expected contralesional (left) side when walking, the other half deviated to the ipsilesional (right) side. The authors suggest that the difference in path can be accounted for if one considers the walking ability of the patient, that is, when walking ability is not severely impaired the patients will deviate to the neglected side. This was supported from their finding that only the patients whose walking ability was impaired veered to the right while walking. Although further research is needed to determine the link between neglect, walking ability and trajectory, one must also consider reasons as to why patients tend to curve at all while walking. One way of doing this is to examine the visual guidance of locomotion in healthy subjects.

Walking in healthy participants

Almost 60 years ago Gibson (1950) proposed that we rely on optic flow to guide our walking path, and not the position of objects within an environment. Optic flow refers to the pattern of motion that we observe as we travel through an environment: as we walk towards an object all other objects in the area appear to radiate outwards (see figure 1). Gibson called the point from which motion is perceived to spread out from the focus of expansion (FoE), and suggested that by finding this point and lining it up with a target we can successfully walk towards our goal. However, despite a large amount of research in support of the idea of optic flow (Royden, Crowell & Banks, 1994; Warren, 1998), this theory is not without its critics. Several researchers have focused on whether optic flow is indeed the most important cue for navigation – it may well be the case that optic flow is sufficient, but not necessary, for determining where we are going. It is not difficult to think of examples of when we cannot use optic flow, yet we are still able to steer to a target, for instance, during snowstorms or heavy fog. It is thus clear that other information is available to enable us to guide our walking path.

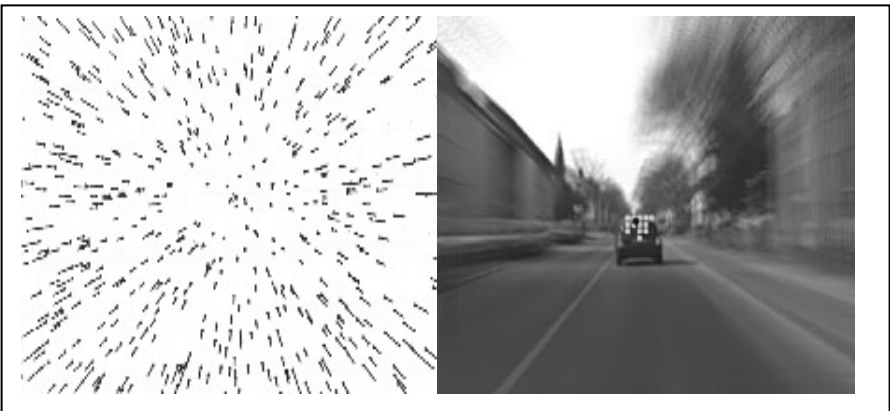


Figure 1. Illustration of optic flow. The left panel shows lines indicating how fast the visual scene is moving across the eye i.e. optic flow. The right panel shows this in picture form. The centre of both illustrations is the focus of expansion – the point from which motion spreads out.

Rushton, Harris, Lloyd and Wann (1998) argued that optic flow was not the dominant cue; they proposed a simpler theory. They theorised that we use

the position of a target object in relation to the position of our own body while walking through an environment. If the target is not lined up with our body we will correct ourselves and turn until the two are aligned and will continue to do this until we reach the target.

It is very difficult to test between these two cues in a typical natural situation since both allow us to walk on a straight path to a target. However, Rushton et al (1998) used prism glasses as a creative way to dissociate between these two strategies. When wearing prism glasses an observer experiences a distortion in perceived directions: that is, the direction of a target positioned straight ahead of an observer will be perceived as off to one side once the observer is wearing the prism glasses. The size and direction of this distortion is determined by the power and base of the prism. Although the prism affects where we perceive a target to be located it would not affect optic flow: the FoE will still be able to be lined up with the target. If Gibson is correct in suggesting that heading is maintained by locating the FoE within image motion observers should walk directly to a given target object. On the other hand if heading is controlled through Rushton et al's simpler theory of target location then observers should take an indirect, curved path to the target object as they will attempt to navigate towards the displaced location and not the actual location of the target. A curved trajectory would be expected because the observer should attempt to line up the target with their body after each step they take (see figure 2).

It was demonstrated that while wearing prisms participants took a curved path to the target object, thus it is unlikely that optic flow is the dominant cue used to guide where we are heading. The results of this experiment have now been replicated and extended by several research groups, with many favouring the simpler target direction strategy over optic flow as the fundamental cue to heading perception (Rogers & Allison, 1999; Rogers & Dalton, 1999; Harris & Carre, 2001).

Walking trajectories in patients with UVN

How then, does this research relate to the trajectories taken by patients with UVN? Recall the curved trajectories described by Huitema et al in their experiment; these are very similar to those taken by healthy controls while wearing prism glasses in Rushton et al's experiment. It thus appears that neglect-like walking behaviour can be seen in healthy volunteers as a result of viewing their environment through prisms.

It is likely that both healthy volunteers wearing prisms and patients with UVN take a curved path to a target as they are walking using an incorrect estimate of their target location. The curved trajectory is ultimately a result of the individual making corrective body movements in an attempt to realign the centre of their body with the target as suggested by Rushton et al's target direction theory. In agreement with this suggestion research indicates that patients with visual neglect will often incorrectly point off to the right when asked to point straight ahead (Ferber & Karnath, 1999).

The problem of attention

A major difference exists between the literature on the walking trajectories of patients with UVN and that concerning the paths taken by healthy volunteers when they misperceive straight ahead: Healthy controls, when wearing prisms, are able to readjust and eventually take straighter paths whereas patients with UVN continue to walk in a curved trajectory despite difficulties such as bumping into objects. A possible explanation for this difference may relate to a decline in attentional resources that often accompanies UVN (Robertson & Frasca, 1992). In line with this suggestion, Redding, Clarke and Wallace (1985) found that when healthy participants were given a secondary task that reduced the attentional resources available for guiding locomotion, their ability to adapt to a mis-perception of straight ahead (prism glasses) was markedly reduced.

Research is needed clarify the connection between UVN, walking and attention. It has been established that attention influences adaptation during walking in healthy controls, but does it influence the paths taken? In addition, although healthy controls take a curved trajectory while walking with a misperception of straight ahead, one could question whether a misperception of straight ahead is the underlying the curved trajectories taken by patients. Answers to these questions could provide useful guidelines for UVN patients to help them while walking. If patients are unable to adapt to their curved trajectories due to low attentional resources, strategies such as not walking and talking at the same time may allow more attention allocation to the primary task of navigating throughout the environment. Furthermore, if results suggest that the curved trajectory taken by patients is related to a misperception of what is straight ahead it may be worthwhile to prescribe prism glasses to null any bias in their perception of straight ahead: if a patient misperceives straight ahead to be 15° to the right, then by wearing prism glasses that shift the visual field 15°

to the left, should correct their perception of what is straight ahead. These are the types of questions that I hope to tackle throughout my PhD. I plan to take a two-pronged approach, working on the basic theories using healthy volunteers and applying the findings to those with UVN. Currently work is being conducted to determine whether attentional tasks affect the trajectories taken by healthy participants.

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How do you Become Expert at Interpreting Brain Images?

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Dr Andoni Toms & Dr Janak Saada, Norfolk and Norwich
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IMAGES OF THE HUMAN MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM AND anatomy have been accessible since Roëntgen's cathode ray discovery in 1895, when he first visualised the bones in his wife's hand. The 1970's introduced three key image modalities that made the visualisation of physiological as well as more detailed anatomical features possible; Computed Tomography (CT), Positron Emission Tomography (PET) and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). Subsequent years have seen the equipment used to acquire medical images developed, extensively manufactured and refined such that their use is commonplace in modern medical practice.

