

ATP TODAY

The Magazine of the Association for the Teaching of Psychology

September 2010



INSIDE

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF
STRESS & TEACHING

OUR FAVOURITE DRUG

Why Caffeine is the Nations
most consumed legal drug



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FROM THE EDITOR

Another year seems to have flown by before our very eyes! This time last year we were beginning the new specifications for A2, tweaking resources for AS and looking at the new GCSE proposals. How things can change in the space of a year! So

here we are once again, at the beginning of the new academic year full of trepidation and confusion, trying to learn the surnames of the four different Alexes (who insist on sitting

together just to confuse you).

But all is not lost! At this time of the year, I always try to remember that at the beginning of term they are more scared of me than I am of them and that I can use this to my advantage in getting a good standard of work from them! (At least for two weeks anyway!) My manager always says: "Don't worry; it's not quite the end of the world yet!" Comforting words.

Keep up the hard work and try to stay sane!

Laura

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FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the start of another academic year. I hope your students received the results they wanted and deserved, and all your hard work was rewarded. Every year the ATP hears of many horror stories about exam marking, please let us know if you have

had any negative experiences. As individual centres there is little we can do, but together maybe we can make a difference. We would be particularly interested to hear your experiences of online marking.

The ATP Annual Conference at Keele University was a fantastic success, and big thanks to Phil Banyard for all his hard work. We

do hope you will be able to join us at the 2011 Conference at the University of Hertfordshire, 8-10 July – see www.atpconference.org.uk

After the success of last year's one-day CPD event, another is being held on 5 March 2011 at The McAuley Catholic High School, Doncaster – the theme is 'Don't work harder, work smarter!'. See the website www.theatp.org for further details.

I do hope you enjoy the latest edition of ATP Today. The ATP is here to help, support and represent psychology teachers. Please remember to recommend us to colleagues and don't hesitate to contact me.

Deb Gajic

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MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

PayPal and standing order are our preferred payment methods for all new and existing Members, as they enable us to keep our running costs down. If new Members, or paypal Members, want to pay by standing

order they will need to e-mail me for a form. Although we are trying to phase out cheque payments, it is still possible to pay by cheque for the time being:- please e-mail Jackie Moody (details below).

The annual membership fee is £25.00 by Paypal and Standing Order, £30.00 for cheque payment (to reflect the extra administration costs involved) and £5.00 if you qualify for student membership (you must be on a recognised PGCE/PG course for teaching psychology).

Paypal Difficulties

We've had some hiccups with the new system of Paypal annual renewal payments.

If your card details stay the same, Paypal will remind you that your annual subscription is due, ask if you want to make the payment, and then they will renew your subscription automatically.

However, if you've changed your card details, for any reason, Paypal cannot make a subscription payment until you have re-authorized them to do so, with new card details. This means re-registering on the site, as a new member and going through the full Paypal payment system again. Apologies for this, but it is a problem with the Paypal system which is out of our control.

Alternatively, you could take out a standing order to pay your subscription. Please e-mail me for a form.

Accessing The Website

Please visit the ATP website – www.theatp.org – to keep up to date with current events. To access the entire site you will need to register as a member. To register the invitation code is

'atpmember'. You will then be sent a password which you can change into something more memorable.

Membership Numbers

Each Member has a membership number which will be with your postage details on the front of the magazine envelope, and, also, on new member welcome e-mails and renewal e-mails.

E-Mail Address And Change Of Details

Please make sure the details we have about you are correct, in particular please make sure (send me an e-mail) we have an up-to-date e-mail address for you since this is the easiest way of contacting you if we need to. If you move house or work and your details change, please let me know.

In particular, we have no e-mails for many long-term standing order Members: so please ensure we get your e-mail address so we can keep you informed of any changes with the association.

New Members

In order to improve the services to our Members, we would like our membership to grow. If you know any psychology teachers – colleagues and friends, who may want to join, please encourage them to join and give them our website address: www.theatp.org.uk

Membership Queries

If you need to speak to me/contact me regarding any other membership query, please ring me or e-mail

Best wishes for the autumn term 2010.

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How do you PRONOUNCE A NAME?

There are some difficult, quirky but traditional English pronunciations not only of names, but also of places and other words. I'm talking about words that are not pronounced as their spelling would suggest.

Though tough, thorough and coughing through the night are well known and well used examples that do not present problems to an English speaker, they can cause problems for one who is not used to English. Proper nouns are even more difficult. My very first bank manager (in the days when we used to have bank managers) was Mr Peters-Smith. It took me a while to discover that if I wanted an overdraft, I had to call him Mr Petersham (or Sir!). And there is the standing joke about the American tourists who go to wor-sess-ter (Worcester) and eddin-berg (capital of Scotland).

I have had a similar problem in psychology. My degree was with the Open University which involved mainly distance learning – reading books and course materials and best-guessing name pronunciation. So here are a few well-known names from psychology which caught me out until recently! You may know these already, my pronunciation source is the Internet so if you have the same name and it is wrongly pronounced here, I apologise.

- Szasz is pronounced 'sharze' rhymes with Mars.
- Zajonc is pronounced 'Zy-ence' rhymes with science. (A Turkish name.)
- Selye is pronounced 'Sell-yay' rhymes with day. I've seen this name spelt incorrectly in various text books, which doesn't really help when we're stressed over exams (!).
- Van Ijzendoorn is pronounced 'van eyes-n-dorn'.
- Ajzen is pronounced 'Arr-zhen' – zh as the s in 'leisure', rhymes with 'men'.
- Freud is pronounced 'Froid' and not 'Frewed' (as in brewed) and definitely not 'Fraud' whatever you may believe!
- Jahoda is pronounced 'Ya-her-dah'.
- Meeus and Raaijmakers are 'Meers' and 'Rye-makkers'.
- Baillargeon is pronounced 'By-arzhon', again with zh as the 's' in 'leisure'.

I'm sure you can find many others simply by looking in a bibliography! But you can make a teaching exercise here by asking your learners to discover what theories or research these names actually connect with.

Jeff Standen (pronounced 'standen' and not 'standing' or 'standon') is Psychology Co-ordinator at Boston College and a member of the ATP Committee.



