

EFPTA Newsletter November 2011

Editor's note

Many topics are touched upon in the articles presented in this issue. We start with a few words from the president of our federation. Then there are a number of articles about the various EFPTA and EFPTA-related activities last year and ongoing and future projects, e.g. about a survey EFPTA is doing on the students' motivation and perceived outcomes of studying psychology. We have an interesting take on a journey to the ECP conference in Istanbul this summer with information on how to apply for Comenius funding and reports of events where teachers from EFPTA gave lectures about various topics in Dortmund, Germany and Bratislava, Slovakia.



I would like to draw special attention to the very exciting upcoming EFPTA Spring conference (page 5) in Copenhagen in April 2012 and to the newly updated EFPTA website (page 6).

You can also read about psychology education in Russia, stories straight from the psychology classroom (from one teacher, two teacher trainees and one student of psychology), Alfred Adler's surprising Scottish connection and finally book reviews of two very interesting new books.



The Grand Place, Brussels

I want to thank all those who have contributed to this issue of the Newsletter. I hope you enjoy reading it and would like to encourage those who are interested in publishing articles in the next Newsletter, due next summer, to contact me.

Kind regards,

Harpa Hafsteinsdóttir (Iceland), editor

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President's Report

Dear Colleagues all over Europe.

Thank you for showing interest in our newsletters in which we try to keep you updated about our activities.

In our spring meeting in Brussels (April 2nd 2011) we changed presidency according to our constitution. We have to thank Hans Reynierse for the work he has done for EFPTA in the last two years.



We have just had our annual autumn board meeting in Brussels on an extraordinary warm and sunny October day. An important topic was to prepare our next conference which will be held in Copenhagen April 20th and 21st, 2012 (beginning Friday at 1 pm, to give participants the opportunity to travel in the morning if they want to). Our theme will be "The Psychology of Evil – its place in the classroom". More information will appear on our website as soon as possible. I hope to meet many of you in Copenhagen to have a fruitful exchange.

Looking back on the year since our last newsletter in September 2010 I can say that we have made great progress.

Our website has been completely redone. We are very thankful to Morag Williamson who has done excellent work on this.

In a meeting with EFPA in August our affiliate membership to EFPA was affirmed, we (myself and our vice-president Dorothy Coombs) experienced great interest and support. Our contribution to raise psychological literacy in society was acknowledged and we will work more closely together with EFPA in the future.



The first step was our being invited to take part in a Conference at the European Parliament with the theme "What can Psychology do for Europe? " Members of the European Parliament (from all EU countries), and representatives of psychologists' organizations and institutions were present at this awareness-raising event on November 9th 2011 in Brussels.

Robert Roe, efpa President, pointed out in his speech “Psychology – A Contribution to EU Policy Making” that it was a worthwhile aim for the future to promote EU citizens’ psychological literacy through teaching psychology in secondary schools. He added that it was hard to understand and justify that people learn the basics of physics and biology at school but have to learn the basics of human behavior by themselves, often at high personal and social costs. As it was a rather tight program we were not able to speak ourselves but we had the opportunity to hand in information papers in advance and these papers were distributed in the conference folder.

In our survey project (collecting information on psychology at school and on teachers’ education and training in the various countries in Europe) we have gone for a further step with the focus on the situation and needs of psychology teachers. The EFPTA Survey Research Project Stage 2 results you can see on a new poster which you can download from our website.

I close this with warm thanks to all who have contributed to our progress.

Best regards,

Renate Schrempf (Germany),
EFPTA President





EFPTA Spring Conference

Copenhagen

(20-21 April 2012)

Theme:

“The Psychology of Evil – its place in the classroom”

An event for all psychology teachers in Europe featuring:

- Keynote speakers on psychological research
- Teacher-led workshops on teaching and learning, and classroom practice
- Collaborative projects
- Discussion on issues of common interest to psychology teachers in Europe
- An excellent CPD opportunity to share ideas, information and good practice amongst our European Colleagues!

**See www.efpta.org for more details
-put the date in your diary now!**

Delegate fees:

- Whole conference: 80 euro.
- Students: 40 euro.
- One day (Friday or Saturday): 50 euro.
- (If you are paying in sterling you may pay at the conference rather than in advance)

Your website needs you!

Your EFPTA website needs you – yes, you! – to visit it, to tell your colleagues about it, and most of all to WRITE stuff for it! It's here: www.efpta.org.



The site has recently been given a facelift, and is being updated regularly, with information not just about EFPTA itself but from all our member associations. It is a plain-and-simple site, with no 'bells and whistles' - the priority being to provide accurate and up-to-date info, links and contacts that psychology teachers in all our member countries – and beyond - will find useful. But, they will only find the site useful if they actually find it in the first place! So, please publicise it as much as possible in your own country, by putting a link on your association's website, and in your newsletters, flyers and posters.

If you haven't visited the site recently, please take a look (at www.efpta.org). You'll see items of news, details of forthcoming EFPTA events, and info on other events relevant to psychology teaching, as well as presentations from past conferences. And of course you'll see your own country's page.