Medical imaging provides information about a patients' health status, to inform and reduce diagnostic uncertainty. Factors that influence the ability of a medical professional to correctly interpret a medical image can be either image dependent or image independent. Image dependent factors can relate to the quality of the clinical image, whilst image independent factors can relate to the observers' cognitive and perceptual abilities as well as their previous experience (Manning, 2005). Radiologists have proven fascinating subjects for investigation, owing to their abilities to diagnose abnormalities, perform clinical procedures and guide surgical interventions. Radiologists perform their duties exceptionally quickly under time, accuracy and consistency pressures, although research is still no closer to understanding to what degree these high functioning perceptual abilities are acquired or innate.

Accurate image interpretation is a challenging and important task with dire consequences for the patient and the medical team involved should perception and cognition become compromised. Diagnostic errors in the interpretation of medical images have been reported since the 1940s across numerous experimental studies. Interpretation may become compromised by limitations in visual search strategies, problems with the detection of abnormal features and whether abnormalities are interpreted cognitively, or ignored. Research has suggested that false negative perceptual errors pervade when abnormalities are 'seen' but not cognitively processed, accounting for between 30 and 40 percent of radiological error (Gunderman, 2001), whereas false positive, perceptual errors (where an abnormality is not present but is reported) represent a smaller number of errors, which could bring the total number up to 50 percent (Krupinski, 2003; Kundel, 2004). Eye-tracking technology can provide an empirical insight into how medical images are appraised and how errors of interpretation occur.

Radiology research in the UK has concentrated upon two applications in medical imaging: the identification of chest nodules in x-rays (Manning, Ethell & Donovan, 2004) and screening for breast cancer in large numbers of mammograms (Department of Health, 2000) as well as observer agreement therein (Mello-Thoms, 2008). It has been noted that stroke presentation and observer detection in CT or MRI appears to have been largely neglected, especially in the field of eye-tracking. Some studies have explored the differences between novice and expert observer performance in the chest x-ray task using eye-tracking technology (Donovan, 2006) but this has not been explored in relation to stroke. In addition, the effect of

clinical information on the examination of medical images and resultant diagnosis has not been explored in this way. This pilot study had three aims: to conduct a feasibility study of stroke presentation with medical images combined with eye-tracking, to explore the visual interpretations of stroke brain images and observer performance across differing levels of expertise and to assess the possible impact of clinical information on observer performance.

Methodology

Participants: Four novice participants, with no prior knowledge or experience of reading brain images, one second-year radiology trainee and three experienced radiologists were consulted over the design of the research and participated in the study.

Design: A computer-based, eye-tracking study was designed using Tobii technology to assess visual search and observer performance in stroke medical imagery. Eight predetermined clinical cases were chosen from the Harvard Medical School bank of training images; four acute, two sub-acute, one fatal and one control case. Four experimental conditions were designed to counterbalance orders of presentation of clinical information availability and case severity. Clinical information accompanied half the clinical cases but was withheld for the other half of the cases to assess the impact of information on performance.

Procedure: Calibration was performed and gaze location recorded. All participants were shown a short presentation surrounding clinical features of stroke. This was followed by a short identification training session. Five slices were selected from each of the eight cases. Participants were asked to rate each case on a five-point Likert scale from 'abnormality definitely present' through to 'abnormality definitely absent'. Participants were also required to confirm the location of primary, secondary and tertiary abnormality locations, as appropriate, on a brain atlas.

Results

Visual Search Strategies

The results presented below highlight the preliminary gaze-tracking data relating to novice, trainee and expert interpretations of normal and stroke images. They offer a qualitative assessment of inspection strategies across each level of expertise and case severity.

Case study 1. Normal aging: The following gaze-tracker images highlight the differences between readers when appraising images of normal ageing. The images come from a woman of 75 years of age who participated in research of normal aging;

Figures 1-3 highlight the normal anatomy of ventricles, which is focussed upon for a long period of time by novice participants (figure 1); neglecting of most of the surrounding anatomy. Figure 2 demonstrates the trainees' inspection pattern, more visual coverage but lacks the structured visual search patterns of figure 3 which portrays expert inspection.

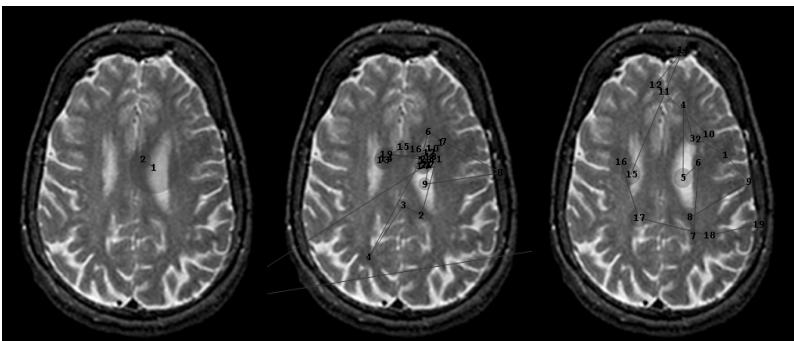


Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Case study 2. Acute stroke: The following hotspot images highlight the differences between readers when appraising images of acute stroke.

In this acute stroke case, figure 4 demonstrates that the novice reader appears to dwell upon the lower regions of the cerebral cortex, whilst the trainee (figure 5) spent a large amount of time in the same area. However, the attentions of the expert readers (figure 6) were drawn to the upper regions of the axial image, specifically the left hemisphere where the abnormality was located.

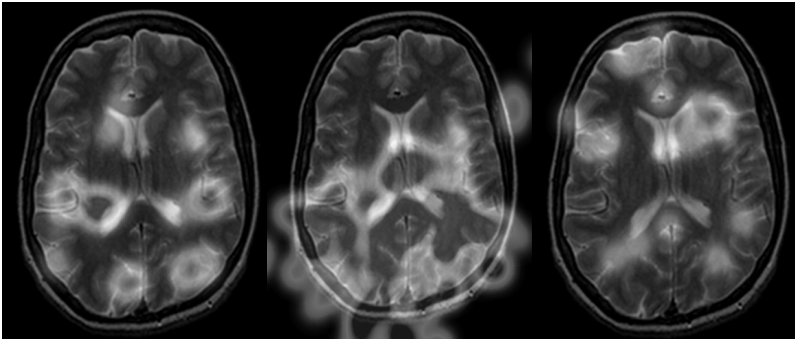


Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

Case 3. Subacute stroke: The following hotspot images highlight the differences between readers when appraising images of subacute stroke.

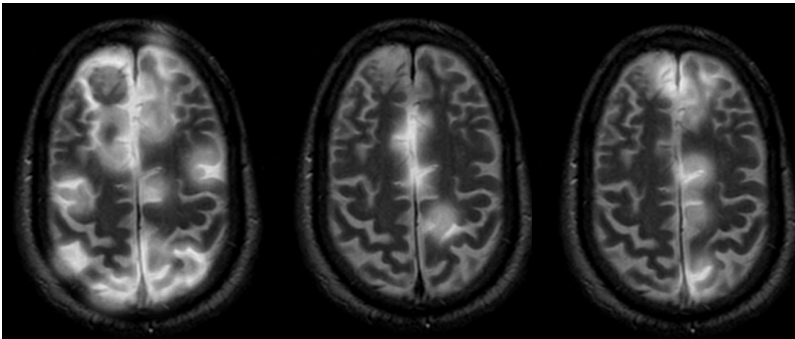


Figure 7

Figure 8

Figure 9

In this case study, the novice observer (figure 7) captures the abnormality in the frontal lobe of the right hemisphere, the trainee (figure 8) appears to miss the abnormality altogether, whereas the expert (figure 9) spent a small amount of time appraising the abnormality before moving on to investigate midline anatomy.

Case study 4. Chronic stroke: The following gaze-tracker images highlight the differences between readers when appraising images of chronic stroke.

