



EFPTA Newsletter September 2014

Editor's note

This year we celebrated the 10th anniversary of EFPTA at our spring conference at WannseeForum, Berlin, Germany. Close to 100 psychology teachers and psychology students from all over Europe gathered together for a weekend to take part in the conference which focused on the topic of psychological literacy.

In this newsletter you can read summaries from all of the many presentations and workshops we offered. These summaries were written by the participants of the conference and I want to thank them all for their important contribution.

I think I speak for us all when I say that we had a fantastic time at that beautiful location with so many great topics to talk about, experiences to share and interesting and lovely people to meet.

I hope you will enjoy reading about EFPTA's activities in the last year. If your psychology teachers' association is not yet a member of EFPTA, or if your country does not have a psychology association, please get in touch with us through the website - www.efpta.org – we would love to hear from you! '

Kind regards,

*Harpa Hafsteinsdóttir (Iceland),
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President's welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2014 EFPTA Newsletter. My thanks go to Harpa Hafsteinsdóttir, and everyone who has contributed to what is always a very interesting and attractive magazine.

In April our Federation celebrated its 10th Anniversary with a conference at WannseeForum in Berlin. It was a great success, thanks to the hard work of our Board members, especially Udo Kittler, and the many others who helped in all sorts of ways. We are grateful to all our sponsors and the German Federal Association of Psychology Teachers for their generous support. You will be able to find out all about the event by reading the reports and presentations here, as well as on our web-site (www.efpta.org)

In July Renate Schrempf and I took part in an EFPA symposium at the International Conference of Applied Psychology in Paris. It was an amazing opportunity for us to promote the importance of the teaching of pre-tertiary psychology to an international audience. There is a full report in this newsletter and, again, our presentation is on our web-site so why not take a look?

So now we look forward to another academic year with the usual mixture of optimism and anxiety. There are changes ahead for many of us and we will need to work together to achieve our goals. I believe that our member Associations are an important source of support and inspiration, and that together we make up a strong Federation with the power to influence how pre-tertiary psychology education evolves in the years to come.

With best wishes to you all

Dorothy Coombs

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Udo Kittler, Morag Williamson and
Dorothy Coombs



EFPTA's 10th Anniversary Conference

Sowing the seeds of psychological literacy: a conference for psychology teachers in Europe.

Almost 100 delegates from across Europe attended the event and all conference presentations are available on the EFPTA web-site (www.efpta.org), but meanwhile here are some of the highlights of this action-packed event at the beautiful WannseeForum.

Keynote speaker Franziska Moser of Berlin's Freie Universität explained her research findings on the impact of gendered language; Chair of the German Psychology Teachers' Association, Michael Bürger used delegates as participants in a live experimental demonstration of the 'shared information effect' in group decision-making; teams of delegates worked 'hands on' in a series of problem-solving and creativity tasks in a 'carousel' workshop of learning activities. Over an intensive two days, psychology teachers, teacher educators and students from nine European countries presented or took part in a variety of interactive workshops focusing on teaching and learning in psychology, ranging from 'Twinning psychology classes' to 'Eco psychology in the classroom'.

Many of the delegates and presenters were students: a team of high school psychology students from Hamburg delighted delegates with a talk about their innovative collaboration with undergraduate students at their local university. A second group of students, this time from Dessau, gave a charming video presentation of their social-psychological research. Student teachers from Slovakia took part in the event too; in fact, students made a major contribution to this EFPTA event overall.

Aside from the formal programme, delegates browsed the display of posters and textbooks; the newest qualified psychology teacher, from Dortmund, was congratulated by the EFPTA President; and on Friday 11th April EFPTA's 10th anniversary was celebrated in style with a magnificent birthday cake and glasses of bubbly. Visit the EFPTA web-site (www.efpta.org) to see the anniversary slideshow of photos of EFPTA events from 2004-2014.

The EFPTA Board is very grateful to the helpful staff at WannseeForum, and all those who supported the event, especially Uniview Worldwide and Classroom Video and the German Federal Association of Psychology Teachers.

Morag Williamson (Scotland)

“The mechanic she...”? Gender fairness and language: how features of different languages and language use influence the perceptions about female and male persons

Report of keynote lecture by Dr. Franziska Moser (Germany)

Which gender do you assign to Mechanic, Engineer or Doctor? We infer from our socialization of gender stereotypes and roles that these professions are typical of male roles. Dr. Moser proposes that language is a subtle mechanism in the socialization process, for example in the use of masculine generics (nouns, pronouns).

