



“The aim (of the ATP) has always been to further the teaching of Psychology at all levels. This is reflected in the membership and to an extent in the career patterns of Psychologists in general. The Association has deliberately not adopted views on the relative merits of different approaches.

There is perhaps a tendency to think of the Association as primarily concerned with A-level. This may increase if, as seems likely, GCE work is the only large growth area in the near future”.

John Radford, 1977.

Who could have guessed that Psychology was to grow from an initial entry in 1971 of just 96 candidates to now being the third biggest A-level in the country. At the time of writing only Mathematics and Biology have larger entries.

This publication, commemorating 50 years of A Level Psychology and the ATP, has been made possible by the generosity of Rick Jackman and Illuminate Publishing. Rick is a longstanding supporter of the ATP and gave us the services of his company for free.

Louise Higgins saved all the historical documents in the Wellcome Trust Archive which made this publication possible.

Our grateful thanks to all the contributors.

To the memory of Mike Stanley.

IN THE BEGINNING

A PERSPECTIVE by JOE COCKER

John Radford suggests that Saturday 18th February 1967 is a candidate for being the date when it all started. The Council of the BPS met on that day and noted a recommendation from BPS Education Section Committee that “a Working Party be set up to enquire into the desirability and possibility of teaching psychology in schools.” (note schools not FE). John says that the BPS, contrary to what has sometimes been suggested, was actively involved from the beginning. Paul Humphreys however notes that there were misgivings in University Psychology departments and other places on the grounds that the subject demands a level of maturity beyond what could be expected of the average 16 year old and worse, it might lead to morbid introspection perhaps actually increasing the incidence of some disorders.

One of the determinants for introduction seems to have been the fact that some psychology was already being taught in schools and colleges as part of liberal studies or similar courses. Should it be examinable? The Schools Council was the important body here although this was anomalous as the greatest interest in teaching psychology was in the FE sector.

A final report was received by the BPS on 8th February 1969 and soon after John Radford was approached by The Associated Examining Board (AEB) to chair a committee with a view to developing an A level. Things must have developed quickly because the first A levels were set for summer 1971. Only 25 centres were allowed to take part for a trial period of 6 years. *It would be interesting to know the names of these centres but when John tried to get this information from AEB's successor, AQA he was unable to do so and ruefully concluded that “either they do not know whether they have the records and are not prepared to find out or simply that they will not answer questions.”*

We do know that one of these first centres was Kidderminster College of Further Education and the ATP Newsletter of Autumn 1998 published a letter which John Radford sent in February 1970 to over 100 people/institutions who had made inquiries about the A level including Kidderminster CFE. It would be interesting to know the list of centres because in the early days, A level Psychology was mainly taught at FE level despite its origins being focussed on school teaching. When I heard about this in the early 70s I badgered my H.O.D. at Herefordshire College of Technology to offer A level Psychology but we had to wait until the six years was up and offered it for the first time for examination in 1977.

John was the first examiner and because there was an oral exam on practical work and statistics before the written exams there was actually a first ever student who took an A level Psychology exam. He can narrow this down to one of three girls from what was then the Thomas Mills High School at Framlingham, Suffolk. Assuming that she was 18 she would be around 64 now. Wouldn't it be great if we could trace this first student or one of the first three!

John also relates how teachers asked him for advice which he tried to supply. He says that he felt that the AEB rather frowned on this considering that Examiners should examine and nothing else, an issue which has become controversial several times since.

John says that he founded the ATP with James Breese in 1970. It was then concerned with psychology teaching at any level and only later came to be primarily concerned with pre-degree teaching. At this juncture viewpoints differ on how the ATP became the organisation that it is today. Two versions appear in 1998 ATP Newsletters.

John and some colleagues in Higher Education, especially the late James Breese, formed the ATP in 1970 basing it on ideas from a recent seminar. The founding members saw the ATP as being primarily concerned with teaching rather than with the level of teaching such as A level.

LIST OF ATP OFFICERS

	CHAIR	SECRETARY	TREASURER
1970	John Radford	James Breese	Roy Monk
1971	John Radford	James Breese	Roy Monk
1972	John Radford	James Breese	Veronica Finch
1973	John Radford	James Breese	Veronica Finch
1974	John Radford	James Breese	Veronica Finch
1975	John Radford	James Breese	Veronica Finch
1976	John Radford	James Breese	Veronica Finch
1977	John Radford	James Breese	Veronica Finch
1978	John Radford	James Breese	Veronica Finch
1979			
1980			
1981	Denis Gahagan	Louise Higgins	Cliff South
1982			
1983			
1984	Peter Sanders	Nicky Hayes	Loma Jones
1985	Peter Sanders	Sue Orrell	Loma Jones
1986	Anne Ratue	Sue Orrell	Loma Jones
1987	Anne Ratue	Dave Clarke	Chris Henney
1988	Anne Ratue	Dave Clarke	Chris Henney
1989	Graham Davies	Dave Clarke	Di Dwyer
1990	Graham Davies	Sue Hirschler	Di Dwyer
1991	Sue Carter	Sue Hirschler	Di Dwyer
1992	Sue Carter	Sue Hirschler	Di Dwyer
1993	Sue Carter	Teresa Smyth	Geof Shoesmith
1994	Geof Haworth	Teresa Smyth	Geof Shoesmith
1995	Geoff Haworth	Chris Braine	Di Dwyer
1996	Geoff Haworth	Chris Braine	Di Dwyer
1997	Duncan Hatcher	Chris Braine	Di Dwyer
1998	Duncan Hatcher	Evie Bentley	Di Dwyer
1999	Evie Bentley	Jill Keogh	Di Dwyer
2000	Evie Bentley	Jill Keogh	Di Dwyer
2001	Evie Bentley	Simon Tombs	Di Dwyer
2002	Karon Oliver	Simon Tombs	Di Dwyer
2003	Karon Oliver	Simon Tombs	Di Dwyer
2004	Karon Oliver	Dorothy Coombs	Di Dwyer
2005	Dorothy Coombs	Jennifer Toal	Di Dwyer
2006	Dorothy Coombs	Jennifer Toal	Di Dwyer
2007	Dorothy Coombs	Jennifer Toal	Janet Brennan
2008	Deb Gajic	Morag Williamson	Janet Brennan
2009	Deb Gajic	Morag Williamson	Janet Brennan
2010	Deb Gajic	Morag Williamson	Janet Brennan
2011	Deb Gajic	Morag Williamson	Janet Brennan
2012	Dorothy Coombs	Morag Williamson	Deb Gajic
2013	Dorothy Coombs	Morag Williamson	Deb Gajic
2014	Helene Ansell	Morag Williamson	Deb Gajic
2015	Helene Ansell	Morag Williamson	Deb Gajic
2016	Helene Ansell	Morag Williamson	Deb Gajic
2017	Helene Ansell	Mandy Wood	Deb Gajic

In an article entitled “Power to the People or “They came from the North” Paul Humphreys details the events of 1978 which others have called a revolution. The ATP AGM took place in London. A group of A level teachers clearly felt that there was an HE bias in the ATP and decided to attend the AGM. They hoped to outnumber the current committee when it came to a vote and so it happened by 7 votes to 6. John Radford and colleagues were clearly upset at the way things were done. John felt in particular that the secretary James Breese who had done so much preparatory work for the A level had been ousted and without due recognition. John resigned as Chair but was persuaded to continue. From then on the ATP changed its focus to specifically pre-tertiary level. More recently John has said magnanimously that he is glad that in Paul Humphreys's words, the ATP “was never the same again.” “No healthy organisation should be”, he writes.

II

A HISTORY OF THE ATP, 1969-1977. A Paul Humphreys perspective

The Association for the Teaching of Psychology was officially founded on 27th November 1970 with an inaugural meeting held at the Institute of Education, London.

There was of course precedent activity (1). Significantly the first A-level in Psychology was being taught although the first examination would not be until 1971 (see chapter 2). The earliest directly ATP related activity logged in the Wellcome Trust ATP archive, where the majority of the research for this booklet was carried out, was an advertisement in the TES from John Radford This is undated but likely to be late winter 1969/70 and was followed by a letter from JKR to the 110 respondents to the advertisement date stamped 26th February 1970 at my first teaching post, Kidderminster College of FE. In the letter he identifies enquiries concerning the teaching of A-level Psychology (2) to be the major focus, with one of the other points raised being

“the possibility of some kind of association for the teaching of the behavioural sciences. An Association for the the Teaching of the Social Sciences is already in existence, but it may well be thought that our interests are somewhat different from theirs. One possibility would be the formation of a a Section or Division within the (BPS)...But this might be too restrictive. It would be helpful to have further comments on this matter”.

This was followed by letters to the AEB (the Awarding Body running the first A-level examination) and the Schools Council. A preparatory meeting for the fledgling ATP was held at West Ham College of Technology 1st May 1970 2-5.30 with 37 of the 110 letter respondents attending.

The agenda was

1. Appointment of Officers. WTA is a little sketchy here but my colleague Joe Cocker believes that the three principal officers were John Radford (Chairperson); James Breese (Secretary) and Roy Monk (Treasurer); all would have been interim posts until the November inaugural meeting.

2. Subscription rates There were to be three categories of membership: individuals at either 10 shillings or £1pa (WTAA sources disagree); Group (5+ individuals) subscription rate unknown and Institution £3pa.

3. Future activities: meetings, literature, etc.

4. AOB, including setting date for the inaugural meeting.

We now move forward to November and the Inaugural meeting although there would undoubtedly have been activity in the intervening period, a substantial amount of this related to the new A-level (see Chapter 2).

The initial correspondence was via the BPS which reflects the perceived importance at the time of a working relationship with that body. A file in WTA suggests that a merger between the BPS and the ATP was mooted at one point. Most certainly not a match of equals at this point.

The November 27th meeting also ran between 2-5.30pm, with the following agenda.

1. Proposed constitution (4)
2. Correspondence with AEB and Schools Council
3. Local branches
4. Future meetings (these were agreed as being October; February/March & May (occasionally) (5)
5. AOB including election of the committee.

THE MEMBERSHIP

The earliest record of membership I have been able to find is for June 1971, ie just eight months after the inaugural meeting. Membership was interestingly defined as “members and others who have attended the most recent meetings in London”. Despite this generosity the n was only 76, and did not achieve a quantum jump until the Schools Council A-level Pilot Scheme (examined 1971-1974) finished and the A-level went open-entry. The other Individual category membership numbers recorded in the WTAA are:

September 1972: 176

December 1972: 263 rising to 450 after the publication of the first Psychology Teaching bulletin in May 1973.

July 1974: 649 (being 389 Individuals; 216 Groups & 44 Institutions).