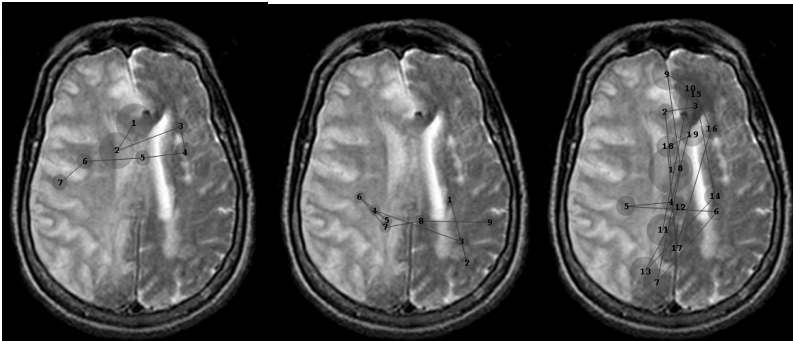


Figure 10

Figure 11

Figure 12

In this case study, some interesting features of visual search emerge: novice readers spend much time gazing at the abnormal right hemisphere (figure 10); the trainee also appraises the abnormality but attention turns to the bilateral abnormalities affecting structure and lack of symmetry (figure 11); whilst experts, collectively appeared to spend the majority of their time investigating the effect of the infarct upon relatively normal anatomy and, therefore, their attention is prioritised around the midline and the left hemisphere (figure 12).

Diagnostic Accuracy, Confidence in Diagnosis and Infarct Detection (Brain Atlas Results)

Novices detected 65% of all abnormalities, the trainee 87% and the experts 96% as being broadly present or absent. Expert results on this task demonstrated that secondary and tertiary abnormalities in two scans were missed or not reported. There appeared a clear trend towards increasing accuracy with increased experience, but information did not appear to improve performance between or within participants.

Confidence in diagnosis was reported on a five point likert scale by distinguishing whether a participant thought an abnormality was definitely present (rating = 1), probably present (rating = 2), unsure (rating = 3), probably absent (rating = 4) or definitely absent (rating = 5). A trend existed whereby confidence in reporting abnormalities increased as the abnormalities appeared larger on the image and encroached on more areas of normal anatomy. Thus, the smaller lesions of the acute cases were associated with lower levels of confidence than the larger lesions of the chronic case; this may reflect difficulties in the perceptual and cognitive

appraisal of smaller lesions. Experts had more confidence in their decisions about the control case than novice readers.

Diagnostic accuracy and confidence ratings have been explored above, but requesting participants to plot the location of infarcts on a brain atlas yielded more accurate information regarding whether abnormalities were accurately spotted or a 'best guess' was provided. Detection rates for lesions varied with expertise (novices: 41%, trainees: 64% and experts: 79%). Additionally, detection rates were highest for primary abnormalities and declined for secondary and tertiary abnormalities.

Discussion

The data highlight differences in visual appraisal and diagnostic accuracy between novice, trainee, and expert observers with the most marked differences occurring between novice and expert readers. This finding is in agreement with previous research conducted by Manning, Gale and Krupinski (2005) and Manning, Ethell and Donovan (2006) state that experts adopt more efficient visual search strategies than novice readers, and in some cases, trainee and novice scan paths do not differ significantly. It is an unsurprising finding that as case severity (and size of lesion) increased so did confidence in participant ratings, as abnormalities tend to be larger and easier to view in chronic cases. For the control case, novice readers appeared reluctant to completely rule out abnormalities, which is in line with research on expert versus novice differences in diagnostic medical cognition: differences are prevalent as novices lack radiology cognitive skills, perceptual acuity and experience (Lesgold *et al*, 1988) but experts are said to generate broad clinical hypotheses based on prior experience and intuitive reasoning that are quickly refuted in the absence of confirmatory evidence (Sisson *et al*, 1991, cited in Cuthbert *et al*, 1999). Thus, the cognitive strategy of an expert can completely rule out the presence of stroke and can confer more confidence on their decisions.

Unsurprisingly, experts exhibited the highest levels of performance in terms of both diagnostic accuracy and lesion detection tasks. However, experts did make mistakes on the lesion detection tasks by not reporting all secondary and tertiary abnormalities. Whilst this was not expected of novices, indeed most secondary or tertiary abnormalities were missed by this group, it would be expected of some trainees and all experts in clinical practice. This finding suggests that experts reach a 'satisfaction of search' criterion *i.e.*, once an abnormality was processed cognitively, search strategies were not continued throughout the 'stack' of images to their full

potential and thus further abnormalities were missed or regarded unimportant. This finding is in agreement with research undertaken by Berbaum (1990) and will be explored in more detail in future studies. The provision of clinical information did not appear to make a significant contribution to performance and will be explored in more detail and with a larger sample size.

The present study has a number of limitations which should be considered when interpreting the data. For instance, the search task did not faithfully capture the nature of search tasks within the clinical environment. Participants were unable to scroll up and down between the five images in the 'stack', nor could they access additional images or sequences, whereas in normal practice both are possible. Additionally, the small number of participants limits the degree to which the study's findings can be generalised. The present analysis has offered a qualitative description of inspection strategy. Future work will adopt a larger sample of participants, inspection strategy will be assessed in quantitative terms and lesion detection performance be assessed within an ROC framework. Thus, future analyses will generate additional insights and ensure that the differences and similarities in visual search patterns observed here are reliable.

Conclusions

Stroke medical images, in CT and MRI modalities, are the perfect resource for the examination of challenging diagnostic tasks. Visual interpretation of such imagery can be assessed empirically using eye-tracking technology alongside data on lesion detection performance in order to gather information about the cognitive and perceptual processes which are at work. Ultimately, this type of work can be used to inform practice in training and diagnosis by adding to our understanding of the acquisition of expertise, causes of clinical errors, and the influence of clinical information on diagnostic accuracy in stroke presentation. This study offers an example of how, through inter-disciplinary collaboration, empirical research may inform clinical practice in this multi-faceted area of psychology.

Acknowledgements:

CT/MRI images reproduced with permission from The Whole Brain Atlas;
<http://www.med.harvard.edu/AANLIB/home.html>

This article was first presented as a paper at the PsyPAG annual conference, Manchester University, August 2008. For more in-depth

reports of the statistical analyses performed to date and observer performance specific results, please contact Miss Cooper. **A complete set of results will be published as part of the SPIE Medical Imaging proceedings in February, 2009.**

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What do PsyPAG do?

By Laura Crane, PsyPAG Chair

PSYPAG IS A NATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR ALL PSYCHOLOGY postgraduates, run on a voluntary basis by postgraduates. The past year has been an exciting one for the PsyPAG committee with our largest annual conference to date, several postgraduate workshops being organised and our monthly publication (PsyPAG Quarterly) being distributed to more Universities in the UK than ever before. Here, several members of the PsyPAG committee give an overview of some of the activities they have been involved in over the past year:

Core committee members:

Chair

By David Moore (outgoing Chair)

The role of the chair is to try to represent the views of the various subsections of the committee and to provide a general 'direction' to PsyPAG. In addition to chairing meeting and other admin responsibilities the main role of the Chair is to represent PsyPAG on the research board and to fight for additional funds and opportunities in BPS activities. On research board the main achievements of the last two years have been the £2000 increase in funding and a number of policy changes. Most notable amongst these have been consultations in partnership with the BPS with the ESRC on the future of funding for PhD's and the assistance in setting up an early career training board; also the revision of the BPS documentation on undertaking postgraduate study and the assessment of doctoral qualifications. I have additionally been helping the BPS with plans to set up a postdoctoral network for those coming out of PhD's.