YOU can contribute to this treasure trove of info! You can:

- announce your national association's conferences for psychology teachers
- give news of members' participation in national or European events for psychologists
- report on your psychology students' activities
- have your presentations or teaching resources uploaded
- contribute links to other sites of interest to psychology teachers

....in other words, you can submit to me any material you feel is relevant and interesting for psychology teachers in Europe.

Some basic guidelines:

Visit the site to get an idea of style and length of items. All text and any images must be free of copyright. Please write in English if possible, but don't worry if your English is not perfect, as help is available. Text files should be in a standard application (eg Word), and with minimal formatting (ie just one font, normal spacing/ paragraphs /margins etc). Files for uploading should be less than 10MB.

You can email your items to me, Morag, either through the website or at moragwill@aol.com. I look forward to hearing from you! And, just in case you haven't visited the EFPTA website yet since starting to read this article, click here: www.efpta.org !!

Morag Williamson (Scotland)

Why study psychology?

A European research project to investigate students' motivation for, and perceived outcomes of, studying psychology.

Motivation towards study is a frequent educational and psychological theme. Many surveys have been published on the motivation for studying science, physical education or foreign languages. Psychology as a non-traditional and voluntary or optional school subject is often perceived as easy to study and teach, and in some countries does not always enjoy support from education authorities (Williamson et al, 2011). On the other hand psychology in many countries is one of the most popular subjects at school and university and there are many different psychology courses available from secondary level in Europe (Schrempf et al, 2010). That is why we find the issue of motivation and perceived outcomes of studying psychology rather complex. The motivation may vary from considering psychology courses to be easier than others to deeper intrinsic motivation for understanding human behaviour (Jarvis, 2006). This situation led us to design an international collaboration project which aims to compare students' motivation for studying psychology in the cross-cultural context, to promote the idea of teaching psychology, to support cooperation among psychology teachers and students in Europe and to share good practice in psychology teaching.



Our survey is carried out in cooperation with the European Federation of Psychology Teachers Associations (EFPTA) and Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. Our aim is to obtain data on motivation and perceived outcomes of studying psychology among pre-university and university psychology students. Data collection and analysis will be a part of students' projects carried out by students of psychology teacher- training at Comenius University and participating psychology teachers and students from other European countries. We hope that the survey data will be useful for further international cooperation in psychology teaching.

There are several ways in which you can be involved in the project:

1. Electronic questionnaire – students may fill in two electronic questionnaires available online:
Perceived outcomes – direct link: www.iankety.sk/dotaznik/244175365/
Motivation – direct link: www.iankety.sk/dotaznik/244091691/
(Password to enter both questionnaires is “efpta”)
2. Individual quantitative studies – if you would like to have your own study with individual results, we may provide you with a printable version of the questionnaires and instructions for administration so you or your students can run your own small projects. In this case we would be happy if you could send us filled-in questionnaires or Excel data to be added to our data.
3. Individual qualitative studies – if you prefer qualitative methodology, we may provide you with a set of questions for a focus group. Again we would be happy if you could send us your transcription or report from focus group(s) for cross-cultural comparison.

We hope that our survey will help us to answer following questions:

- Why do students choose to study psychology?
- Are there any gender differences in motivation for studying psychology and perceived outcomes of psychology studies?
- Are there any differences in motivation for studying psychology across Europe?
- Does the educational system and the status of psychology as a school subject influence motivation for studying psychology?
- How do curricular goals meet students' expectations?
- Do the perceived outcomes of studying psychology meet the European Parliament's and Council's recommendations on key competences (2006)?

In further international discussion the results may open the door to research on curricular goals and objectives of psychology as a school subject, subject-specific competences and skills of psychology teachers as well as the role of psychology in developing key competences in secondary school students.

To date we have about two hundred respondents and ten participating researchers (pre-university psychology teachers and students) from Slovakia, Great Britain, Iceland and Spain. We would still like to invite psychology students or teachers to join the project, either as participants or as researchers. The research results will be published at EFPTA events and web pages by the end of 2012.

Sources:

European Parliament and the Council. 2006. *RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC)*. In The Official Journal of the European Union.

Jarvis, M. 2006. *Teaching Post-16 Psychology*. Nelson Thornes.

Schremppf, R. et al. 2010. Teaching of Psychology in Europe: Future steps for EFPTA's international survey. In *Teaching Psychology in Europe Beyond University: Sharing good practice, learn from experts- international conference, Bratislava, Slovakia, 16th – 17th April 2010*.

Williamson, M. et al. 2011. Pre-tertiary psychology education in Europe: A survey. In *Conference Proceedings, (2011) British Psychological Society Annual Conference*. British Psychological Society.

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European Federation of Psychology Teachers Associations, www.efpta.org

EFPTA research team:

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Dorothy Coombs, Vice President of EFPTA (England)

Renate Schremppf, President of EFPTA, Verband der Psychologielehrerinnen und –
lehrer, Germany

Lenka Sokolová, Faculty of Education, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

Lenka Sokolová (Slovakia)

Oriental Dreams: Turkish Delight

Or: How EFPTA broke the ice

Once upon a time... actually not so long ago, three poor psychology teachers from two far away countries dreamed of the holy grail of psychology generally referred to as the ECP. This grail of course as it is well known provides you with universal psychological knowledge-including all of Philip Zimbardo's experiments -, insights and critical thinking hitherto unknown to mankind. Apart from this intrinsic motivation these three valiant warriors of science were also driven by somewhat more trifle motives to embark on this crusade. Two of them known by the name of The Vikings wanted to get a break from the eternal ice that was surrounding them like a curse and the other desired to get a break from some useless noisy neighbours known by the name of The Dutch. So they decided to join forces because they were convinced that alone they would never stand a chance finding the holy grail of psychology, which as legend has it, was supposed to be found in some far away eastern country.