The Psychology of STRESS & TEACHING

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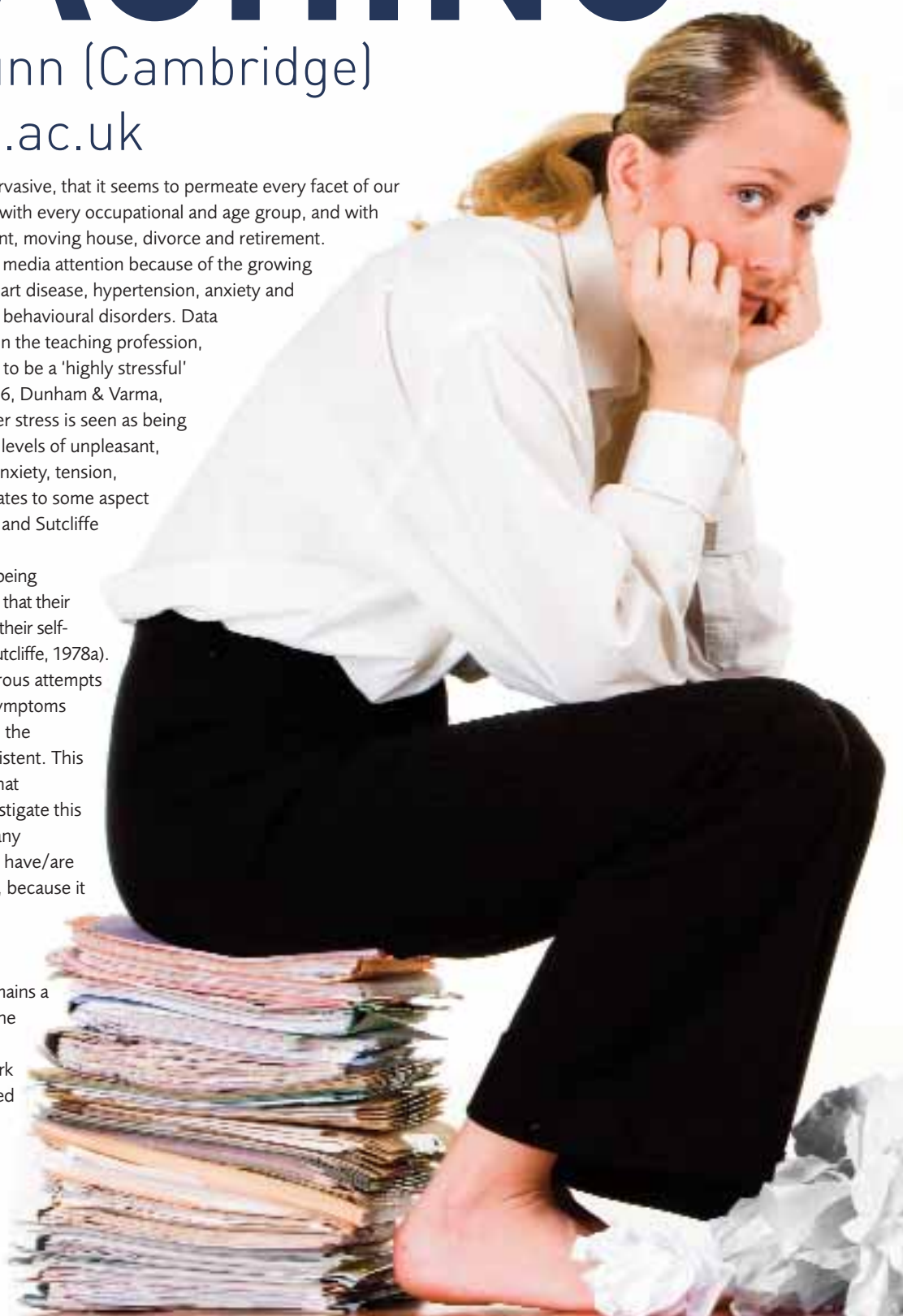
The term 'stress' has become so pervasive, that it seems to permeate every facet of our culture. Mental stress is associated with every occupational and age group, and with life events as diverse as bereavement, moving house, divorce and retirement. Stress has been the centre of much media attention because of the growing scientific evidence linking it with heart disease, hypertension, anxiety and range of other physical, mental and behavioural disorders. Data obtained from surveys undertaken in the teaching profession, indicate that teaching is considered to be a 'highly stressful' occupation. (Travers & Cooper, 1996, Dunham & Varma, 19998, and Kyriacou, 2000.) Teacher stress is seen as being related to the teacher experiencing levels of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, which relates to some aspect of their work as a teacher. Kyriacou and Sutcliffe define it in a clearer fashion as:

'A negative emotional experience being triggered by the teacher's perception that their work situation constituted a threat to their self-esteem or well-being'. (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978a).

Although there have been numerous attempts to investigate the real causes and symptoms relating to teacher stress in general, the research findings have been inconsistent. This is due partly to the different ways that researchers have attempted to investigate this phenomena, and partly because many teachers are reluctant to admit they have/are experiencing teacher-related stress, because it could be seen as a weakness.

Future applications

It is very clear that teacher-stress remains a major concern for teachers all over the world, regardless of the type of teaching establishment that they work in. Research in this area has employed both qualitative and quantitative techniques to differing degrees of success, however further work still



needs to be undertaken to establish cause and effect, stress management, and policy issues. The use of questionnaires allows psychologists to understand and identify certain issues but they fail to go any deeper towards obtaining an understanding. For example, they are limited in their application towards individual differences relating to personality traits and resources, and aspects relating to cultural issues. Also, stress is a complex topic that can be linked to a number of other factors such as biological, psychological, and sociological, making it difficult for questionnaires to shed any further insights other than bringing these to our attention. However, the vast majority of teacher-stress research in the past has relied heavily on the use of questionnaires that have focused on individual accounts of stress or have looked for responses given to questions relating to mental and physical well-being. This includes aspects such as: early retirement, sleeplessness, absenteeism and loss of temper (Kyriacou, 2000). Other examples include those relating to measurements, whereby researchers have monitored levels of hormones in the urine associated with stress and levels of heart rate during lessons (Cosgrove, 2000), and research making use of statistical techniques to identify correlations relating to teacher-stress (Worall & May, 1989, Kokkinos, 2007). The main problem when undertaking research into this topic is that the amount, type, and level of stress experienced by each individual teacher will be unique to him or her and will be the result of many different factors.

Sources of Teacher Stress

In general psychological studies in this area seem to agree that the following areas are the main sources of stress relating to teachers;

- Teaching pupils who lack motivation
- Maintaining discipline
- Time pressures and workload
- Coping with change
- Being evaluated by others
- Dealing with colleagues
- Self-esteem and status
- Administration and management
- Role-conflict and ambiguity
- Poor working conditions

Added to this, is the issue of a current 'target-driven culture' which continues to cause stress and relates to stress-related absence in the workplace.

Directions for future research

Due to on-going changes that occur in education from political to establishment level, regarding teaching methods, curriculum and assessment, research still needs to continue to investigate levels of teacher-stress to see if it remains on the increase. Related to this, is

also the question of how teachers cope and the methods they employ to combat stressful situations. Research also needs to be conducted into the use and effectiveness of teacher-stress workshops and trade union based 'helplines for teachers'. Are teachers reporting the same 'issues' in relation to those staff who have made use of these services, and is there any follow-up evidence to demonstrate that these teachers have benefited either in the short-term or long-term? Again, this relates to the need to further understand and distinguish between 'causes' and 'symptoms' of teacher stress. Added to this, further work needs to look at factors relating to the length of service and career development. Previous work by Huberman (1993) focused on the issue of what was termed 'mid-career crisis', which involved teachers having to reassess their career aspirations. This may also impact on being overlooked for promotion or being seen as a valued member of staff. On a personal note, I am sure that many teachers would welcome further research on aspects of decision making, school leadership and organisation, and how these factors can be correlated with teacher-stress. Finally, research needs to continue to address issues of teacher-pupil interaction and classroom stress, to attempt to recognise how to prevent future episodes of both the teacher and the student displaying stressful behaviour patterns. If extensive and detailed research is undertaken in this area and presented to policy makers, it may make them re-think any future changes.

Trevor P Dunn (Faculty of Education, Cambridge).

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OUR FAVOURITE DRUG

In the UK, caffeine is almost certainly the nation's favourite of legally available drugs. So I asked myself the question, "Why Caffeine?". And I looked for some answers.



When we consume a caffeine-containing drink the drug goes from the digestive system into the bloodstream, reaching maximum concentration in the brain in 30-40 minutes.

