“Research and Scholarship is our expertise.”

George Garrop, General Manager ACAP
ABSTRACT 1
Moving Towards Bayesian Inference in Psychological Research
Gabriel Tillman, ACAP
For the last century, classical hypothesis testing in psychology has been guided by the philosophy of frequentist statistics. But recently there has been a movement toward the use of Bayesian methods for testing hypotheses. I will discuss many of the advantages of using Bayesian statistics that have been put forward by contemporary Bayesians. I will present several recently developed free and open source software programs that allow psychologists to conduct Bayesian statistics.

Keywords: Statistics; Bayesian; Hypothesis Testing; Research Methods

Biography: Gabriel Tillman is a Lecturer at the Australian College of Applied Psychology. He was awarded a Bachelor of Psychology (Honours I) and a Ph.D. in cognitive psychology from the University of Newcastle. Following his Ph.D. Gabriel worked at Vanderbilt University as a postdoctoral research fellow. At ACAP, Gabriel is investigating the relationship between decision processes and negative emotional states such as depression, anxiety, and stress.

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ABSTRACT 2
“A good sketch is better than a long speech”: A pilot study on the use of sketchnoting to teach undergraduate psychology
Timothy P Chambers, Discipline of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Background: Visual presentation refers to the suite of techniques that enable individuals to synthesise written and verbal communication into a series of images. Preliminary evidence suggests that these techniques can build cognitive skills among educators and students (Sibbet, 2008) across a variety of disciplines (e.g., engineering, design, IT). Whilst much of the related research focuses on two of the more common techniques, graphic recording and graphic facilitation (Dean-Coffey, 2013), less is known about the sketchnoting. Furthermore, no research has investigated the utility of sketching in teaching psychology.

Approach: This research presentation will report the findings from a two-year pilot project on utilising sketchnoting to teach undergraduate psychology. The academic performance of two student cohorts (n=112, 77 female) was compared; one cohort received sketchnoting during lectures, in addition to the accredited curriculum.

Research significance: Results indicated that there was no difference in academic performance between cohorts for coursework (p>.05) nor the final exam (p>.05). Content analysis of the student feedback revealed that the graphic recording assisted students to learn several key concepts within the curriculum. Despite not finding group-level differences in academic performance for psychology students, the existing literature supports the inclusion of visual presentation techniques in the classroom to aid academic performance. This study is the first of its kind to examine the influence of incorporating graphic recording into the higher education teaching environment. Suggestions for future research, including trialling the technique in alternative classrooms (e.g., workshops, seminars) will be also discussed.

Keywords: Teaching, psychology, students, drawing, higher education

Biography: Tim Chambers is a Senior Lecturer in the Discipline of Psychological Sciences with the Australian College of Applied Psychology. Tim’s research program broadly focuses on investigating solutions to enhance individual mental health and wellbeing. Specific research areas include exploring the diversity of support services, and related organisational factors, that are designed to improved athlete mental health and wellbeing and investigating the effectiveness of exercise in natural environments as a vehicle to improve mental health for the broader population.

ABSTRACT 3
Getting it right: Preferred pronouns and inclusive language
Dr Vicki Hutton, Discipline of Counselling, ACAP

Language can be a powerful tool for determining gender where gender is perceived as a dichotomy (male/female). Respecting a person’s preferred personal pronoun – whether that be he, she, they, ze, co, xe or others – exposes and confounds society’s taken-for-granted gender binaries, but can also create tensions and controversy. Inclusive language such as the routine use of preferred pronouns should not be adopted for political correctness, rather because it is a respectful, fair and accurate response. Pronoun, name and gender are all important parts of identity, and their correct application is fundamental to supporting transgender or gender nonconforming students’ experiences of university life.

While some universities are exploring and moving towards the methodical inclusion of preferred pronouns in their student information databases, it is not widespread. Similarly, routinely asking and adhering to preferred pronouns in the classroom is sometimes overlooked, not followed up, or treated as too ‘challenging’ or ‘too hard’ to remember.

This paper reports a case study of mis-gendering and the impact of not using a person’s preferred pronouns. Strategies to help staff and students move past the discomfort of the unfamiliar, and understand the normalising effect of inclusive language, are presented and critiqued. Asking students to share their preferred pronouns (even if they are cisgender) at the beginning of class is respectful and direct and goes some way to normalising gender-neutral pronouns. It is also a great tool to introduce conversations around inclusivity with students who may not have considered the gender binaries inherent in a simple pronoun. It is proposed that this activity, and similar ones, should become as natural as asking a person’s name.

As gender-neutral pronouns become more widely accepted, it is important for educational institutions to develop, promote and adhere to inclusive language at all levels and on a day-to-day basis.

Keywords: gender pronouns; gender binaries; mis-gendering;

Biography: Vicki Hutton is Counselling Discipline Lead on the Melbourne campus, and Coordinator of the Graduate Diploma of Counselling at ACAP. After working in the community mental health sector for many years, Vicki now focuses on her academic and research roles at ACAP. Her key research interests include health stigma, HIV, the human-animal relationship, subjective wellbeing, cultural diversity and social justice.
ABSTRACT 1
Deficits of (Hot) Executive Function in Developmental Coordination Disorder: Implications for the Contemporary Models of the Disorder
S. Rahimi-Golkhandan & P. H. Wilson

Developmental coordination disorder (DCD), which affects 5-6% of school-aged children, is characterised by deficits of motor control and learning that are significantly lower than expected given the child chronological age and intellectual ability, and not due to a pervasive developmental delay or medical conditions. Apart from disrupting activities of daily living and/or academic achievement, DCD is associated with a range of secondary socio-emotional consequences. Contemporary aetiological accounts of DCD link the consequences of the disorder to a range of co-occurring cognitive deficits that disrupt both motor and cognitive control. The neuroscientific approach identifies reduced ability in predictive control of action and rhythmic coordination and timing as well as deficits of executive function (EF). EF refers to a set of neurocognitive processes (i.e., response inhibition, working memory, mental flexibility) involved in conscious and effortful control of thought, emotion, and behaviour. Our recent research suggests children with DCD exhibit reduced cognitive control not only in response to ‘cold’, abstract stimuli (e.g., simple motor tasks), but also ‘hot’, emotionally significant ones (e.g., delay of immediate gratification). This paper discusses the implications of hot EF deficits for both the aetiological accounts of DCD and the models developed to explain the link between the disorder and its secondary consequences. One example of such models is the Environmental Stress Hypothesis which posits that the effect of DCD on internalising problems is mediated by secondary stressors as well as intra- and inter-personal resources. We postulate EF as another potential mediator of the relationship between DCD and its emotional consequences, and propose a novel task (based on the go/no-go paradigm) that may determine whether a reduced ability to divert attention from distressing stimuli (e.g., active play) and to exercise inhibitory control (e.g., not to engage in passive activities) contributes to reduced participation and internalising problems in this cohort.

Keywords: Developmental Coordination Disorder, Executive Function, Child Development, Environmental Stress Hypothesis, Participation

ABSTRACT 2
International study on psychiatric diagnosis: Habitual practices of clinicians
Dr Jelena Zeleskov Doric, Australian College of Applied Psychology*
Dr Tomas Juricik, National Research University, Moscow, Russia

Diagnosis is a fundamental component of clinical care (APA, 2000; 2013). As such, the need for high reliability and validity of diagnosis as the foundation for effective treatment plans is more than necessary (Frances, 2013). The diagnostic practice of clinicians should be compatible with current international standards, however research indicates that psychologists and psychiatrists often misdiagnose mental illnesses, overlook comorbid disorders, or reach their decisions prematurely (Armontrout, Gitlin & Gutheil, 2016; Field & Cartwright-Hatton, 2015; Green et al., 2015). This study aims to describe and analyse habitual diagnostic practices of clinical psychologists, psychologists and psychiatrists in response to vignettes of hypothetical patients associated with both DSM-V and ICD-10 diagnostic categories. Recruitment for this international study started in different countries, including Russia Australia, Turkey, Canada and Serbia.

For the purpose of this study, we used mixed methods approach. Participants received a series of case studies, each of which describes the history of one person via Select Survey. The task for participants was to diagnose the mental illness of these cases and indicate their level of certainty and other information they might need to clarify these diagnoses. The three vignettes used in the study depict hypothetical patients with DSM-5/ICD-10 criteria for a type of mood, anxiety or psychotic disorder. Along with the vignettes further information such as confidence in the diagnosis, follow-up assessment to clarify clinical impression, and treatment recommendation was gather. Need for closure and future clarity in clinicians were measured by Need for Closure Questionnaire (Haughton & Grewal, 2000) and Future Clarity Questionnaire (McElwee & Haugh, 2010).

