

School of Social Sciences
Division of Psychology

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Welcome to the Psychological Well-being and Mental Health Research Group newsletter



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Welcome to the first newsletter from the Psychological Well-being and Mental Health (PWMH) Research Group; a collection of researchers working in the Division of Psychology at Nottingham Trent University.

The newsletter will come out twice a year, in spring / summer and in autumn / winter. It will provide regular updates of PWMH activities – but we also hope it will include news and comment from our readers. The success of the newsletter will in part depend on your contributions and we hope you will send us your news, events, developments in your areas of practice to include and share more widely.

The PWMH Research Group is a diverse one containing expertise in evaluation of psychological treatment, epidemiology, neurobiology, neuropsychiatry, organisational psychology, cognitive psychology, health services research, social psychology, occupational health, traumatology, ethics, alcohol and drug use. It also contains two specialist research units which are introduced to you later in this newsletter.

The PWMH Research Group is a busy one and our activities are many and varied, ranging from pure academic research stimulated by our own research interests to collaborative work initiated with or by external organisations. We hope you will find news of our activities interesting. If you do and you would like more details about any of the projects contained within, or would like copies of any of the papers we've published, please do get in touch as we are always happy to discuss our work.

We would be delighted if this newsletter created new relationships and opportunities for partnership working.

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PWMHRG Members' News

Recent publications

Binder, J., Zagefka, H., Brown, R., Funke, F., Kessler, T., Mummendey, A. et al. (2009). *Does contact reduce prejudice or does prejudice reduce contact? A longitudinal test of the Contact Hypothesis among majority and minority groups in three European countries.* Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 96, 843-856.

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Daffern, M., Howells, K., **Hamilton, L.**, Mannion, A., Howard, R.C., & Lilly, M. (2009). *The impact of structured risk assessments followed by risk reduction recommendations on aggression in hospitalized patients with personality disorder.* Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology, 20(5), 661-679.

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Hill, R. & Brunsdon, V. (2009). *'Heroes' as victims: Role reversal in the Fire and Rescue Service.* Irish Journal of Psychology, 30(1), 73-84.

Karanika-Murray, M., Antoniou, A.S., Michaelides, G., & Cox, T. (2009). *Expanding the risk assessment methodology for work-related health: A technique for incorporating multivariate curvilinear effects.* Work & Stress, 23(2), 99-119.

Kumari, V., Das, M., Taylor, P.J., Barkataki, I., Andrew, C., **Sumich, A.**, Williams, SC., Ffytche, DH. (2009). *Neural and behavioural responses to threat in men with a history of serious violence and schizophrenia or antisocial personality disorder.* Schizophrenia Research, 110(1-3), 47-58.

Maltby, J., **Williams, G.**, McGarry, J., & Day, L. (2010) *Research Methods for Nursing and Healthcare.* Harlow: Pearson Education.

McGarry, J., Aubeeluck, A., Simpson, C., & **Williams, G.** (2009). *"I feel quite passionate about this dignity thing": student nurses' experiences of working with older people.* Nursing Older People, 21(7), 16-21.

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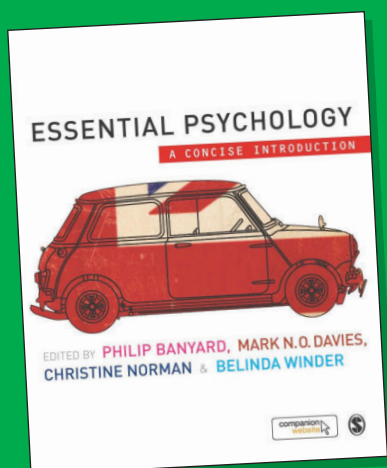
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Watts, S., O' Hara, L., & **Trigg, R.** (2009). *Living with Type 1 Diabetes: A by-person qualitative exploration.* Psychology & Health.

Winder, B. (2009). *Positive aspects of fire: fire in ritual and religion.* Irish Journal of Psychology, 30(1), 5-19.

Wynne-Jones, G., Varnava, A., Buck, R., **Karanika-Murray, M.**, Griffiths, A., Phillips, C., & Main, C. (2009). *Validity of the Work Organisation Assessment Questionnaire in public sector workers.* Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine, 51(5), 586-93.