How long does this caffeine hit last? The half-life is between three to six hours; shorter if you are a smoker, longer if you are pregnant.

How do tea and coffee compare for caffeine content? In the nominal cup tea averages out at 40mg, instant coffee at 55mg and filter coffee at 105 – but clearly there would be considerable variations based on several obvious factors.

What does caffeine actually do, physiologically – how does it achieve its physiological and psychological effects? Caffeine molecules bind to cell receptors all over the body. They block the action of natural adenosine, which is involved in the control of sleep, wakefulness, brain alertness/arousal, general metabolism and energy. But the interesting effect is that in people habituated to regular caffeine intake there are real physiological changes which cancel out these adenosine-block effects. In which case, why do people go on drinking tea or coffee if this does not support wakefulness, alertness, etc?

The Withdrawal Reversal Hypothesis (WRH) suggests that overnight or longer withdrawal from caffeine leads to noticeably reduced alertness and performance, and the morning caffeine drink restores these functions back to normal – but not to above normal – levels. So for those of us who feel drowsy, dull or even a bit dim in the morning, the WRH suggests that we are suffering from symptoms of caffeine withdrawal, and so might be considered to be mildly addicted to this drug. WRH would also explain the feelings that one cannot get through the day or evening well without the caffeine shots, this mild addiction is caused by the need to boost flagging alertness and energy back to normal. Another effect which could strengthen this dependency is that when caffeine levels drop the blood flow to the brain increases and makes the person more liable to have headaches – drinking caffeine reduces cerebral blood flow and thus decreases the likelihood of headaches.

But why would we drink caffeinated drinks, when the naturally occurring ones, especially coffee, are so bitter? Humans tend to avoid bitter-flavoured substances as the bitterness is often linked to harmful or poisonous food/drink. Perhaps conditioning plays a part here. If we learn an association between the bitter, caffeinated substance and being more alert and energetic, and then consuming this substance is reinforced by feeling wider awake and performing better, then by both classical and operant conditioning

we're likely to repeat the behaviour, we start to enjoy the drink. This hypothesis has been tested empirically using two versions of a novel fruity drink – one caffeinated and one not. A preference for the caffeinated version was quickly shown, but only in those participants who normally drank caffeinated drinks and who had not consumed any caffeine since the day before. These findings tie in with the WRH.

But what starts people drinking bitter caffeinated drinks? They have not learned a liking, so how does this develop since it does not seem to be an example of one-trial learning? The common concept that tea and coffee are diuretics is actually not accurate since the net effect of these drinks is actually a positive one on fluid balance. The main reason a cuppa 'goes straight through' is that we have taken in water, so the kidneys remove what we don't need! So drinking even a bitter drink reduces thirst – a reinforcer effect. Drinking sweetened and/or milky versions of the bitter drinks makes them more palatable so that reinforcement, the positive effects of the caffeine, could become more obvious. This is, of course, negative reinforcement, the removal of lethargy, mental and physical dullness, and so on.

Interestingly, there might be biological reasons for caffeine preference. A gene which codes for an adenosine receptor is also linked with caffeine-induced anxiety and people with this gene do seem to use caffeine much less, which makes sense! This gene is also associated with a higher susceptibility to panic disorders. On the other hand, regular caffeine users soon develop a tolerance of caffeine effects, and in a survey of about 6000 UK participants only about 5% of those who avoid coffee or tea gave anxiety-related effects as their reason for such avoidance. Of course, sensitivity to bitterness is an example of individual differences and is genetically determined, and this variance could explain the variance in use of tea and coffee.

A final note is that caffeine actually does enhance physical performance, as many sportspeople have claimed. It seems to increase endurance, and the effects of several cups of filter coffee are measurable but do not exceed the International Olympic Committee's acceptable limit, though this may well change because of the research conclusions.

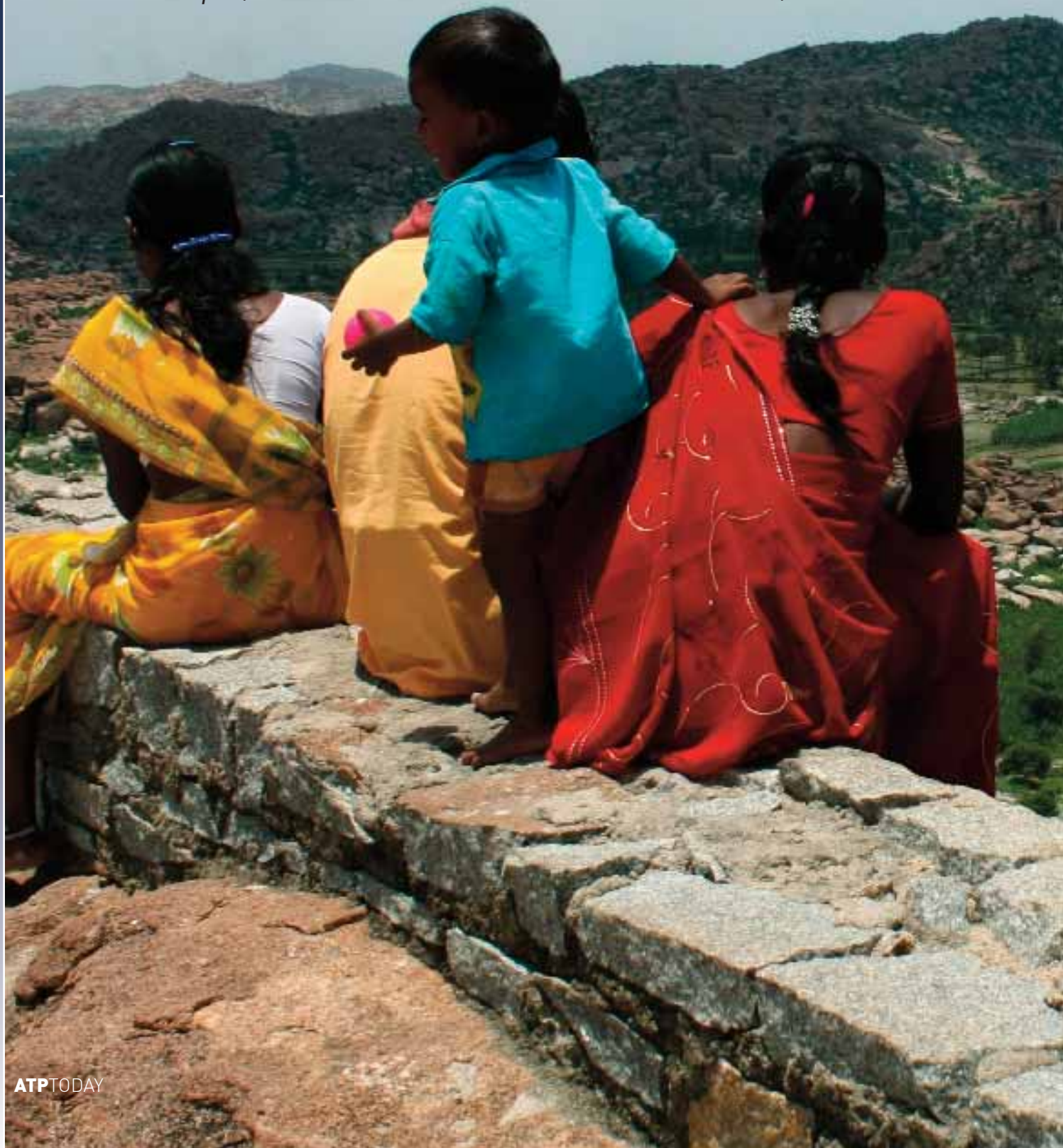
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The Role of FAMILY

A comparative study of the role of family in the life of 12th standard students in Jaipur, India and sixth form students in Polesworth, UK



One of the most basic and important structures of any society is undoubtedly family. No matter in which corner of the world a teenager lives, his or her life and personality is influenced by his or her family. But the kind of hold family has on a young person's life is not really the same, or is it? This study was conducted to try and answer this question. A close-ended 20-point questionnaire was prepared covering various aspects of family life. It was given to 110 students of the same age group across middle level towns such as Jaipur, India and Polesworth, UK respectively. The results gave us an insight into the various ways in which the role of family varies across cultures.