Results from Russian’s participants confirmed that psychiatrists were more likely to use DSM/ICO-10 for formulating accurate diagnosis compared to clinical psychologists. Interestingly, application of DSM/ICO-10 diagnostic tool did not contribute to confidence or accuracy of diagnoses made by mental health practitioners in Russia.

Keywords: diagnosis, psychiatrists, psychologists, international, habitual practices

Biography: Dr Jelena Zeleskov Doric, PhD and MSc in Psychology, BSc Hons in Psychology, BA Hons in Gestalt Psychotherapy and MA in Gestalt Psychotherapy, has been involved in psychology courses, psychotherapy education, supervision, and research for 15 years. She has been practicing as a psychologist, psychotherapist and supervisor for over 10 years. Jelena was a Vice-President of the European Association for Gestalt Therapy (EAGT). She was a Board member of the European Association for Psychotherapy Training Standards Committee. Jelena is a full member of the Australian Psychological Society and an International Chair of Gestalt Australia and New Zealand (GANZ). Jelena is also a member of the Society for Psychotherapy Research (SPR). In addition, she is the EAGT Research Committee Advisor. Jelena currently works at ACAP as a Senior Lecturer in Counselling and Psychotherapy. She is an active researcher interested in the relationship between neuroscience, attachment and gestalt therapy.

Biography: Dr Tomas Juricik, PhD in Clinical Psychology and MA in Counselling Psychology, BA Hons in Psychology, has been involved in psychology courses and research for 15 years. He is a Registered Psychologist in British Columbia (Canada) and a member of the British Columbia
Psychological Association, Tomas is employed as an Assistant Professor at National Research University-Higher School of Economics in Moscow, Russia. In addition, Tomas is an Affiliate Member of the Centre for Clinical Research in Health, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada. Dr Jurcik is trained clinician who worked in Jewish General Hospital in Montreal treating patients with severe mental illnesses as well as Victoria Hospital in London prior to his relocation to Russia. He is interested in relationship between mental health diagnosis, culture, treatment interventions and comparative research.


ABSTRACT 3

Can we predict the outcomes of deep learning algorithms that simulate and replace professional skills? Understanding the threat of artificial intelligence

*J Michael Innes, School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Ben W. Morrison, School of Psychology, Charles Sturt University

Biographies: Professor Mike Innes, previously Head of School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP, is a social psychologist with interests in the areas of social influence, group performance, stereotyping and in the politics of science, technology and psychology. He has been head of three schools of psychology and a Dean of Arts at the University of Adelaide. He is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and of the Australian and British Psychological Societies. He is currently investigating the threat of developments in artificial intelligence to replace professionals in the health and helping professions, especially psychologists and counsellors. He was a contributor to the Prime Minister’s Horizon Scanning Report on the developments of artificial intelligence in Australia.

Dr Ben Morrison is a registered Organisational Psychologist and Senior Lecturer in the School of Psychology at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst. Ben’s research and practice focuses on organisational psychology issues, including human factors, cognitive engineering, cyber-security, and the impacts of automation in the workplace. Ben is currently working on research projects relating to users’ expertise in detecting phishing threats, the impact of artificial intelligence on the health professions, and the causes of algorithm aversion when deciding whether to accept algorithmic advice.

Abstract: Technological developments in artificial intelligence (AI) have produced startling outcomes in the ability of learning algorithms to outperform the capacities of humans. The threat to employment from AI has spread more widely than had been previously comprehended and now encroaches upon the future employment of professionals. Specifically, legal practitioners, accountants, financial advisors and members of a spectrum of health professions are affected. The helping professions, including psychology, have in turn had the spotlight turned on them. This paper will briefly outline the threats that are forthcoming in the employment of psychologists. The main thrust of the paper, however, is concerned with an analysis of the nature of the deep learning algorithms that are being used to simulate human thought and behaviour. These algorithms produce reliable simulations of behaviour. They also develop creative and highly innovative solutions, going beyond the capabilities of many humans. Humans now learn from the output of the algorithms. A problem, however, is that, while the algorithms are the product of human thought, their actual processing is opaque; humans cannot inquire into what is going on during the process. They only see the output. The paradox is that the development of AI mimics methodological behaviourism, a former paradigm in experimental psychology. Our work strongly suggests that the information being put into the initial assumptions from which the algorithms proceed may be deeply and subtly biased due to methodological flaws in the design of experiments. The outcomes may, therefore, have undesirable and unforeseen consequences. In understanding the burgeoning threat of AI, professionals must be alert to the biases that exist to enable a defence against being replaced. Psychology has a role to play in developing this defence through its history of behaviouristic methodology and its understanding of the inherent flaws in the design of human experiments.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Employment; Professions; Future.
ABSTRACT 1
Counselling and Psychotherapy: Is There a Difference and Does it Matter in a Changing World?
Dr Cathy Bettman

Nineteen years ago, Hugh Crago (2000), a well-known Australian counsellor/psychotherapist and academic, asked the question, “Counselling and Psychotherapy: Is There a Difference? Does It Matter?” Currently, the same question continues to be debated, polarizing clinicians and confusing the public, students and policy makers. The Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA), “the leading national peak body and professional association for counsellors and psychotherapists in Australia” (PACFA, n.d.), in describing its mission and strategic priorities, clearly defines counselling and psychotherapy as two diverse practices. Within the Federation, there exist separate Colleges, the College of Counselling and the College of Psychotherapy. Both have in recent times, gone to great lengths to define and develop their individual Scope of Practice and Terms of Reference.

In this regard, Eissenstat and Bohecker (2018) stated that for over “half a century, the counselling profession has been struggling with the solidification of professional identity” (p.1314) and their narrative research study “explored how other professions responded to similar developmental issues” (p. 1326). They concluded that if “the counselling profession fails to build a united identity, we may be in danger of losing our current mission and strategic priorities, clearly defines counselling and psychotherapy as two diverse practices. Within the Federation, there exist separate Colleges, the College of Counselling and the College of Psychotherapy.”

Above all, the presentation will urge consensus and resolution so that increased energy is focused instead upon unlocking possibilities for innovative practice in a changing world.


ABSTRACT 2
A Metatheoretical Framework for the Integration of the Common Factors of Psychotherapy

“ABOVE ALL, THE PRESENTATION WILL URGE CONSENSUS AND RESOLUTION SO THAT INCREASED ENERGY IS FOCUSED INSTEAD UPON UNLOCKING POSSIBILITIES FOR INNOVATIVE PRACTICE IN A CHANGING WORLD.”

- Excerpt from Therapy Abstract 1 by Dr Cathy Bettman


Keywords: Metatheory, Therapeutic Change, Trust, Hope, Self, Play
what often became a fatal combination of AIDS-related conditions. With the advent of life-saving antiretroviral medications, these initial assessments are often also required to fulfil the role of a single counselling session as clients may not necessarily wish to return for ongoing therapy in the short or long term. The session must therefore serve a variety of functions to support the client’s physical and psychological health. The significance of the paper lies in its critical exploration of the challenges to implementing the SST approach within a changing counselling program and broader organisational culture. Instead of servicing HIV positive clients on a long-term basis, the program was required to develop new short-term therapy options, including SST, to meet its clients’ needs in the current climate where a new HIV diagnosis is usually no longer a death sentence.

The findings have implications for the introduction of SST in other community-based counselling programs.