January 1975: It is recorded that at this time a quarter of members were also members of the BPS).

and finally...

The earliest membership list I have been to locate is for June 1973. Here is a complete listing of those 34 early trailblazers. Don't forget that the Pilot scheme was still operating with a mere 25 colleges and five schools being involved (see chapter 2).

LONDON & HOME COUNTIES:

Bishop Otter College, Chichester; Bromley College of Technology; City University, London; Ealing Technical College; Gipsy Hill College of Education, Kingston on Thames; King Alfred's College, Winchester; London University; NELP; Open University; Polytechnic of North London; Wall Hall College, Adenham; Wanstead School; Western Area Centre of Adult Education, Edgware.

MIDLANDS: Loughborough College of Education; Nottingham University; Shenstone New College, Kidderminster.

NORTH EAST: Huddersfield College of Education; Huddersfield Polytechnic; Leeds Polytechnic; Newcastle University; Sunderland College of Education; Totley-Thornbridge College of Education, Sheffield.

NORTH WEST: Bolton College of Education; Chester College of Education; CF Mott College of Education, Prescott; Elizabeth Gaskill College of Education, Manchester; Padgate College.

SCOTLAND: Kings College, Aberdeen; Moray House College of Education, Edinburgh; Queen Margaret College of Edinburgh; University of Strathclyde.

SOUTHAMPTON & DISTRICT: Poole Technical College; La Saints Union College of Education, Southampton; Sarum College of St. Michael, Salisbury.

A number of things strike me from this list, perhaps most notably the high proportion of Higher Education establishments and the low proportion of schools. The AEB's clientele was always largely FE. And why was Southampton accorded a status comparable to London when there was only one Institution from that city? This may never be known.

1, see the Postscript which follows this chapter.

2: in particular, that “some feared that schools were being less favoured than colleges” (letter from James Breese dated 16th May 1970).

3: J. F. Bolton is named as Secretary in one of the WTA documents.

4: A copy can be found in the WTA.

5: The earliest meetings were held at Sidney College, London W1, moving to Goldsmiths College later. The first Annual Dinner is recorded as being held on 11th November 1977 at the Priory Boathouse, Hammersmith. This followed 17 member resignations over the annual individual subscription being increased from £1 to £3. I have no record of what the rate of inflation was back in the day.

6: no figure given for an Institution membership.

CHAPTER POSTSCRIPT

Subsequent to writing the above chapter I had occasion to revisit Wellcome Trust. This allied to a conversation which Joe and I were privileged to have with John Radford has enabled me to form a picture of a pre-history for the ATP.

This letter dated 18/11/1969 which I located in WTAA is central to this.



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YOUR REF.

MY REF JKR/AS

N. T. BLOOMER, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.I.M.A., Principal

JOHN RADFORD, B.A., Ph.D., A.B.P.S., Head of Department

18th November, 1969.

J. H. Breeze, Esq., M.A.,
57 Stockens Green,
Knebworth,
HERTS.

Dear James,

I have had a letter from a Mr. Monk who is teaching some psychology at Reigate and I have given him your name as someone who has similar interests.

What really occurred to me, however, was that with the prospect of 'A' level psychology there will probably be several people who might find an exchange of views useful; and I wondered if there might be support for an occasional seminar and/or newsletter. I think we could manage the clerical side of such a venture here, if there were one or two people keen enough to push it along. I'll be glad of any comments you may have.

Yours sincerely,


John Radford

Before the idea of what was to become the ATP were floated and then actioned (see above) JKR was suggesting to James Breese that occasional seminars and, critically, newsletter(s) would be “useful” for teachers, including those of the newly introduced A-level (teaching of which had begun just two months prior). JKR has told us the seminars were indeed held, at the Institute of Education/NELP. The newsletters probably morphed into the early outputs of the ATP.

III

THE BEGINNINGS OF A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY by JOHN RADFORD, the first Chief Examiner



It is not possible to point to the exact moment at which A-level Psychology 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 Welcome 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 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..

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. 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. Psychology was not taught as part of the national curriculum, and was probably due to an initiative on Dr. Frobenius's part, which might help to explain the relatively low overall grades.¹

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 Breeze 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. 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.

This is a revised and edited version of an article originally published in ATP Today in Sept 2010

ASSOCIATION FOR THE TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY

INTERIM CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

The name shall be the Association for the Teaching of Psychology.

2. OBJECTS

- 2.1. To support, encourage and raise the standards of the teaching of psychology at all levels.
- 2.2. To aid teachers of Psychology, through their membership of the Association, in their professional work.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. The Association shall be open to all interested in the teaching of Psychology, subject to acceptance by the Committee.
- 3.2. The Committee shall have the right to terminate the membership of any person.

4. FEES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 4.1. The Financial Year shall commence on the First Day of April upon which date all annual subscriptions shall become due.
- 4.2. The Annual Subscription shall be no more than is required to cover the running costs of the Association and shall be fixed annually at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.
- 4.3. Each individual joining the Association shall immediately pay an annual subscription, except that after 1 April, 1971, in the case of an individual joining after the First Day of October, no subscription shall be due for that Financial Year.
- 4.4. During the period of this Interim Constitution, a subscription shall be paid by all individuals or Institutions joining the Association, and the subscription rates shall be:

Individual Subscriptions £1

Group Subscriptions from
Institutions £3

- 4.5. Institutions paying the Group Subscription shall submit a list of the persons concerned for the approval of the Committee.

5. MANAGEMENT

- 5.1. The Management of the Association shall be vested in an Executive Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting.

5.2. All Officers and Committee Members shall be members of the Association.

5.3. The Interim Committee shall consist of:

OFFICERS

Chairman
Honorary Secretary
Honorary Treasurer

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Not less than three
nor more than nine
Ordinary Members of
the Committee.

5.4. The Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer shall retire at the Annual General Meeting next following their appointment but shall be eligible for re-election, except that no person may hold Office for a period of more than three consecutive years and shall not be eligible for re-election unless a period of one year shall have elapsed since his/her retirement.

5.5. One third of the Ordinary Members of the Committee shall retire each year and shall not be eligible for re-election unless a period of one year shall have elapsed since their retirement. The Ordinary Members of the Committee to retire each year shall be those who have been longest in office, but as between persons who became Ordinary Members of the Committee on the same day, those to retire shall, unless they otherwise agree among themselves, be determined by lot.

5.6. The Committee may co-opt two additional Members, over and above the maximum of nine elected Members.

5.7. Co-opted Members of the Committee shall retire at the Annual General Meeting next following their co-option but shall be eligible for nomination for Office or as Ordinary Members of the Committee.

5.8. Four Members of the Committee present shall form a quorum.

5.9. A simple majority of the Committee Members present shall be sufficient to carry or defeat a motion.

6. MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION

6.1. An Annual General Meeting shall be held in each year, but the interval between Annual General Meetings shall not exceed thirteen months.

- 6.2. At each Annual General Meeting the Association shall include in its business the Election of Officers and Ordinary Members of the Committee and consideration of the Financial Statement.
- 6.3. An Honorary Auditor shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.
- 6.4. Honorary Membership of the Association shall be conferred only at Annual General Meetings after submission and approval by the Executive Committee.
- 6.5. Special General Meetings for discussion of business matters shall be convened by the Executive Committee as required.
- 6.6. On the requisition of ten Members of the Association stating the business to be discussed, the Honorary Secretary shall convene a Special General Meeting at which that business only shall be discussed.
- 6.7. Not less than three weeks' notice shall be given of an Annual or Special General Meeting and of any business to be transacted.
- 6.8. Ten Members present, all of whom must be in good financial standing with the Association shall form a quorum at Annual or Special General Meetings.
- 6.9. Each Honorary Member, Individual Member or Group Member appointed by an Institution shall be entitled to one vote at an Annual or Special General Meeting.
- 6.10. Arrangements may be made for postal voting on the election of Officers and Members of the Committee and upon such issues of sufficient importance to warrant such a procedure.
- 6.11. Scientific meetings, at which no business matters connected with the Association shall be discussed, may be arranged as necessary by the Executive Committee.
- 6.12. A simple majority of Members present shall be sufficient to carry a motion at the Annual or Special General Meeting.

IV

THE FIRST SYLLABUS. AEB A -LEVEL.

There were three components, two written papers (each three hours in length) and an oral exam on a Practical Notebook comprising at least 12 reports (see article by Hugh Coolican).

PAPER ONE.

Candidates were required to answer five questions, out of a total of 12.

COGNITIVE &RELATED PROCESSES.

(a) Perception; (b) Learning (c) Conditioning; (d) Memory; (e) Thinking and problem solving.

BIOLOGICAL BASES OF BEHAVIOUR.

Introduction to the nervous system including the brain and special senses; bases of emotion and motivation; genetics. (Psychological relevance should be stressed throughout).

SCOPE AND METHODS OF PSYCHOLOGY.

Relationship to other disciplines; different fields of study and personalities in Psychology (historical material is only required where it is necessary to understand the present state of knowledge in the subject). Introduction to ideas of experimental method and design; and use of statistical concepts in Psychology.

PAPER TWO

Candidates were required to answer four questions, from any one section.

OPTION 1: The Individual in Society

(a) Individual Differences

(b) Social factors.

OPTION 2: Physiological and comparative Psychology.

(a) Introductory

(b) Physiological

(c) Comparative.

OPTION 3: Social Psychology

(a) Methods of study

(b) Human communication

(c)Small group

(d)Conformity and Socialisation

(e)Attitude assessment and social survey.

OPTION 4: The Psychology of Industry.

(a) Introduction

(b) Vocational Guidance and Selection

(c)Training

(d)Social Psychology of Industry.

OPTION 5: Developmental and Child Psychology (birth to adulthood)

(a) Introduction

(b) Environment and Heredity

(c)Developmental

(d)Techniques of child study.

3

(a) Practical Notebook. Statistics required are
sampling procedure

measures of central tendency and scatter
correlation

concept of tests of significance.

(b) Oral examination (up to 30 minutes)

THE FIRST READING LIST

When the Pilot Scheme began a list of resources was published entitled Suggestions for Reading.

There were three '**general textbooks**' given:

Hilgard & Atkinson: Introduction to Psychology. 4th ed., 1968. HBJ*

Morgan & King: Introduction to Psychology. 3rd ed., 1966. McGraw Hill.

("A personal viewpoint"): Hebb, D.O.: A Textbook of Psychology. 2nd ed., 1966. Saunders.

"Paperbacks (especially suitable for students)":

Argyle, M. (1967): The Psychology of Interpersonal Behaviour. Penguin.

Broadbent, D. (1964): Behaviour. Methuen.

Eysenck, H.J. (1965): Fact and Fiction in Psychology. Penguin.