New Text Published

Recently published by SAGE publications, *"Essential Psychology: A Concise Introduction"* contains a fresh, concise look at relevant introductory psychology and is co-authored by members of the Division of Psychology at NTU. It contains several chapters by PWMH members including: Simon Watts on *'How psychology became a science'*; Rowena Hill & Mick Gregson on *'Behaviour between groups'*; Glenn Williams, James Houston and Jamie Murphy on *'Personality'* and Eva Sundin on *'Intelligence: Measuring the Mind'*.

More details can be found at www.sagepub.co.uk/banyard

More members' news

Gillian Smith was recently invited to share her methodological and statistical expertise at a statistics workshop, jointly organised by the Higher Education Academy Postgraduates who Teach (PGwT) and Psychology Postgraduate Affairs Group (PsyPAG). The workshop was held at the University of Strathclyde.

Alex Sumich chaired the session on 'Ageing' at the Institute of Brain Chemistry and Human Nutrition at the London Metropolitan University workshop on "Intervention strategies to challenge the rise in mental ill health."

Claire Bloxsom has recently been asked to feedback recent research on treatment readiness in forensic settings to Clayfield House, Secure Children's Home.

Viv Brunsden recently gave an invited presentation on the recent activities of the Emergency Services Research Unit to The Centre for Applied Psychological Research at the University of Huddersfield.

In collaboration with Alan Humberstone and Tim Harris, PWMH researcher Glenn Williams was commissioned by Derbyshire Arts Development Group to look at the barriers to getting involved with art events.

Eva Sundin and Alex Sumich have been successful with two grants (REF and SPUR) to investigate the neurobiological mechanisms underlying meditation as a therapeutic tool.

Maria Karanika-Murray has set up a collaborative partnership with the University of Bath and University of West of England to assess indicators of work related well-being.

Gillian Smith travelled to Sweden recently to share research and build collaborative links with Stockholm University's The Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs (SoRAD).

As British Psychological Society (BPS) Career Adviser, Claire Bloxsom has recently been asked to go to Uppingham School to talk about careers in Psychology.

Alex Sumich is co-ordinating NTU and the University of Nottingham's involvement in an international study to test inter-lab reliability of MEG measures. This work will contribute to the development of multi-site neurobiological studies in collaboration with the Institute of Psychiatry, London and the University of Colorado, USA.

Viv Brunsden has become part of a Skills for Justice working party to develop Vocational Qualifications in Civil Contingencies. She is also a member of the Steering Group for the same project. She has also become a Scientific and Technical Adviser to Communities and Local Government's Emergency Room. The Emergency Room is activated in the case of a major emergency or disaster, such as the 7/7 London bombings, and draws upon academic expertise as is needed and appropriate to the specific incident.

Communicating the 'healthy heart' message will be a new priority for PWMH researcher, Maria Karanika-Murray and her collaborator James Davis from the University of Ulster who have received funding for this work from Heart Research UK.

At a recent presentation to the Youth Offending Team, Claire Bloxsom talked about her research on anger, attachment and effects on violence with a particular emphasis on intervention strategies.

Alex Sumich and Mark Torrance have received REF funding to investigate the electrophysiological correlates of language ability in university students.

In her role as Chair of the BPS Standing Committee on Psychology Education for Other Groups, Viv Brunsden is leading a joint BPS and EPS (the Emergency Planning Society) initiative to develop guidance for psychology curriculum within disaster and risk management courses.



PWMH Research Group PhD focus

Idil Kortanamer is currently in the second year of her PhD studies. Her study is entitled "A cross-cultural study of coping strategies of Turkish and English adults." The aim of this project is to examine differences and similarities between the appraisal process and coping strategies of Turkish and English people. It focuses on how individuals from these two cultures cope with stress in close relationships. In her research Idil is using a mixed method design with an initial qualitative study followed

by a quantitative study. The qualitative study involved interviews with Turkish and English people and revealed some differences across these groups, in terms of national culture but also in terms of gender. She is currently collecting data for the second study which uses questionnaires such as the Appraisal of Life Events Scale (ALE) and Coping Orientations to Problems Experiences (COPE).