Her research question looked at whether women and men are treated linguistically in an equal manner and found that there is an under representation of female persons, she emphasized the importance to make female (and male) persons linguistically visible through explicit reference. Example of Gender fairness language are roles such as Chairman to Chairperson. So what does this mean for education? Dr Moser's research clearly indicates that gender bias exists in education and interactions in the classroom. Children develop concepts and stereotypes of gender roles, especially occupations in schools, content of text books and pictures teach gender typical characteristics, as such stereotypically portrayals contribute negatively to children's development which in turn influence career aspirations. Dr Moser's findings show that children expressed higher status to masculine jobs and more interest in jobs of their own gender. Additionally, and more importantly, the inclusion of feminine forms for occupations resulted in higher self-efficacy for respective occupations.

Two main studies were carried out. Study 1- examined gender fair language in German and Maths books. The analysis shows that whilst there is more gender fair language used today the use of masculine generic nouns are still quite high, especially in German books. for example, roles of the Gardner, Postman, Scientist are apportioned to male roles compared to Teacher or Nurse for female roles, gender fair roles included Author, Teacher, Actor.

The second study, conducted in UK, involved an analysis of frequency of words in early years education. Teachers read out loud a range of occupations (stereotypically, male, female, gender neutral) and children were asked to rate the success of each occupation and their interest. She found that male representation and male pronouns were high, children learn that women are primarily portrayed in a caregiving role, and that there were few occupations for women in job advertisements as most advertisements tend to discourage women from applying by virtue of the use of masculine pronoun. Research involved job advertisements using different male and female forms, the findings showed that when masculine forms were used then females were less likely to be hired and paid less. However, when gender fair advertisements were used both male and female equally hired. Dr Moser concluded her talk by suggesting measures that could be used by teachers when analyzing or

using text, such as invisibility- who is not included? The rigidity of stereotypes: how have they learned them? Simplification of complex issues, unrealistic role reversal, linguistic bias and superficial inequality eg contributions of female scientists. She concludes that children need to see the whole range of opportunities as viable choices in order to make the best use of their individual talents and abilities.

Jackie Moody (Luxembourg)

A carousel of ideas for teaching...hands on!

Reports of workshops by Dorothy Coombs (UK), Wolfgang Augustin (Germany), Jackie Moody (Luxembourg), Harpa Hafsteinsdóttir, (Iceland) Astrid Scherrebeck, (Denmark), Heather Taylor, (UK), Marjatta Lehtovirta, (Finland) and Morag Williamson (Scotland).

The Wannsee conference in Berlin is the first EFPTA event that I have attended so the carousel workshop was my introduction to working and mixing with my European colleagues. It was a very active session led with enthusiasm by Jackie and Harpa – thank you ladies! It kicked off with an ice breaker that ensured we got to interact with just about everybody in the workshop – I will definitely be using this in my lessons next term.



The carousel consisted of four varied tasks which included measuring our heights to investigate if there was a correlation with estimates of self-confidence, completing a tarsia research methods puzzle and sharing our favourite teaching ideas. The one I found most fun was making a representation of a well-known psychological concept or study from play dough that others had to identify. The German teachers in my group created some marvellous works of art depicting Piaget's three mountains task, Pavlov's dog and Freud carrying out psychoanalysis. Sadly they really put my attempt at Harlow's monkeys to shame – no one had a clue what I had made.

The session ended with a plenary where we shared teaching ideas from one of the sessions with the whole group. Most memorable were the ideas on role playing from a Russian teacher with the aid of her interpreter and her natural dramatic talent! Overall the workshop was a great way to start a very enjoyable and inspiring weekend.

Ruth Tarrant (UK)

I have found this „workshop in a bag“ a fantastic way to let people know each other and share ideas for teaching. The first activity – a bingo on psychology and the facts about EFPTA brought a lot of fun (especially because at the beginning a half of a group was given wrong sheets 😊). Then we worked in four groups on four different tasks: sharing ideas of a good practice in the classroom, creating an image of



famous psychological theory out of play dough, testing a hypothesis on the correlation between self-confidence and height and solving a puzzle on research methods and mathematics. In our group the most favourite definitely was the play dough activity, which showed how creative psychology teachers are (it does not matter where they come from). The language barriers made some activities more difficult to handle, but funnier too. While solving the tasks we also spot the differences in the curriculum and the teaching standards in different countries. To sum it up the workshop met my expectations – the combination of creativity, problem solving and fun in an international group of enthusiastic psychology teachers. I really enjoyed it.