Foss, B [ed.] (1966): New Horizons in Psychology. Penguin.

Gregory, R. (1966): Eye and Brain. Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Hudson, L. (1968): Contrary Imaginations. Penguin.

Hunter, I. (1966): Memory. Penguin.

Miller, G.W. (1966): Psychology: The science of mental life. Penguin. [*"The best single introduction to Psychology. A brilliant book by one of the most eminent living psychologists".*]

Research papers (etc.)

Daniel, R.S. (1965): Contemporary Readings in General Psychology.

Dulany, D.E. et.al (1963): Contributions to Modern Psychology.

King, R.A. (1966): Readings for an Introduction to Psychology.

Sanford, F.H. & Capaldi, E.J. (1964): Advancing Psychological Science. 4 vol.s

Wrenn, R.L. [ed.] (1966): Basic Contributions to Psychology.

This reading list clearly relates to the AEB A-level but it is interesting to note that the first 'purpose-written' pre-tertiary textbook was published for the JMB O-level: Hardy, M. & Heyes, S. (1969): Beginning Psychology. Weidenfeld & Nicolson. The first one for A-level was Radford, J. & Govier, E [ed.s] (1980): A Textbook of Psychology. Sheldon Press.

The first edition of Richard Gross's Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour (Edward Arnold) was published in 1987.

• Those of a historical bent may be interested that the first edition of this perennial was published in 1953. The most current is the 16th iteration. .

AEB A-level. The first centres.

The pilot study, which ran from 1969 to 1974 involved 30 centres, 25 colleges and 5 schools. These were accepted on a first come, first served basis and 50 colleges who had applied for inclusion were not admitted once the 30 figure had been reached.

The reasons given by Alan Matten, who was Subject Officer for the Board at the time, for this highly restricted entry were:

- A pilot scheme was necessary because of opposition to the idea of an A-level in Psychology
- Small numbers were required for feedback purposes
- Small numbers were necessary to facilitate changes in the syllabus
- Small numbers would enable detailed attention to be given to scripts and analysis
- If numbers were large some universities might have difficulty in giving acceptance*
- The accepted centres were deemed to "hold a qualification in Psychology" by the responsible teacher/lecturer
- The pilot scheme had to have a early closing date to "get off the ground" quickly.

* Accepting Psychology for matriculation were Birmingham; Cambridge; City; Exeter; Hull; Nottingham; Salford; Sussex. The only one non-accepting was City. All others were 'pending'.

We cannot locate any record of the names of the schools but the 25 colleges (in order of application/acceptance) were:

1. Stevenage College of FE
2. N.E. Essex Technical College & School of Art
3. Filton Technical College
4. Wandsworth Technical College
5. Bournville College of FE
6. Salisbury & South Wilts College of FE
7. West Wilts & Trowbridge College of FE
8. Hitchin College of FE
9. Oxford College of FE
10. West London College
11. Basingstoke Technical College
12. Arnold & Carlton College of FE
13. Worthing College of FE
14. Barnet College of FE
15. Western Area Centres for Adult Education (Edgware)
16. Weston super Mare Technical College
17. Bromley College of FE
18. East Hertfordshire College of FE
19. Redbridge Technical College
20. South Cheshire Central College of FE
21. Thanet Technical College
22. Chiswick Polytechnic
23. Harlow Technical College
24. Kidderminster College of FE
25. Havering Technical College

ASSOCIATED EXAMINING BOARD
for the General Certificate of Education

May/June Examination, 1971—Advanced Level

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 1

Three hours allowed

Answer any five questions. All questions carry equal marks.

1. What is meant by perceptual constancy? How would you demonstrate *two* of the constancies?
2. Give some examples of the way in which perception can be affected by *set*.
3. Describe how you would demonstrate *classical* and *operant* conditioning.
4. What practical psychological advice could you give to a friend who complained of a poor memory?
5. What do you understand by *transfer of training*? Are there any dependable principles underlying transfer?
6. Compare the various techniques for measuring retention in memory, and discuss reasons why they may differ in sensitivity.

[151/1]

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[Turn over

7. What is programmed learning? What are its supposed advantages over conventional learning?

8. Describe any psychological studies of sleeping and/or dreaming.

9. It has been claimed that our language influences the way we think. Describe some of the evidence *for* and *against* this view.

10. Is it possible to distinguish between motivation and emotion in terms of the physiological changes which accompany these states?

11. **Either:** What is meant by statistical significance? Why is the concept of statistical significance important in psychology?

Or: Why are controls used in psychological research? Give some examples of their use.

12. Show that you know what is meant by any *three* of the following:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| (a) Homeostasis | (d) Reaction time |
| (b) EEG | (e) "Open-ended" tests |
| (c) "Insight" | (f) The Müller-Lyer illusion |

V

THE ORAL EXAMINATION by HUGH COOLICAN



When my undergraduates students have a gentle moan about the number of practical reports they have to write in an academic year – usually two in methods and perhaps one more in a theory module - I rather enjoy astonishing them with a tale of teaching AEB A Level Psychology back in the mid to late 1970s, just a few years after the first ever Psychology A level exam was taken. The research methods requirement back then was for candidates to present 10 – 12 fully written up practical reports and these could be based in any domain covered by the syllabus – broadly defined as biological, cognitive, developmental and social psychology. Statistical analysis was expected to include a range of basic inferential tests including correlation, t tests, chi-squared and non-parametric tests. Tough enough you might think; five reports per year. Where I taught however

many of the students, especially those in evening classes, attempted the A Level in one year attending year 1 and year 2 simultaneously, hence ten reports in one year! It gets worse though.

How was this coursework assessed? Teacher assessment with a sample moderated by the exam board? The whole lot sent in to the exam board? Oh no. Each candidate was interviewed at their college or school for 30 minutes by a visiting examiner. People like John Radford, Mike Cardwell, Phil Banyard, Paul Humphreys, myself and many more whose names I'm sorry I've now forgotten would travel out (in my case from London) to Orpington or St Albans or Norwich (even) to examine say 15 or 20 candidates. We were permitted to test no more than 10 in one day (five per session) and so this often meant staying over in a hotel but more often in the A Level teacher's home.

Was it a nice friendly chat with each student? Yes it was for about three minutes at best. Though the rapport remained friendly I'm afraid candidates were taken on a very intensive journey through their work but also far beyond. We would haphazardly pick two or three practicals and have the student explain what was done, at which point the odd bluffer tended to demonstrate very quickly that they hadn't attended and had not a clue about the study. Most though sailed nicely through this part but then found themselves confronted by a host of questions such as: why did you use repeated measures? What are the advantages and disadvantages? What was the IV? .. and so on. Then came the stats – why do we mention $p < .05$? Could there have been a type I error? How do you know there are 23 degrees of freedom? etc. Soon though, even the stronger candidates found the comfort zone perhaps a little lumpy when we turned to our stack of cards (Powerpoint would have been a dream for this) in order to ask about skewed distributions, expected frequencies, negative correlations, z scores, the normal distribution and so on.

As you can imagine the odd student broke into tears or even refused to start the oral exam but overall I was amazed at the number of students who got through all this with relative confidence. They had of course all been thoroughly grilled in mock interviews by their teachers. They had also been warned by tutors not to spend time and effort on pretty graphs or artistic embellishment. Nevertheless we were very often confronted by a hardback file beautifully decorated with flowers, with titles neatly marked out in Letraset (look it up) and with stunning graphs for which, as warned, there were no marks at all beyond the accuracy and appropriateness of the structure and content.

As non-partisan examiners we listened with respect to each tutor's comments about their students. We were often given a detailed history of a student's misfortunes and woes, with the implication that they could have had their work far better prepared, or a tutor might simply rave about their best (favourite?) student. Of course we rigidly stuck to basing our judgement solely on the performance on the day and the work in front of us. So far as I know bribes were never offered! However, on one occasion when my own students were being examined, I stood up after an extended cup of tea in the staffroom and immediately collapsed on the floor. I had a cartilage problem and it decided to jam up on the day leaving me helpless and in pain. I was duly carted off to hospital in a wheelchair (it was a health and care department) and the two examiners, John Radford and either Paul, Phil or Mike, never let me forget that they thought it a rather pitiful attempt to gain sympathy for my candidates!

Over a few years The Associated Examining Board (as it was then) reduced the number of reports required from 12 to 6 to 5 and so on till there were none. As A Level Psychology became more popular it became very costly and then simply impossible to send out so many examiners and moderation took over until practicals were no longer required. Thinking back, I know this was probably a case of 'over assessment' but I still miss the days of meeting psychology teachers on their home turf and I believe that candidates back then, were they to take up a psychology degree, would have no trouble at all with the assessment demands of contemporary undergraduate psychology research methods modules.

VI

THE EARLY ATP YEARS A personal reflection by Nicky Hayes.



There is a case for saying that the ATP, initially formed in 1970 underwent a seismic change eight years later which established the kind of ATP we know today. A small group of teachers of the new FE-based psychology descended on the Annual General Meeting - only attended by a handful of members - and staged a coup, putting up and voting for their own candidates for the executive positions.

The first Chair, post coup, was Denis Gahagan, not a member of the group but a younger lecturer at what was then North-East London Polytechnic who was attending the ATP meeting for the first time. He told me how he had been totally surprised by this, having found himself "swept up in a revolution" that was happening. As neither one of the new FE people nor one of the "old guard", he had been nominated as a candidate who might be acceptable for both sides. But the secretary, the treasurer, and several of the committee members were FE teachers.

I wasn't there at the beginning: I came in a couple of years later, but memories were still fresh and it was a common event for reminiscence in the bar. I'm not sure exactly how many were in the Group itself, but they included Jane Stapleford, from Leeds, Louise Higgins from Chester, who became Secretary, Cliff South from Manchester who became Treasurer, Pete Sanders from Wigan, Mike Battye from Crewe and Paul Humphreys – the sole non-Northerner, from Kidderminster in the West Midlands. Paul went on to be Chief Examiner at every level going. I beg anyone's pardon for inaccuracies or omissions: as I said, I wasn't there and am working from second-hand memory.

Why did they do this? Well, an A level exam in psychology had been established by the Associated Examining Board - largely through the work of John Radford, again. The pilot scheme had its first exam in 1971, but that was limited in scope: psychology A level became officially available to all with a first exam in 1975 and that was when it really started to grow. Then came the first formal O level exam in psychology - an AO, or Alternative Ordinary, to be precise, as it was deemed to have more appeal for the older candidate - from the Joint Matriculation Board. These two qualifications found instant appeal in the FE sector, and many years of steady growth in FE and evening classes followed.