News from the Research Seminars



If you are conducting research into psychological well-being and mental health relevant topics and would be willing to present to the group and to the wider division of Psychology we would love to hear from you. Please email Dr Gillian Smith, the seminar series organiser, at gillian.smith@ntu.ac.uk

Professor Nigel King of the Centre of Applied Psychological Research at Huddersfield University recently gave a fascinating talk to the group entitled “I forget my problems, my problems are in the soil”; an exploration of psychological well-being and allotment gardening. Using a thematic analysis approach, Nigel outlined recent work with two allotment sites in Paddock and West Central Halifax, looking at key well-being themes across both sites. He noted positive aspects of gardening such as contrast of outdoors to compact living spaces, a sense of purpose, rewards and investment in time, and the interaction with others to form a community of allotmenters. There were also some negative aspects, occasional obsessive behaviours, the sadness experienced when giving up allotmenting and the commitment required to succeed. An under-researched area of inquiry, it demonstrates a type of social capital which can demonstrably enrich the lives of individuals and communities.

Dr Heather Flowe joined us from the University of Leicester’s Forensic Psychology department to talk about recent work exploring sexual coercion behaviours using a novel methodology. Her talk entitled “Systematic Studies of Sexual Coercion Using the Participant Choice Method: Estimating the Role of Situational and Individual Difference Factors” explored how hypothetical scenarios could indicate the likelihood to participate in false rape accusations, engage in unwanted sexual contact or to report rape or other unwanted sexual interaction. Different factors were assessed such as gender, sexual history, scenario specific factors such as intoxication or clothing and personality, to dispel some of the myths around the reporting of and engaging in sexual coercion.

Visual Methods in Psychology Seminar

On Friday 9 April, a one day British Psychological Society Qualitative Methods in Psychology seminar was held at NTU. The seminar entitled “Visual Methods in Psychology” provided an introduction to visual methods for those unfamiliar with them but also offered stimulating discussion for those who already use them. The day included sessions on issues such as ethical photography for research, led by Lucy Easthope, Tutor in Mass Fatalities, University of Bath; teaching visual methods, led by Jill Arnold, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, Nottingham Trent University; and innovations in dissemination led by Joe Robinson, of the arts company CoartiXL.

Well-being and dementia: How does quality of life change for someone with mild dementia?

Dr Richard Trigg is a Chartered Psychologist specialising in health psychology. He is currently collaborating with the Research Institute for the Care of Older People, in Bath and Bristol Research into Alzheimer's and Care of the Elderly on a three-year study to find out how quality of life (QoL) changes over time for people with mild dementia and what factors influence these changes.

Maintenance or improvement of QoL is a key outcome for the care of people with dementia. Recent research suggests that people with mild to moderate dementia are able to provide reliable and valid reports about their own QoL and several dementia-specific self-report measures are now available. These include the Bath Assessment of Subjective Quality of Life in Dementia (BASQID), developed by Dr Trigg in association with the Alzheimer's Society (Trigg, Skevington and Jones, 2007). Such measures are now being used to give voice to the perspective of the person with dementia when evaluating approaches to dementia care.

Dr Trigg's current study is following 70 people with mild dementia and their caregivers for three years. Every six months, participants are asked to complete a range of standardised assessments, including the BASQID, and also take part in a research interview. The main aim of the research is to provide some clear indications of when, how and why life quality changes for someone with dementia and thus provide information fundamental to the development of targeted and effective psychosocial interventions to improve well-being.

This work has already produced some novel data demonstrating the complex relationship between QoL ratings and reduced insight in the person with dementia (Trigg, Watts, Jones and Tod, in press). Baseline data from the study suggests that the key predictor of QoL ratings is the degree to which the person with dementia is aware of memory deficits; over and above other predictors such as activity performance and enjoyment. Lower awareness (or insight) is associated with a better perceived QoL and this study is the first to demonstrate such a relationship in people with mild dementia, using a rigorous measure of insight. This finding has important implications for

pharmacological and therapeutic interventions that may bring about improvements in the insight of people with dementia, as there is a suggestion that these may actually lead to a reduction in QoL as perceived by the person with dementia.

The study is now into the final year, with data collection due to end in December 2010. Dr Trigg is currently working with Dr Simon Watts (also Psychology, NTU) to use the research interviews for further exploration of the relationship between insight and QoL and examine the degree to which people with dementia are able to use a retained awareness of feelings to inform QoL ratings.

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New Masters Courses

The PWMH Research Group is delighted to announce that three new Masters degrees were launched at the beginning of the 2009-10 academic year. The courses are aimed at practitioners working in the areas of mental health and well-being but who may wish to expand their psychological understandings in relation to their practice areas.



