the future after I leave university life behind. These friends I hope to keep in touch with in the future. I admired third year students and couldn’t imagine myself in their shoes. However within a short time I met a lovely group of students, who I could relate to, and sound off about juggling home, children and student life and have a laugh with too. I also found some great friends who were younger and not at all ageist as I imagined but friendly and accepting. All these friends I hope to keep in touch with in the future after I leave university life behind.

Continued on page 2

In April, two new lecturers joined the School of Psychology. Dr Aleksandra Cichocka and Dr David Williams are great additions to the team, we wish them a warm welcome!

Aleksandra Cichocka is a political psychologist investigating the links between the self and various social and political realities. She completed an MA in psychology at the University of Warsaw, where she continued with a PhD program. She spent part of it as a Fulbright Fellow at New York University and as a visiting researcher at CIS-IUL/ISCTE in Lisbon.

In her work she examines how the self-concept and group image relate to intergroup attitudes, political ideology and support for the status quo. She is especially interested in defensiveness vs. security of self and group evaluations.

In one line of work she studies ways in which individuals relate to their own social groups and how this affects their attitudes toward people of different nationalities, races, or genders. Specifically, she works on developing a concept of collective narcissism - defensive group identification, characterized by an emotional investment in an unrealistically positive image of the in-group. Current research projects focus on intergroup consequences of collective narcissism, as well as factors that contribute to the development of this type of group identification.

In another line of work, she examines how self-esteem and psychological well-being are associated with political orientation, as well as supporting vs. rejecting the overarching socio-political system. In this work she seeks to consider the socio-political context, especially comparing traditionally capitalist vs. post-communist countries.

Dr David Williams is a developmental psychologist with research interests focusing on developmental psychopathology. He gained his BSc Psychology and Philosophy degree from the University of Warwick, before working for one year in a London-based school for children with special educational needs. David then completed his PhD on self-awareness among children with autism and typically developing children at the Institute of Psychiatry, King’s College London. Subsequently, he was awarded an ESRC postdoctoral fellowship, which he undertook at the UCL Institute of Child Health, and then a City University London Research Fellowship. For some of the work he undertook during these Fellowships, David was given the Young Investigator 2010 award by the International Society for Autism Research. David then worked for three years at Durham University before joining us in April 2013.

David conducts research with children and adults from the typical population, as well as from atypically developing populations such as autism spectrum disorder, specific language impairment, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. His research is organised around three main themes:

a) Memory across the lifespan: David is interested in how aspects of memory develop, change across the lifespan (e.g., in older age), and break down in seemingly-specific ways in certain developmental disorders. For example, his recent ESRC-funded grants explored the cognitive underpinnings of “prospective memory” and “episodic future thinking” among children and adults with autism.

b) Verbal mediation: David is interested in the extent to which inner speech use is necessary for flexible thinking and behaviour, and how this inner self talk emerges in typical development.

c) Self-awareness: David is interested in a potential distinction between awareness of physical aspects of self and awareness of psychological aspects of self. He is currently researching whether there can be a selective breakdown of only one type of awareness in particular developmental disorders.

Welcome to Dr Aleksandra Cichocka and Dr David Williams

Continued on page 4
My first year as a Psychology student was eye-opening. I learnt that there is a large emphasis on statistics and this took a while to take in, as maths was never my forte! But in my third year after weeks of research in my study for my final year project, statistics became like an old friend. The feeling you get when you have a significant result in your study is amazing! I really valued having a choice of modules too. My final year, I must say has been the best year of them all. Once you have learnt the basics, you move on to study the more exciting research. It has been a privilege to be taught by lecturers who are involved in cutting edge research and interventions and to follow them along on their journeys. It is fantastic to mix with such a diverse range of students from all backgrounds and cultures too, and I have been moved by their passion for student issues and the environment too. Overall, I have learnt that struggles may occur in life, but they are merely like a hill on a journey to your destination. “If you really want to do something, you’ll find a way; if you don’t, you’ll find an excuse.”- Frank Banks.

I first decided to apply to be a Psychology rep because I wanted to get to know everybody more and to help people. Also as I have not had enough hours in the week for employment I thought it would be valuable as work-experience on my C.V for the future. I feel that this role has made me feel more included in university life which is crucial to me. It has also helped to increase my confidence. Alex and Francis from Kent Union have been inspiring in course rep training sessions and have always been there to help. Carly and Jo in the Psychology office have been a rock for advice with issues and contact referrals.