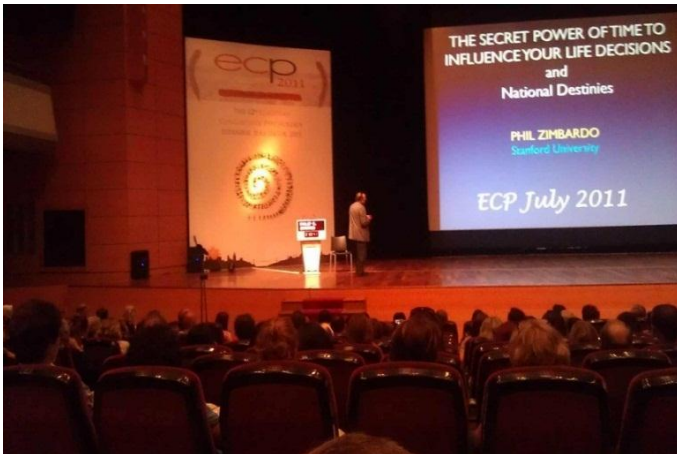
And thenwhen the situation seemed hopeless and despair was all around as some dark lords in Germany refused to hand over the golden key to the knight from Germany and our brave crusaders were about to abandon their plans of their noble journey, help came in the form of the mighty God Comenius who was sent by some mysterious wizards in Brussels. To make a long story short: they lived happily ever after and taught psychology in a completely new spirit of total enlightenment.

OK, this sounds too good to be true but wait, here are the facts.....

What does ECP stand for?

The **E**uropean **C**ongress of **P**sychology is an event organized biannually by the EFPA (www.efpa.eu) which is a platform for European co-operation between national Psychologists Associations from all over Europe. EFPA's Member Associations are 35 countries and have over 300.000 individual members. EFPA represents European psychology vis-à-vis the European Union, the Council of Europe, and other international bodies. The EFPTA is an affiliated member of EFPA so our own organization is an accepted team player in the world of European psychology. In Istanbul about 2500 psychologists from all over the world met in July 2011. In Robert Doe's words "From the start, in 1989, European Congress of Psychology has been the place to meet European psychologists and learn about advances in theory and research as well as educational and professional developments in Europe. But (...) the Congress is also a global meeting place, where students, scholars and professionals from all parts of the world share knowledge and experiences." For more information about this congress go to www.ecp2011.org.

To give a brief glimpse of this very impressive event here are some pictures:



This is a picture of the big auditorium where the VIP's gave their state of the art speeches.

The author of this article, accompanied by an unknown (?) psychologist from the US. Guess who it is! ¹



Wolfgang, Harpa and Gunnar with the real Joe Cocker

But unfortunately there were only three pre-university teachers from Europe attending this wonderful event. The reason for this was very simple, the standard registration fee ranged from 400-550 € (!!!) and this included:

- Full attendance to all congress sessions and exhibition area between the 4 full congress dates
- All official documents like congress program and abstract book, certificate of attendance, name badge etc.
- Opening Ceremony and Welcome Reception
- Coffee Breaks
- Congress Bag

But travel and accommodation expenses came on top of this which makes it clear why an ordinary teacher of psychology would never even dream of going there.

So how did our three valiant warriors of science manage to get funding?

The answer to this question is just as simple, the magic word is Comenius Teacher In-Service Training. The European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme offers teachers in school or adult education the opportunity to secure funding to cover all (!) participation costs including travel, accommodation and course fees. If you are a teacher in a school or adult education institution, you are eligible to apply for funding. So in our case the Comenius programme did not only cover the registration fees but also practically all other expenses that were involved. Of course there is a little bit of small print which has to be taken account of e.g. one precondition is that your school or college has not received any Comenius funding in the past two years. Also national regulations may apply which you would have to find out about yourself. But apart from this, the application process is surprisingly simple and in contrast to other EU funding does not demand much effort. The next upcoming event is the **European Congress of Psychology 2013(ECP)** which will be held in Stockholm from 9th-12th of July 2013. So get going, Europe is just one step away from you. The holy grail of psychology is waiting for you!

A special thank you goes to Harpa from Iceland because she helped me overcome some obstacles that the German national agency (Comenius) presented to me and I believe she is more than right when she says: “and I doubt that most of us would have even known about the Istanbul congress or ever thought of going there if not for the information sharing of EFPTA”

This is the first instance in EFPTA history that our organization was able to provide valuable information which as a result delivered substantial financial support to individual teachers of psychology. From now on, if psychology teachers from whatever European country wish to participate in this European Congress of Psychology – and fulfill the requirements of course – they can do so. EFPTA has broken the ice for them.