The Chair also needs to be the first point of contact and often the person with whom the 'buck stops' when trying to deal with PsyPAG. On this front I think the role of the chair is less one of 'leadership' but more one of support in that the chair needs to work to ensure that people are able to best carry out their own jobs well.

I feel in the last two years I have been lucky to oversee some exceptional work from everyone and am very happy with the events and achievements we have together managed

Treasurer

By Caroline Bettenay

As Treasurer I am responsible for the financial well being of the PsyPAG organisation. My duty is to ensure we operate legally, within our budget and provide the best financial value add to our membership. To that end I have spent the first year in office streamlining the organisations financial and banking records, and automating our reporting. I have successfully worked with the Committee to reduce costs in order to maximise the funds available to members for conference bursaries and workshops. As well as supporting the annual conference organisers and working with the Committee on policy matters, I report to the Committee four times a year on our financial standing, develop an annual budget and of course distribute cheques! My aims for the next year are to improve the service to members still further and to leave the organisation at the end of my term this time next year in a robust financial position.

Communications Officer

By Glenda Pennington

As Communications Officer my key responsibility has been to manage the PsyPAG website (www.psyPag.co.uk) and the Jiscmail service for postgraduate psychologists (<http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/psy...-postgrads.html>). By the time that this issue of the Quarterly is published I will have stepped down as Communications Officer after several years in the role.

Under my control, the website has undergone two major redesigns; the first was just over four years ago when I took on the role, and the second was approximately two years ago. Right now I am working on my third and final redesign, which again should be live by the time you read this. All the changes have been designed to enhance the web experience for the end user, you the postgraduate and to ensure compliance with the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) standards for accessibility and use.

The conference micro site went live early in the year and has seen many visitors. It seems to have assisted the conference organising team in the

promotion and advertising of the Annual Conference, as we had exceptional interest from potential delegates, academics and presenters.

In my time as a PsyPAG Committee member I have attempted to fulfil several other roles, such as editing our publication PsyPAG Quarterly, and I have been an active member on several subcommittees including the PsyPAG bursary team, and the PsyPAG Annual Conference organising team. All of these things have served to provide me with a broad range of experiences that will no doubt serve me well in the future. I hope that I have given as much to the PsyPAG committee and the postgraduate community as I have gained from being a member of it.

Quarterly Editors

By Naomi Andrew

The Quarterly Team consists of 4 committee members with the responsibility of producing 4 editions of the PsyPAG Quarterly (affectionately known as the 'Q.') per year. A 'lead editor' is in charge of each edition, with this responsibility rotating around all of the editors.

The lead editor is basically in charge of putting the edition together and ensuring it gets to the BPS in time for our printing slot. This might sound fairly simple but it can be quite time consuming; the lead ed. has to keep track of all the articles received and what stage of editing they are at, encourage people to write for the Q to ensure a variety of articles, disseminate articles to other editors and committee members for peer review, communicate the reviewers comments back to the author and await a redrafted article, consult with the Chair about his/her column, collate the dates for the diary, check on the committee list, write the editorial and finally put the edition together in the format required by the printers! Of course, this is all made easier with a supportive team around you.

Since leading my first edition back in December 2006 I have loved being on the Q. team, especially reading the diversity of articles that arrive in my inbox. One of the tasks I find challenging is communicating back to the authors; I feel the Q. has an important role as somewhere for postgraduate students to first experience the peer review process and publish their early work but we also want to encourage good quality articles, so I try to be positive and constructive – I really do want to read that second draft! There was also a steep learning curve, trying to achieve a smart presentation throughout the edition despite the hurdles Microsoft Word threw at me!

Speaking of smart presentation, we have recently had an overhaul of our internal layout, with the aim to include more articles on the same number of pages. We hope you like the new look! There may be a more dramatic change on the way in the future, so watch this space!

Finally of course, the Q. has a principal role in keeping you, the psychology postgraduate community, informed about the things that may affect us all. Recently the articles about statutory regulation and the results of the Postgraduates Who Teach Survey have been particularly important. It is the place to advertise and review the workshops and conferences the other committee members organise, and generally letting you all know what we are up to on your behalf.

Division Representatives:

Sport and Exercise Psychology

By Andrew Manley

Given that this post is relatively new and in need of development, my key responsibility over the past two years has been to raise the profile of PsyPAG within the domain of sport and exercise psychology in order to ensure that postgraduate students with an interest in this field are aware of the support that PsyPAG offers and the resources that are available to them.

Working closely with the Society's Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology (DSEP), I have been able to suggest and implement a number of initiatives that have already been of benefit to postgraduate students studying sport and exercise psychology. Using the PsyPAG bursaries as a reference point, I was able to develop the DSEP Postgraduate Bursary Scheme, which is designed to help postgraduate members of the Division to cover the cost of attending and presenting at conferences, workshops, and other events that are deemed valuable to their professional development. In addition, I was able to secure a reciprocal publicity agreement between PsyPAG and DSEP, which ensures that any advertising or marketing conducted at events organised by DSEP will be completely free of charge to PsyPAG.

For the past 18 months, I have acted as co-editor of the student pages for the DSEP publication, Sport and Exercise Psychology Review (SEPR). This has given me the opportunity not only to advertise a range of events

and activities on PsyPAG's behalf, but also to publish a number of articles (e.g., supportive resources for postgraduates, tips on presenting at conferences, workshop and conference reviews) that are likely to be of particular interest to members of sport and exercise psychology's postgraduate community. Moreover, with the agreement of SEPR's editorial team, variations of these articles have also featured in PsyPAG's own publication, PsyPAG Quarterly.

I have tried to fulfil various other roles during my time as a PsyPAG committee member, such as sitting on the bursaries sub-committee and helping to organise symposia for the PsyPAG Annual Conference in 2007 and 2008. The effort I have put in over the past two years as PsyPAG's Sport and Exercise Psychology Representative has been far outweighed by the amount of help, support, and enjoyment that I have experienced in return, largely due to the friendly and welcoming environment created by the other members of the PsyPAG committee. With DSEP continuing to experience rapid growth and change, there is a great deal of potential to develop this role further. I hope that the next person to accept this position will enjoy taking it forward as much as I have.

For more information about the Sports and Exercise Division, please visit our website: <http://www.bps.org.uk/spex/>.

Section Representatives:

Cognitive Psychology

By Rachel Pye

I will be stepping down as Cognitive section rep this year, after sitting on the committee as PG rep for two years. The cog section has always been very PG-friendly, by offering generous grants to attend its annual conference (increased to £250 this year). Since joining the committee, we have added a 'lunch with leaders' session for the annual conference, which allows a few PGs the chance to meet one, or both, of the conference keynote speakers. PGs apply for this when registering, and then supply a summary of their work which is sent on to the keynote. This gives PGs the chance to really question a leader in their field on issues pertinent to them. Feedback from last year's lunches was extremely good, and we're looking forward to this year's too (if you want to meet the conference keynotes, e mail the conference organisers on ptel@soton.ac.uk). As academic

psychologists, the cog section has had a great deal to say about the statutory regulation consultations, and feeding back these to PsyPAG has been an interesting experience!

To find out more about the Cognitive section, please see our website: http://www.bps.org.uk/cognitive-section/cognitive-section_home.cfm

Developmental Psychology

By Caroline Bettenay

The Developmental Section of the BPS is one of the Society's largest sections. As Developmental Section Rep on the Committee I attend quarterly meetings of the Section Committee to ensure that the interests of postgrads are promoted within the Section and to aid communication between the two organisations. As well as allowing us to provide input to policy and working documents likely to affect postgrads, a notable success this quarter has been the decision to present stands at each others conferences at nil cost. The Section is keen to increase the number of postgrads who can take advantage of the benefits on offer in the Section at a heavily discounted membership fee. For further information about the Developmental Section please visit our website (http://www.bps.org.uk/dps/dps_home.cfm). If you are interested in joining the Developmental Section, student membership is only £5 (download an application form from: <http://www.bps.org.uk/dps/join.cfm>).

