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The Society has offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow and London, as well as the main office in Leicester. All enquiries should be addressed to the Leicester office (see inside front cover for address).

The British Psychological Society was founded in 1901, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965. Its object is 'to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge'.
Extract from The Charter



President's column

Sue Gardner

Contact Sue Gardner via the Society's Leicester office, or e-mail: president@bps.org.uk

One of the best aspects of presidential life is learning more about the work of members. This learning comes in many forms. Individuals write or e-mail information in response to *The Psychologist*, the Society's website or reports in the media. Staff in the office can help with networking people who have similar interests or enable someone's research to reach a wider audience. It can also help the Society to know of work that is particularly relevant to our current priorities. Learning from groups of members via the member networks is interesting in that it enhances the usual reports from minutes of meetings. One set of member networks I recently encountered is that associated with the Northern Ireland Branch, whose Annual Conference I attended.

"The collaboration... seems to have created a rich mixture for the benefit of all"

Enniskillen and Lough Erne provided the stunning setting for a friendly and lively gathering. The weather was changeable but the welcome was warm. I was impressed by the atmosphere which encouraged both unity across the Branch and diversity with the establishment of local divisions. The collaboration of academics, researchers and practitioners seems to have created a rich mixture for the benefit of all. The keynote speeches on educational research (Professor Paul Connolly) and socially devalued differences (Professor Evanthis Lyons) were well received and prompted much discussion. I attended a seminar on 'Troubles-related trauma' to hear about the work with people who have lived through terrible events that most of us only hear about as news items. I was struck by the efforts being made by the Branch to balance a central overview with several interest-based member networks. This is difficult to achieve, so congratulations are due to Professor Maurice Stringer as Branch Chair, Dr Barbara McConnell as Branch Secretary and Anne Kerr, Regional Administrator. It must also be the case that members in Northern Ireland can appreciate the opportunities that cohesion and collaboration can bring, in addition to the benefits of sharing ideas with those engaged in similar work. Maybe the social context in the region has ensured that those in the Branch more fully understand the advantages of building on commonalities and working through

differences. It was good to see that, in psychological societies at least, relationships between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are well established and positive.

We are continuing to follow the progress of legislation to statutory regulation, planning for the immediate changes together with the Divisions and Representative Council and also trying to plan a few years ahead. The experience of other professional groups and other psychological organisations is helping us to reduce some of the uncertainty facing us. The website is being updated regularly and you will know things as soon as we do. We have written to thank those in the House of Commons and the House of Lords who contributed usefully to the debate on the legislation. It was obvious that in addition to our welcoming of better public protection, the messages about our concerns on some details of the

legislation and implementation have been noted. We have also made responses to the proposed registration cycle and to the consultation on the proposed criteria for admission on to the register via the grandparenting route. The start date is still expected to be 1 July, and those directly involved will be receiving a letter from the Health Professions Council to begin the process of transferring to the HPC register.

Thank you to everyone who has commented on the draft Strategic Plan or on the member networks consultation or on the proposal for a new education governance structure. The Board of Trustees will take your views into account as any overview is always strengthened by input from members.

LEARNING CENTRE

To have your CPD event approved by the Society and for a catalogue of forthcoming opportunities, see www.bps.org.uk/learningcentre or call 0116 252 9512.

To advertise your event in *The Psychologist*, e-mail psyadvert@bps.org.uk or call +44 116 252 9552.

A diary of non-approved events can be found at www.bps.org.uk/diary.

Award for Promoting Equality of Opportunity 2008

Professor Marilyn Davidson

The Society's 2008 Award for Promoting Equality of Opportunity has been accepted by Professor Marilyn Davidson. The award seeks to highlight an individual's contribution to challenging social inequalities in the UK in relation to gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age. Throughout Marilyn's career she has been committed to challenging discrimination and empowering people at work.

Dr Sarah Fielden, who nominated Marilyn, said: 'For the past 25 years, her personal and passionate commitment to equality issues in the workplace – particularly in the areas of gender, women in management, race and ethnicity, female entrepreneurs and (more recently) sexual orientation – has been prolific and sustained in terms of practical applied research, publications and consultancy.'

Marilyn gained her PhD in 1982 with a pioneering thesis 'Occupational Stress in Female Managers' and through the next three decades continued to publish groundbreaking work in areas relating to vulnerable workers – psychosocial and legal issues, black and minority ethnic female managers and entrepreneurs, sexual orientation and career development. In 2004 Marilyn was awarded the USA's Outstanding Academic Title Award for *Women in Management Worldwide: Facts, Figures and Analysis* (co-editor R.J. Burke).

Since 1984 Marilyn has taught and trained MSc Organisational Psychology students (specialising in diversity and equality) at the Manchester Business School, where she is currently the Co-Director of their Centre for Equality and Diversity at Work. The Centre has been acclaimed for its research in equality, culminating in being nominated as an outstanding example in European Management Schools in Diversity Management Research and Teaching in 2008 by the European Academy of Business in Society.