Keywords: Counselling; HIV; Single Session Therapy


ABSTRACT 3
An innovative approach to counselling newly diagnosed HIV positive clients: applying the Single Session Therapy Model

Kieran O’Loughlin PhD, Discipline of Counselling, ACAP (Melbourne Campus)

Counselling is traditionally conceived as an episode of care comprising a shorter or longer series of client sessions. However, findings from studies of a range of counselling contexts reveal that the most common (modal) number of sessions clients attend is in reality only one, and that many clients find this single encounter sufficient. Single Session Therapy (SST) is a process that assists counsellors to make the most of the first, and what may be the only, session for clients (Bouverie Centre, 2019). This paper will describe and evaluate the effectiveness of an innovative application of the SST model to counselling newly diagnosed HIV positive clients. In Australian cities these clients are often fast-tracked into a full psychosocial assessment within specialised community-based counselling programs. In the 1980s and 1990s such clients would have typically then chosen to enter long-term therapy in these settings to support them through
**ABSTRACT 4**

**Toward an Integrative Clinical Psychology Practice: An Exploration of the Experiences of Registered Psychologists who use Complementary and Alternative Therapies (CATs) in Their Clinical Practice**

*Amanda Kassis, Discipline of Psychological Sciences, ACAP*

**Abstract:** Transpersonal Psychology (TP) synthesises knowledge of eastern consciousness psychologies with western empirical psychologies. Recent rapid diversification and inclusion of eastern practices within western cultures has resulted in an increase in use of a range of complementary and alternative therapies (CATs). For example, recent research shows that up to 70% of the population in Australia and New Zealand use complementary medicine, often alongside their conventional healthcare, and without discussion with their primary care physician. The growing use of complementary medicine in the community has encouraged the emergence of integrative medicine, where conventional medicine is combined with evidence-based lifestyle, natural and complementary medicine interventions, to deliver holistic, patient-centred care. Paralleling these developments in integrative medical practice, has been the incorporation of CATs into psychological treatment, following a growing evidence base to support the effectiveness of CATs in addressing psychological issues, such as depression and anxiety. Yet although the evidence for some CATs is building, there remains ongoing scepticism about integrative practice, which necessitates further evaluation. This research uses a qualitative framework informed by both narrative and phenomenological approaches to examine the experiences of registered psychologists who work transpersonally and incorporate CATs into their practices. Four registered psychologists who work integratively will be interviewed about their experiences of integrative practice, and verbatim data generated analysed for themes capturing the depth and breadth of their experiences of integrative practice. We hope that the results of this research might open conversation about the importance of integrative psychological practice for the 21st century, contributing to the growth of a body of high-quality, clinically relevant research to inform service delivery and policy around integrative psychological practice.

**Biography:** Ms. Amanda Kassis is a provisionally registered psychologist, who is currently completing a Master of Clinical Psychology degree at the Australian College of Applied Psychology. Amanda also graduated from ACAP with a BPsychSci(Hons). She has a long interest in complementary and alternative therapies.

**Keywords:** integrative psychological practice, Transpersonal Psychology, CATs, qualitative research

**ABSTRACT 5**

**Counselling African Refugees: How is the process observed and experienced by practitioners?**

*Ms Fatmata Parkinson, Student, Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy, ACAP*

**Abstract:** Papadopoulos (2002) identified that while there is already an enormous amount of research on refugee mental health, inadequate attention has been given to the therapeutic care viewpoint. Moreover, some studies have also shown that it is a moderately new area and as a result very few studies have been shown to explore the experiences of practitioners working with refugees (Papadopoulos, 2002). Akinsulure-Smith (2012) stressed the need to recognize the plight of refugees and the tribulations they face pre and post migration as the number of refugees coming to the western industrialized countries increases. Furthermore, practitioners who work with African
refugees should learn to apply skills and approaches appropriate to clients’ cultural tradition and background (Akinsulure-Smith, 2012). This study provides a qualitative account of the experiences of six practitioners, five male and one female, who have worked with African refugees. Thematic analysis was used to categorize several experiences and complexities that practitioners face in their work with African refugees. Therefore, four themes of the reported experiences of the practitioners were generated: the therapeutic practice as observed by the practitioner; the impact of the therapeutic process on the practitioner; practitioners’ use of interpreters; available supports for therapists. Result shows that while there are numerous factors that act as an obstacle when working with African refugees, supervision and support from colleagues and other services were shown to assist the practitioners to attain good therapeutic outcome. Results identified some similarities and differences within the literature. Study limitations, implications and future recommendations were discussed.

Biography: Ms Fatmata Parkinson is currently a student in the Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy at ACAP. Her career includes working with migrants and refugees at Metro Assist previously known as Metro Migrant Resource Centre, Sydney, working as a contract interpreter with the Translation and Interpreting Service (TIS). Fatmata was inspired to do counselling to assist the most vulnerable people in her community, in particular, refugees. As a refugee from Sierra Leone, she experienced first hand the struggles of resettling in a new country and the challenges faced by people from non-English-speaking backgrounds. She was awarded Marrickville’s Young Australian of the Year for her commitment in supporting refugee families to resettle in the community. Presently, Ms Parkinson works with migrant families at The Multicultural Network. She is looking forward to developing her career in counselling migrants and refugees.

Dr Katrina Andrews is a Senior Lecturer with a PhD in Clinical Psychology from Griffith University, Gold Coast. Her career includes working as a psychologist in government and non-government institutions as well as in private practice, providing individual and group psychological treatment to adults. Since being awarded her PhD (Clinical Psychology), Dr Andrews has worked within academic institutions, providing academic leadership in both psychology and counselling departments. Presently, Dr Andrews is a Senior Lecturer at ACAP, and has been now for 3.5 years. During this time, Dr Andrews has developed, coordinated, and taught research related units in the Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy, and represented the Discipline of Counselling at the ACAP HREC board. Alongside this role, Dr Andrews has also successfully course coordinated the Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy and more recently the Assoc. Degree and Bachelor of Applied Social Sciences. During her academic career, Dr Andrews has research supervised both Psychology Honours students, and Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy students to completion in both qualitative and qualitative methodologies.

Keywords: African refugees, migration, thematic analysis, practitioner, self-care, interpreters.

**ABSTRACT 6**

Investigating Therapeutic Presence: A Hakomi Therapy Perspective

*Author 1 (Corresponding Author): Scott Kelly, Discipline of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Author 2: Fiona Ann Papps, Discipline of Psychological Sciences, ACAP*

Therapeutic presence is defined as the ability to be fully human and fully engaged with another person on multiple levels: emotionally, cognitively, physically, and spiritually. Presence is a fundamental skill which underpins efficacious interventions, with research showing that therapist personhood is more important than any particular technique or theoretical orientation in facilitating therapeutic change in clients. The Hakomi method, developed by Ron Kurtz, is a mindfulness based, psychodynamic psychotherapy that integrates the body into the therapeutic process. The Hakomi perspective places significant focus on the personhood of the therapist as a therapeutic tool. Relatively little research has been devoted to the exploration of therapeutic presence, and none has been conducted with focus on Hakomi therapy. The present research, therefore, used a qualitative framework informed by phenomenology to explore Hakomi therapists’ understanding of therapeutic presence, given its importance in predicting therapeutic outcomes. Four graduates of the full professional Hakomi training were interviewed about their lived experiences of therapeutic presence. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis applied to the resultant verbatim transcripts yielded two superordinate themes: Sacred Space and Embodiment. These superordinate themes reflect the work in which the loving, mindful presence of the therapist enables the practitioner to create a sacred space, the ‘Bubble,’ and in which the therapist’s ability to tune into the somatic cues of the client allow clients to feel ‘felt.’ Both sacred space and embodiment were perceived as central to therapeutic presence and both facilitated a process of deep exploration in clients which participants believed was not always possible in other forms of therapy. Results suggest that therapeutic presence as it is practiced from a Hakomi perspective may be an important common factor supporting therapeutic change and that could be incorporated into future training of mental health practitioners, regardless of therapeutic modality.

Biography: Mr. Scott Kelly is currently completing a BPsychSci(Hons) at the Australian College of Applied Psychology under the supervision of Dr. Fiona Ann Papps. Scott has completed the foundations training in Hakomi Therapy and is about to commence advanced training. His interest in embodied therapies stems from his long career as a professional musician and his personal mindfulness practice, which have shown him the importance of being present in the moment in order to achieve full potential. Dr. Fiona Ann Papps is a senior lecturer in Psychological Sciences at the Australian College of Applied Psychology. She joined ACAP in 2011 after nine years at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada, where she served in a variety of roles, including Assistant Professor of Psychology, Head of the Department of Psychology Research Ethics Committee, and Head of the Department of Psychology. Fiona’s research interests include body image and embodiment, sexuality, media representations of sex, gender and sexuality, literature, madness, death and dying.

Keywords: therapeutic presence, Hakomi Therapy, the Bubble, embodiment

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**“THE HAKOMI PERSPECTIVE PLACES SIGNIFICANT FOCUS ON THE PERSONHOOD OF THE THERAPIST AS A THERAPEUTIC TOOL.”**

- Excerpt from Clinical Abstract 6 by Scott Kelly and Fiona Ann Papps
ABSTRACT 1
Moving and Improving together: A Review of Recent Research in Dance Cognition
Dr Staci Vicary*, School of Psychological Sciences, ACAP
Cognitive psychology is often criticised for the tendency to take broad lived experiences of the world and break them down into their composite parts for study. This is, of course, a necessary process if the field is to truly understand the nature of the brain and human behaviour. However, when working in applied settings such as industry and the arts, the tendency to break our world down into such finite units is often met with disdain. A welcome antidote to this approach is one that attempts to study large scale naturalistic stimuli, such as dance, in holistic ways. In this talk I will overview the emerging field of dance cognition and review recent research that describes the prosocial outcomes observed when groups of people move together (such as in a dance performance or group fitness class; von Zimmerman, et al, 2018) and the cognitive processes involved in passively observing the movement of other bodies (Pollick, et al 2018; Vicary et al, 2017; Vicary & Stevens, 2014; Vicary et al 2014). Using full bodied dance stimuli and innovative new technology and data analysis approaches, we have been able to better understand human memory, explore social bonding, and document the ways in which communities of people engage with the arts.