For more information:

Comenius http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/doc996_en.htm

European Congress of Psychology 2013(ECP) <http://www.ecp2013.se/>

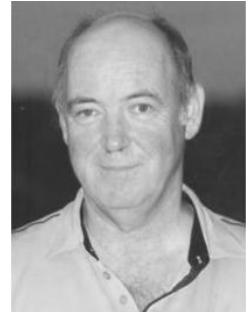
[EFPTA](#) more about the application process (soon to be published)

*Wolfgang Augustin (Germany)
EFPTA Treasurer*

¹ Philip G. Zimbardo

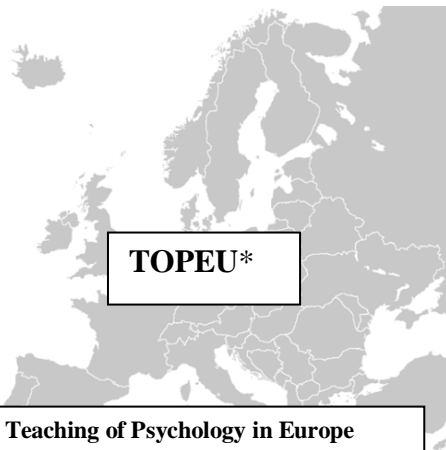
Students from Bratislava and Dortmund learned from European psychology experts: International TOPEU Spring School at TU Dortmund University

Teachers of Psychology in the classroom are facing a rapid moving world. “Multimedia” is one of the factors of developmental acceleration. But could it be a threat to the people? Are there any reasons to get the feeling of threat? Almost forty students from Dortmund and Bratislava (Slovakia) met in March 2011 in Dortmund to attend the TOPEU Spring School. TOPEU means: Teaching of Psychology in Europe, and this acronym has been created by Udo Kittler, academic teacher of “Fachdidaktik” at University for more than 30 years now.



Teachers from Iceland (Harpa Hafsteinsdóttir, Kristján Guðmundsson), Slovakia (Radoimír Masaryk), Great Britain (Joe Cocker) and Germany (Udo Kittler) held lectures under the topic “Multimedia in the Classroom: Threat or Opportunity?”

The project idea has been conceived last year in Bratislava, when students from Dortmund and Bratislava took part in the EFPTA Conference 2010. All necessary business was done by Olena Kryshko and her team of excellent international students, and the result was overwhelming: Financial supports by student fees and additionally by the “Gesellschaft der Freunde der TU Dortmund (GdF)” made sure, that this event would succeed – administratively at first. Secondly, and more important, affords were undertaken to motivate psychology teaching experts from all over Europe: Their expertise should have been a challenge for the attending students. And, by the way, it has been:



* = Teaching of Psychology in Europe

**Some of the
attenders**



Radomír Masaryk, Slovakia

**New Media in the Classroom:
Stairway to Heaven, or Road to Hell?**

The presentation is attempting to look into the world of new media. It starts with an overview of the history of using technology in schools with a particular emphasis on computer technology. Then case studies of using 1:1 technologies are presented. The presentation is also trying to address the most recent developments and possibilities regarding the use of new media in the classroom, and suggests some ideas for discussions. It concludes by suggesting that new media could be used to change the entire paradigm of the educational process to become learner-centered, based on exploration and discovery, and focused on learning within a group or community.



New Technologies in the Classroom: The „Notebook For Every Pupil“ Project

The presentation explains the background of the „Notebook For Every Pupil“ project implemented in two Slovak elementary schools. Findings from two years of data collection are presented. Research methods included standardized tests, questionnaires, interviews and focus groups. Target groups were students in experimental class, students in parallel non-experimental class, parents, teachers, and school administrators. Results suggest that 1:1 Technology Rich Learning Environment tools may be very effective in bringing substantial educational benefits, especially increased self-reliance and motivation. The presentation discusses limits of the research design and tries to stimulate discussion on how to measure the impact of educational interventions which involve new technologies.

Myths in Psychology: Lessons Learned Writing a Textbook

The presentation starts with general discussion about the nature of knowledge. In the beginning it quotes theories of social constructionism and social representations to challenge traditional views about the nature of knowledge, especially the dichotomy of lay vs. expert knowledge. Then several case studies of scientific legends are discussed. Examples of using scientific legends for research purposes are described. The presentation concludes with a set of questions related to the meaning of scientific legends in the face of modern technologies, and the role of psychology teachers in leading students towards critical thinking when working with expert knowledge.

Kristján Guðmundsson, Iceland

Psychology of the Cinema

This is not a typical class in film studies, but an application of the use of psychology in the cinema in general. It is a unique elective course at Reykjavik Women's College which does not require a prior psychology course. The participants are students from 17-19 years who are on the way to matriculation examination (entrance to university). In my presentation I will concentrate on the positive and negative side of teaching to such a large extent through the film - using as I am, the film as another teacher used a textbook.



Harpa Hafsteinsdóttir, Iceland

The times they are a-changing

One of the many challenges that teachers of today face is to adapt to the rapid change occurring in schools brought about by the emergence of new technology. Today's students use new media in a way never seen before. This comes with pros and cons but in my opinion teachers can take advantage of this and improve their teaching and assessment methods to meet new demands. In the presentation I will talk about how teachers can use new media to enrich their teaching in hope to enhance learning. I will offer some suggestions and ideas that I have found helpful in my teaching. I will also show examples of student work and discuss their opinion on the matter.