Through her work at the Centre,



Professor Marilyn Davidson (left) receives her award from Vice President Dr Elizabeth Campbell at this year's Annual Conference

Marilyn has contributed to many projects that have been recognised for their excellence. For example, the development of 'Good Practice Guidelines for Building Equality in Construction Industry' for the Department of Trade and Industry was selected by the UK Equal Opportunities Commission as an example of 'good practice' in research in 2005.

Marilyn has had extensive experience of research and policy development in the area of diversity and equal opportunities for numerous public and private organisations. Her work with the NHS Modernisation Agency Leadership Centre aiding nurses to crack the glass ceiling through mentoring and career development was highly successfully in that it enhanced the lives of participants in terms of career promotion and self-esteem. Additionally it also changed the perception, willingness for these people to take up issues and projects themselves and increased awareness in senior NHS managers (who acted as mentors) of the careers barriers facing some employees.

The Society has benefited from

Marilyn's many contributions whether acting as a media spokesperson, a Board Examiner or as an editor of Society journals. Her assistance was recognised a decade ago when she became a Fellow of the Society.

Marilyn's continuous and prolific work in promoting equality of opportunities has made a difference to many people's lives. As Dr Sandra Fielden explained: 'She certainly made a positive difference to the lives of individuals in the workplace from marginalised and oppressed social groups and has proved a significant and relentless pioneer in the field.'

On accepting the award Marilyn said: 'I am absolutely delighted and honoured to receive this award and certainly, its one of the highlights of my career. When I started in the early 1980s only 3 per cent of UK

managers were female, today it's over 35 per cent. However, recently the EHRC calculated that at the current rate of progress, women managers will have to wait 187 years before their salary outstrips that of men's. Clearly, we still have a long way to go!'

DATA PROTECTION NOTIFICATION

Members have recently been receiving unsolicited letters from 'data protection agencies' offering to deal with statutory notification under the Data Protection Act for fees up to £135. Such agencies, despite any claims they might make, have no official standing and are just after your money. For our advice on data protection notification go to: www.bps.org.uk/dpa.

Award for Outstanding Doctoral Research Contributions to Psychology 2008

Dr Yulia Kovas and Dr Merim Bilalić

Two very different theses share the 2008 doctoral award, but the Society's Research Board found the papers similar in one crucial respect – the contribution they have made to psychological knowledge.

The winners, Dr Yulia Kovas and Dr Merim Bilalić, will each receive £500 and a commemorative certificate and have been invited to deliver lectures based on their research at the Society's Annual Conference next year.

Dr Yulia Kovas carried out her research 'Generalist genes and mathematics: An interdisciplinary investigation into the etiology of individual differences in mathematical ability and disability' at the Social, Genetic and Developmental Psychiatry (SGDP) Research centre, King's College London. Yulia was nominated for the award by her doctoral degree supervisor Professor Robert Plomin, who said: 'Dr Kovas is an exceptionally talented new academic. Her research opened up mathematical ability and disability as a new area of research.'

Originally from Russia, Yulia studied for her undergraduate degree at Birkbeck College, then undertook both an MSc and PhD at the SGDP centre. Her doctoral research investigated 2674 pairs of 10-year-old twins to better understand the genetic and environmental etiologies of mathematical abilities and disabilities.

Professor Plomin continued: 'By studying maths in conjunction with reading, Yulia has been able to show that most of the genes that affect maths ability and disability are general in the sense that the same genes also affect other learning abilities and disabilities including reading.'

On receiving the accolade Yulia said: 'I'm greatly honoured to receive this award and very grateful to the British Psychological Society for acknowledging the importance of this interdisciplinary work, which involved multiple areas of psychology, education and behavioural genetics. I believe that genetically sensitive research into etiology of learning abilities and disabilities is of



Dr Yulia Kovas

great value and will lead to significant theoretical and practical advances.'

The second 2008 doctoral award winner is Dr Merim Bilalić, who achieved a DPhil in Experimental Psychology from Oxford University for his thesis; 'Inflexibility of experts – Reality or myth? Quantifying the Einstellung effect in chess masters' [see also p.476]. Dr Peter McLeod, who

nominated Merim for this award, said: 'Merim's clarity as a thinker, and skill in experimental design, is such that almost every experiment he did produced clear-cut, immediately interpretable results. The power of the Einstellung effect has never been so dramatically demonstrated.'

Merim achieved a Diploma in Psychology from Sarajevo University in his native Bosnia before relocating to Oxford to study towards a DPhil in Experimental Psychology. His research investigated how chess experts' knowledge affected their ability to solve a given problem. To investigate this, Merim studied children's acquisition of chess skill over two years, showing what aspect of intelligence, personality and practice could predict how their skill would develop, as well as analysing the eye movements of expert players and their verbal protocols. He found that the inflexibility of thought induced by prior knowledge predicted by the Einstellung effect was shown by experts, but the more expert they were; the less prone they were to the effect.