Biography: Dr Staci Vicary completed a PhD in Psychology in 2014 at the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development at Western Sydney University, studying human short-term memory and body perception. Staci then pursued a Post-Doctoral research position at Goldsmiths University working with prominent cognitive psychologists and neuroscientists to study group behaviour and emotional engagement with performing arts. Currently, Staci is a Lecturer in Psychology at Australian College of Applied Psychology where she works predominantly with undergraduate psychology students and honours degree candidates. Staci’s research falls under the broad umbrella of cognitive psychology, with focuses on dance cognition, social behaviour and executive function. You will find Staci chatting with students about pop-culture, or proudly showing off photos of her son.

Keywords: Cognitive Psychology; Dance; Prosocial Behaviour; Memory; Observation

ABSTRACT 2
Supporting athlete mental health and wellbeing: The need for a community of practitioners
Timothy P Chambers, Discipline of Psychological Sciences, ACAP

Background: The recent proliferation of athlete mental health and wellbeing research, as highlighted by the International Society of Sport Psychology’s (ISSP; Schinke, Stambulova, Sl, & Moore, 2017) position stand, is an indication of the importance of this critical issue. Whilst most of this research focuses on pathological issues as experienced by athletes (Gulliver, Griffths, Mackinnon, Batterham, & Stanimirovic, 2014), little attention is paid to those who deliver vital services to support these individuals. Research that explores the underpinning support structures that are designed to facilitate athlete mental health and wellbeing is essential.

Approach: This research presentation, based on the collation of research findings from ongoing program of research that continues to investigate these support services, will outline the need for a collaborative approach to supporting athlete mental health and wellbeing. Findings from 36 interviews, conducted with an array of sporting industry practitioners, point towards the need to develop a community-based framework to support athlete mental health and wellbeing.

Research significance: Unlike prior discipline-specific service models for these individuals, this multidisciplinary framework highlights the need to create a network of practitioners who can provide support to contemporary athletes. Given the proliferation of athlete mental health and wellbeing research, these findings make a significant contribution to supporting these individuals.

Biography: Tim Chambers is a Senior Lecturer in the Discipline of Psychological Sciences with the Australian College of Applied Psychology. Tim’s research program broadly focuses on investigating solutions to enhance individual mental health and wellbeing. Specific research areas include exploring the diversity of support services, and related organisational factors, that are designed to improve athlete mental health and wellbeing and investigating the effectiveness of exercise in natural environments as a vehicle to improve mental health for the broader population.

Keywords: mental health, sport, support, career transition, wellbeing.

ABSTRACT 3
Cultural Differences in Measuring Resilience across Australia and Singapore
Cabanes, B., & Gunaratne, C.
Resilience is operationalised in many ways with a lack of consensus in how it is measured and defined. Current theory emphasises resilience as a multidimensional construct, however few measures adequately evaluate the dimensions of resilience, particularly the socio-cultural factors that influence resilience. In order to examine cultural differences in resilience, the current study utilised an online survey design to compare 333 adults from Australia (Mage = 32.03, SDage = 11.24, age range = 17-74 yrs; 87% F) and Singapore (n=128). The two samples (Mage = 32.03, SDage = 11.24, age range = 17-74 yrs; 87% F) completed the Resilience Scale for Adults which has been cross-culturally validated and is the only existing psychometrically adequate measure of resilience that evaluates family and social influences on resilience. Exploratory factor analyses were conducted to compare the underlying factor structures of the RSA for the two samples. Contrary to the hypothesis, the factor structure of the RSA for the Australian sample differed from the factor structure of the RSA for the Singaporean sample. The factor structure of the Australian sample corroborated with previous research identifying a six-factor solution; however the factor structure of the Singaporean sample identified a three-factor solution, with the three factors seen as representing family relationships and social support, optimism and self-esteem, and social competence.

“FINDINGS FROM 36 INTERVIEWS... POINT TOWARDS THE NEED TO DEVELOP A COMMUNITY-BASED FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING.”

- Excerpt from Wellbeing & Physical Activity Abstract 2 by Timothy P Chambers
While the limitations of the study include the lack of a representative sample, the results nonetheless emphasise the importance of considering cultural factors within resilience theory and research, and underscore the need for refining existing measures of resilience taking into account cultural aspects.

**Biography:** Ms Belinda Cabanes, School of Psychology, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW

Belinda Cabanes graduated from Charles Sturt University (B. Soc Sci (psych) (hons)) in 2017 and is currently living in Singapore.

Dr Charini Gunaratne*, Lecturer, Discipline of Psychological Sciences, Australian College of Applied Psychology, Melbourne.

Charini Gunaratne commenced as a lecturer in the Discipline of Psychological Sciences at ACAP in 2018, and is currently the Course Coordinator for the Bachelor of Psychological Sciences/Criminology degree. Teaching in to the undergraduate program, Charini also supervises a number of Honours, Masters’, and PhD candidates. Previously she was a lecturer in the School of Psychology at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, where she was also the First Year Subject Convenor for two years. Charini completed her Bachelor of Arts (Psychology, Astrophysics) at Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio, USA, and completed her PhD at Deakin University, Geelong, Victoria. While at Deakin, Charini held sessional teaching roles in the School of Psychology, School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, and Institute of Koorie Education. Charini was also a part of the Australian Unity Wellbeing Index research team at Deakin for a number of years.

**Keywords:** culture, resilience, factor analysis

**ABSTRACT 4**

Disconnected from Nature: The Lived Experience of Feeling Disconnected from the Natural World

*Rebecca Sibthorpe, Eric Brymer*, ACAP

The natural world has always played a critical role in our lives as humans, but more recently the idea has arisen that a deep sense of connection with nature is an essential component in our well-being. Previous research has exposed that a connection with the natural world enhances both mental and physical well-being and encourages increased involvement in ecologically friendly behaviours. Despite expansive research on nature Rebecca Sibthorpe connectedness, there is a significant dearth of information about those who feel disconnected. With our impact on the earth becoming even more evident, the idea that we are disconnected from nature is clear and any insight that could possibly reduce our negative impact is imperative. This paper presents initial data from a study examining the wellbeing outcomes of people who feel disconnected from Nature. Data includes four semi-structured interviews with individuals who report feeling disconnected from nature. Interpretative phenomenological analysis is employed to gain a deep and authentic understanding of the lived experience of the participants. Results from this study will be some of the first on those who feel disconnected from the natural environment and contribute to the conversation about nature and wellbeing. The impact of this study will be to act as a spark to ignite further research and an appreciation of the role of nature in everyday lives.

**Biography:** Rebecca is a psychology student at the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP) who is completing her Honours Thesis on the lived experience of people who feel disconnected from nature. Before beginning her honours, Rebecca completed a Bachelor of Psychological Science at the University of Newcastle and a Graduate Diploma at ACAP. Throughout her student career she has worked as administration at one of the biggest private psychology practices in Newcastle. When she is not studying, Rebecca loves to be outdoors, camping, boating (she likes to think she is a good wakeboarder), walking her dog or enjoying a game of netball. Rebecca is particularly interested in psychopathology and wishes to eventually become a Forensic Psychologist.

**Keywords:** Disconnected, nature, lived experience
ABSTRACT 5
Changing Landscapes: Social work by Telehealth and implications for practice
Trina Charnock, ACAP,* and Dr Staci Vicary, ACAP**

The contribution of individual employee creativity to organisational success is well established, and a plethora of research has investigated the motivational mechanisms driving workplace creativity. Several studies have shown a positive association between creative leisure-time activities (CLAs) and workplace creativity. Moreover, recent evidence suggests that some CLA motives are equally important across all CLA domains (domain-general, e.g. enjoyment motive), while others are more relevant to some CLA domains than others (domain-specific; e.g. coping motive is more relevant for visual arts, literature, and music than other domains; Benedek, Bruckdorfer & Jauk, 2019). These findings suggest that it may be possible to predict how to motivate individual workplace creativity based on the type of hobbies employees pursue during their leisure-time. However, to our knowledge, the relationship between the motives driving CLA participation and those driving employee creativity have not been investigated. This study will explore the relationships between the motivational mechanisms driving leisure-time and workplace creativity using a new scale (The Motives for Workplace Creativity; MoWCS) which will be completed alongside the Motivation for Creativity Scale (MoCS; a measure of leisure-time creativity; Benedek et al., 2019) by approximately 250 participants. The degree of domain-specificity and domain-generality for each CLA motive will also be assessed, and data will be analysed using correlational analyses to explore these relationships. It is hoped that the study findings will help guide employers in choosing appropriate strategies to motivate individual employee creativity based on the type of CLA their employees pursue.