Positive psychology

Positive psychology is a relatively new branch of psychology that aims to research all the things that go right in people's lives and to find ways to make the good things even better. The focus of many previous approaches of psychology has been more on what can go wrong in life and how that can be fixed. In my presentation I will talk about a course on positive psychology I teach in Hamrahlid College (Reykjavík, Iceland) with special attention to the many ways I use new media.

Joe Cocker, England

Charles Darwin and Human Evolution

Psychology studies human beings and their behaviour and mental processes. The biggest change in our view of human beings, at least in the West, was Charles Darwin's idea of Evolution. Until his time most people in the Christian world believed in individual creation. His idea that all life is linked caused a profound change in our view of human nature and of our relation to the rest of the living world. Man's body evolved but so also did his behaviour. Darwin's most famous book "The Origin of Species" 1859 is one of the most important books of the last 1000 years. At the end of this book Darwin says that Psychology will be based on evolutionary foundations. 160 years later this is reflected in the study Evolutionary Psychology.



The Psychology of Personal Appearance

In the absence of other information we make a judgement about people we meet for the first time by their appearance including clothing and makeup. This lecture examines the factors influencing how we dress and present ourselves. This can even be a matter of life and death. For the teacher there can be issues of inappropriate dress or dress issues such as islamic veil, burka, niqab. In particular there are the pressures today to not only present a good body image but to alter the body image through surgery.

An English High-School Project on Body Image

In this workshop we will look at the world of fashion and its influence on young people. A particular concern today is the sexualisation of young girls which is done through the use of adult clothing and make up for girls as young as 5 or 6. A report by the American Psychological Association focuses on the increasing rates of eating disorders, depression, and low self-esteem among younger and younger girls. A project in an English country town addressed this problem by measuring the pressures on young people and especially girls of around 13 years of age. Most of the issues such as peer pressure, media pressure will be the same or similar in Germany. Members of the workshop will answer a questionnaire and compare their answers with those in the English study.

Teaching Sensitive Issues in Psychology

Psychology studies normal behaviour but it also studies abnormal behaviour. In psychology we come across many problems, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual abuse, eating disorders, suicide and bereavement and many more. It is very likely that in a group of students there will be one or several affected by such things either personally or with a relative or friend. So how can we teach such topics without upsetting such students? Some people come to study psychology in the first place

precisely because they have such problems and hope psychology will help them to solve them. We will examine this issue with the help of some case studies.

Beyond all the lectures and workshops the regional culture was not forgotten: Excursions to Cologne, to the Phoenix Lake of Dortmund (regional transition project from industrial steel factory places to a local holiday area), visiting the football scene of Dortmund, a Campus rally and a common barbecue – activities, which brought the people together. Rado Masaryk, chief of the Slovakian team: “An unforgettable prototype of common European teaching activities, which we will have to continue!”

Contact: Udo Kittler, Institute of Psychology, TU Dortmund, Abteilung Pädagogische Psychologie, Fachdidaktik, phone: 0049/231/755-4598, Mail: udo.kittler@tu-dortmund.de

*Udo Kittler (Germany)
EFPTA Secretary*

„My hovercraft is full of eels“

In October 2011, Joe Cocker, the advisor of EFPTA, held a lecture called “Moje vznášadlo je plné úhorov” (My hovercraft is full of eels) for students and teachers of the Faculty of Education, Comenius University in Bratislava. He discussed three areas of the development and current issues of languages:

- The possible evolution of human language,
- Modern politics of language,
- English language and other old languages in UK such as Welsh and the increasing academic study of English as a Lingua Franca.



Joe presented the issue of language politics and the current situation of English language in an interesting and attractive way and he concluded with the statement that the future of “his” language is in „our“ hands – in the hands of the non-native English speakers around the world.

Reactions of participants:

“very nice and interesting talk” (teacher training student)

“thank you for very interesting lecture” (psychology teacher)

Lenka Sokolová (Slovakia)

Psychology education – Russian style

In Rostov-on-Don, in southern Russia, schools don't just *teach* psychology, they build their whole curriculum on psychological principles.

The 'Don School of Psychology' is an educational model that is based on the work of the pedagogical psychologist, Professor Eugene Ivanovich Rogov, of the Education Faculty of the Southern Federal University in Rostov-on-Don, in partnership with other universities in the region and local schools. Its central idea is the 'psychologisation' of the educational process, which entails the application of psychological concepts and techniques throughout the learning and teaching experience. It is a student-centred approach – in the truest sense of that term - as it is strongly influenced by the humanistic perspective.



Each child's experience of school, from start to finish, is carefully managed with psychological and psychosocial processes to the fore: personality and learning style profiles are created, and used as tools for monitoring progress and for informing progression choices (in education and careers); teaching methods and schedules are tailored to learners' needs. Clearly, there is a strong focus on 'personal development'; the Don model refers to this as 'personality-oriented' education.

As far as actual classes are concerned, 'psychologisation' characterises both content and delivery, and is an ongoing process that is achieved 'from the ground up' through the collaboration of groups of teaching staff, rather than being imposed top-down. Self-evaluation by teachers is required. Concepts of cognition, emotion and social behaviour permeate classroom teaching methods, and teachers are expected to have skills such as conflict resolution and stress management; a prerequisite being that teachers themselves receive a thorough education in psychology, both in initial training and in continuing professional development.