Lenka Sokolová (Slovakia)

The WannseeForum runs down to the edge of a beautiful lake so your task when reading this report is to count the water related words. If you take the plunge prizes may be available for the winners.

As soon as we entered the lovely Kaminsaal and saw the playdough the word 'icebreakers' drifted through



our psyche's leaving a ripple of anxiety! Although why the Finnish and Icelandic attendees need help from the Brits and the Deutsche on breaking ice is anyone's guess! However sitting around the tables listening to the instructions a warm current of gleeful competitiveness welled up and we cast off flushed with the thought of victory. So in the name of international co-operation we dived in to create playdough sculptures of psychological concepts, carry out a correlational study into the relationship between height and confidence in speaking in public, tapped our knowledge to share our best teaching ideas and put together a mathematical tarsia puzzle (now who thought psychologists were arithmetically numerate??) Our worries were flushed away, submerged in general hilarity and doused in a river of goodwill as we waded back and forth through the language barrier, which proved to be no barrier at all, just an excuse to unpick cultural conundrums as we bailed each other out. No-one got steamed up, we all enjoyed it and so the conference set sail.

Q. What did Poseidon say to Psyche? A. Nothing, he just waved
Answer 15 water related words at least!!

Sonya Barrow (UK)

High school students and university students – a collaborative project in the pedagogy of psychology

Report of a presentation by students of Goethe-Schule Harburg and Universität Hamburg, (Teacher: Annette Lindner)

At the EFPTA conference this year we were treated to a presentation by Psychology students from Goethe-Schule, Harburg. Their teacher had set up a collaborative project with the local university. This involved reciprocal learning between the school and university students.

The results of the project were uplifting and exciting. As the university students were studying such topics as perception, communication, mental disorder and their therapies, so they were able to go to the school and pass on their newly learned knowledge to the school students, who were preparing presentations on similar topics.

The school students emphasised how much freer this learning experience was compared to their usual learning process. They were pleased that differentiation between students was absent, as the university students had no preconceived ideas about their abilities. Interactive tasks such as adding one's own personality traits to a giant poster of a clown aided the transition towards learning about theories of personality and moral development.

We then heard about the experiences of two of the university students involved in the project. They pointed out how, rather than simply learning a new topic, they were able to put it to immediate use for passing on to the school students. This they found very satisfying. Moreover, they were given university credits for this, so it did not exact an extra toll on their time.

Finally, we were introduced to the brave teacher Annette Lindner who put this brilliant idea into practice. She had been modestly keeping in the background whilst her 17 students related and enthused about this creative project.

It is hoped that members of the EFPTA audience will now go forth and set up similar projects for their own students.

Jacky Childs (UK)

Join the class! Why do groups sometimes make really bad decisions? The effect of shared information

Report of a presentation by Michael Bürger (Germany)

This was an ambitious session designed to involve genuine High School students from the previous session in a lesson simulation to demonstrate the socio-psychological effect that the bringing together of unshared information can have on a group decision, compared to control groups where all the group members have been given all the information. Not deterred by the students leaving the conference straight after their session, so unavailable to participate in this, Michael recruited student teachers and teachers at the conference to role play students and observers. One of the extra variables this introduced was the language difficulty issue, as some participants (either group members or observers) were not using their first familiar language. Some groups used German and some English. Materials were available in both languages.

The 'students' were divided into five groups of three, each group given an animal name, Flies, Scorpions, Foxes, Dolphins and Mantas, each group was assigned an observer for the discussion phase of the activity. Although unaware of which group had which condition initially, to avoid demand characteristics, Flies and Scorpions were the control group, where all participants had all the information, whilst the other three were experimental groups, where some of the information was not given, but was to be shared in the discussion phase.