Biography: *Trina Charnock completed a Bachelor of Pharmacy at Otago University, New Zealand, in 1993 and a Masters in Literature at Roehampton University, London, in 2001. She is currently completing an Honours Degree in Psychology at the Australian College of Applied Psychology, Sydney. Trina has worked as a hospital pharmacist, medical editor/writer, and medical information advisor. She has also received classical training in fine arts and exhibited paintings in several group exhibitions. Trina’s key research interest is creativity and the motivations that drive creativity across different contexts. She is currently living in Australia with her husband, three children, and two miniature schnauzers

**Dr Staci Vicary completed a PhD in Psychology in 2014 at the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development at Western Sydney University, studying human short-term memory and body perception. Staci then pursued a Post-Doctoral research position at Goldsmiths University working with prominent cognitive psychologists and neuroscientists to study group behaviour and emotional engagement with performing arts. Currently, Staci is a Lecturer in Psychology at Australian College of Applied Psychology where she works predominantly with undergraduate psychology students and honours degree candidates. Staci’s research falls under the broad umbrella of cognitive psychology, with focuses on dance cognition, social behaviour and executive function. You will find Staci chatting with students about pop-culture, or proudly showing off photos of her son.


Keywords: employee creativity, everyday creativity, innovation, motivation
examining the lived experience of wellbeing through regular qigong practice

James Woodhouse* (ACAP), Associate Professor Eric Brymer (Discipline Lead at ACAP)

Qigong is a Chinese art consisting of movement, elements of mediation and deep synchronized breathing. Qigong has demonstrated the ability to reduce depression and anxiety in a clinical context, in addition to improving wellbeing and stress in non-clinical populations. There is a scarcity of qualitative research on Qigong, with very little research examining the lived experience of wellbeing as experienced through Qigong practice. Additionally, many studies focus on brief Qigong interventions, with very little research focusing on the effects of extended Qigong practice. Our study aims to explore the lived experience of wellbeing through regular Qigong practice with semi-structured interviews. These semi-structured interviews will be analyzed with a hermeneutic phenomenological analysis, in order to tease out subtle nuances of experienced wellbeing through regular Qigong practice. We hope to reveal relationships that may not have been explored in a traditional empirical positivistic framework, aiding in a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in question. Our study provides a unique perspective on how non-traditional therapeutic modalities such as Qigong may be used to assist in health and wellbeing promotion. The results will aid an understanding of the relationship between long-term Qigong practice and experiences of wellbeing. Qigong is a gentle, low cost, non-invasive form of exercises, therefore, it may be suitable for a variety of populations to which traditional exercise is not feasible or preferred. Our study will shed light on the unique improvements of Qigong on subjective wellbeing, both physical and mental.

Biography: James Woodhouse completed his undergraduate degree at Macquarie University. Graduating with a Bachelor of Science (Psychology). He is now completing his Bachelor of Psychological Sciences – Honours at the Australia College of Applied Psychology (ACAP). He has worked in retail for the last 9 years, allowing him to hone his skills of communication and understanding of other people. He hopes to complete a Master’s Degree in Sports Psychology or Clinical Psychology, although he has not made a final decision yet. He is passionate about health and wellness, including exercise and different forms of movement. His other hobbies include fishing, bush walking, reading and socializing with friends and family.

Keywords: Lived Experience Wellbeing Regular Qigong

The relationship between attitudes towards climate change, connection to nature, and well-being

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Dr. Eric Brymer Associate Professor and Discipline Lead, Discipline of Psychological Sciences, Brisbane.

As climate change has an increasingly negative impact on mental health outcomes, research indicates that there are many factors that make one’s mental well-being more or less susceptible to the impact of climate change. For instance, although mental well-being is positively related to increased levels of connection to nature, preliminary research indicates that the mental well-being of those with high levels of connection to nature are more susceptible to the negative impacts of climate change. One yet to be determined factor that may influence this relationship is one’s attitudes towards climate change. To address this gap, this study is investigating the relationship between attitudes towards climate change, connection to nature, and mental well-being. This quantitative study is using an online survey consisting of demographics items and validated measures of attitudes towards climate change, mental well-being and connection to nature. Participants must be over 18 years of age and fluent in English. As nature is incorporated in the treatment of many people with mental health issues, it is important to determine whether attitudes towards climate change might alter the positive contribution connection to nature has on mental well-being. Research findings may have some significance for the design of psychological interventions, climate change policy, and encourage the assessment of climate change attitudes when testing for depression and other psychopathology.

Biography: Matthew Whelan is a student studying at ACAP. Dr. Eric Brymer has extensive research experience, and has been successful in attracting funding grants for various research projects.

Keywords: attitudes towards climate change, connection to nature, mental well-being.

"QIGONG HAS DEMONSTRATED THE ABILITY TO REDUCE DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IN A CLINICAL CONTEXT IN ADDITION TO IMPROVING WELLBEING AND STRESS IN NON-CLINICAL POPULATIONS”

- Excerpt from Wellbeing & Physical Activity Abstract 6 by James Woodhouse and Associate Professor Eric Brymer
Insight thinking has been associated with many great scientific discoveries and creative endeavours. An insight occurs when an ill-defined problem space is cognitively restructured, and a problem solution appears without conscious processing. Most research has focused on the aha! moment of realisation that precedes the problem solution. Little research has examined changes in affect over time during insight thinking, and whether the product or the process is responsible for affective change. The present study aimed to test whether problem solution type (correct; incorrect) influenced positive affect and negative affect across time (pretask; posttask). Participants were 95 adults from an Australian university and the general public (Mage = 40.46, SDage = 16.02, age range = 18 to 72 years) including 79 females, 15 males, and one participant of other gender. A mixed between-within subjects analysis of variance and Mann-Whitney U Tests revealed a significant increase in positive affect over time, however, solution type did not significantly increase positive affect, and there was no interaction effect between solution type and time for negative affect. Again, surprisingly, both correct and incorrect solutions decreased negative affect. These results suggest that it is the process and not the product of insight thinking that may account for changes in affect. This finding has particular utility in workplaces in which creative and innovative solutions are sought for continued growth and development. Furthermore, insight thinking has implications for psychotherapy where cognitive restructuring and affective change are often desired outcomes. Keywords: insight, problem solving, creative thinking, positive affect, negative affect

Biography: Ms Deanne Tyrell*, School of Psychology, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW

Deanne Tyrell is currently a Master of Clinical Psychology student at Australian Catholic University. She completed her Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology) (Honours 1) at Charles Sturt University, and also holds a Bachelor of Architecture (Honours 1) from the University of New South Wales (UNSW). Deanne has also worked as a sessional tutor in psychology at the Australian College of Applied Psychology, and in architecture at UNSW. Dr Charini Gunaratne, Lecturer, Discipline of Psychological Sciences, Australian College of Applied Psychology, Melbourne. Charini Gunaratne commenced as a lecturer in the Discipline of Psychological Sciences at ACAP in 2018, and is currently the Course Coordinator for the Bachelor of Psychological Sciences/Criminology degree. Teaching in to the undergraduate program, Charini also supervises a number of Honours, Masters’, and PhD candidates. Previously she was a lecturer in the School of Psychology at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, where she was also the First Year Subject Convenor for two years. Charini completed her Bachelor of Arts (Psychology, Astrophysics) at Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio, USA, and completed her PhD at Deakin University, Geelong, Victoria. While at Deakin, Charini held sessional teaching roles in the School of Psychology, School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, and Institute of Koorie Education. Charini was also a part of the Australian Unity Wellbeing Index research team at Deakin for a number of years.
NARRATIVES OF MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY IN DUNGEONS & DRAGONS (D&D)

Abstract

Background: Role-playing and imagery have been widely used in psychotherapy as a tool that allows clients to experiment with perspective taking in a safe setting (Kellogg, 2004). Perspective-taking can lead to more socio-centric approaches to problem-solving, decreased stereotyping and greater awareness, which in turn can foster recovery from mental health challenges (Galinsky, Magee, Rus, Rothman, & Todd, 2014; Galinsky, & Moskowitz, 2000). Therapists’ perception of the function of role-playing games in recovery is generally positive, with observed positive changes in behaviours, and cognitive and emotional awareness (Enfield, 2007). Although some research exists on the way people use role-playing games to meet real-life needs (Adams, 2013), no study has directly investigated the role that role-playing board games may have in recovery from mental health difficulties. This study aims to bridge this gap in literature, by directly reaching out to people who play board games and have been in recovery from mental health difficulties.