What 'psychology' do children actually learn, in terms of content of lessons? As soon as they start primary school at age six or seven, children are trained in 'psychological competence', for example: becoming aware of their different senses, their own thinking, their language and communication, their creativity, their emotions, their personality. They develop awareness of self and others, interpersonal skills, and an understanding of their relationships with family and peers. Empathy, respect for others, equality, acceptance of other cultures, and observance of rights and duties are the key values that are promoted. Strategies for coping with adversity, preventing negative thoughts and actions, and dealing with interpersonal conflicts are just some of the practical psychosocial skills that children acquire in the classroom. The need to

self-regulate, or self-manage, is emphasised, alongside the ability to function effectively in the social and cultural environment.

All children experience this kind of learning: a structured syllabus for 'psychological competence' covers the whole age range from Year 1 (age 6-7) to Year 11 (age 16-17), such that the content and delivery methods are appropriate for the developmental stage of the various age groups. Often the psychological content will be integrated into whatever class activity is taking place, whether it be a music lesson, art, maths, IT or learning a foreign language. Older age groups study psychology in formats that are more akin to psychology classes in western European countries, but with a strong emphasis on understanding and dealing with real-life issues, such as violence in the adolescent's environment.

Teachers see the development of psychological competence as the central element of the child's socialisation, and the essential basis for successful growth into adulthood; indeed, the process is referred to as 'professionalisation', even in relation to the youngest schoolchildren – a notion that may seem strange through western eyes!

Finally, there is another important theme – maybe the most important one - underpinning 'psychologisation': the better the young person's understanding of the multifaceted human environment in which they find themselves, the better equipped they will be to adapt and survive, and hopefully thrive. From this angle, psychologisation of the school curriculum for all children and young people may be seen as a preventive or protective measure, even perhaps a 'public health' measure, making full use of psychological knowledge to enable youngsters to make good decisions and avoid maladaptive choices, in the face of the many pressures, threats and challenges of their 21st century world.

About the author: Raisa Chumicheva is Director of the Institute of Pedagogy and Psychology at the Southern Federal University, Rostov-on-Don. She is a member of the European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations and is a regular contributor at EFPTA events.

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Further information on psychology teaching in Russia, including a presentation on one school's experience of the "Don School of Psychology": <http://efpta.org/home/index.asp?SID=3&SSID=18&aid=23>

Information on the Institute of Pedagogy and Psychology, Southern Federal University, Rostov-on-Don: http://sfedu.ru/00_eng/main_context.shtml?str/s_ped2_f9

Raisa Chumicheva (Russia)

Alfred Adler's Scottish connection

The city of Aberdeen, in the north-east of Scotland, has many claims to fame: it has one of the oldest universities in the UK (founded 1495), it is the centre of the North Sea oil and gas industry, and is the birthplace of the singer Annie Lennox, of the band 'Eurythmics'. Aberdeen even features in a Bob Dylan song!



The city has illustrious psychology connections. It is the birthplace of Alexander Bain, who established the first Psychology journal in the world, 'Mind', in 1876, and paved the way for the opening of the first university psychology department in the UK, in 1899.

Aberdeen is also, rather surprisingly, the place where Alfred Adler died. The Austrian psychoanalyst had been invited to lecture at Aberdeen University in May 1937 - his lecture manuscripts are still available in the university library - but sadly he died suddenly of a suspected heart attack during his visit there.

His wish to be cremated was relatively unusual at the time, but was respected. However, with the storm clouds gathering over Europe, Adler's family's immediate concern, like those of many Jewish people, was focused on escaping the Nazi threat; his ashes were not claimed, and were assumed to have been lost.

Recently however, a dedicated search by psychotherapists from the Alfred Adler Institute in Vienna, along with Austrian officials, located Adler's ashes in a small wooden casket at an Edinburgh crematorium. The casket was inscribed with his name and the words "Founder of Individual Psychology". The ashes had not really been 'lost' – it was just that nobody knew they were there. In the spring of 2011, his ashes were handed over to the Austrian Consul for Scotland at a ceremony in Edinburgh, and later returned to Vienna, where Adler had been made a Freeman of the city in 1930.

So, for Adlerian devotees, the mysterious fate of their 'father figure' has found resolution. And for us psychology teachers in EFPTA, it's a story which reminds us that the sharing of psychological ideas and knowledge across Europe is nothing new; we are following an honourable tradition.

Sources:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/apr/10/alfred-adler-ashes-found-edinburgh>
[http://www.adleriansociety.co.uk/phdi/p3.nsf/imgpages/0939_Adler-ashes-April2011.pdf/\\$file/Adler-ashes-April2011.pdf](http://www.adleriansociety.co.uk/phdi/p3.nsf/imgpages/0939_Adler-ashes-April2011.pdf/$file/Adler-ashes-April2011.pdf)

Acknowledgement: thanks to Caroline, a student at West Lothian College, for the newspaper cutting.