Lesbian and Gay Psychology

By Keeley Windle

I am the lesbian and gay representative for PsyPAG which ultimately means that I feedback to PsyPAG (and therefore post graduates) about any information which is relevant to us within the field of psychology. The BPS Lesbian and Gay section is committed to developing non-heterosexist and gender inclusive forms of research, theory and clinical practice. The section is heavily involved with policy initiatives which prioritise equality and respect diversity – my role as PG rep is to make sure post-graduates are kept abreast of pertinent issues within this field. Over the past year I have also been involved in the undergraduate and postgraduate prizes awarded by the section. To find out more about these awards, or for more details about the section, please see our website: <http://www.bps.org.uk/lesgay/>

Mathematical, Statistical and Computing

By Gillian Smith

This year has been a particularly busy one for the Mathematical, Statistical and Computing Section, who held their biannual postgraduate workshop in collaboration with PsyPAG in April this year. This free workshop was extremely well attended with over 100 postgraduate psychology delegates coming to learn from five excellent speakers, and have their burning statistical questions answered by the stats clinic panel. Also, approximately £150.00 was raised for charity at this event by hosting a stats book raffle.

PsyPAG have also been assisting in the development of a new postgraduate award, "The Ranald Macdonald Postgraduate Prize" for the best postgraduate thesis using statistics in a novel way to investigate an aspect of psychology (consisting of certificate, cash prize, invitation and expenses to present at Maths, Stats and Computing Section Conference). PsyPAG have also been involved with the updating of the section website and the annual conference.

If you would like to find out more about the Maths, Stats and Computing Section (including details of how to join – it is FREE for student members!), please see our website: http://www.bps.org.uk/mscs/mscs_home.cfm

Branch Representatives:

Northern Ireland

By John Hyland

In early February, the NIBPS worked in partnership with the Psychological Society of Ireland to organise an All-Ireland careers event for final year psychology students. The event was held in Trinity College, Dublin, and a number of top-quality speakers delivered talks on a diverse range of psychological disciplines. The event was a great success, with hundreds of students in attendance. My involvement in the fair was two-fold. Notwithstanding my contribution to the organization of a contingency of final year students to travel from the University of Ulster to Dublin for the event, I was involved in speaking to students about the NIBPS student section and how to become involved in their respective Psychology branches. Many students were interested in the benefits of becoming a student member of the BPS, and I was available to advise as to these benefits, and also answer any queries that students may have had, which

included clarification on the role of PsyPAG as the student affairs representative committee within the BPS.

In mid-February, the NIBPS organized a selection of talks entitled "A Flavour of Psychology", for all final year 2nd-level students in Northern Ireland. The talks ranged diversely, from Health and Cognitive Psychology, to Forensic Psychology and Suicide Prevention. My role at the event was primarily as a representative of my own University, but I also received a number of questions regarding the career of Psychology in general and the stages of career development from an undergraduate student starting their degree, to enrolling into postgraduate courses.

In mid-March of this year the NIBPS, in conjunction with the PSI and the University of Ulster, organized the PSI Annual Conference of the Division of Health Psychology. I was a member of the organizing committee for this event, and my role was a student liaison officer with postgraduate students, and to ensure a strong level of student involvement by increasing awareness of the event. At the conference, I was available for any student-related queries regarding PsyPAG, and student membership of the BPS.

My most rewarding of roles since becoming Northern Ireland representative for PsyPAG was my involvement during the British Psychological Society's Annual Conference in Dublin this past April. I had several responsibilities during this time. I organised accommodation for the PsyPAG committee in advance of the conference, as well as organising the committee meeting. As the NIBPS were jointly involved in the organisation of the event, I was involved in running the branch stand during the days of the conference. The Conference was another great success with an excellent venue, top quality poster and oral sessions, and very nice weather!

The NIBPS Annual Conference was held in County Louth in the middle of May this year and a lot of preparation and planning went into the event. The location was superb, overlooking beautiful Carlingford Lake. My involvement in the Annual Conference was quite substantial; as well as liaising with students regarding presenting prior to the conference, there were chairing duties for each committee member, as well as looking after the delegation registration stand at different times during the event.

There have been several more events organized by the branch for the coming months and if the events of the last six months are anything to go by, we are in for another busy period!

Wales

By Emma McDonald

As the PsyPAG Welsh branch representative I am a member of both the PsyPAG and Welsh branch committees and by participating in both committees I can feedback information about issues affecting postgraduates both in Wales and/or in the UK. This is becoming an increasingly important role considering the devolution of power from Westminster and policies differing between Wales other counties in the UK. This year I had the opportunity to represent the branch at the BPS Annual Conference in Dublin. Below are also some of the achievements and activities of the branch I have been involved with over the past year.

National Assembly for Wales

One of the key aims of the Welsh branch is to bring together stakeholders in psychological services from our membership to produce a coherent and representative message to governing bodies within Wales. During the last year we have been involved in consulting and responding to matters that affect our membership through our National Assembly for Wales Liaison officer. For example, in the coming months the Liaison officer will gain feedback from the Division of Counselling Psychology in Wales (DCoPW) and produce a joint response (Welsh Branch/DCoPW) for the Michael Williams Review of Mental Health Services. We are also continuing consultation on "New Ways of Working" and "Agenda for Change" amongst other initiatives.

Welsh Branch Annual Student Conference

The annual student conference 2008 was held at Bangor University and was a great success with 24 students presenting and approximately 50 more attending. This year, in addition to our general student bursaries, we offered specific grants for students from South Wales to help with the cost of travelling to attend the conference in North Wales. This was such a success that it will be repeated (in reverse) for our next conference in 2009 at Cardiff University, with students from North Wales being offered grants to help towards travel to South Wales.

Student Grants

This year the branch has paid over £600 to postgraduate students for conference and research bursaries. The branch has received positive feedback from postgraduate students about the speed and efficiency with which the bursary applications were dealt with.

This is in addition to our Student Prizes which are awarded to a student from each of the five Universities in Wales running psychology degrees. Prizes are either awarded for the Best Final Year Student or Best Dissertation and students are nominated for these by their institutions.

Scientific Meetings

In 2007-08 we held five well-attended Scientific Meetings throughout the year covering diverse topics such as Freud, fertility, driving and alcohol. The 2008-09 season will be kicked off by Professor John Pearce discussing Animal Intelligence as part of the Ernest Jones Celebration Lecture on 1st October, which is being held in conjunction with the Branch AGM.

Bridging the Geographical Gap

This year the branch has started using videoconferencing for its committee meetings, allowing us to expand the committee to include members outside of the Cardiff area without increasing cost and inconvenience to committee members. Over the next year we hope to extend the use of videoconferencing or webcasting to our Scientific Meetings.

The Psychologist in Wales

And finally that branch has its own publication, The Psychologist in Wales. This is published annually and Issue 21 is due to be published in the summer. The publication is sent to every member of the BPS in Wales and postgraduates are encouraged to contribute to the 2009 issue.

I am stepping down as the PsyPAG Welsh branch representative at the October AGM after two great years. If anyone is interested in taking over the role please contact the PsyPAG Information Officer (info@psypag.co.uk) and the Welsh branch advisor Helen Taylor (wales@bps.org.uk). For more information about the branch please visit our website: http://www.bps.org.uk/welsh/welsh_home.cfm

Ethics committee representative

By Sue Jamison-Powell

This role is a new one for the PsyPAG committee. As Ethics Representative I sit on the BPS Ethics Committee and report on any issues that may influence psychology postgraduates. I can also request items to be placed upon the agenda. One of the main things that the Ethics Committee is currently involved in is preparing the ethics training guidelines for the postgraduate professional training course for trainee psychologists.

