

UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE

Department of Psychology, Sport and Geography

Research Seminars 2023-2024

SEMESTER A

Day & Time: Thursdays (late afternoons or lunchtimes) and on Wednesday, 22 November

Location: in 1H279 in CP Snow (Student Zone) on College Lane Campus, except on 22 November

Date	Speaker / Topic	Time
12.10.23 Thursday	Amy Orben, MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, Cambridge <i>Rethinking how we study digital technologies and their impact on teen mental health</i>	16:00- 17:30
19.10.23 Thursday	Kelly Jakubowski, Durham University <i>Is music "special" as a cue for autobiographical memories? Exploring the how and why</i>	13:00- 14:30
26.10.23 Thursday	NO SEMINAR – Half term	
02.11.23 Thursday	Cristina Atance, University of Ottawa, Canada <i>Preschoolers' understanding that their preferences will change: Why it's difficult and how we can help</i>	16:00- 17:30
09.11.23 Thursday	Jason Nurse, University of Kent <i>Psychology and Cyber Security: A match made in H...</i>	13:00- 14:30
16.11.23 Thursday	NO SEMINAR	
22.11.23 Wednesday	Michael Callan, University of Hertfordshire <i>Treading the way: The contribution of judo education to life</i> <i>Inaugural Professorial Lecture – in Room A161 in Lindop Building, College Lane Campus – followed by Reception at Bar 77 on College Lane Campus, with wine, cheese and nibbles.</i>	17:00- 18:30
23.11.23 Thursday	Michael Kopelman, King's College, London <i>Neuroscience, memory and the law</i>	16:00- 17:30
30.11.23 Thursday	Speaker 1: Laura Hielscher, University of Hertfordshire <i>Longitudinal predictors of feeding problems and weight in children with Down syndrome</i> Speaker 2: Sophia Cristophi, University of Hertfordshire <i>Assessing hypersensitivity to difference in autistic and non-autistic adults</i>	16:00- 17:30
07.12.23 Thursday	Matthew Jewiss, Anglia Ruskin University <i>Predicting performance under pressure: What do we know, how much can we explain and where do we go next?</i>	16:00- 17:30

Speaker	Abstract
<p>Amy Orben, MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, Cambridge</p> <p>12.10.23</p>	<p><i>Rethinking how we study digital technologies and their impact on teen mental health</i></p> <p>Adolescent mental health has declined substantially in the last decade, with large social and economic consequences that make this area a priority for policy and the public. Concurrently, widespread digital innovation has radically altered child and adolescent behaviour. This has spurred pervasive concern that digitalisation and social media use might be playing a part in decreasing adolescent mental health and well-being. Previous research has tried to address these concerns by quantifying the relationship between time spent using digital devices such as social media and adolescent mental health and well-being in large-scale samples. These links have been found to be negative and bidirectional but very small in size when averaged across a whole population. Very little actionable recommendations have arisen from this work. Dr Orben will reflect on the challenges and problems facing research in this space to date, and provide an up-to-date overview of how her team’s work is trying to address these to produce evidence that can be used to improve adolescent mental health.</p>
<p>Kelly Jakubowski, Durham University</p> <p>19.10.23</p>	<p><i>Is music "special" as a cue for autobiographical memories? Exploring the how and why</i></p> <p>Many people think that music is particularly powerful or unique as a cue for bringing back memories from our lives. Empirical research has partially supported this idea, by showing that music can evoke more vivid and emotional autobiographical memories than various other everyday cues. But it is still not well understood as to <i>why</i> music might be a particularly salient cue for such memories. In this talk I will present a series of recent studies from my lab in which we’ve manipulated features of musical retrieval cues and associated events, allowing us to identify key factors underpinning this complex relationship between music and autobiographical memory.</p>
<p>Cristina Attance, University of Ottawa</p> <p>02.11.23</p>	<p><i>Preschoolers’ understanding that their preferences will change: Why it’s difficult and how we can help</i></p> <p>We often ponder our futures – for example, we may ask ourselves to what extent our future attitudes and preferences will resemble those we hold today. Around age 3, children begin to contemplate their futures and my talk focuses specifically on their reasoning about future preferences. I present data showing that children are more proficient at predicting that another child’s current and future preferences will differ than they are at predicting this same shift in their own preferences. I discuss reasons for this <i>other-over-self advantage</i> – most notably, that adopting a more “psychologically distanced” perspective may help bridge the gap when present and future “conflict.” I close by discussing how we might leverage this advantage to help children reason more optimally about their own future preferences.</p>
<p>Jason Nurse, University of Kent</p>	<p><i>Psychology and Cyber Security: A match made in H...</i></p>

