

UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE
Department of Psychology, Sport and Geography
Research Seminars 2023-2024
Semester A

Day & Time: Thursdays (late afternoons or lunchtimes) except on 22 November, 2023

Location: in 1H279 in CP Snow (Student Zone) **except on 22 November, 2023**

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	
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	Laura Hielscher, University of Hertfordshire <i>Longitudinal predictors of feeding problems and weight in children with Down syndrome</i> Sophia Christophi, University of Hertfordshire <i>Assessing hypersensitivity to difference in autistic and non-autistic adults</i>	16:00-17:30

Semester B

Date	Speaker / Topic	Time
15.02.23	Hannah Alcott-Watson, University of Hertfordshire <i>Developing and testing an evidence-informed behaviour change programme for young people targeting physical activity, healthy eating, and wellbeing</i>	16:00- 17:30
	Andrew Paice, University of Hertfordshire <i>Investigating the Hebb Repetition Effect, and on doing better cognitive science</i>	
29.02.24	Alexandra Lamont, Keele University <i>How does music define us? Reflecting on music that matters across the lifespan</i>	16:00- 17:30
07.03.24	Richard Wiseman, University of Hertfordshire <i>Investigating the impossible</i>	16:00- 17:30
14.03.24	Tharun Radhakrishnan, Lister Hospital, Older People Services <i>Dementias and use of technology</i>	16:00- 17:30
21.03.24	Patrick Holthaus, Robotics Research Group, University of Hertfordshire <i>Socially credible robots</i>	13:00- 14:30
18.04.24	Giulia Poerio, University of Sussex <i>The dark side of love: Living with limerence</i>	16:00- 17:30
25.04.24	Rachel Armitage, University of Huddersfield and Lucy Roberts, Anglia Ruskin University <i>"We're not allowed to have experienced trauma. We're not allowed to go through the grieving process" - Exploring the indirect harms associated with Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) offending and its impacts on non-offending family members</i>	16:00- 17:30
02.05.24	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>	13:00- 14:30
09.05.24	Chris Chandler, London Metropolitan University <i>The role of drug cues in maintaining drug craving and consumption</i>	16:00 17:30

Speaker	Abstract
Amy Orben, MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, Cambridge	<i>Rethinking how we study digital technologies and their impact on teen mental health</i> 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

<p>12.10.23</p>	<p>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, <i>Durham University</i></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, <i>University of Ottawa</i></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, <i>University of Kent</i></p> <p>09.11.23</p>	<p><i>Psychology and Cyber Security: A match made in H...</i></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, <i>University of Hertfordshire</i></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</p>

<p>30.11.23</p> <p>Sophia Christophi, University of Hertfordshire</p>	<p>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>Hannah Alcott-Watson, University of Hertfordshire</p> <p>15.02.24</p>	<p><i>Developing and testing an evidence-informed behaviour change programme for young people targeting physical activity, healthy eating, and wellbeing</i></p> <p>As a Knowledge Exchange Partnership PhD, I partnered with HENRY, a charity that aims to provide children with the best start in life. HENRY wanted a new programme for 11–16-year-olds that would support them to develop healthy behaviours, specifically physical activity and healthy eating, which research shows to be troublesome for this age group. My presentation will commence with a brief overview of initial studies (systematic review and qualitative interviews) conducted as part of this project. This will provide context for understanding how the project evolved to include parents of young people and address wellbeing. Additionally, this sets the scene for understanding the latter two major parts of my PhD which will be presented in more detail. Firstly, I will present how the programme was developed using the Behaviour Change Wheel and results from the systematic review and interview studies. Secondly, I will present results from a formative evaluation of the programme, using APEASE criteria, which was delivered by HENRY to young people and parents in a school in Oxfordshire.</p>