India is taking centre stage in today's world. It has changed drastically over the last 20-25 years. We sure have made a place for ourselves politically and economically, but this has also brought many changes as far as our social fabric is concerned. The change in the society is palpable, but to what extent it is and most importantly what is the opinion of the younger generation about it, was something worth knowing.

It would be interesting to compare the results with the responses of students in another country, so a close-ended questionnaire was prepared covering various aspects of family life. It was given to 60 12th Standard Indian students from Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan's Vidyashram, Jaipur and 50 sixth form students from The Polesworth School, UK. The raw scores were converted into percentages for comparison and the following comparative data is based on the responses.

The first question aimed to ascertain the current structure of family: joint (extended), nuclear, lone or step family. 65% of the Indian students live in a nuclear family in Jaipur, while 35% of them live in joint families. Among the Polesworth students, 74% live in nuclear families. 16% have a lone parent family and 8% live in step families. The next questions focus on number of members in the families and their relationships. In Polesworth 78% have 3-8 members in their families and 84% consists of only two generations. It is obvious considering that majority of the families are nuclear. In Jaipur, 32% of students live with their grandparents and 28% share



their home with their uncle's family, as well as grandparents. It should be mentioned that most of such families are business families. They usually have a joint business, so they work together, live together and there is one kitchen working round the clock catering for the large family where ladies all work together.

This leads to the role of a woman in these two family set ups. In Polesworth, 80% of women are career women, while in Jaipur only 36% work outside of the home. Here it is important to state that India is a very vast and varied country. It would be too simplistic to try to generalise. The ratio of working women would be significantly higher in metro (large) cities. But in Jaipur the majority of women are homemakers. In most of the families, it is the family who decides whether a married lady would work or not. So it may not always be a matter of personal choice, perhaps they give in to the family pressure, as family reigns supreme in India. There may be a few heartaches, but the bright side is that the family break-up rate is very low. Out of 60 students in our sample, not one family is a broken family. The next set of questions concerned the decision-making process in the family. In Polesworth, 94% decisions are taken jointly, as against 63% in Jaipur. In both the places the oldest member in the family has a say ie, 6% in Polesworth and 17% in Jaipur. But as far as decisions regarding students' own life are concerned, a major difference can be seen. 64% of Polesworth students decide for themselves, whilst in Jaipur it is a mere 8%. In fact, 2% of students even reported that all decisions regarding their life were taken by their family. Thankfully, 83% of them feel that the decisions are taken jointly.

Since family has a firm grip on the life of an Indian teenager, the next question tried to seek their opinion about it. Surprisingly 75%

of them like to be guided. This shows a tendency for dependency. Conformity and compliance seems to come naturally to our students while assertiveness remains allusive. 54% of Polesworth students prefer to make their own decisions, so they do not feel any emotional pressure to comply, but interestingly in both the countries majority ie, 43% in Jaipur and 48% in Polesworth seems to be facing oscillation. Perhaps they cannot decide whether they want to be independent or dependent. On one hand they like to be guided, but then they also feel pressurised. Now that the world is becoming a global village are families changing with times? In Polesworth, 88% of them felt their families are changing while in Jaipur 57% felt so. It clearly shows the majority in Jaipur feels it still needs to change a lot. The next step in the questionnaire examines the self-perception of the adolescents in the following categories, that is traditional, rebel and modern. Traditional refers to those who conform and follow the path taken by many before. Rebels don't wish to conform for the sake of it and they are ready to be vocal about it too. Modern refers to a happy blend of the old order with a modern outlook; they are flexible and adjust with the changing flow. Consistent with our previous results we find very few rebels in India and more traditional (37%) or modern (47%), among Polesworth students, 80% of them see themselves as modern, 14% as rebels, while only 6% place themselves in traditional category.

It is interesting to note the distribution of their free time too. In Jaipur, 54% enjoy their free time by indulging in hobbies. Friends consume 15%, while family claims 31% of their free time – just the double of their peer group! This may be because movement out of the house is not according to personal whims and fancies in India,

...IT IS THE FAMILY WHO DECIDES WHETHER A MARRIED LADY WOULD WORK OR NOT. SO IT MAY NOT ALWAYS BE A MATTER OF PERSONAL CHOICE, PERHAPS THEY GIVE IN TO THE FAMILY PRESSURE, AS FAMILY REIGNS SUPREME IN INDIA.

but with mobile phones making inroads in a big way, friends are never far away. The Polesworth students spend more than half of their free time with friends 54%, 40% on hobbies and only 6% with families – that is only one fifth of the Indian sample!

The most important aspect of family in India is marriage. This is very different from the UK, where marriage is not necessarily seen as an essential component of family life. So it would be interesting to see the existing situation and students' opinion of it. The major difference, of course, is in the way one gets married. Here we see a total contrast. 100% of Polesworth marriages are love marriages, whilst 97% of Jaipur marriages are arranged ones. 63% of Jaipur students, in fact, would not mind having an arranged marriage for themselves, whilst such a possibility simply doesn't exist in Polesworth. None of them favoured arranged marriage and 8% of them showed no interest in getting married at all. Having parental approval for marriage seemed very important to Jaipur students. 67% of them reported they would not go against their parents' wishes, even if they truly loved someone, as against 96% of Polesworth students who would follow their heart, even if parents did not approve of their choice. This clearly shows Jaipur students rate parents' approval highly in their value schemes. The last segment of the questionnaire examined the advantages and disadvantages of joint and nuclear families through the eyes of the teenager. In both the countries they felt that joint families create favourable atmospheres for positive relationships, shared responsibilities and the care of elderly people, but that there is lack of privacy, crowding and financial burden. 16% of Polesworth students felt that there is no disadvantage in a joint family, while

45% of Jaipur students echoed this feeling. As far as the nuclear family is concerned the biggest advantage perceived was independence and privacy. The disadvantages of the nuclear families were seen as undifferentiated lack of emotional support, reducing values and lack of care for kids and elderly. All were considered important by the Indian sample, but 24% of Polesworth students saw no such disadvantage in the nuclear families.

Finally, they were asked about their choice of family structure. In Jaipur, 70% preferred to live in joint families while in Polesworth 76% preferred to live in nuclear families. This sums up the main difference in the role of families in these countries. No doubt, bonds of family are very strong in both the countries, but in Jaipur, the concept of family seems more inclusive. The old family systems and values are still very much alive here. In fact an overall tilt towards family belongingness and approval was observed. The Polesworth students came across as independent and ready to walk on the path of adulthood. So yes, there is a difference. Sometimes when we see ourselves in comparison to others it gives us a better insight into ourselves, perhaps many answers regarding our personalities and cross-cultural issues are hidden behind this data. It is this difference, that makes psychology so interesting. Isn't it?