Morag Williamson (Scotland)

Stories from teachers and students of psychology

Positive psychology teaching

Happiness

When I was asked to write a story from my time as a teacher I immediately thought about the positive psychology class I taught in 2010. There were so many things that I did differently in comparison to my other classes. In my positive psychology class I emphasized to get more engagement from students and focused on happiness and personal growth.

In these classes I gave out assignments that were quite unusual. I, for example, asked my students to do one good deed. This idea of making students do a good deed is based on Martin Seligman's research, he divided students in two groups and asked half of them do good deeds and the other half to spend time doing something they enjoy. After 6 weeks the half who did the good deed were happier, and thought they got more out of the assignment.

We had a lot of discussion in class regarding how we should go about doing this. One idea was to go down town and giving out free hugs, and another volunteering at the Red Cross, however we finally decided that it would be best that each student would find some good deed to do for themselves.

Many of the students found someone to help, someone in their own family, elderly grandparents, disabled relatives and some even devoted their time to their younger siblings. Many of them had heartwarming stories, and I believe it is one of the most worthwhile assignments I have given my students.

For this article I contacted one of my former students, to ask her opinion on the assignment and to get a student's perspective. Below is her story.

Anna Jóna Guðmundsdóttir (Iceland)

The Good Deed project

At first I wasn't sure what was expected of me when my teacher explained the Good Deed project. I simply had never done a good deed as a planned action before or ever thought about it that carefully, really. I along with a few of my classmates decided to participate as a group. We decided on going to a nursing home near our school to spend time with the elderly playing bocce. When we arrived at the nursing home we realized none of us had ever played bocce before. Our hosts were keen to start playing and taught us the rules in an instant. We played for about two hours or

until it was time for our “competitors” to take a break. If I remember correctly we got crushed and lost by several points, but none the less; Time well spent.

The Good Deed project was unlike any other project I have participated in before. It opened my eyes to a new way of thinking about good deeds. A Good Deed does not have to be big or take much time. It can be as small as helping one’s neighbor or visiting one’s grandmother, as one of my classmates did. It probably made her day.

Shortly after school was over I started volunteering at the Red Cross. There I have a group of teenagers from various nationalities who meet once a week to talk, play games, laugh and simply do something fun. It feels good being able to help people getting to know each other and form friendships. And that is, in my opinion, what good deeds are all about: to make yourself feel good by doing something that makes others feel good.

Erla María Tölgyes (Iceland)

A prospective teacher’s perspective:

I only started my psychology teaching programme two months ago but so far my experience has been good, fun and a lot of work. The programme is structured so that we begin attending classes where we learn the theory(ies) of teaching and the application of it. Then we are sent to our homeschools where we will meet our instructors who are supposed to help us take our first steps in teaching. At first we only sit at the back and observe the experienced teacher, later we get to try teaching for ourselves, under supervision of course. We send our instructors the plan we intend to follow and are given feedback and pointers regarding whether the instructor thinks the plan is all right or if it should be revised.

At this exact moment I have finished my second instruction and I am absolutely, head over heels, in love with teaching even though the material I have been teaching is they eye and visual perception, interesting but perhaps not the liveliest. Nevertheless, the students and I just could not stop working although the bell had rung which I imagine is the best feeling for any teacher. I look forward to upcoming instructions, which include one on body language, and only wish there were more in this programme.

Unnur Tómasdóttir (Iceland)

A prospective teacher's perspective:

My teacher "career" is not long. The first time I came to students in the role of a teacher was only a month ago with the intent to make them study the most interesting way as possible. I had prepared my own notes, which followed the curriculum of textbooks and individual activities were added to give a transposition for students and support the curriculum. I went to them with a little soul and I asked myself how would they accept me, how to perform in front of unknown group and how to manage to take everything I had planned...

Introduction of the lesson traditionally I started with the transposition of the subject matter by revision of the last lesson. To my surprise, the students got involved actively, answered my questions correctly and did not respond to me as a stranger.

The motivational part of the lesson focused on the methods in school psychology. I distributed them memory tests and "What are your social skills and knowledge" questionnaire. The first one was created in an entertaining way and the other one was standardized, so they could compare them. I found out that even high school students like to get to know each other, while sharing their results with others.

While explaining the new theme, I tried to balance between theoretical knowledge and interesting facts which I knew from my own academic study. Students remembered it easier and it was more attractive for them too. Later when they revised the theme they associated interesting facts with the theoretical knowledge. Students responded to questions about the new theme spontaneously, in their own words, but always more or less correct. I tried to submit the new material in a simple language and also I explained all the scientific terms.

At the end of the lesson I tried to fix the content by activity such as creation of test items in groups and by collective evaluation of the appropriateness of individual items because teamwork contributes to enrich lessons.

Finally, my first impressions as a teacher were not as negative as I thought at beginning. Students were nice. They tried to engage them in activities, to keep their attention. They expressed their own opinions about the content. I think I was lucky for such a positive approach from students and I know that in practice I may face the indifference and negativity too. Therefore I think it was good experience for me.