In my experience so far, even though the Ethics Committee does tend to be primarily concerned with the ethical issues that affect applied psychology, this role will help to inform psychology postgraduates by reporting on real ethical considerations and provide psychology postgraduates with a chance to raise any issues with the Ethics Committee.

Chair's comment:

As you can see from the above reports, the PsyPAG committee are working harder than ever to give something back to the psychology postgraduate community. I would like to personally thank the committee for their hard work and commitment over the past year. If there is anything else that you think PsyPAG should be doing, please let me know: chair@psypag.co.uk

Psychology Postgraduate Affairs Group
POSTGRADUTE CONFERENCE
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Conference Bursaries

Deadlines: 10th May and 10th October annually.

Need help with the cost of attending a conference? PsyPAG might be able to help.

All postgraduates registered on a course in the UK are eligible to apply and there are two types of award:

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Successful applicants are asked to write an article for the PsyPAG Quarterly and will be invited to present at our annual conference.

Retrospective applications are welcome, but please note that due to the rising popularity of the fund, applicants who are not presenting either a poster or a paper are unlikely to be successful.

To apply for a Bursary, please visit the PsyPAG website : <http://www.psyag.co.uk> where you can access the online bursary application form.

For further Information, please contact *The Information Officer* at: info@psyag.co.uk

Conference Review

PsyPAG Annual Conference, Manchester 2008

THIS YEAR'S PSYPAG CONFERENCE WAS HOSTED BY THE University of Manchester; claimed to be "Britain's largest single-site university". The campus comprises of new and old buildings with some beautiful architecture lining the Oxford road, embedded within a bustling cosmopolitan city; making it arguably one of the best locations for a postgraduate conference. The conference was attended by approximately 150 people on each of the three days and showcased postgraduate research from around the UK. The conference demonstrated the diverse nature of the discipline of Psychology, with research emerging from most subdivisions of the BPS.

I attended the conference on my own and upon arrival was instantly welcomed into the postgrad community and invited "for drinks", which I found a relief! On the first night I was struck by the width and breadth of research areas that people were interested in and busily undertaking studies. Research areas included were those of sexual orientation, prejudice and stereotyping, and psychotic illnesses. It was exciting to attend different symposia from my Neuropsychology roots over the three days. My eyes were opened as to how blinkered I had become when undertaking a PhD.

The keynote speakers were inspirational and well chosen for attendees; the first by Prof. Mark Griffiths, Director of the International Gaming Research Unit at Nottingham Trent University, who gave a fast-paced guide to breaking into the media and how to work with journalists once you succeed. The talk included how to cope with 'twisted' interpretations of your words, especially when they appear as a front page special the day after! Prof Griffiths made me completely reappraise the way I considered Psychologists in the public eye, their reputations and research activity. I found myself rethinking my career and whether I would like to follow a similar path, as I'm sure did many others in the audience that day.

Dr David Marchant, a senior lecturer in sport and exercise psychology at Edge Hill University, gave us an insight into human performance and exercise psychology (not to mention my pitching and putting technique in golf!) and explored the influence of attentional focus on movement execution; from novice motor skill performance and task experience, through to altering instructions and building on instructional preferences. He also talked about learning in sport, exercise and rehabilitative settings. Having not attended many sports psychology talks in the past, it was an exciting snap shot into sports psychology as a thriving discipline.

From one high profile Psychologist to another; Prof. Geoff Beattie, the Head of the School of Psychological Sciences at the University of Manchester, spoke about verbal and non-verbal communication. He drew on a number of fascinating examples of key people in the public eye, *e.g.*, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, and how psychological inquiry can unravel the mismatch between 'what we say' and 'what we really think', which may often be captured more accurately through iconic hand gestures. In addition, the talk examined how psychological research can promote small adjustments to advertising campaigns that can directly influence the amount of information retained by TV viewers, which should make all marketing executives pay attention!

Overall, the conference was very well organised by our PsyPAG team and in my mind, surpassed many of the 'professional' conferences I've attended. The selection of posters and talks were pitched at the right level, provoked further thought and engaged interest without getting 'bogged down' in the detail. On a personal note, it was awesome to receive an award for my presentation entitled 'How do you become expert at interpreting brain images?' and to get recognition of my research activities by peers. As I was constructing my presentation, I was a little anxious my work wouldn't be considered 'theory-driven' for the critical ones among us; in fact, the opposite turned out to be true. The audience were interested in my chosen topic and feedback was really positive. It was commented that people found it refreshing to attend a talk with a heavily applied focus.

We all know too well how determined and stubborn you have to be to succeed in psychology and acknowledgements along the way, no matter how big or small, can keep the spirits lifted. If you didn't present this year, I would strongly urge you to consider submitting an abstract next year; you couldn't present to a friendlier, more encouraging audience and you have nothing to lose. I believe I would be right in speaking on all attendees

behalf by confirming that the aim of 'providing a supportive environment where postgraduate psychologists can cultivate their skills without the normal pressures of academic conferences' was certainly met.

Well done to the PsyPAG committee and the conference team at Manchester for their hard work in organising and hosting an excellent conference!

Correspondence

Lindsay Cooper

AS A FIRST-YEAR PHD STUDENT THIS WAS MY FIRST encounter with both the PsyPAG team and a research conference specifically aimed at postgraduate students and I have to say that I was very impressed on both counts. I had been informed prior to attending the conference that this might be one of the lesser recommended events on the conference circuit, however, this advice could not have been more wrong. Over the course of the three days, attendees were privileged to a packed programme of events, including high quality oral and poster presentations, a wide range of themed symposiums, skills workshops and prestigious key note speakers.

The quality of the oral presentations was generally outstanding. It was clear that presenting at this conference provided vital opportunities to review work in progress, elicit discussions ultimately prompting feedback and to generate new ideas and potential solutions to obstacles encountered in the process of current research. All of the aforementioned occurred within a friendly, supportive and relaxed environment. Similarly, the poster presentations were of a very high standard and from a diverse range of research perspectives, providing the opportunity to network with other students from both national and international research institutions.

Additionally, the conference provided the opportunity to attend a variety of skills workshops. The 'Postgraduates Who Teach' network organised a valuable teaching skills workshop on the theme of 'How to make lectures and seminars more interactive', this was delivered by Dr Martyn Stewart from Liverpool John Moores University. Dr Coral Dando chaired a lively, interactive careers workshop, in which a panel of both academics and applied psychologists laid themselves open to a wide range of intriguing and thought provoking questions from the audience. I'm sure that Dr Coral

Dando, having only recently completed her PhD, would not mind my saying that she stands as a shining example to all of us slightly more mature students, in respect of her own career achievements as both a Research Fellow and Lecturer.,Last but not least, the conference also provided the opportunity to attend a hypnosis workshop led by Paul Millar in which a series of participatory exercises were equally fun, relaxing and educational!

Having attended a PsyPAG conference for the first time, one thing which created a lasting impression for me was the dedication and organisation of the PsyPAG committee. It was a pleasure to be able to meet the team, who had clearly put a huge effort into organising the conference, making everything run smoothly and everyone feel welcome. What is more, I came to realise that the PsyPAG committee represents a group of highly professional individuals, dedicated to providing a service to postgraduate students. This service includes, supporting students in all aspects of their career development, providing bursaries, organising workshops, training events and conferences in addition to representing student interests within the BPS. So, I am honoured to be able to say that I have taken the opportunity to join the PsyPAG committee as a member of the Quarterly magazine editorial team and that I will be acting as the Membership and Professional Training board representative. I very much look forward to taking up these roles and I hope that I will be able to contribute to the growing success of PsyPAG.