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FORTY YEARS ON...

...when afar and asunder
Parted are those who
are singing today.



There was no singing, as far as I know, but a great deal of talking, when the first A-level examinations in Psychology took place in the summer of 1970. In fact the talking had been going on for quite some time.

It is not possible to point to the exact moment at which it started. We must pick up the story on Saturday, 18 February 1967. The Council of the British Psychological Society, meeting as usual at its offices in Tavistock Square, London, noted a recommendation from the Committee of the Education Section 'that a Working Party be set up to enquire into the desirability and possibility of teaching psychology in schools'. The Council's Minutes are held in the Library of the Wellcome Institute in London, and I am grateful to Dr Lesley Hall for making them available. Unfortunately those of the Education Section Committee do not appear to have been preserved, so I do not know who originated the recommendation. Interest had also been expressed at the Open Meeting at the Annual Conference in April 1966. Council noted that a discussion would be held at the forthcoming Annual Conference in Belfast. (I attended the Conference, and probably the discussion, but I have no memory of it.) The Working Party was set up at the next meeting of Council, on 20 April 1967, consisting of Dr R G Andry, Mr Robert Borger, Professor C I Howarth (Convenor), Dr John Radford, Dr Vera West, and Professor George Westby. Professor George Seth, as President of the Society, attended the meetings *ex officio* and later as a member. The terms of reference were: 'to consider information as to what has been done here and in other countries, and to collect opinions from Sections, Branches and individual members, about the teaching of Psychology in schools; and to present a report to Council'.

It is worth noting, first, that the BPS was actively involved from the first, and by no means averse to the idea, as has sometimes been suggested, and second, that the idea itself was about teaching Psychology in schools, not specifically for an examination. The Working Party met on 8 June. Professor Westby sent apologies, and I was asked to act as Secretary. We met on seven further occasions, and our Minutes are also in the Wellcome Library. We decided initially to treat the matter widely, seeking both facts and opinions, and dealing with educational and vocational purposes, examination and non-examination courses, staff, syllabuses, books, and demand. By December 1968 we had still not reported, and Council asked us to do so 'as a matter of urgency'. (Purely in passing, the fee for attending the next Annual Conference was fixed at £2, with four nights' accommodation at £10.) Our final report was received on 8 February 1969. Council decided it should be published in the

Society's *Bulletin*, the forerunner of *The Psychologist*, and it is in Volume 22 (1969), pp. 103-108. It was also decided to inform the membership that the report was open for discussion, with the possibility of a special meeting for that purpose, and to inform the Schools Council of the Society's views.

The main recommendations were that Psychology was being taught in schools and the Society must take this seriously. It was also taught in other countries, though often with a philosophical or human relations slant rather than experimental. The Society should clearly distinguish the teaching of Psychology from counselling. As a minority time subject it should be encouraged. If introduced as an examinable subject, it should be examined by qualified psychologists and taught by adequately trained teachers. The Psychology offered in teacher training colleges would not be sufficient. Any syllabus should include practical work, and the time allocated should be comparable to other science subjects. George Westby submitted a short minority report, to the effect that work at VI Form and first year undergraduate levels was already too specialised, and he felt it should be much wider. This is, of course, more a matter of general educational policy, with which I personally feel considerable sympathy. But in practical terms, new subjects can only make progress within the existing framework, and it seemed, to me at least, that the way forward must be an examinable subject, in effect GCE A-level.

Here unfortunately the history becomes hazy. At some point I was approached by the Associated Examining Board (AEB) to chair a committee with a view to developing an A-level. I agreed. This must have been before the Working Party reported. The Board presumably got my name from the BPS, but they must also have already decided that there was a market for Psychology, on what basis I do not know. The AEB became part of the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) in 1997, merging with it in 2000. I enquired of the AQA as to the starting date and membership of the Committee, the number of candidates for the first examination, and a list of the centres taking part. My enquiry was acknowledged by the Psychology Department, but after further requests, the answer was that it was 'unlikely' that the records had been preserved, and therefore the information could not be given. This seems to mean, either that they do not know whether they have the records, and are not prepared to find out, or simply that they will not answer

...PSYCHOLOGY WAS BEING TAUGHT IN SCHOOLS AND THE SOCIETY MUST TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY. IT WAS ALSO TAUGHT IN OTHER COUNTRIES, THOUGH OFTEN WITH A PHILOSOPHICAL OR HUMAN RELATIONS SLANT RATHER THAN EXPERIMENTAL. THE SOCIETY SHOULD CLEARLY DISTINGUISH THE TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY FROM COUNSELLING.

questions. I was disappointed, since I have no records, and few recollections that can help. To my shame I cannot remember the members of the Committee.

What I do recall is a general impression of our aims and the process of getting approval. We deliberately took a 'straight down the middle' approach to a syllabus, with the main conventional areas, and a strong emphasis on practical work. We made this count for one third of the marks. These decisions were partly because we wanted to be 'respectable', in the interests of getting approval, and partly because we wanted to achieve the status of a scientific subject. We decided that practical work would be assessed by visiting examiners, to make certain that students understood what they had done, and that reports had not been simply, or partly, supplied by teachers. The AEB, to its credit, accepted this very expensive strategy (though such visits are or were done in some other subjects).

When it came to approval, the crucial body was the Schools Council. This was in some ways an inappropriate body, as it was indeed specifically concerned with schools, which was reflected in its membership. The AEB's clientele was very largely in further education. In this sector it was very much easier to introduce new subjects. A college could simply offer a course, full- or part-time, and run it if enrolments were sufficient, if necessary engaging more staff. Schools on the other hand had full-time, permanent students, with timetables that were already full. It fell to me to present the case at various meetings, and to deal with reasonable and less reasonable objections. Small schools felt they would not have the resources for such an innovation. One member asked worriedly whether Psychology would not 'make the students very introspective'. There were indeed all the usual misconceptions, which despite all that has happened since are still found in the mass media and in the general public. However we managed to overcome the misgivings and the new A-level was open for business. I became the first, and for some time the only, Examiner. I do not know how many centres took it up in the first year, nor how many candidates took the first examination. I do have a note that one hundred and twenty passed. The A-level statistics for this period are available, published by the then Department of Education, but Psychology is not listed separately.

Due to the system of oral examining of practical work, one candidate was the very first to take the A-level. I can narrow it down to three, though not by name, all girls, at the first centre I visited. This was at Framlingham in Suffolk. I did not recall the name of the school. There are two senior schools there, Framlingham College, which is an independent co-educational boarding school, and Thomas Mills High School. Both very kindly answered my enquiries. The latter turned out to be correct. It was then a girls' grammar school, which amalgamated with Framlingham Modern School in 1979. The three girls had been taught by a delightful lady named Dr Frobenius. Their practical work was very good, with a real understanding of experimentation. They lacked, however, any knowledge of statistics, which were evidently not part of Dr Frobenius's background. But statistics, while they were part of the syllabus, are not essential to meaningful investigations, and I had no hesitation in awarding good marks.