MSc Psychological Wellbeing and Mental Health

This course is aimed at students who are intending to work, or are already employed, in health care, counselling, social care and related areas. A distinctive feature of the course is the emphasis on well-being as opposed to illness. Students leave the course with in-depth theoretical and applied knowledge, as well as professional and research skills. The degree is taught entirely by staff from the PWMH Research Group. The degree can be taken full-time or on a part-time basis to enable practitioners to continue working where possible. Although the normal entry route is through having a first degree we are open to enquiries from those without degrees, particularly those with alternative and professional qualifications. For further information please see the degree's website at www.ntu.ac.uk/psychwellbeing



MSc Forensic Mental Health

This course is designed to provide students with the theoretical understandings and a combination of applied and research skills core to working in forensic related health settings. It is also suitable for those already working in mental health settings who wish to gain a wider understanding of forensic psychological issues; or conversely for those already working in forensic settings who wish to expand their understandings of issues relating to psychological well-being and mental health. The degree is taught by staff from the PWMH Research Group, including those from SOCAMRU. The degree can be taken full-time or on a part-time basis to enable practitioners to continue working where possible. For further information please see the degree's website at www.ntu.ac.uk/forensicmentalhealth



MSc Forensic Psychology

This course is designed to provide psychology graduates with the theoretical understandings and practical skills necessary for work in forensic settings. The degree is taught by staff from the PWMH Research Group, including those from SOCAMRU who have experience of working in those domains. The degree is subject to accreditation by the British Psychological Society and provides Stage 1 of the Society's Qualification in Forensic Psychology. For further information please see the degree's website at www.ntu.ac.uk/forensicpsych

For further information on our courses please visit www.ntu.ac.uk/s3 or contact us on s3.enquiries@ntu.ac.uk

Introducing other research units

SOCAMRU: The Sexual Crimes, Offences and Misdemeanours Research Unit

SOCAMRU aims to produce high quality theoretical and applied research intended to feed into and improve service provision for both offenders and victims. Within this we have a body of research which is considering systemic improvement of service delivery in prison and healthcare, with a focus on ethnic minority prisoners. Research into nursing and staff boundary management when working with personality disordered offenders is also being undertaken. Consideration of victims is an evolving area, with some research being undertaken with Nottinghamshire Police (co-ordinated by Aarti Kotecha) to understand the experience of victims of domestic violence.



ESRU: The Emergency Services Research Unit

The Emergency Services Research Unit is an interdisciplinary unit including specialists in psychology, sociology, accountancy, quantitative research methods and statistics, qualitative methods, ethics, political and social theory, and business. Our primary interest is in the health and well-being of emergency services personnel. Another key interest is in the human aspects of disaster and emergencies. We conduct a variety of activities from research to consultancy and training. Recent and ongoing research projects include:

- the violence and abuse that emergency services workers can experience;
- ethical working practices within the emergency services;
- the psychosocial needs of families of emergency services personnel;
- traumatic and occupational stress in first responders;
- social representations of disaster.

ESRU works extensively with collaborative partners, not just those from the emergency services themselves but also those from allied organisations, for example, trade unions, charities, Government Departments, training institutions and commercial organisations. We would be very happy to hear from those working with or in the emergency services who are looking to work in partnership with academia.



Knowledge Transfer Partnership

Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) is a UK-wide programme enabling businesses to improve their competitiveness, productivity and performance. The initiative is sponsored by the government and through research councils in order to encourage businesses to use the knowledge, technology and skills available within the UK's universities. KTP enables new capability to be embedded into the business and has benefited and continues to benefit a wide range of organisations across many sectors, including business, public sector organisations and the third sector.

The PWMH Research group, through ESRU, has recently obtained funding for a KTP in collaboration with the Firefighters Charity. The sponsorship funding is being provided by the Technology Strategies Board and the Economics and Social Research Council. The KTP will explore the financial and humanitarian benefits of the services the Charity provides. Maxime Buguley has been employed as the Research officer leading on the project with academic support being provided by Rowena Hill, Viv Brunsden and Kirsten Greenhalgh from ESRU.

If you would be interested in the possibility of a collaborative KTP between your own organisation and the PWMH Research group please contact **rowena.hill@ntu.ac.uk** for more information.

If you would like to make submissions to future editions of the PWMH group newsletter, please contact the editor Dr Gillian Smith on **gillian.smith@ntu.ac.uk**

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