

PSYCH@ Nottingham



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Issue 3, May 2011

Welcome

Welcome to the third issue of psych@nottingham, the re-vamped Psychology Newsletter. Since the last issue, we've had some exciting news with several colleagues publishing in high-impact journals and getting major news coverage. Many congratulations to them; and everyone else. The Brain Awareness Event – where this picture was taken – saw 50 A-level students spending an afternoon at the school. Enjoy reading about that inside, along with all the rest of our news and achievements.

A warm thank-you to all the students, post-docs, and colleagues who have been sending me their news, contributions, and ideas for articles. If you have anything newsworthy related to teaching or research (or just plain fun), get in touch. Keep your news coming...

Denis Schluppeck

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Age	Circumference	Channel Count	Category
Neonates	32 - 35 cm	32	Neonates
0-3 months	35.5 - 38.5 cm	32	Infant
3-6 months	38 - 41 cm	32	Infant
6-12 months	41 - 45 cm	32	Infant
12-18 months	45 - 48 cm	32	Infant
18-24 months	48 - 50 cm	32	Infant
2-3 years	48 - 50 cm	32	Infant
3-5 years	50 - 51.5 cm	32, 64, 128, and 256	Children
5-11 years	52 - 53 cm	32, 64, 128, and 256	Children
11 years - Adult	53.5 - 56 cm	32, 64, 128, and 256	Adult Medium
11 years - Adult	56.5 - 59 cm	32, 64, 128, and 256	Adult Large

Because children's head sizes vary greatly (circumference rather than age, should be the guiding factor when choosing a net size for children). The age range is only a general guideline.

Small caps are built without ear elements but are modified so they may be used with standard electrodes.

*These caps available soon.

Marie steps in for the Daily Mail

By Roger Newport

Marie Calladine, from the school office, stepped in for the photographers when reporters wanted images for newspaper articles covering a story about multisensory illusion research in the department. The original story, about the use of illusions to reduce arthritis pain (covered nationally by the BBC, ITV Central and Channel 4 News, as well as 20 local and national radio stations) featured a genuine arthritis sufferer, but when she was unavailable for the tabloid news hacks, brave Marie stepped in. roger.newport@nottingham.ac.uk

Note by the Editor: *Congratulations to Roger Newport and Catherine Preston for their excellent performances in the limelight of the national news!*



Diary dates

Manchester Science Festival

22-30 October: At last year's festival, Catherine Preston and Roger Newport's workshop highlighting their work on sensory illusions was a big success. Check out the website for details of this year's event. www.manchestersciencefestival.com

Staff Away Days

21&22 June: The University of Nottingham Club (aka the Staff Club), come ready for discussions on teaching/ learning and research, respectively.

Climate change hits home

By Alexa Spence

Direct experience of extreme weather events increases concern about climate change and willingness to engage in energy-saving behaviour, according to a new research paper led by Alexa Spence. Alexa is based partly here at the school of Psychology and partly at Horizon Digital Economy Research.

The study revealed that people who reported flooding experiences had significantly different perceptions of climate change, compared to those who had not experienced flooding. These perceptions were, in turn related to a greater preparedness to save energy.

This study provides the first solid evidence for something which has been discussed for some time – that people's local experience of climate-related events such as flooding will promote higher awareness of the issue. This implies new ways for engaging people on climate change.

Spence et al. (2011) Nature ClimateChange 1, 46–49

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Tourette's news

Results from a study from Prof S Jackson's lab looking at cortical organisation in patients with Tourette Syndrome featured in *Current Biology* and discussed in the national news and on science blog sites. *Jackson et al. (2011) Current Biology 21(7) 580-585.*

Pattern predictor

Congratulations to Neil Roach and Paul McGraw, who also have an article to appear in *Current Biology*. The study demonstrates that computations of visual motion can produce a forward prediction that affects the perception of a visual pattern. *Roach et al. (2011) Current Biology*

Career options

If you are a member of staff on the Research Only track, you should look out for the University's special efforts to support the Career Development of Researchers. Lots of information and pointers for the many career options are available. There is a Vitae briefing document with tips on how to make your CV look good and how to get most out of your transferrable skills.

www.nottingham.ac.uk/researchstaff/concordat/
www.researchconcordat.ac.uk

The School of Psychology at the University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus (UNMC) was opened in September 2009. Three full-time postgraduate students enrolled in the first year. All are Malaysian, although students from anywhere in the world, including the UK, are welcome.

My first impressions

By Dr Lizzy Sheppard, Assistant Professor School of Psychology, UNMC.

After a year and a half at UNMC I've been asked to write a few words, about life, psychology and Nottingham in Malaysia. So here are just a few of my impressions:

Malaysia itself is a beautiful, chaotic, intriguing, frustrating and exciting place. Certainly, there was an element of culture shock on arrival, with the first few months presenting a huge number of challenges especially in getting to grips with everyday life: even simple obstacles like "how do I get the internet?" or "where can I buy a screwdriver?" can seem almost insurmountable. For some of these I'm still none the wiser...

Nevertheless, once I'd settled in to my life here I've found it to generally be a very easy place to be and I have a nice life here.

Nottingham Malaysia Campus is a weird parallel universe wherein you can be simultaneously amused by the overt similarities with the UK campus (the corporate logo is everywhere; and the building in front of the lake which kind of looks like the Trent building if you squint really hard) and the equally striking differences (the sun, the palm trees, the total lack of campus bar etc.etc.)