The Head of the Sixth Form, John Jennings, went to considerable lengths to unearth this bit of the history, and I am most grateful to him. One of his colleagues remembers Dr Frobenius. She was apparently semi-retired, but carried on teaching through the 1970s. The school records show three girls obtaining a D and two Es in Psychology. There is a slight confusion about the date, as the records suggest they took A-levels in 1971, but it seems most likely that they took Psychology after one year in the VIth, in 1970. That would perhaps be consistent with the relatively low grades. Psychology was not taught as part of the normal curriculum, and was probably an initiative on Dr Frobenius's part. The alternative of course is that I made a mistake, and the first exam was in 1971. As the AQA was unable to answer this, I enquired of the Department for Children, Schools and Families. They told me that their predecessor, the Department of Education, had held an archive of GCE exam papers, which had passed to the Institute of Education in London. The librarians there kindly looked out what they have for 1970 and 1971, which turned out to be simply the regulations. Those of January 1970 indicated that Psychology would be examined in June that year, and one must assume it

was. Just possibly someone retains the original papers somewhere.

I was of course to some extent making up the rules, and setting precedents, as I went along. The AEB did have the custom of appointing a Moderator to keep an eye on things, and I know who this was, Betty Dawson, an experienced lecturer to teachers, and like me a graduate of Birkbeck College. As I went on visiting, I found inevitably that teachers asked me for advice, and I tried my best to supply it. I am not sure that this was entirely approved of by the AEB, I rather think they felt that Examiners should examine and nothing else. But to be honest my interest was in advancing Psychology, and part of that was improving the teaching, if possible. Another way of doing it was through the ATP, which I founded with the

late James Breese in 1970, based on a seminar we had started some time previously. We saw it as dealing with Psychology at any level, but later the ATP came to be mainly concerned with pre-degree work.

The visits were the part of the examining I liked most. It was always interesting to meet the students and staff. It could be exhausting. Centres were widely scattered across the country. Orals were normally thirty minutes, and of course had to cover much the same ground every time. It is very difficult to keep alert when one follows another relentlessly. On one occasion I went by train to Bristol, for a college at nearby Filton, examined fourteen candidates, and returned to London, some fourteen hours in all. On the journey I planned a new degree course. The other less enjoyable part of examining was the written papers. We had decided to have a set of optional papers as well as compulsory ones. In the event, there were very few takers for most of these, but they still had all to be set until they were done away with. There were, I recall, sixty questions to be devised each year. A bit later, the AEB also required me to supply outline answers to every question as well. And at first I had to mark all the scripts. When numbers grew it was possible to appoint further examiners, but then the marking had to be standardised so that all were more or less marking at the same level, and I had to check what they had done.

I was busy with developing a large new Department, teaching, writing my first book which appeared in 1974, business for the BPS and the CNAA (the body which oversaw degrees outside the universities), and innumerable other matters of all kinds. I had, in short, a rather full diary. I hope I didn't make too many mistakes. On several occasions I arrived at a town only to realise I did not know where I was supposed to go, and had to find a pay phone (no mobiles then) to ring my office and find out. Several times I was terribly late due to missing my way, or misjudging the time, especially when driving. On one occasion I went on the wrong day entirely, but the staff took it in their stride, apparently assuming it was merely a friendly visit to see how they were getting on. I think the written exams were on the whole fair and well assessed. At any rate there were very few complaints, and the staff and students I met were invariably enthusiastic. The steady growth in numbers seemed to show that we were, as they say, doing something right. But to my regret, Psychology, at all levels, has failed to attract male students in the same way as female. I do not know the solution to this, but I do think it is a problem.

I carried on as Chief Examiner, unusually, for nine years at the request of the AEB. It was frankly exhausting work. I was paid, of course. I once tried to work out how this related to the time I actually put in, and came up with a figure of under five pence per hour. Was it all worth it? It is typical of old age to try to make one's past seem right and valuable. But I do retain the conviction that a better understanding of how we poor bare forked animals work is for the good. Psychology is the name for that attempt, though an A-level, or any examination course, can only be a sample. I hope the sample conveys to the very many who now take it the principle that objective, eclectic, systematic, humane investigation is a better way to solving the manifold problems we face, than the old methods of unfounded belief, prejudice, tradition and sheer ignorance; in fact is the only way with any real chance of success. Psychology should be part of everyone's education. A sermon I have preached often and may well again, if I get the chance.

My title is from one of the famous Harrow School songs, words by Edward Bowen and music by John Farmer (1872). Harrow, where a school was in existence by 1243, offers twenty-eight subjects in the VI Form, but not Psychology. Give them time.

John Radford 2010

DIFFERENT REVISION

I've been doing revision lessons with my Lower 6th and as a 'filler' activity suggested they write a poem in pairs on a study of their choice to help them remember the details. One of my students wrote a good one about Milgram's study – see below!

Milgram, a trickster from US of A. Took a look at the Nazis, and started to say, "Why the hell would these people commit such a deed?

And would *anyone* do it? To find out I'll need some suck...er, I mean volunteers, a room and a box which people will think is administering shocks."

As it turned out, the people were really quite willing to cause others pain to the point even of killing.

Milgram concluded that people are liars, when they say in their voices so haughty and pious 'What monsters! *We'd* never commit such an act!' They would, if commanded, no bribe, threat or pact. Just a man with a clipboard, a room with a box, a pretence 'For Science!' and instructions: More Shocks.

Elaine Faulkener





Video-linked CLASSES

Using the Internet and its resources is everyday behaviour for teachers and students, and as funding becomes increasingly tight more of us are going to use or increase our use of video links. But research is now showing what I expect most of us do not find a surprise – that just putting traditional-style classes online does not produce similar student progress to real time in-class teaching.

The most negative outcomes are for students who are more, rather than less, challenged, ie, lower-performing students and those for whom English is not their mother tongue. Interestingly, in a study which randomly assigned volunteer university students to either real time or online lectures, male students had lower learning outcomes than female students.

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Evie Bentley
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ONLINE MARKING

Friend or Foe?

You may be aware of the recent move to online marking from the exam boards. Some of you might have even had the opportunity to use this new facility yourselves on the January and summer series exams this year. I myself had the opportunity to mark for OCR January G541 series. But what exactly are the implications of moving from paper-based marking to the e-version?

Positives

The exam boards seem to have different strategies with how to deal with online marking. AQA for instance are using standardisation meetings in some subject areas, allowing markers to discuss schemes of work and gain training in how to use the new systems. This is useful, not only for 'old hats' at marking, but for those relatively new to marking.

Other exam boards such as OCR use online training and standardisation via marking of practice online scripts and seeded scripts*. The seeded scripts act as a continual quality assurance procedure to ensure that markers are following the marking requirements.

The use of seeded scripts also helps to reduce the effects of rogue markers. Gone are the days that having a rogue marker can affect your entire college results. Exam boards have sort to randomly allocate student scripts from a variety of areas to help avoid this.

Furthermore the new ICT facilities make reassessing and accessing papers easier than before. Markers can flick back to previous questions relatively easily using the system, a benefit when faced with large batches of marking.

Potential Problems

With any facility that requires long hours using computers, there are always going to be health concerns. Whereas, before markers could take the scripts for marking with them, using a laptop or computer restricts movement and venue of marking. Long hours using a computer can also create health issues including headaches and migraines, especially when marking long questions such as 15-mark answers.