Aims: This study aims to understand the impact that role-playing games have on the process of mental health recovery and whether people with mental health difficulties reconstruct helpful narratives about themselves with the aid of role-playing games.

Approach: This study utilises a qualitative methodological approach, with 7-12 participants interviewed on their experiences with a role-playing game (“Dungeons and Dragons”) and their perspective of its function in recovery. The resulting data will be analysed using narrative analysis.

Significance: Data will be analysed by August 2019. This study represents the first qualitative exploration of the function of role-playing games in the recovery from mental illness. This in turn may guide the development of therapeutic tools to promote recovery from mental illness with the assistance of role-playing games.

Keywords: Recovery, Role-play, Narrative analysis, Imagery
ATTITUDES TOWARDS MEDICALLY ASSISTED REPRODUCTION: THE INFLUENCE OF EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE AND RELIGION

Abstract
Recent innovations and improvements in medically assisted reproduction (MAR) have helped thousands of people realise their dream of parenthood when traditional means have failed. The availability of MAR also means that individuals falling outside of the traditional male-female relationship, such as single women and same-sex couples, can fulfil their dream of having a child. Unfortunately, MAR remains a taboo topic and those using assisted reproductive technology report feeling stigmatized. Feelings of stigma and associated lack of disclosure are then linked to further distress during an already physically and psychologically demanding situation. Currently, there is no clear understanding as to exactly where the stigma around MAR stems from. Furthermore, research on attitudes towards MAR is very outdated and/or has a narrow focus on specific types of assisted reproduction such as oocyte donation or donor insemination alone. Therefore, our research sought to better understand current attitudes towards MAR as a means of beginning to understand the stigma that surrounds this topic. At present, there is no reliable and validated scale that measures all aspects of attitudes (affect, behaviour, cognition) regarding MAR. Thus, the first stage in this research was to design and assess the new Attitudes towards Assisted Reproduction Scale (ATARS). Given that factors such as knowledge, experience and religion have been shown to influence attitudes towards infertility, the research then compares responses to the ATARS with respect to differences among these particular factors. Results will help to determine which factors lead to more positive and negative MAR attitudes and this knowledge can then be used to influence education and health promotion programs that will benefit not only those directly affected, but also the community at large. Better understanding attitudes towards MAR is essential in removing associated stigma, which will then in turn lead to less distress and provide more avenues for support.

Keywords: Medically assisted reproduction, attitude, stigma

Name: Dr Staci Vicary
Biography: Dr Staci Vicary completed a PhD in Psychology in 2014 at the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development at Western Sydney University, studying human short-term memory and body perception. Staci then pursued a Post-Doctoral research position at Goldsmiths University working with prominent cognitive psychologists and neuroscientists to study group behaviour and emotional engagement with performing arts. Currently, Staci is a Lecturer in Psychology at Australian College of Applied Psychology where she works predominantly with undergraduate psychology students and honours degree candidates. Staci’s research falls under the broad umbrella of cognitive psychology, with focuses on dance cognition, social behaviour and executive function. You will find Staci chatting with students about pop-culture, or proudly showing off photos of her son.

Name: Carolin Hayes
Biography: Carolin Hayes has completed her Bachelor of Psychological Science in 2018 at the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP). Currently she is an honours student at ACAP under the supervision of Dr Staci Vicary. Her areas of interest are psychological wellbeing of mothers, neuropsychology and neuroplasticity.

“BETTER UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDES [ARE] ESSENTIAL IN REMOVING ASSOCIATED STIGMA.”
AUSTRALIAN’S ATTITUDES TOWARDS PILL-TESTING: PERCEIVED RESPONSIBILITY, DESERVINGNESS AND EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

Abstract
Pill-testing at festivals is an internationally employed harm minimisation strategy. This process informs the individual of the substances’ constituents. Other health issues have shown that responsibility, deservingness and emotional reactions can vary based on controllability and positive or negative outcomes. However, most research relating to pill-testing focuses on drug-use behaviour. Accordingly, no research has looked at how responsibility may differ towards those who have access to pill-testing at festivals. The current research seeks to evaluate the level of responsibility attributed when using drugs, and in what way deservingness may vary depending on pill-testing availability, pill-test results and health side-effects. Two-hundred participants are required to complete an online questionnaire. Data for each of the variables will be analysed using a multivariate analysis of variance. This research may find differences in responsibility, deservingness and emotional reactions towards people at festivals who have access or no access to pill-testing, which could help inform appropriate legislative policy, education programs, and identify potential barriers around pill-testing.

Keywords: Pill testing, Music festivals, Harm minimisation, Responsibility, Illicit drugs

“THIS RESEARCH ... COULD HELP INFORM APPROPRIATE LEGISLATIVE POLICY, EDUCATION PROGRAMS, AND IDENTIFY POTENTIAL BARRIERS AROUND PILL-TESTING.”

Name: Dr Vincent Mancini
Biography: Dr Mancini has a PhD in Clinical Psychology from Curtin University in 2018. His doctoral research focused on exploring the role of motor coordination in social and emotional outcomes across the lifespan. Dr Mancini’s clinical training also allowed him to develop skills treating a range of psychological disorders including anxiety, depression, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, and eating disorders. Dr Mancini’s research interests are diverse, though primarily centered around child or adolescent development and psychopathology. Some additional areas of research interests include social psychology, cross-cultural issues in contemporary psychology, public perceptions of crime, scale development and validation, research methodology, and the evaluation of clinical interventions for psychological disorders. Dr Mancini has contributed to the supervision of two Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) students in 2018, completing their dissertations in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). His previous academic role also involved providing research methodology support for both undergraduate and postgraduate psychology students.
Correspondence: Vincent.Mancini@acap.edu.au

Name: Pia Malouf
Biography: Pia Malouf is the associate co-researcher. This research is being conducted by Ms Malouf, a fourth-year honours student under the supervision of Dr. Mancini. The research contributes to the studies of Ms Malouf, for her honours thesis, towards the award of the Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) degree, which is being undertaken at the Australian College of Applied Psychology. This research contributes to the honours thesis of Pia Malouf.
THE GIFT OF PSYCHOPATHIC PREDILECTIONS: NATURE’S ERROR OR AN ENHANCED COGNITIVE PARADIGM?

Abstract
Examined largely as a malevolent personality profile, psychopathy is characterized by deficits in interpersonal functioning and antisocial behaviour. As with any personality dimension, a continuum exists whereby subclinical levels are prevalent in the general population. Lacking within research, is an examination of the degree to which psychopathic traits at non-clinical levels may be underpinned by deficits within basic cognitive processes. The current study aims to investigate the relationship between psychopathic traits and memory within an emotional facial recognition paradigm. The current study aims to investigate the relationship between psychopathic traits and attentional attenuation within a facial recognition paradigm. Firstly, how high levels of psychopathic traits may influence memory of emotional (happy, sad or angry) faces. Secondly, whether psychopathic traits moderate emotional facial recognition depending on central or peripheral face location. It is hypothesised those low in psychopathic traits will have superior memory for peripheral happy faces than either angry or sad peripheral faces. It is also hypothesised those low in psychopathic traits will have superior memory for angry and sad central faces, where those high in psychopathy will not exhibit this pattern. Basic cognitive processes such as face processing and attention may contribute to relatively overarching patterns of behaviour and interpersonal relationships. The case is made to address the gap within literature and explore direct relationships between cognitive processes and personality dimensions and extend explanatory power to the overall picture of personality. To date, no study has attempted to consolidate affective emotional face recognition and the positioning of face stimuli within a single experimental paradigm in order to examine the relationship between affective deficits and deficits in attentional attenuation in relation to psychopathic traits.

Keywords: personality, psychopathy, memory, facial recognition.

“BASIC COGNITIVE PROCESSES SUCH AS FACE PROCESSING AND ATTENTION MAY CONTRIBUTE TO RELATIVELY OVERARCHING PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOUR AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.”