But they were not part of the educational establishment, and that was very resistant to change. So teachers of psychology at that time were usually working on their own without specific training or support, and having to develop all their own teaching resources. They also, often, had to fight prejudice within their own colleges, which made it even harder to get official support. I remember an unknown member of staff in the lunchtime queue at one college saying to me: "So you teach psychology, do you? Don't you find it hard thinking of things to say?" Some kind of support

organisation was needed, and the ATP was nominated.

In the first few years, the ATP worked largely by groups coming together locally, sharing ideas and providing support: that was how I was drawn in, and I think it was the same for Phil Banyard and Roz Brody. We were the "second wave" on the committee, coming into what was effectively a new organisation still finding its feet.

But membership was growing all the time, as psychology gathered in popularity. Pete edited the Newsletter, which was our main point of contact with the membership: four of us together produced the very silly Student Handbook of Psychology which injected a bit of humour into some sensible advice for students; Roz organised a resource bank for sharing teaching aids and ideas; and the local groups continued to thrive.

Perhaps most important of all: the ATP conferences began. Louise organised the first ATP conference in Liverpool in 1983, Pete the second in Newcastle, and I did the third, in Leeds, by which time it had become established, not just as an annual event but also as the main source of CPD and support for psychology teachers across the country. The Liverpool conference had been mostly formal, with an interesting set of speakers; but the Newcastle conference was more workshop-based, giving teachers the opportunity to share ideas and resources, and that formed the pattern from then on.

So there you have it: my personal memory of How It All Began.

Power to the People or They came from the North

This article is dedicated to John Radford, the Founding Father of A-level Psychology, without whom all of what followed would not have happened.

In the hot summer of 1997 I was conferred an Honorary Life Membership of the ATP. This was a real high point in my professional life and I will remember that Guildford morning for a very long time. As I was preparing my acceptance speech my mind went back to what I recall to be a real turning point in the history the ATP, a pre-Thatcherite day when collective action brought dramatic change and ownership of the ATP was wrested by its grass-roots users.

I fully accept that the following account has been drawn from episodic memory rather than verbatim recall (Neisser, 1981) but I have checked out the account with two of the other key players. Nevertheless, any factual errors are mine and if they offend any of the other players, I hope they will accept my apologies (but why let the facts get in the way of a good story?).

From my recollection the story of A-level Psychology begins in the late 1960s, at a time when people had only just stopped wearing flowers in their hair and John and Paul were still talking to each other. The BPS were becoming increasingly concerned about psychology being taught (necessarily poorly!) in schools and colleges as part of what was then called complementary or liberal studies. A suggestion was

made that this 'unlicensed teaching', as it were, be regulated by introducing the subject into the post-16 curriculum. The key figure from here onwards was John Radford, who I remember as then being a Dean at West Ham College of Technology. From this base, later North East London Polytechnic, were the early operations played. The provision for an A-level Psychology was taken on by the AEB.

There was opposition to this initiative. It appeared that many university tutors believed that such was the nature of psychology that it could not be taught well at any level below that of the undergraduate degree and that it would 'muddy the waters' if some of their undergraduates arrived with significant knowledge of the subject (as opposed to what the keen student had gleaned from one of the multitude of popular Penguins which proliferated at the time). Other commentators argued that psychology demanded a level of maturity beyond what one could reasonably expect a 16 year-old to possess, or even worse, that there might be a contagion effect (or perhaps a Family Doctor look scenario) whereby read about depression or anxiety disorders increased the statistical incidence of these maladies.

The AEB responded with extreme caution and ran the A-level on a trial basis only for six years, the first examination being in 1971. Only a small number of 'licensed' centres were allowed to enter candidates (I recall the figure being around 25). The vast majority of these centres were in or

around London but significant exceptions were South Trafford and Wigan colleges in the North West and Kidderminster College in the Midlands. The nature of their significance will soon be seen as will the importance of the small n.

As part of his incalculably great contribution to the early days of A-level Psychology Radford produced and circulated a document (a copy of which is logged with the current ATP secretary) inviting interested parties to become involved in the establishment of a body concerned with issues specifically pertaining to the teaching of psychology at A-level. This was the birth of the ATP. Following an inaugural meeting (no details, sorry) items and articles were drawn upon individuals of sound financial standing were invited to become committee members. The annual subscription rate was set at £1.

To the best of my knowledge the early ATP committee were all based in and around London and were not presiding A-level teachers. It is worthy of note that the first non-HE Chief Examiner – John Gamm – did not come into office until 1987. Although there were VERY few lecturers delivering the A-level on the trial scheme we (yes, I was that Kidderminster man...) had a feeling that although the London HE people had done us a great service in setting up the ATP and acting as its unsung and unpaid 'workers' the very heavy bias towards the HE sector and the River Thames made us feel as though we, the chalkface teachers, had little real ownership. And as in all good revelations, we weren't interested in a share of the power, we wanted it all!

The ATP AGM in 1978 was to take place at a rowing club next to the Thames. A

knob of A-level teachers, hereafter The Gang of Seven, plotted. We hoped that only the committee would attend (n = 6) and the fact that a dinner had been booked for shortly after the meeting indicated to us that nothing problematic was anticipated. It's time to name names.

The Power to the People came were:

Mel Hardy and Steve Hayes from South Trafford College, Altrincham. Liz Shaw and Pete Sanders from Wigan Pier. Roz Brody from Stafford (Roz, incidentally, would like it to be known that she was EXTREMELY young at the time, and furthermore is still quite young now). Louise Higgins from Padgate College. And your current author.

The meeting began, with voting imminent, but the Gang of Seven were only five. We were later to learn that the Wigan pair were stuck on a pre-Richard Branson train shrouded in fog on its journey from the Far North. For a bloodless strike to be successful the element of surprise is critical. This would be our only chance. The display of filibustering, particularly by a stunningly verbose Mr. Hardy, would have impressed even the most hardened politician and just when words were beginning to fail us all the Wigan Two appeared. 7-6 votes were the order of the evening and the ATP committee was now in the hands of the practitioners, John Radford was to remain Chair, in acknowledgement of his unique contribution (and the fact he was Chief Examiner), a post he magnanimously accepted, but the other key committee post went to Louise Higgins, Pete Sanders and a rising star from Crewe called Mike Bottye. The ATP was never to be the same again.

Paul Humphreys

Letter to the Editor

Dear Chris,

It is always gratifying to have something dedicated to oneself, and I appreciate Paul Humphrey's gesture in naming me at the start of his article 'Power to the People, or They came from the North' (Newsletter, Summer 1998). The article was about the event at which, in his words, 'ownership of the ATP was wrested by its grass-roots users'.

I had occasionally wondered how these early events were seen by those taking part. My own view, not surprisingly, is a little different. First of all, as to the development of GCE A-level, the prolonged 'trial' period was mainly due to the Schools Council. This was the body then responsible for approving new subjects, and the Council had, in my experience, a considerable distrust of any innovation and perhaps especially of such a risky enterprise as psychology ('Won't it make them very *introspective*? I recall one member asking). This distrust was also a main reason for the syllabus being a rather conservative one. The role of the BPS was by no means as negative as is sometimes thought. It did after all set up a Working Party (to which I was Secretary) on pre-university psychology which led, if indirectly, to the new A-level.

The idea of an Association arose from an informal seminar on teaching

psychology, open to anyone, which James Breese and I had started. Neither the seminar nor the Association was initially thought of as having any particular connection with A-level; it was *teaching*, not the level, that was the defining characteristic. I have been involved in several small societies (it must be a repetition compulsion, or else something in the genes), and they have followed similar patterns. Early committees are composed of anyone willing to take on the work, naturally without pay or expenses. Because of the peculiar structure of the United Kingdom, with population and transport being concentrated in the Southeast, and particularly in London, meetings tend to occur there, and committee members live there. So it was with the ATP. The Committee consisted of anyone who could be pressed into service; any volunteer was eagerly embraced.

For this reason the 'coup', as Paul Humphreys calls it, came as rather a surprise to me. I was particularly disturbed by the summary dismissal of James Breese as Secretary, since it was his dedicated behind the scene work, which was largely responsible for getting the thing off the ground. I feel certain that had anyone come along and offered to share this burden, or even taken it on, James would have eagerly welcomed it. So discourteous did I feel his treatment to be that I immediately resigned as Chair, but eventually agreed to

continue, perhaps wrongly.

I have another memory, which is of the first meeting of the new Committee. Some course of action was proposed, and someone suggested, 'Shouldn't we find out what the membership thinks?' Someone answered, 'Oh, I don't think we should do that. After all, we are the Committee!' I don't recall who these speakers were, but I felt I understood better the structure of revolutions.

On the other hand, I am glad the ATP was 'never the same again'. No healthy organisation should be.

Yours sincerely,

John Radford

(Some of the original documents concerning ATP beginnings are reprinted elsewhere in this Newsletter - Ed)

AUTUMN 1998

ATP Newsletter

VII

EARLY A-LEVEL TEACHING

by RUTH HOOPER



In the early days few if any A level psychology teachers were trained as Psychology teachers. Many like me moved into teaching psychology without psychology qualifications. My personal experience was of taking psychology as a minor part of a BSC Econ, majoring in Geography. My first full time job was at an FE college where I was promised A level Geography teaching but allocated a full timetable of General Studies. After a year of welders 3 “Wilt style” I realized I had to either move to another job or find a way changing what I was teaching. My dalliance with Psychology at university offered a way out of my predicament so I began to look at the possibility of introducing A level Psychology in the college.

Initially I embarked on a lot of reading trying to extend my knowledge so I would be in a position to deliver the AEB A level syllabus. Next, once I felt confident that I could deliver the subject, I had to persuade the College to allow me to introduce the subject. College Management and the Board of Governors were reluctant to agree. One governor declared psychology was inappropriate for young people and there was already one radical subject offered - Sociology. I was eventually permitted to offer A level Psychology as an adult only evening class. The first cohort comprised of nurses, primary school teachers and a mixture of interested adults and those whose motives were far from clear!! The latter group dropped out by January, realizing Psychology did not enable them to read other’s minds, was not a hypnotherapy course and would not immediately resolve their personal issues. Whilst affecting retention rates the drop out resulted in a core committed to success. After the 1st year I was allowed to offer the course on two different evenings.

Repeated requests to offer psychology as part of the daytime A level provision for 16 year olds were beginning to be listened to. A level psychology was, in the eyes of college management becoming “a good earner”. So, eventually I was permitted to offer Psychology as mainstream A level. At last an opportunity to deliver the course at a more leisurely pace. Each group was allocated 6 hours a week tuition, of which there would be one class of 2.5 hours for practical investigation skills. Not only did it recruit well and have very good achievement rates, it also resulted in a request for students from the prestigious local grammar schools to be permitted to attend the college to study A level Psychology. My lack of a degree in Psychology was however deemed a problem. So I was seconded on full pay for a one year conversion course at UWIST. (those were the days 6 hours face to face and a 2.5 hr session in which to develop practical skills AND a year off on full pay !)