Another concern is that some exam boards have lost the standardisation meetings. This is a concern for a number of reasons. Firstly, marking is difficult enough, especially when a person is a new marker and standardisation meetings allow markers to get to grips with their scripts and receive valuable feedback from other markers. Furthermore there is no opportunity to query answers with other teachers and the exam board themselves so teachers have no input on the types of responses that should be accepted or rejected.

Despite the reduction of bad marking, there is still potential for rogue markers. Some markers who have previously been identified as bad markers appear to be let through in some subject areas which is always a concern. Hopefully these effects will continue to be reduced with the adaptation of the new systems.

A final issue I can see with online marking is for those people who cannot use the new advances in ICT technologies. Not everyone is 'computer savvy'. Often downloading marking software and adapting to new technologies can be time consuming and very daunting for some, leading to some very good markers leaving the system. This issue needs to be addressed.

Overall, I think that online marking is a useful tool which, once the 'kinks' have been worked out, can be an excellent facility for teachers to use. I would like to thank all of those people who contributed their experiences of marking online and of being markers to help me write this article. If anyone has been a marker using the new ICT facilities, please do not hesitate to contact me with your experiences. This is something that needs to be explored and it becomes more prominent within our teaching lives.

Contact me on laura.rudd@franklin.ac.uk

*Seeded scripts are scripts that have been previously marked by the exam board to check that markers are allocating similar marks to themselves.

Laura Rudd
Franklin College



DON'T WORK HARDER, WORK SMARTER!

ATP CPD EVENT

Saturday, 5 March 2011

The ATP is running a CPD event which is open to all teachers of Psychology. The aim of the day is to provide high quality, low cost CPD for Psychology teachers.

The day will consist of interactive workshops given by experienced teachers and examiners on a variety of topics relevant to all teachers of Psychology. There will be plenty of opportunity to network with like-minded professionals.

The exact programme is still to be finalised, but will contain workshops on the following:

- Using new technologies to support teaching and facilitate learning;
- Developing Reflective Learners – increasing students' understanding of how to improve work;
- Developing Independent Enquirers – equipping psychology students with the basic skills required to succeed in HE.

The event will be held at:
THE MCAULEY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
 CANTLEY LANE
 DONCASTER
 SOUTH YORKSHIRE
 DN3 3QF

The nearest train station is Doncaster and the school is 10 minutes away from junction 3 of the M18.

The cost of the day is £65. Refreshments and a light lunch will be provided. The day will begin with registration and coffee at 9.30am and finish at 3:30pm. Please book your place early to avoid disappointment.

Please pay the £65 delegate fee via PayPal, on the website www.theatp.org – In order to qualify for this bargain price you must be a member of the ATP. Please join via www.theatp.org – if not already a member, before registering for the Event.

Any queries please contact: eshakespeare@mcauley.org.uk

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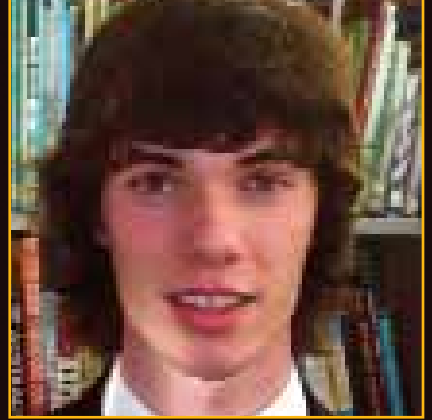
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ON WOMB THEORY & THE UTERIAN COMPLEX



Thomas Moodie, March 2010

Freud is dead. Modern psychology is fixated on his work concerning the sexuality of infants and its subsequent effects on adult life. However, there are many issues and limitations attached to Freud's work, which have been argued countless times. What is needed is a new approach to psychoanalysis and the subconscious mind, one that affects all humans equally and will venture beyond the limitations of Freud's theories. Here, I propose Womb Theory, a concept which aims to undertake this task.

To understand Womb Theory, its context must first be explored. The human foetus develops within the mother's womb, receiving nourishment, protection and warmth. Nourishment is provided through the umbilical cord, allowing the foetus to gain the nutrients needed to develop into a full human. Protection comes in the form of the mother's body, which carries the foetus and guards it from any harm that may distort growth. The womb also offers a warmth to the foetus that provides comfort and a further degree of safety whilst it is developing.

Birth is devastating for the human. Now a baby and no longer a foetus, we are forced from the uterus; we are forced from instant nourishment, protection and warmth. The world is a shock to us, resulting in the first conscious emotions felt within the world – fear and anxiety. Gone are the womb's nourishing features. Gone is the lining of the womb that fed and sheltered the foetus. The first experiences of life are unbearable, and the baby's first cry is an admission of pain.

From this arises the central theme of Womb Theory. Away from the womb, the human baby desires to return to its previous state, which we will call the Uterian Complex. Throughout its life, the human will strive subconsciously to return to the womb, which is shown through all aspects of human behaviour.

Firstly, the issue of physical protection is important as part of human experience. Protection to some extent is a necessity of all animals; to stop predators, to keep out the cold, to provide a safety. What is unique to humans is the excess to which we protect ourselves. After mastering tools we set to build houses, encasing ourselves in an isolation that made us feel secure. Perhaps we first

became man when, aware we were naked, we clothed ourselves to hide our shame. This protection comes from the Uterian Complex, where we feel the need to blanket ourselves in order to recreate the world of the womb. Further examples of this behaviour include the enjoyment of hot drinks, showers, baths, embraces, and even sex, which I shall return to later in this article. We protect ourselves constantly in order to avoid the reality we cannot return.

If protection is the physical aspect of Womb Theory, warmth is the emotional aspect. Emotions are the psychological response of the body as a way of manufacturing the experiences of the womb. Love, an adequate example, is universally seen as a positive emotion – it is warm and it is safe. Love mirrors the foetus' experience in the womb, where it is offered full comfort. Notice how a human wishes love was eternal, and how the Uterian Complex seeks an eternal womb. On the opposite side of emotion are negative feelings, which work to a form of negative feedback-hatred is warm because the body attempts to bring the mind to a neutral state by placating the subconscious mind through mirroring the warmth of the womb. Tears, connected with emotion, serve as a physical response to a psychological need; when a person is upset, the body masks reality by showering the human with hot liquid, just as in the womb. This comforts the person and allows them to return to a neutral state of arousal.

So, emotions are a direct result of the subconscious mind trying to recreate the conditions of the womb. But no attempt of reconstruction can be successful, which is precisely why there are so many mental conditions found in humans. Depression, for example, works as a failing of the subconscious to suppress the fact

there is no return to the uterus. As a result, the depressed person lacks motivation, for what is the point of life if the ultimate aim is not achievable? Phobia, another common aspect of human psychology, involves the fear of something on Earth linking to the subconscious fear of losing protection and warmth altogether, comparable to the feelings experienced during birth. Hysteria can also be a result of these first experiences – the mind realises it cannot succeed in its goal, but as an opposite to depression, the mind act not by giving up but by going into an overdrive state, unable to cope with the concept of never returning to the womb. Note that Hippocrates referred to hysteria's cause as a 'wandering womb'. On a more extreme scale are psychopaths and mentally disturbed individuals who have evicted emotion because they have become aware of its artificial nature. Ed Gein, a famous serial killer of the 20th Century, is a perfect example of an individual who attempted to return to the womb. His choice to make clothing out of female skin was likely a perverted attempt to recreate a womb he could live inside.