Name: Kidd, Isabella, Honours Student at ACAP
Biography: Isabella is a research student keenly interested in the role of personality on memory. Her current study is investigating the relationship between psychopathic personality traits and memory, within a facial recognition paradigm. Isabella has previously studied a Bachelor of Psychological Science at the University of New South Wales, and a Graduate Diploma of Psychological Science at ACAP.

Name: *Shi, Ran, Senior Lecturer at ACAP
Biography: Ran received her PhD, Master of Clinical Psychology and Bachelor of Psychology from the University of Sydney, where she received the Richard Champion Award for Best Empirical Thesis in Learning and Cognition in 2006 for her Honours thesis looking at how cigarette smoking affects decision making. Her PhD thesis was in Psycholinguistics, a field at the intersection between cognitive psychology and linguistics. Her Master’s thesis examined the role of attentional control in anxiety. She has presented her research in both national and international conferences. Ran comes to ACAP after working on research projects at the University of Western Sydney and Charles Sturt University. Ran currently works part-time, while continuing her clinical practice.
Abstract
A team of psychology academics and learning experience designers collaborated to develop interactive online learning resources for two undergraduate psychology subjects; including, interactive topic mindmaps, scenario-based learning tutorials, and a series of interactive scenario games. A sequential mixed-methods approach was adopted to explore the student behaviour patterns in accessing online resources, the time they spend on subject sites, their attitudes towards the resources, how the resources influenced their learning, and demographic correlates of engagement with resources. From a total pool of 220 students, 63 students completed a quantitative online survey, 22 participated in two focus groups, and 7 participated in individual in-depth interviews. Analysts from the university analytics team were then engaged, resulting in the amalgamation of traditional quantitative survey and qualitative interview/focus group data with detailed analytic data. As a result, the team were able to delve deeper into what students are doing in the subject sites. This poster presentation will describe the team’s methodology and the combined approach of using quantitative, qualitative, and analytic data. The aim is to provide insights for academics and higher education administrators regarding the development of novel online learning resources, multidisciplinary assessment, and triangulation of diverse data sources. Some of the questions that were able to be answered included: Does qualitative student feedback about how they study reflect their actual online activity? Do students access resources in the order academics and designers expect/intend them to? Do students go back through topics to revise? Do students with higher grades spend less time online; i.e., are they more time efficient? In answering these questions using combined survey, interview, focus group, and analytics data, this cross-division collaboration has resulted in dynamic and rich conversations about student engagement. Future collaborations like this will allow academics to better understand students’ needs and adapt teaching strategies accordingly.

Keywords: learning analytics, student engagement, online learning, evaluation of learning technologies.

Authors:
Dr Nicole Sugden, School of Psychology, Charles Sturt University.
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Ben Hicks, Adaptive Learning and Teaching Services, Charles Sturt University.
Dr Cassandra Colvin, Student Strategy Evaluation, University of Queensland.
Michelle Yeo, Faculty of Business Justice and Behavioural Sciences, Charles Sturt University.

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“THE AIM IS TO PROVIDE INSIGHTS FOR ACADEMICS AND HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF NOVEL ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCES, MULTIDISCIPLINARY ASSESSMENT, AND TRIANGULATION OF DIVERSE DATA SOURCES.”
Abstract
Performing accurate and coordinated movements underpins many aspects of a child’s development. Children who lack age-appropriate motor coordination are at risk of poor psychosocial outcomes, including disrupted peer relationships. Poor motor coordination is a predictor of peer victimisation, social rejection and higher levels of isolation among children. However, an additional factor that consistently predicts children’s social functioning is the quality of social support received from their family. To date, no study has examined how motor coordination and family support may interact as predictors of peer functioning.
Participants in the present study were 188 children aged 7-12 years. Motor coordination was measured using a standardised motor assessment administered by a trained professional. Perceived family support was measured through self-report. Peer functioning was measured through teacher-report.
Results of a moderation analysis revealed a significant interaction between motor coordination and perceived family support. Children with low levels of perceived family support reported the highest levels of peer problem regardless of level of motor coordination. A significant association between motor coordination and peer problems was only examined for those children with high levels of family support. Movement-based intervention programs should also target family support to maximise social outcomes for children with poor motor skills.
Keywords: Motor, Movement, Peer Functioning, Social Development

“RESULTS OF A MODERATION ANALYSIS REVEALED A SIGNIFICANT INTERACTION BETWEEN MOTOR COORDINATION AND PERCEIVED FAMILY SUPPORT.”
Abstract
Attitudes are a key predictive factor in behavioural intention and behavioural action. Within the current Australian social climate, pill-testing has been at the heart of much discussion as to whether it should be implemented in high-risk areas as a form of harm-minimisation. Individual attitudes about its usefulness vary, however there has been a limited amount of studies carried out to investigate how these attitudes are formed. The current research is measuring a number of factors related to attitude formation and is in the preliminary stages as to whether they can predict an individual’s attitudes towards pill-testing.

Approximately 300 participants are currently being recruited through online platforms and word of mouth. There are currently roughly 160 valid responses thus far. Once the desired number of participants has been reached, the research team will run a hierarchical multiple linear regression to assess the predictive validity of each measure.

At the time of the conference, the research team will have engaged in preliminary data analysis. This will be the first stages of the data analysis process and will give insight into how the final linear regression model will look.
DON'T THROW THE BABY OUT WITH THE BATHWATER: ILLUMINATING CURRENT INNOVATIVE RESEARCH AT ACAP SO AS TO UNLOCK FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

Abstract

Students in the Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy (MCP) at ACAP are currently undertaking innovative research. A tiny sample of some recent qualitative studies include:

• The social effects of methamphetamine use on adult users
• Women's lived experiences of abortion
• The impact of witnessing domestic violence in childhood on adult men
• The effect of religion on Muslim women's marital satisfaction
• The experiences of self-identified internet pornography addicts

This presentation aims to spotlight a number of these original studies not only to report their intriguing outcomes but to argue that MCP research is seldom used to its full advantage to the detriment of the College, the profession and potential clients themselves. The Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy at ACAP is not a research degree and therefore, the life of its research component is not guaranteed. For that reason, a further aim of this presentation is to strongly urge that “the baby is not thrown out with the bathwater” in the name of “innovative” course development.

Keywords: Innovative Research, Qualitative, Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy, Outcomes, Course Development

Name: Dr Cathy Bettman

Biography: Dr Cathy Bettman is the Sydney Campus Counselling Discipline Lead, the Coordinator of the Bachelor of Counselling and a Senior Lecturer. For some time, Cathy has been a teacher in the Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy (MCP), she serves on the Navitas HREC and supervises MCP research students undertaking qualitative research. From 2015 to date, Cathy has supervised to completion almost 40 student projects. For her own PhD, Cathy conducted a qualitative research study in the area of domestic violence. Her thesis was entitled: Patriarchy: The Predominant Discourse and Font of Domestic Violence. This resulted in a number of publications including a novel based upon her thesis. Cathy’s other qualifications include: Master of Couple and Family Therapy, Master of Counselling, MSc (Psychotherapy), Post Graduate Diploma in Conflict Resolution and BA.

“A FURTHER AIM OF THIS PRESENTATION IS TO STRONGLY URGE THAT “THE BABY IS NOT THROWN OUT WITH THE BATHWATER” IN THE NAME OF “INNOVATIVE” COURSE DEVELOPMENT.”
PRESENTATION TO TAKE PLACE IN THE MORNING
SYMPOSIUM WITH JACKY CRANNEY

PRESENTATION 1
Practical approaches to (1) optimising the curriculum environment for student success and (2) creating in-curricular opportunities for the development of self-management capability.

Jacky Cranney
Attend this session if you are motivated to learn about and plan some practical ways in which you can (1) optimise your curriculum environment to support student learning and thus academic success, and (2) include opportunities for students to build their self-management capability. Self-management is the capacity to effectively pursue meaningful goals, and to be flexible in the face of setbacks. Within the academic context, self-management includes time-management, effective study skills, and emotional regulation. In terms of the first approach, optimizing your curriculum, it is possible to utilize principles derived from psychological research (e.g., based on self-determination theory) to inform curriculum design and delivery in a way that supports student success. Practical examples are given. In terms of the second approach, it is possible to explicitly provide students with opportunities to further develop their self-management capacity within the formal curriculum. Practical examples from a variety of disciplines are given. Finally, you will be given the opportunity to plan how you can adapt these approaches in the context of your own units and programs.