On a final note, I would just like to say that I would recommend all postgraduate research students, especially those in the early stages of their research career, attend the next PsyPAG conference to be held in Cardiff. You never know what might come of it. At the very least you might come away with a new group of friends sharing common research interests and career aspirations. However, the chances are that you will acquire some of the skills and experience on which your future career development might depend. One thing that can be guaranteed is that you will leave having had a very memorable and enjoyable experience!

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Clairvoyance in Cats; Eight Good Reasons to Publish Before Writing-up your Thesis

Rory Allen, Goldsmiths University

AFTER A HARD DAY TESTING PARTICIPANTS AND WORRYING about how to analyze the data, the last thing most of us want to think about is generating more work. Here we are, wanting to make the process of becoming “Dr X” as short as possible. Surely a straight line is the shortest distance between two points?

Yet sometimes things are not so simple. It could seem like a diversion of time and effort from the direct path to a PhD, but writing up findings for journal publication can bring a lot of benefits.

1. Original research may be ‘scooped’ by rival workers if you wait till completion of your thesis before beginning the task of writing it up for publication. Don’t underrate your expertise: if you have been working for two years on an investigation into Clairvoyance in Cats, this probably makes you the world leader in the subject. Make the most of it and get your stuff out there first.
2. Getting published is a great morale-booster. It is a public acknowledgement of the quality of your research, and can recharge that enthusiasm which might be running low after two years of hard work with insufficient holidays and coping with awkward questions from relations about “tell me what exactly it was you were doing again?”.
3. What do we dread most on that day of the oral examination? An overzealous external examiner who terrier-like, focuses on a minutely critical examination of your sample selection policy, methodology, analysis, or worst of all, originality. What better response can there be to the portentous words “I’m a bit concerned about your claims on page 119”,

than “I’m surprised by that: my development of standardized tests for clairvoyance has been accepted for publication in the Journal for Quantum Phrenology (impact factor 13.5), and the two expert reviewers actually found the discussion on page 119 one of the strongest parts of the paper”. Wouldn’t it be great to be able to say that? They can hardly deny that your work satisfies the “of publishable quality” criterion if already published.

4. If you write up your results as you go along, you are forced to analyze the data and draw conclusions from it as each chunk of data gathering is completed. This means that if an experiment is good, it can be relied on confidently as a basis for further research, but if it turns out to be a failure, you can go back and redesign it so as to redeem the failure, or perhaps take other corrective action eg try another type of experiment or another approach altogether, before it’s too late.

5. Journal reviewers and editors can provide an excellent, unpaid source of independent advice and criticism. This is linked to reason 3 above; *you* may think your demonstration of Clairvoyance in Cats is fireproof, and your supervisor may agree, but you may both be mistaken, or may not have been aware of related work being done by a group elsewhere. Reviewers may point out confounds or statistical errors that make your work unsound, but correctable with some adjustments to the experimental design. They may also express astonishment that you failed to refer to important work by Nutkin and Potter showing similar results in squirrels, which you can then incorporate into your literature review. Better doing it at that stage than as a thesis rewrite.

6. If you write up the results of your studies for publication as you go along, you minimize the aversive task of sitting down to make sense of it all right at the end, under time pressure. Many of us have experienced that feeling of paralysis at the prospect of having to change gear after a solid chunk of data-gathering and (a) think theoretically about our results and (b) write what can at times be tedious summaries of other people’s research in the literature review (who cares about Nutkin and Potter’s work on squirrels? You’re working with cats). But if you already have one or two papers written up, it is a lot easier to adapt these to form separate chapters of the thesis. The job is more than half done already.

7. And sadly, it’s a competitive world out there. When it comes to applying for jobs in the final year of your PhD, if you have two or three first-author publications to put on your CV you have to be in a stronger position than

those with none. Publications are a guarantee of quality: even if you happen to come from Allington University, Bassetshire, which has not yet established the reputation it deserves for academic excellence, this will not matter if you personally are already famous for publishing seminal studies into Clairvoyance in Cats in the pages of Nature Neuroscience.

8. Finally, there is a bonus for the supervisor: he, or she, will get their name as (usually) second or final author on papers that you publish, adding to their own CV. This is not unreasonable in those cases (common, but certainly not universal) where the supervisor may have suggested the paradigms or given heavy theoretical/practical support to the student. This bonus might, incidentally, serve to motivate the supervisor to give you even closer and better support than they would otherwise have done.

Are there any drawbacks? Yes, publication can be a frustrating business. It may be months before you get reviewer comments, and when you do, be warned: their criticism of your cherished draft can hurt. But most reviewers are reasonably constructive and some at least of their points are useful. And in my experience, comments which look dauntingly hostile often turn out to be quite manageable after mulling them over for a day or two. Anyway, you always have the alternative of ignoring them and just getting on with your research: the process of drafting for publication will still have saved you time at the stage of writing up your thesis. And you are going to have to get used to critical reviewers at some stage if you are to stay in research.

So get started now. Mr. Fluffy tells me that you won't regret it.

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(How to Write a) Book Review

Hartley, James (2008) Academic writing and publishing: A practical handbook

Graham Badley,

Research, Development and Commercial Services

Anglia Ruskin University

IT'S NOT EVERY AUTHOR WHO IS CONSIDERATE ENOUGH TO provide a checklist for reviewers (p. 121). So here is a review of Hartley (2008) following his own guidelines which should contain:

An early paragraph saying what the book is about, and putting it in context

Hartley characterises academic writing as unnecessarily complicated, pompous, long-winded, technical, impersonal, authoritative, humourless, elitist and exclusive. He suggests that, even so, such writing can be appropriate in specific circumstances and can be easier for non-native speakers to follow. However, his book is a campaign against advice which tries to turn academic writing into impersonal, precise and objective prose. Instead, like the Fowlers, he promotes academic writing which is 'direct, simple, brief, vigorous, and lucid'. The trouble is that those who try for a more readable approach may well be criticized by journal editors and referees for putting accessibility before or instead of academic formality.

Information about the intended audience

'This lively and reliable guide will be invaluable for postgraduates, lecturers and researchers new to academic writing and publishing' (a blurb which, unusually, does not exaggerate). The blurb also claims that Hartley's

handbook will help seasoned writers too. Again, I agree, since it directly and practically addresses academic writing in general, journal articles in particular, other genres such as books, theses and conference papers as well as, for example, publishing, procrastination and productive writers.

A critique of the argument/content of the book

Outstanding book reviews, according to Hartley, give a balanced, critical evaluation of the text. First, then, what about Hartley's main argument that academic writing should be 'direct, simple, brief, vigorous, and lucid'? His argument is exemplified by the book itself. Not only is his own writing direct and simple he urges other writers, seasoned and unseasoned, to follow his lead: keep in mind your readers, use the first rather than the third person, use short simple words, use active tenses, avoid negatives and abbreviations and overloading the text with references, vary sentence lengths, use short paragraphs, read the text aloud, and revise continuously. This may seem like standard stuff but, I believe, it needs stressing since many academic writers still believe that obfuscation equals wisdom. As Hartley points out, students and academics tend to judge complex writing to be more erudite than simpler text.

Second, what about the content of Hartley's handbook? Is it as practical and useful as it sets out to be? Again I would say 'yes'. For example, few handbooks have such an illuminating discussion of the role of *titles* in academic articles. Hartley offers a helpful typology which ranges from titles that announce a *general subject* – The age of adolescence – or that *announce a thesis* – The lost art of conversation – or that *attract by alliteration* – The taxonomy of titles – to those that *mystify* – Outside the whale. There are also useful brief chapters on abstracts ('After the title, the abstract is the most frequently read part of any paper'); selecting key words; introductions; methods; results; discussions; and even on the writing of acknowledgements.