I love the fact that we know all the students by name, even if they don't always love this back! Also – knowing our fellow staff, including those in schools outside Psychology... It isn't unusual to spot a couple of deans and a vice-provost eating their laksa or panmee alongside the students in the canteen at lunchtime. I feel a much stronger sense of the workings of the organization that I'm in and a feeling I can make a difference here. Being involved so closely in so many aspects of administering the course and School has been a challenge

News from Malaysia



that I have really enjoyed for the most part, and one that I feel incredibly lucky to have had and to have been trusted with.

Of course, it isn't always easy... Doing research in a department you're setting up from scratch is undeniably harder than working somewhere with equipment and labs already in place. And having to attend education fairs on the occasional weekend to attempt to 'sell' psychology to anxious and suspicious parents of prospective students can't possibly be anyone's idea of enjoyable recreation. However, these few difficulties are offset by the feeling of achievement on seeing things moving in the right direction on every front: teaching, research, student numbers etc.

We've come a long way

By Zanel Dempers, 2nd year mobility student in School of Psychology, UNUK

My time studying at the Malaysia Campus has already proven to be an invaluable experience. Not only because Malaysia brings with it sunshine every day and the opportunity to explore a different island every weekend, but also because the campus itself enables you to interact with people from almost every nation.

Even after 2 months here I am still meeting at least 3 new people a day, and regularly come across people from parts of the world I didn't even know existed! It has provided a unique insight into interacting

with people from different cultures and the considerations that need to be applied. Taking yourself out of your comfort zone and leaving all that you know behind in exchange for the new and unknown really challenges you to discover who you are and what you value in life. It certainly develops your character and enables you to learn how to adapt to a vastly different environment.

The method of teaching is also drastically different from England – to go from a lecture hall of 200+ students to a classroom where you know each of the 14 other individuals studying alongside you is a shock at first!

Everyone knows if you are late for a start! But it does mean you can ask the lecturer to cover parts you don't understand in a greater depth and you get a more personal approach to learning that university often lacks.

Studying abroad comes with its challenges, and it is hard to leave the people and home comforts you love behind for a period of time. However it is far outweighed by what you gain – an invaluable experience that changes you as a person and prepares you for life outside of the bubble that university creates. Besides, at what other point in life will you be able to party on a beach in Thailand the one weekend, shop in Singapore the next and wade through a jungle in Laos thereafter?

If you'd like to read more first impressions from Alice Russell (2nd year mobility student in School of Psychology, UNUK) and Dhanya Pillai (2nd year PhD student in School of Psychology, UNMC), please contact Neil Mennie at UNMC.

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Summer Scientist Week: help needed

Do you like working with children? Are you looking for things to do over the summer?

Then why not volunteer for Summer Scientist Week 2011, which runs from 8-12 August at Jubilee Campus.

Four to 11-year-olds will be visiting the University to take part in experiments looking children's development and learning, as well as enjoying lots of fun activities.

We need volunteers to help entertain the children and run activities. You'll also find out what doing research with children is all about. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Sophie Batchelor.

Sophie Batchelor lpxs@nottingham.ac.uk
www.summerscientist.org



Fifty students visit School's brain event

By Lucy Cragg

Around 50 A-level students have had a taste of university life with two mini 'seminars' at the School of Psychology. The students – from schools across the county – learned about psychology and neuroscience in a series of short lectures and interactive activities.

Academics gave 20-minute lectures on topics such as autism, aggression and schizophrenia. And postgraduate students organised lab tours and experiments for the students to take part in and watch.

Lucy Cragg, RCUK academic fellow in translational neuroscience and outreach officer at the School, said the workshops had been designed to complement the A-level curriculum while extending into new areas.

In Visual Neuroscience, students were asked to wear prism goggles, which shift everything horizontally, and throw balls into a basket, sparking hilarity. Within a minute, their eyes adjusted and the balls landed in the basket. But immediately after the goggles were removed, the students' aim failed as their eyes then had to readjust.

And in Cognition and Language (electrical brain cells and subliminal messages), postgraduates Emily Coderre and Kate Bailey demonstrated how an EEG

(electroencephalograph) measures the pattern of a brain's electric activity. Brain cells communicate by sending tiny electric signals to each other. The cover image was taken by Lisa Gilligan-Lee, the University's photographer.

The other interactive workshops were Behavioural Neuroscience: is your memory as good as a rat's?, NITES (Nottingham Integrated Transport and Environment Stimulation): tracking drivers' eye movements, Personality, Social Psychology and Health: social problem-solving & are you a morning person?, Human Development and Learning: the use of eye-tracking technology, and Cognition and Language: subliminal priming.

The students are all studying psychology or biology at George Spencer Academy in Stapleford, Rushcliffe School, The Nottingham Emmanuel School, Bramcote Hills College and Christ the King School in Arnold.

The event, which ran as part of Brain Awareness Week, allowed the postgraduate students to experience training in outreach activities, which is increasingly important for research.

Lucy Cragg is now putting together the programme for Summer Scientist Week.

Visit from Saudi delegation

By David Clarke

A delegation of three professors from the King Saud University, Saudi Arabia, visited the School in Nottingham on a fact-finding mission to explore future collaboration and to discuss methods of working that might enhance their course.

They had discussions with the Acting Head of School, Director of Teaching, Deputy Director of Research, School Manager, Director of the International Office, and a group of current students from the course.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all contributors and (as usual) Marie Calladine, Charlotte Langham, and Martin Lockett for comments on the newsletter, spotting errors and arranging printing with alphagraphics.