As a course rep you get to know the staff more and I was very pleased at the respect shown to course reps, students’ issues are taken seriously and the staff really listen to what we have to say. Also as a rep, it drove me to be more involved in the N.U.S and Kent Union activities via social media sites and by attending meetings. Through the Kent Union I found student media that is available and have been able to follow events from home, such as the student elections on KTV and university event coverage on CSR FM. The course psychology reps that I have worked with have been fantastic, always willing to attend meetings and have really worked hard as a team unit.

My only regret as a student is that I wish that I had been able to move nearer to Uni to join in more societies and events, the amount of diverse clubs and sports available here is fantastic! Despite this, my life has felt considerably richer for my university experience here at Kent. In the future, I hope to go onto postgraduate studies, dependent upon funding. The route that I will most likely take is to get some real life experience and then return to study later on in my journey. It is reassuring to know that the careers advisory service is available to students for up to three years after we leave. My advice to first year students would be, don’t wish your time away, as it goes so quickly and I feel sad to leave this part of my life behind, but I am looking forward to the much brighter future University has given me.

### HEA Students as Partners

Second year student Rebecca Bisset shares her insight into the Students as Partners new change programme from the HEA. The aim of which is to help institutions involve students more in curriculum design, quality assurance and enhancement, and student participation in decision making among other things.

Throughout my education, I have been interested in how different people learn and how people’s learning experiences can be improved. In February I became aware of an opportunity for students to become more influential in higher education. The Higher Education Academy (HEA) is an independent organisation which aims to ensure a high quality of teaching and learning throughout universities and colleges are implemented. They advertised for a group of current students to apply to be a part of the new Student Advisory Forum (SAF). Being part of this forum would include becoming more involved in the decisions being made regarding how they can improve education and provide more opportunities to enhance the student experience. This was therefore an opportunity that I was keen to get involved in!

Over 200 students applied for a position in the forum but only 20 were selected, and I was lucky enough to be chosen. All forum members are from different universities and colleges and are studying a wide variety of subjects at various levels.

I am therefore the only student who is representing both the University of Kent and Psychology, and it is a privilege to do so. I will serve in this post until the end of the next academic year, which also coincides with the end of my undergraduate degree.

The principle aim of the forum is to provide a student insight into the key issues of learning and teaching in a higher education context. The forum acts as an advisory service concerning areas that staff within the HEA would like to put towards students to see what ideas they like or would change. In our first meeting in March, items discussed included how higher education conferences could be better run, and how they could attempt to engage and involve students more. Some of the ideas raised at the meeting such as student-led panels and research feedback sessions are already being put into action, and can be seen in the HEA conference in July.

The speed with which the ideas put forward by the SAF is very encouraging, and demonstrates how students really do and can have a voice concerning their education. I am looking forward to contributing more to the work of this organisation, and raising issues which especially affect the concerns of Psychology students.

### Forensic Update

MSc Dissertation

**Competition Winner**

Former Forensic Psychology MSc student Kayleigh Whitby is the winner of the 2nd Forensic Update MSc dissertation competition. Titled Investigating Rape Victim and Perpetrator Empathy in Relation to Rape Myths within the Police Service, Kayleigh’s dissertation had the most utility for forensic practice. Well done Kayleigh! Here’s what Kayleigh had to say about her work:

Having finished a BSc(Hons) in Psychology from the University of Portsmouth with a keen interest in sexual offences, studying at the University of Kent with its excellent reputation for research was the perfect fit. The idea to investigate police officers’ rape myths and victim and perpetrator empathy came to me in a lecture, whereby it was suggested that women may be more sceptical of female rape victims than men, and I wondered if this applied to law professionals? Working alongside Dr Afroditì Pina, we secured permission from a Home Office police service to gather data from their officers though online questionnaires in an invitation email; gathering data from Kent University students for the control group.

Overall, both male officers and controls indicated higher male rape myths than...
Kent Psychologists in the Media

Dr Afroditi Pina contributed to a report on children and internet porn for the Office of the Children’s Commissioner released in May. Since then, the report has received major media coverage in international press such as the Independent online (bit.ly/132UnCm), broadcasts on the BBC and ITV’s Daybreak, plus national press such as the Daily Mail, the Guardian, the Telegraph, Sky News, and the Express. Read the report here: bit.ly/1c3MFdf.