PRESENTATION 2
Use of Embedded Digital Resources to Develop English Language Proficiency in Higher Education

Fiona Perry, Student Learning Support, ACAP
Communication skills including English Language Proficiency (ELP) is an essential graduate outcome and necessary employment outcome (AUQA, 2009). An increasingly diverse student population has triggered a need to look beyond entrance requirements and ensure there is development of these skills throughout a student’s degree (Arkoudis, 2014; Harris & Ashton, 2011; Johnson, Veitch, & Dewiyanti, 2015). In response to this, higher education providers (HEPs) have developed suites of tools including digital self access resources. In line with the academic socialisation and genre-based pedagogy there is a move to embed academic literacy including communication skills and ELP within discipline subjects (AUQA, 2009; Dunworth, 2013). In addition to this, the theory of communicative language teaching also ties into ELP as the focus is equipping students with the skills, knowledge and strategies they need in order to communicate (Nunan & Richards, 2015). The purpose of this paper is to characterise and evaluate these resources through the lens of second language acquisition theory and genre based writing. A literature review was conducted in order to best answer the question: How are digital tools being used to develop ELP? Findings showed there were reported benefits to students and staff when using embedded videos, technology for communication, quizzes, games and resource banks aimed at ELP development. There is evidence that when well scaffolded these tools offer opportunity for language input, vocabulary growth and to learn cultural communication norms within the context of the discipline. There were measured gains in language and learner confidence in communicating in English. However, most of the research focused on perceptions of gains rather than actual gains. The short term nature of many of the projects indicated a lack of a holistic, systematic approach to ELP development and measurement across the studies.

Keywords: ELP (English Language Proficiency), Digital Tools, Embed

Biography: Fiona currently works in the Student Learning Support Team and is based in Melbourne. She has a double degree in Education and Psychology and is currently completing her Masters in Teaching English as a Second Language. She has worked in various countries as a teacher specialising in content and language integrated learning and academic English. Her professional interests include educational technologies and feedback.

PRESENTATION 3
Diversity in the classroom at ACAP
Dr Despina Sfakinos, Dr Pól McCann, Sharon Walker and Dr Cathy Bettman

Globalisation and specifically increased mobility have resulted in many major cities of Australia having some of the most culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms in the world (Diallo & Miazonniaux, 2016). This creates some challenges and opportunities for ACAP.

At the 2018 ACAP conference the preliminary results of a study undertaken at ACAP on diversity in the classroom was presented. This research project was undertaken to gain a better understanding of the dynamics between academic teachers and students in the culturally diverse classroom. The aim was to uncover rich and in depth data that would result in improved pedagogic practice, increased equality, opportunity and wellbeing and the reduction of cultural gaps and friction which ultimately would improve student outcomes and retention rates.

This presentation will provide an in depth analysis of both teacher and student data. Recommendations will be presented to inform teaching practice and also to assist ACAP to manage its increasing diverse student cohort. The study is qualitative and based upon social constructivist philosophies. It is interpretative, ideographic and phenomenological. Data was collected through focus groups and semi structured interviews of teachers and students either face to face or via Zoom and has been analysed using NVIVO software. The study was conducted by 4 lecturers, Dr Despina Sfakinos, Dr Pól McCann, Sharon Walker and Dr Cathy Bettman.

Keywords: Diversity, diverse classrooms, culturally and linguistically diverse


The authors are full time lecturers at ACAP in the Discipline of Counselling, Sydney. All authors have worked at ACAP for more than 6 years and have extensive experience in teaching and curriculum development.

Dr Despina Sfakinos is a Registered Psychologist and she works as a Lecturer at the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP). She has been working with ACAP in the School of Counselling for the past 5.5 years and as part of her role she supervises Masters students. Despina has experience in both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Her qualifications include PhD (graduated 2013 from the University of Sydney, School of Psychology), Graduate Diploma of Psychological Practice (graduated 2009 from the College of Psychological Practice) and a BA (Hons) (graduated 2002 from the University of Adelaide).

Her research project in her PhD was “The Development of the Multifactorial Self-Awareness Scale: A Theoretical Model of Self-Awareness and Its Relationship to Leadership Development”. Sharon Walker is a lecturer at the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP). Sharon has been working with ACAP for 5.5 years and has been responsible for developing curriculum and lecturing in the Masters of Counselling and Psychotherapy course. Sharon has Masters degree’s in Counselling (University of Western Sydney) and Education (Adult Ed) (University of Technology Sydney). A significant part of Sharon’s work has been in Papua New Guinea (PNG) in the field of HIV counselling. Sharon was a researcher in a mixed method study conducted across four provinces of PNG aimed at privileging the voice of women in regards to their experience of gender based violence and HIV. The article related to the study is titled “Violence against women on Papua New Guinea”. Dr Cathy Bettman is the Sydney Campus Academic Coordinator and Senior Lecturer in the School of Counselling, ACAP. Her duties include the teaching of Counselling and Psychotherapy Research in the Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy program. In addition, Cathy supervises research students undertaking qualitative research and from 2015 to date, Cathy has supervised to completion 23 student projects. For her own PhD, Cathy conducted a qualitative research study in the area of domestic violence. Her thesis was entitled: Patriarchy: The Predominant Discourse and Font of Domestic Violence. This resulted in a number of publications including a novel based upon her thesis. Cathy’s other qualifications include: Master of Couple and Family Therapy, Master of Counselling, MSc (Psychotherapy), Post Graduate Diploma in Conflict Resolution and BA.

Dr Pól McCann is a sociologist with a research background in gender, sexuality, sexual behaviour and risk, and illicit drug use. He has managed large-scale mixed-methods research projects, including the design qualitative and quantitative survey instruments, at the University of New South Wales. He has been employed as Senior Lecturer at the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP) since 2012 and lectures in cultural diversity and applied social research methods in the Bachelor of Counselling. He currently supervises research students in the Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy. His qualifications include a PhD (graduated 2007 from the University of New England) and a BA (Hons) (graduated 2002 from the University of Sydney). His research project in his PhD was ‘The Pressures of Modern Manhood: The Role of Homophobia in Shaping the Gender and Sexual Identities of Australian Men’.
Presenting 4: The Relationship of Perfectionism to Undergraduate Student Distress, Academic Success, and Retention Rates

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A recent study of perfectionism and psychological distress in 1,506 Australian university students recommended developing focused interventions targeting students at risk of developing psychopathology as a result of perfectionistic personality traits. Certain aspects of perfectionism have been associated with the onset and maintenance of psychological disorders, such as depression, and identification of the aspects that influence students’ well-being and academic performance can therefore improve targeted interventions that increase both students’ welfare and academic success and retention. The present research aimed to gain further understanding of the ways in which cognitive dimensions of perfectionism (personal standards, negative affect, rumination, and worry) contribute to student distress, academic success, and retention rates in a sample of first year students in Australia. We predicted first, that there would be a significant and positive relationship between dimensions of perfectionism and student distress; and second, that there would be a significant and negative relationship between dimensions of perfectionism and student success and retention rate. We collected data on 722 first year students in an undergraduate psychological sciences program in Australia at their entry into the program. We then collected data on student performance and retention in the program at the conclusion of the program. Results supported the hypotheses, and will be used to facilitate the development and implementation of measures to increase students’ well-being and retention rates in undergraduate programs of study. Ultimately, such measures will help to build a future cohort of psychology graduates and potential practitioners who are engaged and resilient, contributing to the continued growth of the profession.

Keywords: perfectionism, student distress, student success, student retention

Biography: Dr. Ester Senderey is a practising clinical psychologist and Psych Board accredited supervisor. She has more than 25 years of experience in adult mental health. Ester has worked in private and public out and inpatient psychiatric facilities. She joined ACAP in 1996 as an educator and supervisor. In 2012 she joined the ACAP School of Psychological Sciences. She is a Senior Lecturer and ACAP Psychology Clinic Manager in the Professional Psychology Programs. She provides individual and group supervision to provisionally registered psychologists as well as clinical psychologists registrars. Her research interests include borderline personality disorder and applications of dialectical behaviour therapy, perfectionism as a transdiagnostic process, students’ well-being and the prevention of psychological burnout.

Dr. Fiona Ann Papps is a senior lecturer in Psychological Sciences at the Australian College of Applied Psychology. She joined ACAP in 2011 after nine years at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada, where she served in a variety of roles, including Assistant Professor of Psychology, Head of the Department of Psychology Research Ethics Committee, and Head of the Department of Psychology. Fiona’s research interests include body image and embodiment, sexuality, media representations of sex, gender and sexuality, literature, madness, death and dying.

“Ultimately, such measures will help to build a future cohort of psychology graduates and potential practitioners who are engaged and resilient.”

- Excerpt from Presentation 4 by Ester Senderey and Fiona Ann Papps