After my post grad conversion course at Cardiff I took on examining for psychology JMB GCE and in various advisory and associate roles with AEB and then AQA. Reflecting on my involvement with the exam boards, In the early days it gave me an insight into the skills students needed to do well. The early exam papers and mark schemes were flimsy compared with rigour and

quality assurance applied to today's assessment where the exam questions are scrutinized by a range of teachers and examiners and the mark schemes are likewise scrutinized, revised and checked for accuracy and fairness to students. A far cry from "a pleasure to read" a criterion for grade A in the early days. However In the 70's students were required to undertake and write up reports on 12 practical investigations. Each student's portfolio was assessed by a visiting oral examiner who checked the authenticity of the reports and the student's understanding of the investigations they presented in their portfolio including being quizzed on things like the choice of statistical test and the implication of the findings.

Getting back to the actual teaching of A and AO level psychology in an FE college. Resources in the mid 70's consisted of a collection of undergraduate textbooks. It was some time before we had the luxury of class sets of textbooks dedicated to specific syllabus. Managing the department budget involved moving money from the text book budget to boost the photocopying budget and arranging for photocopies of original journal articles to be sent to the college for students and staff to refer to and to support students' practical research projects.

Support for teachers emerged at an ever increasing pace. The ATP provided a platform for teachers to share resources and experiences. SE London became a focal point - providing teacher CPD and student lectures on a range of syllabus relevant issues. Goldsmiths provided an annual 3 day residential practical course for students with sessions on investigation design, data analysis and more importantly from the student POV was involvement in practicals organized by a university psychology department. Not only did students get a taste of university life and London they felt part of the psychology community.

As time passed more dedicated text books, revision guides, teacher and student conferences were offered, Psychology Review provided students with insight into the demands of the exams and because they addressed all the specifications they acted to introduce students to topics not on the particular spec they were following.

So over the years how have things changed what has improved? Today's teachers do have a much clearer idea of what they need cover in preparing students, and students have a clearer idea of the knowledge and skills they need to gain an A level in Psychology and what they need to do to improve their grades. On the downside the pressure on both teachers and students to focus on targets and grades has taken away some of the scope for inspirational teaching and exploration of a subject that is so central to us all. In my first 10 years of teaching Psychology A level I was never once asked if what we were discussing or investigating was on the syllabus or would be tested in the exam. Now it is not just the question "is this on the specification" there are occasions when students have refused to undertake work that is not going to be assessed as part of the A level.

The demise of direct assessment of practical research skills in the A level assessment is perhaps the greatest loss. As a teacher I found it was the practical work that brought the subject to life, engaged and inspired students in a way that classroom learning did not. Somehow through the planning and reporting of their own investigations students came to indentify with the psychology community.

On the upside psychology has risen from being a subject that was not considered appropriate for young people to being the 4th most popular A level subject. The internet has given students and teachers much easier access to up to date knowledge with internet tutorials, BPS research digest, webinars, scope for students to collaborate with students in other schools and colleges and the plethora of dedicated text books has no doubt made A level Psychology more accessible. It has been accepted as a science and is recognized by many as a subject that "...has the potential to create a sense of wonder in anyone who studies it. It is the personal science that explores how we make sense of the world, ourselves and others. It is about the gaps between sensation and perception. It is about the wonder of being alive. Could there be another subject that is more engaging, more relevant or more personal." (BPS 2013)

VIII

MEMORIES OF A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY (AND GENESIS, BOWIE AND SANTANA IN THE 1970s ALISON WADELEY

At the tender age of 16, as most of us do, I faced a choice between leaving school or staying on. It was 1972 and A-levels, university and a professional career weren't routinely on the cards for ordinary girls like me. Somewhat disaffected with what my excellent High School had to offer, and harbouring a powerful feeling that my time there was done, I sneaked out of lessons early one afternoon to the local Further Education college to see what their courses were like. My parents didn't know of my dastardly plan to leave school. They knew I wasn't one of the alpha females, destined for a career in law or medicine, nevertheless, if I were to carry on studying, the FE college, with its slightly dodgy reputation, was academic suicide in their eyes, so I went under cover.

And so it was that I found my rebellious self, awkward in my uncool school uniform, sitting in the swanky new library at the top of the FE tower block, hearing about Psychology from the guy who taught PE. (FE lecturers had to multi-task in those days.) He must have had great persuasion skills because I was immediately sold on this new subject. He recommended that I read Richard Gregory's *'Eye and Brain'*. After that, I was certain that Psychology was right for me and had an overwhelming sense of having 'come home'. I was so, so lucky.

I also count myself lucky to have had an inspirational teacher in the legendary Paul Humphreys. He was always so good-humoured, totally professional and never berated us on the odd occasion when we chose to skive off to sunbathe in the long grass at a local cider house. We had 3-hour classes but they shot by, sometimes helped along by Paul's excellent taste in background music which he played to us on a massive tape-recorder. My cohort of just 16 students bonded effortlessly, all of us busy channelling our inner hippies and raging hormones through the medium of cheesecloth shirts, the awful pong of patchouli oil and the general hairiness of the times. Unusually by today's standards, there was an even balance of girls and boys in the group, which helped hugely with the bonding!

The highlight of the course for us was the practical classes. We each had to produce a portfolio of 14 'experimental' reports. I still have mine, and this ancient, historical document contains such gems as an ESP test, deliberate and heartless provocation of anxiety and shameless stereotyping of Hillman Imp, Ford Capri and Morris 1000 owners. We also called on the college Biologists who obligingly starved a rat, gerbil and mouse for two days (really??) prior to our maze-learning experiment. The portfolio was assessed by Paul, but also by a visiting oral examiner, probably a colleague of Prof. John Radford from North-East London Poly (NELP), whose brainchild A-level Psychology was. The terrifying ordeal of the oral exam was one of the best aspects of A-level in my view and it remained in place for many years until it became too costly to run, due to the numbers of students taking the subject. During my time as an A-level teacher, I was proud to send my students off to university with their methodological and statistical knowledge firmly embedded as a result of 'the oral' but, now, as a university tutor, I find that my undergraduate students need to spend their first year, sometimes very reluctantly (because of the stats), learning what we once taught at A-level.

These days, I am struck by the plethora of books, revision guides and online materials that fall into A-level Psychology students' outstretched hands. In the 1970s, we survived on a short and thin, early edition of Hilgard and Atkinson's *'Introduction to Psychology'*. To supplement this, Paul made handouts which he produced following long hours in university libraries and fevered activity with a Banda machine. Equipment for practical work was made Blue Peter-style from stout card and string. I still remember the mirror-drawing apparatus knocked up from bits of wood and a bathroom mirror-tile and the classical conditioning experiment which involved blasting puffs of air into people's eyes using a squeezable, plastic bottle attached to a tube. Not for us the widely published specifications, past papers and mark schemes of today. We trusted our teacher to guide us, but still, turning over the exam paper on the big day was a bowel-liquefying moment of uncertainty. In 1974, we sat two 2-hour papers. All answers were essays and you had to think on your feet. There were no

known Assessment Objective hoops to jump through or structured exam questions with marks made clear. Instead we responded to such demands as 'Why do psychologists study animals?' (the rat, gerbil and mouse would have liked an answer to that one) and 'Briefly outline and discuss the work of any **one** contributor to Psychology, living or dead.' I seriously considered writing about Paul.

Since its creation, A-level Psychology has become huge and, except in some die-hard topic areas, bears only passing resemblance to its early self. I am bound to feel sentimental about my good experience, but do feel that the A-level lost some of its magic over the years and I'm not entirely sure why. We had such fun, largely due to great teaching, but also through regularly getting our hands dirty doing so much practical work. There was a joy in learning about a fascinating subject for its own sake, uncomplicated by the pressures that today's students seem to face.

My two happy years of A-level Psychology were over all too quickly but were followed by three more equally wonderful ones studying for a Psychology degree then some decades of teaching, examining, writing and researching. For all of this, I give thanks to Prof. Radford, the life-changing interview with the random PE guy, my traumatised but forgiving parents, and my teacher and lifelong friend, Paul.

Alison Wadeley,	<u>PSYCHOLOGY 'A' LEVEL</u>
	<u>PRACTICAL NOTEBOOK.</u>
	<u>INDEX.</u>
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IX

FUN AND GAMES AT ATP CONFERENCES

by **DOROTHY COOMBS**
(former ATP Chair and Editor of ATP Today)



For over 30 years ATP Conferences have been famous for their excellent Keynote speakers, a diverse range of workshops and outstanding value for money, but worthy of special mention are the infamous quizzes and games that have challenged delegates both physically and mentally (often both at the same time!) for decades. Prizes have ranged from the sublime (books, videos, models, posters all kindly donated by publishers, exam boards and suppliers of educational resources) to the ridiculous (water pistols for example!). Committee members were often delegated to scour the local “Poundshop” for silly toys that never failed to excite the winners! Exhibitors would donate wonderful prizes, sometimes after some serious arm twisting but generally very willingly. I guess some of you will have won a Nicky Hayes pointer pen? I still have mine! For many years in the early days Nicky Hayes and Phil Banyard delighted delegates with their legendary quizzes and Karaoke competitions. In 1999, in Manchester, they held a “Caption Competition” showing a picture of a black horse standing sideways on a board filled with numbers. Standing by the head of the horse, and blocking sight of its front legs, was a bearded male figure in a full length belted white coat. Captions included: “Freud finally gets to meet Little Hans’ father” and “David Blunkett unveil his plans for Key Stage 4 Numeracy”.

Phil reminded me that it wasn’t only about quizzes and Karaoke. They also did much more physical things like the “egg games” that included an egg and spoon race, and the egg throwing championship but with real eggs! (no Health and Safety in those days!).

The 20th conference was in 2002 at Bangor University, where there were almost 300 delegates, one of whom wrote in her feedback: “The most important part of the conference was the quiz. I was determined to come back with a trophy of some sort, but it was a disaster and we lost. Even cheating didn’t seem to help, but Phil’s Karaoke really lifted my mood”

In July 2005 the conference was at Swansea and was memorable in so many ways. Sadly, it was at the time of the London Bombings which made the journey for many a real challenge, but the conference was blessed with glorious sunshine for the first ever sandcastle competition in Swansea Bay. I will never forget the array of wonderfully inventive psychology-themed sculptures.