Barbora Gondová (Slovakia)

Book reviews

Elephants on Acid and other Bizarre Experiments

Author: Alex Boese

Published by Pan Books, 2011

ISBN-10: 0330506641

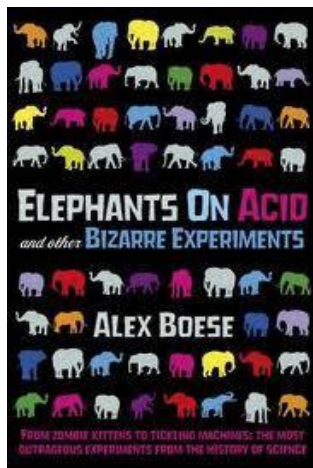
ISBN-13: 978-0330506649

£5.45. Paperback, 304 pages.

This is a very “easy read” and I read it on a train journey from Birmingham to Newcastle. Although it is very basic and could be classified as “psychology-light”, I really enjoyed it and I’m definitely going to get my school library to stock a few copies and will recommend it to year 9 or 11 students as an introduction to psychology.



It contains all the “classics” such as Milgram, Zimbardo, Latane & Darley etc., and some weird and wonderful stuff too. If you ever wondered where the chief examiners find some of their strange examples for research methods papers, look no further – the tickling example used in the OCR AS research methods paper is in this book! (Note from the editor: I know the book was recommended at a recent OCR CPD event so look out for more like that on G541)



I loved the author’s method of grouping studies together. Chapters include: - “Frankenstein’s Lab”, “Mating Behaviour”, “Toilet Reading”, “Making Mr Hyde” and “The End” (devoted to the psychology of death).

If you’re looking for a book that will stimulate your students’ interest in psychology, while still being easy to read, I’d fully recommend it.

http://www.amazon.co.uk/Elephants-Acid-Other-Bizarre-Experiments/dp/0330506641/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1302421245&sr=1-1

*Deb Gajic (England)
ATP Chair*

Nine Seahorses: A Plea for Sanity in Three Parts.

Author: Seahorse Sam (aka Martin Neiland)

Published by Seahorse Press Ltd 2011

ISBN: 978-0-9567142-0-6

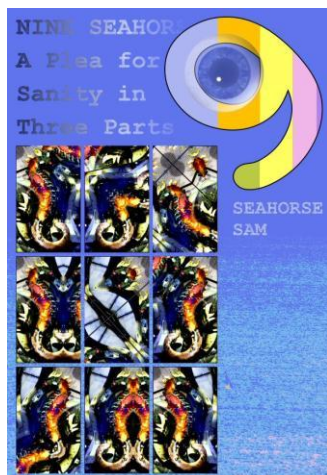
£21.75. 311 pages.

When I received an e-mail advertising this publication I was intrigued by the title, so I requested a copy from the author (no, not Seahorse Sam himself but Martin Neiland) who is a psychologist with a wealth of experience of teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, as well as being central in implementing policy in mental health domains such as dual diagnosis (where a mental disorder and substance abuse occur together). The intrigue continued when I took the book from the envelope. It is probably the heaviest book of its size I have encountered and this is because the glossy paper is of very high quality and there are 311 pages. The font varies but it is never “conventional”, giving the impression that it has been typed on an old fashioned typewriter and the list of contents is so extensive that virtually every page is listed several times.



The foreword is written by Professor Geoffrey Hall from York University and in it he expresses his concern that very few of the students he has taught seem to be interested in the “Big Questions” that make psychology so fascinating. He places the blame for this on teachers (I would disagree as I think it is the fault of exam boards who divide the subject up into chunks for convenience and to make examining easier). Whoever is to blame for this is it certainly true!

So what is the book about? Well I believe it aims to be provocative and to challenge virtually everything from the spiritual to the scientific. It claims to be about a personal and collective sanity and propounds what the author calls an ecumenical “moral psychology”. He rejects the extremist views (he calls “polarisation”) in debates such as the extent to which humans have free-will and how far we can explain our behaviour in purely scientific terms. In the first part he has identified almost every person, event and theory in both ancient and modern history that has had any relevance to academic psychology. In the second he takes “a tour of modern psychotherapy” and this is the part I found to be most accessible, though still very challenging to read. Part three is “The Story of Seahorse Sam” in which a sensitive seahorse (Sam) meets the creepy “Clipboard Clive” who is



meant to represent the way that our cultural learning can be detrimental to our mental wellbeing.

Throughout the book there are over 90 illustrations, each one having relevance to something in the text at that point (though it is challenging in itself to make the connection at times) and over 20 figures and tables ranging from a basic explanation of Pavlovian conditioning to a summary of integrated developmental “moral psychology”. There are over 100 references, reflecting just how far Martin Neiland has tried to address the “Big Questions” in psychology. Should you decide to accept the challenge and read this book I would recommend that you start at page 16 after reading the foreword and the notes on the back cover. Then dip into different chapters rather than attempting to read it in the usual sequential way. You will find some particularly good stuff in Chapter 7 of part two, “Sanity and Contemporary psychotherapy” and in Chapter 6 you will recognise the list of individuals from recent times who have endured enormous pressure and yet whose sanity remained intact. This illustrates the potential we may have to determine our own psychological wellbeing, particularly if we are helped along the way by what the author calls “competent coxswains”.

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Nine-Seahorses-Sanity-Three-Parts/dp/095671420X>

Dorothy Coombs (England)
ATP Vice Chair and EFPTA Vice President