<p>09.11.23</p>	<p>You're more likely to be the victim of crime online than in the offline world, and this has been the case since 2016. It's a successful business model too, with criminals swindling people from thousands of miles away with little to no repercussions. But why are these attacks so successful even after years of efforts to raise awareness of scams, educate the public, and train people at work? The answer, I believe, lies in psychology. In this talk, I explore the role of psychology in cyber security. We discuss actual examples of how cybercriminals actively exploit how we think, feel and act to craft their attacks. We also take a look at the flip side, i.e., the numerous opportunities that psychology brings to cyber security research and practice. It's really a marriage made in H...!</p>
<p>Michael Callan, <i>University of Hertfordshire</i></p> <p>22.11.23</p>	<p><i>Treading the way: The contribution of judo education to life</i></p> <p>Michael Callan's Inaugural Professorial Lecture will be structured into three parts, aligned with the three phases of a judo technique, <i>kuzushi</i> (breaking of balance), <i>tsukuri</i> (setting up the position) and <i>kake</i>(performing).</p> <p>Professor Callan will address their research journey as a practitioner and academic leading to their contribution to impact through judo education. In the <i>kuzushi</i> phase, there will be an initial presentation of his early years as a judoka and coach. The <i>tsukuri</i> phase will constitute the main part of the lecture and will address the three themes of safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, international coach education and development, concluding with his more recent work into <i>ukemi</i> (judo breakfalls) for older adults. These three themes encapsulate the importance of judo education to three different life stages.</p> <p>The lecture will conclude in the <i>kake</i> phase by discussing the importance of high-level judo education and research for evidence-based decision-making and the contribution of judo to life.</p>
<p>Michael Kopelman, <i>King's College, London</i></p> <p>23.11.23</p>	<p><i>Neuroscience, memory and the law</i></p> <p>Criminal medico-legal practice is fraught with issues, some of which raise philosophical questions. In this talk, I will discuss various issues, including (i) the notion of automatism, and what light the science of 'agency' could shed; (ii) amnesia for offences; (iii) false memories in the law courts, particularly with respect to issue of false confessions, sometimes seen as a type of confabulation; and (iv) the impact of brain pathology upon medico-legal issues, such as fitness to plead and criminal responsibility.</p> <p>A burgeoning literature has focused attention upon subtle neurobiological anomalies as underlying criminal behaviour. On the other hand, philosophers of law have taken a sceptical view of the probative value of these findings.</p> <p>Even in patients who have definite neuropsychiatric disorders, there are unresolved issues, such as (i) the unsatisfactory definition and status in law of 'automatism'; (ii) the cut-off for issues of responsibility in brain disease; (iii) the question of simulation; and (iv) how the courts handle people with neuropsychiatric disorders.</p> <p>The talk will be illustrated throughout with clinical case-examples from the author's experience. Outstanding issues will be summarised, and the problem of matching clinical subtleties to legal demands emphasised – a grey area in a world of legal black-and-whites.</p>

<p>Laura Hielscher, University of Hertfordshire</p> <p>30.11.23</p> <p>Sophia Cristophi, University of Hertfordshire</p>	<p><i>Longitudinal predictors of feeding problems and weight in children with Down syndrome</i></p> <p>Children with Down syndrome are more likely to encounter feeding problems in early life and more likely to be overweight or obese than typically developing (TD) peers. It is not fully understood why this is, and existing interventions aimed at promoting healthy weight outcomes have limited efficacy. The present study aimed to explore the longitudinal predictors of feeding problems and weight outcomes in young children with Down syndrome compared to TD children. A mixed-methods longitudinal study design was used and data was collected at two time points roughly seven months apart. Participants include 25 children with Down syndrome aged 1-4 years and 25 TD children of the same age, and their parents. Questionnaires collected quantitative data on the outcome measure of feeding problems and predictors such as background factors, parental feeding practices and children's eating behaviours during exclusive milk feeding, eating behaviours after the introduction of solid food, sensory processing, texture sensitivity and gross and fine motor development. Video-recorded mealtimes were conducted to examine mealtime behaviours. Anthropomorphic data relating to height and weight of both parent and child were also collected at each time point. Questionnaire and anthropomorphic data collected at Time 1 will be presented during the seminar. Potential impact and implications of this research include identification of areas for early and targeted intervention to address feeding problems, promote optimal eating development and healthy weight outcomes in children with Down syndrome.</p> <p><i>Assessing hypersensitivity to difference in autistic and non-autistic adults</i></p> <p>Autism is a complex neurodevelopmental condition that has been associated in various degrees with a range of traits that include anxiety, sensory differences, intolerance of uncertainty, need for sameness, and repetitive behaviours. Other perceptual/cognitive differences, such as attention to detail and reduced use of context, have also been extensively researched. The tendency in the literature has been to examine individual traits and characteristics or the link between two or three traits. This presentation will describe a new model that follows the alternative line of more recent work in identifying an underlying cognitive trait from which these other autistic traits flow; specifically, it is a hypersensitivity to difference that is proposed to be this central trait. A programme of empirical work has been completed that was designed to test for evidence for the model through various tasks. The most promising of which was a study whereby autistic and non-autistic participants were asked to rate similarity or difference for a series of item pairs. The study included a small set of written protocols that suggested some informative differences between the autistic and non-autistic groups and raised interesting questions about the relationship between protocols and ratings. The data from this study will be presented, and changes to the method used will be considered that may result in a more sensitive measure of hypersensitivity to difference. Wider methodological issues that have become apparent when working in this area will also be discussed.</p>
<p>Matthew Jewiss, Anglia Ruskin University</p>	<p><i>Predicting performance under pressure: What do we know, how much can we explain and where do we go next?</i></p> <p>One of the main aims in Sport Psychology is to identify and understand psychological</p>

07.12.23	variables which explain why some individuals thrive and some choke under pressure. In this talk I will critically overview traditional psychological variables which are believed to have an association with performance under pressure. Within this, I shall introduce challenge and threat (C/T) states as a contemporary, potentially superior, psychophysiological correlate to predicting performance under pressure in comparison to traditional “psychological variables”. I shall consider the C/T states and performance association with respect to performance outcomes and underlying performance mechanisms and critically explore their explanatory power. Here, C/T states will be applied to performance domains beyond sport (e.g., aviation, fire service and military to reflect ongoing research collaborations). I shall end by introducing physiological indices of emotional regulation which, on a theoretical level, may prove a psychophysiological marker worthy of research attention in the performance under pressure field.
-----------------	---

After the seminars, staff and students are invited for drinks and nibbles for an informal chat and follow up discussion with the speaker in the Psychology Staff Room in CP Snow (in 2H256).

All enquiries to: Lia Kvavilashvili (l.kvavilashvili@herts.ac.uk), Katherine Brown (k.brown25@herts.ac.uk) and Lindsay Bottoms (l.bottoms@herts.ac.uk)