Now to the issue of sex. Whilst Freud believed sex was on the mind of every toddler, schoolboy and pensioner, this theory argues against sex as an end in itself. After having sex, we do not feel complete, suggesting there is something beyond sex we strive for. In finding pleasure in sex, we are in fact displaying a psychological process, arguably the most effective, in which we aim to recreate the womb. For females this is the desire to activate their wombs and for males it is the desire to return to the female body. Sex is a means to an end rather than an end in itself, explaining our unsatisfied sexual behaviour and our fixation on sexuality.

What implications does Womb Theory have for religion? Freud argued that religion was an illusion akin to a neurosis used by humans to satisfy their fears of death and their repressed sexual desires. Womb Theory, disagreeing with the link to sexual desire, argues that it is the desire to return to the womb that causes religious development. This is true to the majority of religions, and I shall focus here on Christianity. Christianity shares familiar themes with many other religions; it has a harmonious creation, a disaster leading to pain, the concept of human meaning and a glorious afterlife. What is Eden in human life but the womb? What is the disaster other than birth? What is human meaning beyond the Uterian Complex? What is the afterlife but an eternal womb? Heaven is a womb and Hell a world of suffering, symbolic of our desires versus our reality.

As well as in religion, the theory can be detected in philosophical writings. Plato, for example, deduced there was a separate World of Forms in which the perfect specimen of everything existed. The soul was once aware of this world, and in the human body it strives to attain the knowledge it lost. Again, this suggests a womb-like state humans were once aware of that we lost and now aim to return to.

To summarise the theory; a human desires to return to the womb and mirrors this through seeking protection and warmth as well as nourishment. Emotions govern the conscious mind as to what is favourable in achieving the desire and mental conditions are the direct result of the subconscious mind's awareness of its doomed aim. A true return is not attainable yet the human condition is that we continue trying, resulting in the Uterian Complex.

Once a person learns Womb Theory, they will not stop functioning. No doubt the majority who read this will meet it with disregard due to the lack of scholarly evidence or even its plausibility. When you put this article down, you will not give in to despair after hearing of the Uterian Complex. This is because the conscious mind and the subconscious mind are only loosely connected and can equally suppress information from the other. I ask you to consider this theory as a true contender in psychology and reflect on how every aspect of

human life can be related to a wish to return to the womb.

This theory is needed if psychology is to develop. It offers an entirely fresh approach to looking at human behaviour and has endless implications for the fields of psychology, religion, philosophy, literature and science. Perhaps the meaning of life has finally been detected.

Tom Moodie (b 1992) is currently Head Boy at The Leventhorpe School, which is a Foundation school in the state sector in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire. He is in Year 13 and will be going to Cambridge in Autumn 2010. He studies English Literature, Religious Studies and Psychology at A level. He wrote this essay for the English Department at the school who passed it on to the Psychology Department because of its cross-curricular content.

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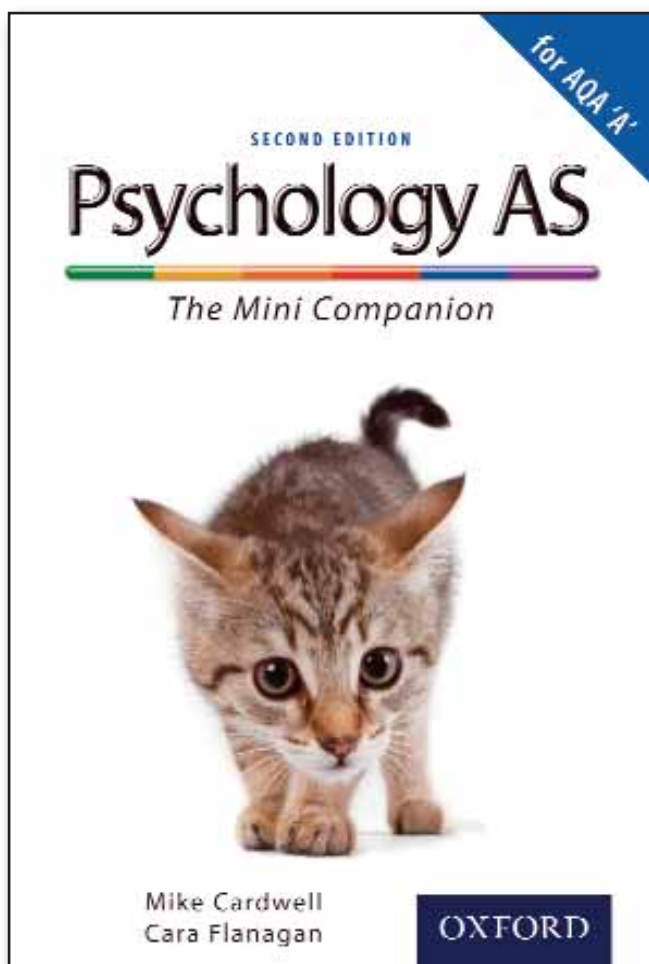
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PSYCHOLOGY AS The Mini Companion (AQA - A)

Mike Cardwell & Cara Flanagan

ISBN 978-1-850080549-2 Folens

This book is the latest edition to the popular series and designed to be used alongside The Complete Companion. Each section of the Complete Companion textbook is reduced to a single page of essential knowledge. This will save you hours of work preparing revision guides for your students.

It also includes useful advice on exam technique, a mock exam paper and mark scheme. As one would expect from Cardwell & Flanagan it is well written and very closely linked to the AQA A AS specification. The layout is very clear and student friendly. I particularly liked the glossary at the back of the book which could be used to devise simple peer-assessed or self-marked knowledge tests.

As Freud famously said: 'Time spent in the company of cats is

never wasted', so I love this book simply for the cat pictures which are very cute!

I would recommend it as a student revision text, although it does need to be used alongside a more comprehensive textbook as it only contains the bare minimum of information needed to pass the exam.

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Writing Articles for ATP Today

What kind of articles are we looking for?

We are looking for a variety of articles such as:

- Teaching & learning articles
- Lesson suggestions (activities and suggestions that have worked well for you)
- Resources that can be used by teachers or students (worksheets etc)
- Psychology research
- Current research by University Departments
- Reviews of books (Exam and non-exam texts welcome)
- Articles of interest including current teaching issues

Who can write for the ATP?

Anyone can write for the ATP. We particularly welcome articles from teachers, researchers, University departments, University lecturers and PGCE students.

How long should my article be?

Your article can be anything from half a page to three pages of A4. Articles should be submitted in Arial font size 12.

Can I submit pictures?

Yes. We welcome photos to be used for the articles. If you want to submit them, once you have checked copyright, please attach them to your e-mail separately and do not embed them into the article. All photos need to be taken in the highest resolution setting on your camera possible and in jpeg format.

ADVERTISEMENTS

What kinds of advertisement is the ATP looking for?

Here at the ATP, we pride ourselves on offering our Members the highest quality resources and facilities available in the Psychology teaching world. This is the same for advertisements.

- Teaching resources
- Trips and conferences
- CPD opportunities
- Exam boards
- University information

What constitutes an advertisement?

If you wish to invite Members to an upcoming event, issue a call for papers, or other items that you think may provide a service to our Members; we may be able to waive some or all of the fees for advertising. This decision will be made at the discretion of the editor. Please contact us for more information.

If you would like to submit an article, need any clarification on your article or are interested in advertising then please do not hesitate to contact the editor via e-mail on Laura.rudd@franklin.ac.uk



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