On receiving the award, Merim said: 'I am honoured to be chosen as a joint winner. As my supervisor Peter McLeod noted upon getting our first paper on the



Dr Merim Bilalić

Einstellung effect accepted, the publication process is a bit like watching England play cricket – hours of agony and occasionally a moment of joy at the end. Getting our research published after numerous setbacks has been extremely rewarding. However, receiving this award feels rather like how I imagine winning a Test match with a boundary off the last

ball of the fifth day's play must be – as a continental European this is probably the closest I will ever get to it! It goes without saying that none of these achievements would be possible without the guidance of Peter and my external supervisor, Fernand Gobet from Brunel University. I am deeply grateful to them for their support and I consider myself extremely lucky to have not one, but two outstanding mentors during my doctoral study.'

Professor Judi Ellis, Chair of the award committee, said: 'Dr Kovas has made an extremely impressive contribution to our understanding of behavioural genetics and mathematical abilities, while emphasising the changeability of these skills. This research provides important evidence on the origins of educational attainment and will be of considerable influence within the field of learning difficulties. The Award Sub-Committee highly commends her achievements thus far.'

'Dr Bilalić provides very important and original insights into the nature of expertise and the role of memory in problem solving. His novel research findings have far reaching implications for both a wide range of cognitive phenomena and different domains of psychological enquiry. The Award Sub-Committee was particularly impressed by the ingenuity of his research in combining mixed-method approaches with sophisticated experimentation.'

Professor Ellis added that 'the Award Sub-Committee was faced with an incredibly difficult decision between two truly outstanding candidates nominated for this year's award. It decided it would be appropriate to make a joint award, thereby recognising the significant and exceptional contributions made to two areas of the discipline by these researchers.'

DCP welcomes new Layard proposal

The Division of Clinical Psychology has welcomed Lord Layard's call for 1000 more child therapists to be employed by the NHS to improve access to evidence-based psychological interventions for children. Lord Layard has proposed that the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) approach to adult mental health services be extended to services for children and adolescents.

Dr Jenny Taylor, the Chair of the Division, said: 'The introduction of IAPT for adults of working age has transformed social attitudes to mental health difficulties and given evidence-based psychological therapies the prominence they deserve. Although the challenge with children, both of identifying the right therapies and demonstrating the resultant social and economic gains will be greater, we very much want to support this initiative and see it through to fruition.'

CONSULTATIONS ON PUBLIC POLICY

The next in the series of **Skills for Health consultations on national occupational standards** (NOS) concerned their draft NOS for psychodynamic and psychoanalytic therapy. As with the previous consultations in this series, Skills for Health failed to refer to the overarching competency framework devised by psychologists. The following points were highlighted in the response:

- | More work is needed on defining a clear and consistent relationship between the competency framework of Lemma, Roth and Pilling (2008) and the NOS as, without this, the exhaustive and repetitive list of competences is unworkable in practice and therefore unlikely to be fit for purpose by practitioners or trainers.
- | Explanation is needed of the way in which the NOS are to be used within psychological training and clinical practice, and the anticipated relationship between the NOS and the HPC's standards of proficiency should be clarified and articulated.
- | The draft NOS appear to have been derived from a narrow evidence base.
- | Competences should reflect skills required for all the contexts within which psychoanalytic/ psychodynamic therapy is offered.
- | Unambiguous definition is required of the level of competence considered essential for all therapists working in a psychoanalytic/psychodynamic modality and a clear definition of competences and metacompetences considered additional and specific to particular disciplines in the field.

The **Health Professions Council** (HPC) consulted on two sets of draft guidance: (i) Health & Character; and (ii) Conduct & Ethics for Students. The first provides information about the processes that the HPC uses when looking at information about the health or character of an applicant or registrant and gives some advice on the principles used when making decisions about health and character; the second is designed to give guidance on issues of conduct and ethics to both students and education/training providers. Both sets of guidance were found to be clearly written, succinct and leaving little room for doubt. They were also not overly prescriptive on details – a feature which it was hoped would support their applicability to future psychology training programmes, students and registrants.

The following consultations were also responded to in April:

- | Revised Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Children Missing from Home or Care (Department for Children, Schools & Families [DCSF])
- | Consultation on Children, Young People and Alcohol (DCSF)
- | Service Framework for Respiratory Health and Wellbeing (Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety for Northern Ireland)
- | Depression in Adults (update): Draft guideline consultation (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence [NICE])
- | Depression in Chronic Health Problems: Draft Guidance (NICE)
- | College Research and Training Unit Survey (Royal College of Psychiatrists)

The preparation and submission of the Society's responses to consultations on public policy is coordinated by the Policy Support Unit (PSU). All members are eligible to contribute to responses and all interest is warmly welcomed. Please contact the PSU for further information (psu@bps.org.uk; 0116 252 9926/9577). Details of active and completed consultations are available at: www.bps.org.uk/consult.