Any supporting academic references

One of the main features of Hartley's book is the extent to which he backs up his statements about academic writing by reference to his own work and to that of others. For example, in his opening chapter on the nature of academic writing he cites no less than seven of his own papers on such topics as improving the effects of new technology on writing, clarity across the disciplines, style and substance in psychology as well as on readability and prestige in scientific journals. He also links his own research with that

of others in similar or contrasting disciplines. Noticeable here is a reference to, for example, Murray and Moore (2006) which might be regarded as a rival text on academic writing.

Remarks on the strengths and limitations of the book

The strengths of the book lie in its clear and direct style, its effective coverage of key topics in academic writing and its scholarly quality. I agree with one referee who describes Hartley's work as 'exceptional' because he 'speaks out to the reader quite personally, while at the same time conveying useful information, findings and thinking in a scholarly, rigorous and academic manner. This is a rare talent'.

Does the book have any limitations? Of course, Hartley could have written more comprehensively about each of the issues he discusses but this might have undermined his concern to avoid an unnecessarily complicated, pompous, long-winded, technical, impersonal and humourless text. And, for those who want more, each chapter ends with helpful suggestions for further reading.

Although 'it is not required that every review contain at least one negative remark' (p. 117) I will offer a couple of minor complaints in order to avoid becoming too laudatory. First, there is the occasional misrelated participle: 'Borrowing from Hughes (2005), it might be worth considering selecting words from a series of categories...' (p. 39); 'When writing a literature review, one solution to some of these problems is to examine in more detail the original papers...' (p.91). The eminently Victorian Fowlers would not have been amused. Second, I have a beef about his punctuation of bullet points. In my view the virtue of the bullet point is that its punctuation is up-front in order to attract attention and signal emphasis. Hartley effectively uses this device throughout his text and, indeed, urges consistency in its punctuation for lists (p. 148). However, he and/or his sub-editor fail to meet the need for consistency because the bullet points are variously followed by semi-colons, full stops or nothing at all. I prefer the latter but most of all I urge my own students to be consistent in how they punctuate their lists:

A list about the punctuation of bullet points (bps)

- bps may be punctuated with a semi-colon;
- bps may be punctuated with a full stop.
- bps already have their punctuation mark up-front and need no other

- but shouldn't bps which are questions have their own question mark?

However, of course, in order to make the point, I have had to be inconsistent. Writing is a tough old trade.

A note on the format, length and price (or value for money)

The handbook has four sections – *Introduction*, *The academic article*, *Other genres*, *Other aspects of academic writing* – each containing, apart from the relatively long (20 pages) *Introduction*, a series of brief chapters. There are also three appendices offering guidelines for academic writing, guidelines for revising text and abbreviations for American states used in citing references. Hartley also follows his own advice by keeping his paragraphs short and using helpful subheadings throughout. The length at 196 pages is long enough for relevant material to be covered and short enough to avoid tedium. At £19.99 the paperback represents excellent value for money and I shall be recommending it to all postgraduate students and academics across the disciplines.

A note (if appropriate) on how well the text is supported by tables/diagrams/illustrations

Here again Hartley exemplifies his own recommended good practice. First, he provides his readers with 19 useful figures such as *Reasons for writing*, *An original abstract in structured form*, *The author's response to an editorial request* and *A typical format for an academic poster*. Second, he offers 39 valuable tables including *Some characteristics of academic writing*, *Some rhetorical devices used in academic articles*, *Titles used by students for their projects*, *Ten ways to provide effective key words and phrases*, *Authors from hell versus dream writers*, *The hidden meanings of phrases in book reviews* and *Things that writers do to avoid writing...*

The figures and tables alone, mainly research-based, will be gratefully used by novices and experienced writers, by students and teachers.

Hartley, James 1940-

Academic writing and publishing: A practical handbook

Routledge: London and New York 2008

ISBN 13: 978-0-415-45321-9 (hbk); ISBN 13: 978-0-415-45322-6 (pbk)

ISBN 13: 978-0-203-92798-4 (ebk) Hardback £75; Paperback £19.99

Inspired to Write?

Thinking of Contributing to the Psychology Teaching Review?

The next deadline for contributions to the PTR is **30th April**. If you have a study, review or just something to say around teaching and learning email it to the editor at ptr@bps.org.uk. We are trying to move towards a journal which, in addition to the customary peer reviewed articles has a section for comments and opinions on issues related to the teaching and learning of psychology. There will also be book reviews and hopefully an abstracts section.

For the next issue, we would be particularly interested exploring Contemporary Issues in Psychology. Do you teach about psychology in relation to contemporary issues such as war, peace, politics, the environment, children and work, education, poverty, social inequities, happiness, etc.? Papers on other relevant topics are also welcomed as this will not be a themed issue.

The publication is open to contribution by students and we will provide support and guidance throughout the process. This could be a paper on the student's view on teaching and learning issues, reporting an undergraduate dissertation or a post-graduate study.

Don't be shy! We are nice people who will do our best to help you get your work to print in PTR.

Quarterly Submissions

The Quarterly Team would be delighted to receive your ideas for future editions of the PsyPAG Quarterly.

If you would like to submit an article, or discuss your idea before writing then please email quarterly@psypag.co.uk

Deadlines for submissions are:
January 2nd 2009 for March '09 edition
April 3rd 2009 for June '09 edition

Dates for the Diary

When	Event	Contact
10-12 Dec 08	Divisional Clinical Psychology Annual Conference	www.dcpconference.co.uk
11-12 Dec 08	2008 Inaugural Conference of Division of Sports and Exercise Psychology	dsepconference@bps.org.uk 0116 2529555
17-18 Dec 08	Special Group in Coaching Psychology 1 st European Coaching Psychology Conference	www.eventsforce.net/sgcp
13-14 Jan 09	Postgraduate Occupational Psychology Conference	www.bps.org.uk/pop2009
14-16 Jan 09	Division of Occupational Psychology Conference	www.bps.org.uk/dop2009
1-3 April 09	BPS Annual Conference, Brighton	www.bps.org.uk/ac2009
7-9 April 09	History & Philosophy of Psychology Section Annual Conference	a.collins@lancaster.ac.uk

PsyPAG Committee Members 2008/09

Position	Currently Held By:	Due for re-election
Core Committee Members		
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Treasurer treasurer@psypag.co.uk	Caroline Bettenay	2009
Vice Chair vicechair@psypag.co.uk	Laura McGrath	2010
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Quarterly Editors	Naomi Andrew	2009
quarterly@psypag.co.uk	Cherie Armour	2010
	Kyle Brown	2010
	Lesley Jacobs	2010

Division Representatives		
Clinical Psychology	Vacant	
Counselling Psychology	Vacant	
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Sport and Exercise Psychology	Sarah Wood sarah.wood@unn.ac.uk	2010
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Consciousness and Experiential Psychology Section	Tamara Shengelia T.Shengelia@open.ac.uk	2009

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Mathematical, Statistical and Computing Section	Agnes Lech hormeza@gmail.com	Co-opted 2009
Psychobiology Section	Vinet Coetzee Vc56@st-andrews.ac.uk	2010
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Psychology of Women Section	Vacant	
Psychotherapy Section	Vacant	
Qualitative Methods Section	Vacant	
Social Psychology Section	Vacant	
Transpersonal Psychology Section	Mark Shovman m.shovman@abertay.ac.uk	2010
Coaching Psychology	Vacant	
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Wessex and Wight Branch	Vacant	
West Midlands Branch	Dean Wilkinson	To be co-opted
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Publications and Communications Board	Kyle Brown k.g.brown@shu.ac.uk	2010
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Research Board	Laura Crane	2010

(chair +1 other)	Vacant	
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Learning and teaching support network	Rebecca Semmens-Wheeler rebecca.jsw@gmail.com	2010
National Postgraduate Committee	Maja Jankowska Maja.Jankowska@beds.ac.uk	2009
Undergraduate Liaison Officer	Sarah Parry	