The ATP games of 2006 in Manchester were the first of a “new generation” of games involving hoops, balls, skipping ropes, cones, bean bags and plastic eggs and spoons, borrowed from our own schools and colleges. I understand that the committee splashed out in 2017 and bought some of this equipment to save some poor soul from having to beg, steal and borrow from his or her place of work.

At Leicester in 2007 Phil and Wendy Wood held a memorable Limerick competition and here are a few contributions: There was a young man from Yale, Who turned his participants pale, He said “do not stop, you must give the shock, Or else the experiment will fail”. and There once was a baby who cried, When her mum left the room with a stride, When a stranger came in, the baby looked grim, But perked up when she came back inside. (You can read more in the ATP Newsletter of Autumn 2007!)

The Aston University Conference of 2012 was famous for the venue being the most difficult we have ever had to navigate. In addition, there was also “Accommodationgate”! Half of the delegates were allocated to suites in the Business Centre in order to free up space in the normal students’ hall of residence for a group of Italian students on a summer school. When those in the standard rooms found out they were furious, so it was quite fortuitous that, instead of games, we had organised a Salsa event (I’m sure those who were there will remember Michael?) and a Tai Chi session to calm the troubled brows!

After being inspired by the London Olympics of 2012 we decided to hold the 2013 “Keele University Olympic Games”. Out came the Hula hoops and balls, and back came the races, but this time the eggs were fake! It was a particularly “international” conference that year, with lots of the EFPTA members taking part.

Thankfully we rarely had any casualties during all our games (though we have always had good insurance cover!) but in 2014 at Loughborough University a delegate was so carried away that she ran into a tree and ended up in the local A&E. Fortunately she made a full recovery! Those who chose to do the music quiz instead had a much less exciting evening.

In recent years we have attempted to have treasure hunts, with varying degrees of success. At Lancaster in 2015 a student (we assume it wasn’t one of our delegates!) stole all the clues. That was also the year of the famous plasticine dinner-plate models depicting theories, studies and approaches in psychology. The results showed just what an inventive bunch our ATP members are!

It is interesting to note that the ATP Games have evolved over the years to reflect changes in educational culture, not to mention Health and Safety laws, so in recent years, such as 2017, there has tended to be an alternative quiz for those not into games. In my time we didn’t give anyone the choice!! I understand that last year (2018) in Leeds the game was so complicated that the winner was the last one standing at 11 pm!

So, I am sure you will have your own personal memories of ATP conferences over the years, but one thing is for certain, there was always a great deal of fun to be had, enormous team spirit shown by all and, most importantly, fierce competition

X

HOW A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY CHANGED MY LIFE **by RICHARD GROSS**

Having begun my teaching career at North London College of F.E. in 1973, my then Head of Department asked me how I felt about teaching A-level Psychology (ALP). I didn’t really know *how* I felt, because I was unaware that ALP existed! As the sole Psychology lecturer in the entire college, I, of course, agreed to take it on. Teaching was to begin in 1979, initially to evening class (mainly mature) students; the aim was to enter them for the 1980 exam.

Once I had a copy of the *syllabus* (a.k.a. *spec.*), my search began for materials that would provide some kind of foothold on this very steep – indeed sheer – mountain that I was about to climb. Ideally, there’d be a one-stop text awaiting me! My search (remember, this was long before

Amazon, Google etc.) led me to the seventh (1979) edition of *Introduction to Psychology* by Hilgard, Atkinson and Atkinson, the classic American text. I was 'up and running' (although 'the Practicals' were to give me more sleepless nights than any of the theory).

One of the oddities of ALP is that it was introduced several years *before* the 'Ordinary' ('O') Level (OLP). I started teaching OLP in the early 1980s and so became aware of Malcolm Hardy and Steve Heyes' (1979) *Beginning Psychology*. Herein lies the (first) link with my own writing endeavours.

While on a Fulbright Teacher Exchange in the U.S., 1982-3, someone from John Murray publishers visited my college in London, asking if anyone had any publishing ideas. One of my colleagues put me in touch with John Murray and, while still in the U.S., I sent them three sample chapters for what I believed would be an OLP text. but Feedback from the reviewers judged the standard of writing to be inappropriately high for 'O' level. Had the author/publisher considered writing a text for ALP? By now (1983/4), safely back in North London, I was only too keen!

Since I'd started teaching ALP, John Radford and Ernest Govier (1980) had edited *A Textbook of Psychology*; this was largely a product of the Psychology Department at the then North East London Polytechnic (now University of East London). Other contributors included Simon Green and Denis Gahagan, both of whom subsequently served as ALP Chief Examiner. In 1981, *Understanding Psychology* was published, written by Hardy and Heyes, together with Cliff Dobson, Ann Humphreys, and Paul Humphreys (the last of whom was also to become Chief Examiner).

In 1984, 3,620 students sat the A.E.B. (Associated Examining Board) 'A' level exam. (piloted in 1969 and now well-established) and a mere 166 for the new J.M.B. (Joint Matriculation Board) exam. These numbers were considered low at that time, at least from a commercial perspective. However, a new A.E.B. syllabus was approved in 1985 (for first exam. in 1987) and this provided the impetus for Edward Arnold to offer me a contract, in September, 1985.

The new syllabus represented quite a radical departure from its predecessor; the major content additions were Psychopathology, Adulthood and Ageing, and Individual Differences. (It's difficult now to imagine any Psychology course not including these topics.) I had a year in which to complete the manuscript and it would take another full year to produce a book of 822 pages (small format, black-and-white, no photographs, with a modest number of graphs, diagrams etc.).

This first edition was written by hand (I had no typewriter, let alone a PC), using my lap as a desk, as I took over the front room. I had two young daughters (eight and six), my wife had recently returned to nurse-training, and I was teaching full-time. Apart from the inevitable devotion of evenings and weekends to 'the book', I was fortunate enough to be granted a 'sabbatical' by my then employer, the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA). I could focus on completing the book from Easter to early September, 1986.

In July, just as I was working on the final chapter, my father died, suddenly. As Jewish custom has it, he was buried as soon as could be arranged (48 hours in his case). Getting back to the writing provided me with a much-needed sense of normality in the wake of this sudden loss; I comforted myself in the knowledge that my Dad had been very proud that I was actually writing one, even though he wouldn't be around to celebrate its publication. The first edition is dedicated to him.

Psychology: The Science of Mind & Behaviour was duly published in September, 1987. That summer, I attended my first ATP conference, the venue, Nottingham University; being where I'd obtained my Degree and with large numbers of flyers promoting the book all around, this was a very special occasion for me. What made it even more special were the thanks I received from teachers for saving them the task of having to prepare for a brand new – and content-heavy-syllabus: all this *before* publication. While the flyers showed a faithful mapping of syllabus onto textbook, teachers trusted implicitly my ability to cover the material appropriately and accessibly. I came away on a real high, believing that I had achieved something over-and-above hand-writing a 822-page book on my lap! Was this the foot-hold which I myself had been searching for some nine years earlier? Could I have possibly written a British Hilgard, Atkinson and Atkinson?



Edward Arnold

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Hilgard et al.'s first edition appeared in 1953. The latest edition of *The Science of Mind and Behaviour* appeared in 2015, 28 years after first publication. So, 2017 marked 30 years of a book that changed my life in so many ways, and, I'm repeatedly told when I meet teachers (many of whom were students themselves not very long ago), the lives of many other people. There's very little that has ever filled me with such a sense of achievement as this kind of feedback.

Of course, the book was aimed primarily at ALP students; this is who I was 'addressing' as I wrote; as it has evolved over 30 years (visually and in terms of content, features etc.), it has appealed to an increasingly large and diverse market (including Psychology undergraduates, Nursing students, Access –to-Higher-Education students, police trainees, and even those training to be firefighters!)

ALP has, of course, itself evolved dramatically within that same time frame, with a number of new specs, each embodying its own particular (peculiar?) definition of what Psychology itself is; this, in turn, reflects the ongoing evolution of the discipline of Psychology. But one constant amongst all this flux is the need for footholds, something to ground the student – and the teacher – to help them find their way around the often confusing Psychology landscape; indeed, the more Psychology changes, the more they are needed.

XI

UNIVERSITIES AND A LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY: A PERSONAL HISTORY by LOUISE T. HIGGINS



Psychology had been taught a little in schools in the UK before 1970 as part of general studies, biology or sociology, but because it was not a recognised school subject, universities did not expect anyone to know much about it so they always began their psychology degrees with a basic introduction to the subject.

Back then, psychology was not as salient in society as it is now. Most people linked psychology with the name of Sigmund Freud and there was a general feeling that it was concerned with sex, the unconscious and reading people's minds. There was little serious reporting of psychological findings in the mass media. There were small numbers of professional psychologists and few people knew what they did. Today, psychological terminology is widely used and there is a greater understanding of what psychology is and what psychologists do.

The 1960s and 70s were times of opening up in lots of fields. There were full grants for university students, the sexual revolution was happening, mortgages and jobs were easy to find. It was a good time for psychology to expand. John Radford convinced the Associated Examining Board (a board with a special interest in more mature students) to set up a pilot study for A level psychology from 1971 for a small number of centres. In 1975, the Schools Council fully accepted the first A level and its expansion began.

The first A level stressed the experimental and scientific nature of psychology in order to

avoid the criticisms that it was an unsuitable subject for pupils to study at school. Even so, schools and parents often had to be convinced that it was a serious discipline.

In the first exams, students had to present a laboratory notebook containing at least 10 reports (based on 2 years' work) and they each had a half hour oral examination based on these reports and experiment design and statistics. This was a challenge for all concerned and over the years these requirements have softened. Students and staff found preparation for this very stressful although often the reality was not as bad as feared. It certainly rewarded understanding rather than rote learning.

When the first generation with A level psychology began to apply for university, what was the admission tutors' policy? While the student numbers were small, it had little impact but as they began to increase, there was some resistance from university psychology departments to accepting A level psychology and it was certainly not a requirement as an A level in English was required for an English degree.

Universities feared that students would be bored in first year with repetition of what they already knew; that they would be taught by teachers with inadequate qualifications in psychology; and that they would be taught popular rather than scientific psychology. The first of these fears may well have been true, although good students could always have used their background knowledge to do well in first year. The second reservation was possibly correct at first because in setting up any new A level subject, schools and FE colleges normally recruited small classes initially. They did not have enough work for a full time teacher or lecturer so there was a tendency for head teachers to say to the geography teacher for example "You did a bit of psychology in your degree. How about teaching this new A level?" Even when there was someone with a psychology degree, he or she would not have been trained as a teacher of psychology because it was not then a recognised teaching subject for PGCE courses. Nevertheless, a talented cohort of psychology teachers and lecturers were soon recruited who produced good results and went on to invigorate the development of the ATP.