<p>Andrew Paice, University of Hertfordshire</p>	<p><i>Investigating the Hebb Repetition Effect, and on doing better cognitive science</i></p> <p>The Hebb Repetition Effect characterises the gradual improvement in learning the order of a list of items over time. The mechanisms underpinning the Hebb Effect can explain how individuals learn and reproduce the specific order of a set of items, enabling them to form sentences, perform complex dances, learn melodies on an instrument, or memorise the lyrics to a song. The Hebb Repetition Effect provides a powerful laboratory task to investigate how order is represented in the mind. It is also a ubiquitous effect in memory, appearing with verbal, visual, kinetic, and even olfactory stimuli. My goal in this talk is not only to describe our work on the Hebb Effect but also to explore open science, preregistrations, power analysis through simulation, and mixed models. Additionally, and time permitting, I will demonstrate the potential application of AI in our statistical procedures.</p>
<p>Alexandra Lamont, Keele University</p> <p>29.02.24</p>	<p><i>How does music define us? Reflecting on music that matters across the lifespan</i></p> <p>This talk reviews research from before birth to old age looking at how music that matters plays a key role in a range of musical, emotional, social and cultural contexts. It draws on my own work and that of others to illustrate the importance of music in experiencing, making sense of, and recalling important aspects of our selves, and brings together the individual and the social aspects of music.</p>
<p>Richard Wiseman University of Hertfordshire</p> <p>07.03.24</p>	<p><i>Investigating the impossible</i></p> <p>Most of my work has involved studying topics on the fringes of psychology, including stage magic, psychic powers and other seemingly impossible phenomena. In this talk I will look back at over 30 years of such activities, reflect on the origin of some of my favourite projects, and explore the surprising ways in which this type of work informs mainstream psychology. Discover how the study of ghostly experiences shaped perceptual psychology, how telepathy experiments were the catalyst for new and remarkable technology, why parapsychologists foresaw the replication crisis and the need for preregistration, and much more. Ultimately, it is a talk about why we study what we study, the surprising benefits of heading away from the path well-trodden, and the unexpected twists and turns that have changed the history of our field. At the end, I will reveal how to transform a tea towel into a chicken.</p>
<p>Tharun Radhakrishnan, Lister Hospital, Older People Services</p> <p>14.03.24</p>	<p><i>Dementias and use of technology</i></p> <p>It is estimated that around 900,000 individuals suffering from dementia currently reside in the UK. This number is expected to nearly double by 2040. Unfortunately, a cure for various forms of dementia remains elusive. However, there has been notable progress made in the field of dementia research over the past two decades. Some of the main areas of development include early detection tools, biomarker research, virtual/augmented reality, remote monitoring, and cognitive assistive technologies. While many of these advancements are still in the translational research phase, they offer hope for the future. In this session, we will have an overview of these advances to give us an idea of what we can expect in the future of dementia care.</p>

<p>Patrick Holthaus, University of Hertfordshire</p> <p>21.03.24</p>	<p><i>Socially credible robots</i></p> <p>Assistive robots are designated to support people in their daily activities. In this talk, I will discuss how such robots can deliver various types of assistance when designed as robot companions and what scientific questions are important to address in this context. My presentation will also introduce the UH Robot House, a unique facility for researching human-robot interaction, along with its robot residents. Robot House provides a realistic home environment off-campus where our research team can investigate the aforementioned questions looking towards a future where robotic companions play a greater role in caring for older people. The third part of the talk will address one of the fundamental research questions of social robots, that is, how nonverbal communication can facilitate interactions between humans and robots. For that, I will present a few studies with human participants that look at what effects robot social behaviours have on human trust and acceptability towards them.</p>
<p>Giulia Poerio, University of Sussex</p> <p>18.04.2024</p>	<p><i>The dark side of love: Living with limerence</i></p> <p>Limerence is an intense and obsessive form of unexpected feelings of connection, love, or attachment to another person (often termed the 'limerent object' or LO). It is characterised by intrusive thoughts about the LO, excessive fantasy, compulsive behaviours (e.g., checking social media), a strong persistent fear of rejection, and an emotional roller-coaster of euphoria and hopelessness depending on perceived reciprocation from the LO. Limerence remains largely unresearched and is not yet clinically recognised, perhaps, in part, due to the misconception that limerence is 'just a crush' or passing infatuation. Although limerence does share many of the hallmarks of falling in love, in its extreme form, it becomes problematic: impairing functioning at work, education, and in real-world relationships. Those living with limerence can find themselves stuck in unwanted repetitive, cyclical limerent patterns lasting months and even years. In this talk, I present results from two studies we have recently conducted on limerence. First, is an experience-sampling study tracking the thoughts and feelings of 62 limerent individuals as they went about their daily lives. Second, is large-scale cross-sectional study with over 1000 individuals exploring co-morbidities between limerence and other conditions such as obsessive-compulsive disorder and maladaptive daydreaming.</p>
<p>Rachel Armitage, University of Huddersfield Lucy Roberts, Anglia Ruskin University</p> <p>25.04.24</p>	<p><i>“We’re not allowed to have experienced trauma. We’re not allowed to go through the grieving process” - Exploring the indirect harms associated with Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) offending and its impacts on non-offending family members</i></p> <p>Professor Armitage will be sharing her findings on the indirect impact on families when someone is being investigated for Child Sexual Abuse Material Offending (CSAM). This research draws on a number of projects exploring the psychological, social, physical and financial harms experienced by families, as well as the impacts on police officers in conducting such investigations. Rachel will be joined online by Lucy Roberts – a researcher with lived experience, who will talk about her role in informing research, lobbying for change and ensuring that the research is informed by her own lived experience as an ex-partner and mother. Rachel and Lucy will highlight the harms associated with this offence, and the subsequent re-traumatisation of agency responses, but will also present the progress made in both policy and practice in mitigating against these harms.</p>

<p>Matthew Jewiss, Anglia Ruskin University</p> <p>07.12.23</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 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.</p>
<p>Chris Chandler, London Metropolitan University</p> <p>09.05.24</p>	<p><i>The role of drug cues in maintaining drug craving and consumption</i></p> <p>Summary TBC</p>

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)