Following the conspiracy theories surrounding the Boston Marathon bombings, Dr Karen Douglas published a Comment is Free piece in the Guardian which can be read here: bit.ly/15r0ofu. Karen and PhD student, Dan Jolley’s research also featured in the New York Times Magazine article titled ‘Why Rational People Buy into Conspiracy Theories (nyti.ms/12JdIi1). Other media mentions included: thebea.st/10ejPQz.

Recent Publications


Congratulations

Congratulations to Ayse Uskul who has been awarded £4,960 by the British Institute of Ankara for a project entitled “Effects of being ignored vs humiliated as forms of social exclusion: evidence from the Black Sea region”.

Congratulations to Mario Weick who has been awarded £1,200 by Swiss Re Services Limited for a training event entitled “Risk Perception and Behaviour”.

Congratulations to the following staff on their promotions with effect from 1st October 2013: Joachim Stoeber (Chair), Roger Giner-Sorolla (Chair), David Wilkinson (Reader), Markus Bindemann (Senior Lecturer), Tim Hopthow (Senior Lecturer) and Mario Weick (Senior Lecturer).

Congratulations to Libby Cuthbert who has been awarded a bursary of £305 by the British Society of Gerontology. This will enable Libby to attend the 2013 BSG annual conference which is being held at Oxford University 11th-13th September, 2013. Libby will be presenting a paper entitled ‘An investigation of care workers’ relationships with the elderly: Understanding the effects of negative and positive intergroup contact”.

Congratulations to Ayse Uskul who has been awarded a grant by the British Academy for £69,172 for a project entitled “Ostracism in micro-cultures and evidence from farmers and herders”.

Congratulations to Lynsey Mahmood who has been awarded a Student Bursary of £289 by the BPS Social Psychology Section. This will pay towards attendance at the 2013 Annual Conference in Exeter.

Congratulations to Caioile O’Ciardha who has been awarded £300 by the BPS Research Board as part of the Postdoctoral Conference Bursary Scheme. This will help towards the costs of registration and travel to attend the “32nd Annual Conference of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Offenders”, in Chicago, USA.

Congratulations to Anna Brown who has been awarded £2,750 by the Caliper Corporation and Caliper Management Inc. for a pilot study to carry out psychometric evaluation of a forced-choice assessment instrument.

Congratulations to Lindsey Cameron who has been awarded £1,892 by a sub-group of the Faculty Research Committee for a project entitled “Strategic colour blindness in children: Responding to a ‘revise and resubmit’”.

Congratulations to Dominic Abrams who has been awarded €166,294 by the European Commission for a project entitled “MOPACT: Mobilising the potential of active ageing in Europe”.

Congratulations to Lindsey Klein who has been awarded £1,892 by a sub-group of the Faculty Research Committee for a project entitled “Strategic colour blindness in children: Responding to a ‘revise and resubmit’”.

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Eurogang XIII Continued

Enhancing the understanding of gangs is a key focus for the academics, practitioners and criminal justice professionals who were at the conference.

The research produced by the Eurogang Network is used to inform government policy and also to develop interventions to reduce the impact of gangs on communities and young people.

Students at Conferences

Research collaborations between staff and students occur quite regularly in the School resulting in publications and posters. Some of our students have even had the opportunity to present their work at conferences - a great addition to the CV and another way to boost employability!


Forensic Update Continued

...females, supporting previous research that men are more blaming (Krahé et al., 2007) and less pro-victim to males than women (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992). Females indicated low female rape myths with no differences between controls and police, rejecting the suggestion that female officers hold lower general attitudes to rape than female students (Brown & King, 1998).

Female rape myths were significant predictors of perpetrator empathy for women and men, indicating that acceptance of female rape myths, elicited perpetrator empathy. Victim empathy was predicted by female rape myths for women but not for men, possibly because women are perceived to be at a greater risk of rape (Ashton, 1982, cited by Smith, Pine & Hawley, 1988), eliciting greater empathy (Feldman et al., 1998).

The study has contributed to the limited research into male rape myths within the police service, but more is needed in addressing the populations which have direct contact with male rape victims (Kassing et al., 2005).