However, even when suitable people were appointed to teach the A level, they were almost certainly the only specialist in their school or college, leading to possible isolation and lack of support. There were no purpose-written textbooks. All that was available were the traditional US college introductory texts such as Hilgard and Atkinson. There were few suitable books about statistics until Colin Robson wrote his classic. The centres probably had few library resources and no access to university libraries. There was likely to be little psychology equipment in schools either. Before the availability of computers which now serve so many functions, we had to rely on stop watches, mazes, and home-made devices such as mirror-drawing apparatus.

Over the years as A level became more and more popular, universities realised that they did not need to worry about academic standards and teachers' qualifications and ability, but they were still concerned about having to deal with an increasing minority of students who knew a lot about psychology sitting in lectures beside the majority who knew nothing. If numbers allowed, it was sometimes possible to run separate classes or options, or encourage the A level people to lead seminars and lab groups.

What about the students? Why was there this explosion of numbers taking A level psychology? The main reason they said was because it was so interesting. When I was 17, I discovered a book in an unlabelled section of the school library by George Miller entitled "A Study of Mental Life". Unlike today's books with pictures, art work, and vivid case studies, this was a dense text covering what psychology was in those days. I was so fascinated by what it had to say about learning, memory, emotions, etc. that it changed my life: I knew then I wanted to study psychology. Psychology itself has changed so much since then. It no longer all goes into one book so easily. All the knowledge in the world is available to all of us on-line instantly.

Another reason why some people chose psychology but perhaps did not articulate it was because they thought it would meet their own psychological needs. This applied equally at A level and university and psychology teachers always had to be sensitive about it. For example, all psychology teachers and lecturers have met the young women with eating disorders who were keen to study and write about it when given the option.

While students expected to hear about some aspects of human behaviour in their courses, they were still surprised and often not so happy that they had to know so much about research design. Psychologists more than many other scientists study the methods they use to investigate, perhaps because it is so difficult to measure aspects of human behaviour or because people are never 100% predictable. It was always hard to enthuse students about statistics (I can remember at university laboriously covering several pages of notes with the working out of analysis of variance, and factor analysis) but at least nowadays all they have to learn is how to enter data on a computer and press “stats all” to get their answers.

Through the ATP, members were able to avoid isolation by attending meetings, sharing ideas with others in the same position as themselves who were listed in the Directory of Psychology Teachers (today it could be done instantly by social media but that was not available then) and reading the journal. The ATP attracted the attention of suppliers of equipment and videos as well as authors who began to provide materials for this new growing UK market. I believe that it is a good thing that most people see the value of psychology nowadays. They recognise that an understanding of it will help us all to learn and remember better, be better parents and teachers, help us to be more tolerant, and maybe even better human beings.

XII

QUALIFIED TEACHER STATUS (QTS) IN PSYCHOLOGY

by DEB GAJIC



When A level Psychology first came into being there were no possible routes available to achieve QTS in Psychology. Psychology teachers were simply recruited from other disciplines. Unfortunately, this led to a belief that anybody could teach psychology and this is an issue that still plagues the subject today. It is still not uncommon for teachers with gaps on their timetable to be drafted in to teach psychology. Although, some individuals in this position have blossomed into wonderful psychology teachers with a clear passion and expertise in the subject, this is not always the case.

In the early nineties it became possible to achieve a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) in Social Science, which usually included an array of subjects including Sociology, Psychology Economics, Business Studies and Politics. However, only a hand full of Universities offered this, notably Leicester, Manchester, Keele and the Institute of Education in London. These courses had very limited places and entry was very competitive. A further problem was the need to teach at least two Key Stages in order to gain QTS as Psychology was often only offered at Key Stage 5; this meant most trainees needed a second subject in order to qualify.

Alongside the PGCE, which gave QTS status, there was also a 6th form only qualification, confusingly also known as a PGCE, however this gave Qualified Teacher and Lecturer Status (QTLS). The problem with this qualification was that it did not qualify people to teach in schools,

schools required QTS. Individuals with QTLS could only teach in further education and 6th form colleges. In 2011 the Wolf Report addressed this issue. However, it has still remained far from straightforward to convert QTLS to QTS, there are hoops to jump through. Individuals who have gone through this process have been left frustrated as they feel they are duplicating work already completed in their original qualification.

In 2012 Michael Gove told Academies that they had the right to employ unqualified teachers. Whilst this might seem like good news for people with QTLS or simply a psychology degree, in practice it means that they will be employed on much lower salaries (unqualified teacher scale) regardless of their experience and be blocked from future promotion opportunities.

There are now several routes into psychology teaching, the main ones being the traditional university based PGCE and Schools Direct (which replaced the Graduate Teacher Training Programme in 2013), which means spending much more time in schools gaining first hand experience. The expansion of the Schools Direct programme has meant more Psychology training places are available. However, the introduction of tuition fees at an eye watering £9250 is a considerable barrier. Unfortunately, psychology PGCE's do not qualify for a bursary, as psychology is not seen as a shortage subject. Therefore, it might make more sense for a psychology graduate who wants to become a teacher to train in Maths or Science instead! What is interesting is that research has shown that students in receipt of a bursary are far more likely to drop out of teaching within the first few years, than those that do not, possibly because those that don't receive a bursary have made an investment in their own future and are therefore more committed.

For unqualified teachers, currently teaching psychology, it is possible to complete an assessment only teaching qualification. Although, it remains difficult to find providers that offer this in psychology and there is a cost involved. However, this cost and commitment needs to be weighed against future higher earning and promotion opportunities.

All of the above only applies to England & Wales; in Scotland, the situation has been even more difficult a PGDE (Post Graduate Diploma in Education) has only recently been introduced by the University of Strathclyde, previously there was no recognised route into Psychology teaching. However, there are no tuition fees!

So what does the future hold for teaching qualifications in Psychology? In my opinion this issue will not be resolved until we raise the status of Psychology as an academic subject. Unfortunately, the Russell group did nothing to help this cause when they published their list of facilitating A levels. Furthermore I would like to see Universities asking for A level Psychology as a prerequisite for a psychology degree. However, the problem is wider than just psychology teaching, until the government addresses the crisis in education, which includes workload, status of teachers and funding, the teaching profession will continue to suffer, which means students suffer.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY SCOTLAND ATPS

by MORAG WILLIAMSON

Scotland can justly claim to have played a major role in the birth of the modern discipline of psychology: see, for example, David Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* (1748); Thomas Reid's *An Inquiry into the Human Mind* (1764); the publication of the first psychology journal, *Mind*, in 1876, by Alexander Bain; G.F.Stout's influential textbook *Mind and Matter* (1898). Some of the earliest psychology departments were established in Scottish universities, at Aberdeen and St Andrews, and in the 20th and 21st centuries psychology departments flourish in virtually all universities north of the border.

At pre-university level, during the 1990s, psychology short courses were taught in some Scottish further education colleges, and A-level Psychology was delivered in a handful of centres, but it was not until 1999 that the introduction of new National Qualifications in psychology signalled the arrival of psychology as a fully recognised school / college subject. This was a historic moment for Scotland, and not just in terms of psychology: the Scottish Parliament was established in the same year. The first exam in the new Higher Psychology took place in 2000, along with courses in the two levels below (Intermediate 1 and 2) and one course at the level above (Advanced Higher).

It was not long before psychology teachers and lecturers from across Scotland got together to support each other, and set up the Association for the Teaching of Psychology Scotland (ATPS) as a branch of the ATP; the first meeting of a handful of enthusiasts took place in Aberdeen in spring 2001, supported by Joe Cocker. The first ATPS conference was held a few months later over two days in September, at Pollock Halls, Edinburgh University. The keynote speaker was Professor Sergio della Sala from Aberdeen University, an internationally acclaimed neuropsychologist. Just as exciting were the workshops and discussions amongst colleagues meeting for the first time and getting to know each other. Many contacts that were made at that time grew into professional relationships and networks which continue to the present day (although quite a few members have now retired!).

Since that first ATPS conference, an annual CPD event has been held every year bar one, held in various locations in Scotland including Glasgow, Dundee, Perth, Dunblane.

A major milestone in the ATPS story came when it was instrumental in establishing the European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations (EFPTA) in Helsinki in 2004, along with representatives from Finland and England. The Federation was the brainchild of inveterate traveller and 'networker' Joe Cocker. The ATP was a founding member of EFPTA, but although membership was to be on the basis of one national association per country, with one representative on the Board, in Helsinki ATPS member Morag Williamson put the case for Scotland's membership as a separate nation, based on the fact that the education system is entirely separate from the rest of the UK, with different courses and qualifications. This was accepted and since then the ATPS has been an active member of EFPTA, which has grown from its original three members to 10, with more countries joining regularly. The 2009 EFPTA conference was hosted by ATPS in Edinburgh, as was a Board meeting in 2014. Indeed, ATPS members have made significant contributions to EFPTA conferences, most recently at Reykjavik in April 2018.

ATPS has collaborated with EFPTA colleagues from Germany, Slovakia and England in research into psychology education, and given presentations at international conferences including the International Congress of Applied Psychology (Paris, 2014), International Congress of Psychological Science (Amsterdam, 2015), and EuroPlat (Salzburg, 2017). Research has mainly focused on the nature of the psychology curriculum at pre-university (or pre-tertiary) level in Europe, and availability of teacher education for psychology. At EuroPlat 2017, ATPS and ATP representatives took part in the formation of the new European Society for Psychology Learning and Teaching (ESPLAT) – where psychology educators from all sectors / levels would be welcome, not just university level. This was highly significant, since school level psychology throughout its history, in Scotland, the UK and other countries, has sometimes been undervalued or even denigrated. ATPS can claim to have played a role, however modest, in gaining recognition of the value of psychology teaching for young people in Europe.

As for the UK context, ATPS is represented on the ATP UK committee and members contribute to its activities including the annual conference, articles for *ATP Today* magazine, etc. Scottish members collaborated with UK colleagues to produce the *ATP Ethics Guidance* in 2015; this remains the only source of ethics guidance specifically tailored for students' practical research tasks at school / college level.

Within Scotland, ATPS has maintained good relationships with national education agencies, including the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA, the single awarding body in Scotland), and Education Scotland (which includes the inspectorate). Links have been built with university psychology academics and researchers, as well as professional practising psychologists. In particular, ATPS has developed strong ties with the British Psychological Society both through its Scottish Branch and via representation on its UK committee on pre-tertiary psychology education; as a result, ATPS and BPS Scotland regularly support each other's events.

In recent years Scottish courses in all subjects, including Higher Psychology and National 5 (currently these are the only National Qualifications in psychology), have undergone enormous changes as a result of 'Curriculum for Excellence', the comprehensive overhaul of the 3-18 curriculum; this continues to be controversial. ATPS has been dissatisfied with some of the changes to psychology courses and has made representations to SQA to try to secure improvements; this work continues.

Another key area where ATPS has sought better provision is CPD and initial teacher education (ITE) for psychology. From the start, it was clear that ITE was very limited or non-existent in Scotland and that this could seriously hamper development of psychology as a school / college subject. In the early 2000s ATPS representatives obtained meetings with the Chief Executive of the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), requesting ITE courses and a registration category for psychology (in Scotland all teachers must, by law, hold GTCS registration). Thanks to collaboration with other bodies including Education Scotland, BPS Scotland and university department heads, eventually the University of Strathclyde set up the first PGDE course (post-graduate teacher training) for psychology in August 2016. Since 2017 the programme has been led by Jonathan Firth, an experienced teacher and author – and a founding member of ATPS.

At the time of writing, in 2019, ATPS has around 50 members, from Shetland to Dumfries, having grown steadily in recent years. We have played an active and substantial role in the development of psychology education in Scotland and further afield, and we will continue into the future as, essentially, a supportive grassroots body of committed psychology teachers.

XIV

Fake News and Psychology by PHIL BANYARD

There is nothing like a good story. We share them with friends, we enjoy them in dramas and books and we tell them to our students. In our teaching we create a dramatic narrative about psychology to bring the subject alive. But is there a cost? When we tell a personal story we sometimes embellish it to make it more amusing and some of these stories change over time. No real harm is done, but when we tell our psychology stories, are we creating fake news?

Naughty Ted and baked beans

Sometimes as teachers we find quirky bits of research that we know will engage a student and then big them up – some might say embellish them. In ATP history, Naughty Teddy became quite a star at several conferences. He was a key element in one of the studies that challenged Paiget's view of conservation. Naughty Teddy was a prop in a small study but became a big part of what we taught and an essential example in any reputable text book. The story wasn't fake but the study gained a prominence over and above its scientific merit. School psychology had other stars such as Washoe and Little Albert and Bowlby's 44 thieves. They were all great stories, illustrated a point and were fun to teach, but have we been misrepresenting the science because they are good stories?



Phineas Gage

I don't think there is a clear distinction between fake news and true news. It's all about selection and interpretation – which data you choose to look at and which you choose to gloss over, and then how you weave it into a narrative. Take for example the story of Phineas Gage (Kean, 2014) that appears in most introductory texts. An industrial accident blew a tamping iron through his head and removed part of his brain. The key message that is often derived from the account is of the role of the frontal lobe in planful behaviour. The most commonly quoted statement from the original medical report is that after the accident his friends observed that Gage “*was no longer Gage*”.

If you explore the evidence of the case, however, you find that Gage did not become the dissolute and disordered man that appears in the texts but in fact moved to Chile from the USA (no small journey in the mid 19th century) and became a stagecoach driver until his physical health deteriorated. So are the standard textbook account fake news? In some ways yes, but they contain a story that challenges us to reflect on the impact of neural structures on our personality and behaviour. It's great education, shame about the details.

Please let me teach Milgram

Elsewhere in the curriculum I have been surprised at the durability of key studies that have lost their social context and have been comprehensively challenged by subsequent research. Yes, I mean studies like the Milgram obedience study and Zimbardo's prison simulation and Little Albert and Bandura's Bobo studies, and so many more. As teachers we love them because they all have a strong narrative and they are all very visual.

The key message from the Milgram study is that anyone could be a killer, and that the majority of people will follow instructions to kill another human being. In fact, the study doesn't tell us this but are we going to change our notes and textbooks? The story is stronger than the evidence and so the story wins out.

On top of this, the world has moved on in the last 50 years and we have different concerns. The context for the obedience study was a very real concern about the horrors of the Second World War and acts of inhumanity carried out by apparently ordinary people. Our concerns today are quite different and, and we want to know how apparently ordinary people can become radicalised and carry out acts of terror. The leader of the London Bombers in 2007, Mohammad Sidique Khan had a young family and worked as a learning mentor at a primary school. Examining his motivation and behaviour is a question for our time in a way that obedience to authority was for the 1960s.

At my University I lecture to first year students, the vast majority of whom were born in this century. I like us to tell them stories that make them reflect on their lives as they are lived rather than the lives their grandparents lived.

The worst ideas about the mind

Most of the inaccuracies in our psychological stories are relatively harmless but this is not always the case. When asked by the Royal Institution to identify their 'worst idea on the mind' two of the suggestions were post-traumatic counselling and the chemical imbalance model. Simon Wessely from the Institute of Psychiatry pointed out that the available evidence shows that that psychological debriefing after a trauma definitely does not work, and in fact probably increases the risk of post-traumatic stress disorder. Joanna Moncrieff from UCL pointed out that the theory that mental distress is caused by some kind of chemical imbalance is an idea that is heavily promoted by drugs companies. 'Most people think the link between depression and the neurotransmitter serotonin is established,' she said, 'and yet there's no evidence for it at all.' Yet both of these ideas still have large scale endorsement and damage our understanding of mental distress and what to do about it (see *The Psychologist* – reference below).

What's to be done?

So what should we do with this fake news in psychology? I still hold that school psychology courses are brilliant and act as great general education for students. The ATP has been at the front of this education for the last 40 years (and some) and has had a great effect in shaping the school curriculum and hence the psychological literacy of the UK. Our students learn about behavioural methods, they put those methods into an ethical context, and they learn the value of evidence. It is ironic that we then populate that learning with studies that don't match the standards we tell our students about. Despite this I think the moral stories provided by Milgram, Rosenhan, Bandura and others are worth retelling. They surprise students and challenge them to reflect on their experience and behaviour. However, I think we should fess up to them being moral stories that shed some light on the human condition rather than hard science that is uncovering truths.

XV
THE ATP TODAY 2018-2019

by HELENE ANSELL

Today's ATP is a growing professional association for all Psychology teachers. Our members are generally school and college teachers who teach Psychology at various levels. In the main this is A Level, but includes GCSE and BTEC Psychology however, many Psychology teachers are also teaching Psychology elements on many other qualifications such as Criminology, Health and Social Care and PSHE. In addition The ATP attracts many members who are university lecturers and academics showing that the growing diversification of the Association.

Today's ATP is an association whose motto is 'For the Teacher by the Teacher' and our aim is just that; as teachers we offer real time support and guidance to our members as and when this may be needed and to represent them on a number of professional related boards and associations. To do this end the committee members are often released from their teaching commitments to act for an on behalf of the ATP members. Their role is a voluntarily one but one that all committee members are happy to do. Some committee members have many years experience teaching psychology and are recognised experts in the field and they are more than happy to share their good practice with fellow professionals. Between the committee members contacts can be made with Examinations Officers and other specialist agreed experts thereby, offering general advice and guidance and or resources if this is needed. The ATP offers one-day CPD events, where current teachers offer CPD linked to teaching and learning and subject related topics and also offers an annual Conference. This conference, which is hugely successful, is linked with all the awarding bodies, textbook publishers and many known experts in their field. The 2019 Conference returns to Leicester, the home of the BPS and will be an extremely busy two days of CPD. There will be 3 keynote speakers, 49 workshops and an evening gala dinner that will allow members to meet and mix with fellow like-minded psychology teachers. Our website, showing our new logo and motto has just been redeveloped by the website team and will allow for members to have access to resources from each years Conference, past copies of the ATP Today magazines and allow for the secure exchange of support documents and resources. We also have a very active Facebook page with some 950 members (growing daily) where teachers can ask questions, exchange ideas, post articles, video links or links to TV programmes plus - very importantly - offer support to one another.

Anyone who is a member of The ATP can apply to be a member of the committee by making an application before or during Conference and selection is completed at the AGM, which is held at Conference each year. In addition a further 2 members can be seconded onto committee if they have specific skills that committee agree are valuable to the association. The committee comprises 13 members, 4 officers and 9 general members all of whom are or have been Psychology teachers or lecturers. The officers consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and the remaining nine general members may also have some specific roles to carry out such as assisting with Conference or being part of the website and membership teams.

Committee members will represent the ATP members on academic and professional boards such as the BPS committees; SCoPTE (Standing Committee on Pre Tertiary Education) and EPEB (Education and public engagement board). In addition we have members, including the current Chair, who are committee members of EFPTA (European Federation of Psychology Teachers Association) committee. Of course it should be noted that some Committee members have close working relationships with the awarding bodies.

Over the years the ATP newsletter has changed to a professionally produced academic magazine now called ATP Today. We have an overall editor Laura Quaife and two assistant editors, Punam Farmer & Helen Kitching, who together, three times a year, produce what is a much valued magazine for our members. ATP Today includes articles ranging from Teaching and Learning, Psychology updates, articles from experienced teachers, NQTs plus past & present students who write about their experiences on Psychology overall, including practical advice and guidance that will support our membership. A few years ago Morag Williamson along with a couple of additional committee members produced the ATP's own ethical guidelines based broadly on the principles of the BPS Ethical guidance. These Ethical guidelines along with past copies of ATP Today magazine can be found on our ATP website (www.theatp.org).

All of the committee make a huge contribution to the annual Conference, many offer numerous workshops linked to examination skills but may be subject based or skills based workshops. They will also run evening entertainment from quizzes to the ATP games. However the committee could not coordinate such a massive conference without a dedicated work of our Conference organiser, Helen Kitching who works energetically to bring everything together from choosing the venue, planning the full programme and ensuring everyone has a good time. For the last eight years Helen Kitching has very successfully managed the day-to-day planning of the Conference, ably supported by Helen Gibb who is the Exhibition coordinator. Both are current teachers of Psychology and have active roles on other professional associations as well as the ATP.

In addition to this committee members will sometimes work on one of three teams, the website team, the membership team for the networks team. The website team has most recently fully improved the look and content of the main ATP website and combined it with our Conference website. In general the teams role is to keep the website updated and resolve any access issues.

The membership team which processes every membership application checking correspondence data and ensures that the first new member mailing is successfully completed.

Lastly, the most recently established is the Local Networks Team which works to assist members who wish to establish their own local area networking group and coordinate any additional support with them. This may include ATP committee members attending meetings, offering a workshop or just being available to offer some general support.

Our current Chair, Jock McGinty, elected to position in 2018, suggests that the focus of the ATP in today's market is to continue to provide members with high quality support in terms of teaching and learning, CPD opportunities and an annual Conference that stimulates and regenerates members' love of teaching psychology. It is important we communicate effectively with members through our website, social media and create a national network of teachers so that we can give clear direction on developments in the teaching of psychology. Above all, the ATP has always been an association that is *for the teacher by the teacher* and this will continue to be our priority in the future.