The materials, tasks and conditions:

Each student was provided with a scenario of a job application where there were two competing candidates. It was their task to write notes about the candidates from the information they had been given, then, only using these notes, discuss in groups of three and come to a decision about which candidate should get the job. During the discussion phase observers should note whether all the material was discussed and what emotional responses were shown. The information about the candidates was primed to give 'Mr Baker' the edge where all candidates were given all the positive and negative information about both candidates. However in the experimental condition, each member of a group of three only received a third of the positive information on 'Mr Baker' but all the negative information. If groups are not sharing effectively in the discussion phase, they will vote against 'Mr. Baker' and for the rival, 'Mr. Adams' (The concept from the original paper by Stasser and Titus, 1985)

Results

This is the risky side of teaching through activity, especially in front of a curious audience at the conference. As expected the two control groups chose Mr. Baker, no arguments. However the experimental groups showed interesting variation. One group all chose Mr. Baker. Were they good at sharing the information? In the other groups the shared information caused confusion and at least

one group member chose Mr. Adams. The beauty of this replication of the study is that it can be used to open up a discussion of group processes, introduce Social Psychology or be used as a critical analysis of research methods.

Heather Taylor (UK)

Developing psychological thinking in pre-university psychology courses

Workshop leaders: Lenka Sokolová (Slovakia), Miroslava Lemešová (Slovakia) and Udo Kittler (Germany)

The lovely workshop was held in an assembly-room in the Atrium during a sunny Saturday afternoon. We were about fifteen people altogether and the first task was to take apart a wooden puzzle cross, one on each table, and then re-join it. For some of us it took longer time, but cooperation and communication was the underlying purpose of the activity, and finally we solved it together. As a college-teacher of psychology, philosophy and ethics I got some new aspects after the session to psychology and I reminisced how important the philosophical discussion is to psychology. The discipline psychology is not only for intrapersonal understanding and those close at hand, but can be aimed at biases and prejudices in broader sense. The emphasis of the workshop was on how people read everyday messages from facial expressions and cultural standpoint, i.e. how European neighbours view each other. The undercurrent of the workshop in my mind, became the concerns we all have about Europe's future and how psychology can increase understanding among the many nations that make up the continent. Thank you Lenka Sokolová and Miroslava Lemešová for a well-prepared workshop and the illustration of biases in everyday thinking.

Bjarni Guðmundsson (Iceland)

How can teachers work together to help their students and institution to function better?

Workshop leader: Teija Jokinen-Luopa (Finland)

On the second day of the conference I attended the workshop about how European teachers can work together. The reason why I chose this workshop was at first to learn about teaching of psychology in various European countries and also to meet and become acquainted with new colleagues and thereby change experiences.

What I found was a very motivating and enthusiastic lecturer coming from Helsinki and teaching there at a big high school with almost 100 different nationalities. Of course, when there are so many different languages and migrants being taught at that kind of school, you

have to consider probable language problems. I was - as a teacher with migration background in Germany - quite interested in how to solve that kind of problems because we've been having these problems for decades with migrants in Germany. The solution was called collaboration between language teacher and subject teacher!

Ahmet Atasoy (Germany)

Developing the psychological literacy of parents of young children: Overcoming the uncertainty of young children

Workshop leaders: Olga Zvereva (Russia) and Raisa Chumicheva (Russia)

This workshop focused on the increasingly popular trend, in Russia, for parents of some young children in the kindergarten to be trained, either in groups or individually, in "psychological literacy". The purpose of this training is to support parents in building their relationship with a child who is showing signs of insecurity or uncertainty.

We started by building up a picture of the "socially uncertain" child by sharing ideas in small groups. (Potential language issues were reduced by having an interpreter and one Russian delegate who teaches in England, and is therefore fluent in English). There was general agreement on what the emotional and behavioural symptoms of "uncertainty" are so we moved on to discuss the possible causes. Why might a child fail to demonstrate love toward his/her parent or, conversely, why may parents appear not to love their child.

In a role play activity we explored the various behaviours that parents can show towards their children as they attempt to carry out an unfamiliar task. These included appropriate responses that would encourage the child, and some that were less appropriate! Although this was rather amusing the message was clear...parents should avoid ridicule, name calling and intimidation and instead should provide support and encouragement, verbal praise and possibly the withdrawal of privileges like watching TV or playing computer games rather than physical punishment in cases of unacceptable behaviour.

In their presentation Raisa and Olga referred to the work of Russian psychologists such as Repina Smoleva, who argues that insecure behaviours in children are a symptom of emotional states such as anxiety and fear of failure, and Lev Vygotsky who proposed the concept of a "zone of proximal development". The full presentation will be available on the EFPTA web site www.efpta.org.

Dorothy Coombs, President of EFPTA (UK)

The psychology of personal appearance

Workshop leader: Joe Cocker (UK)

It was my first time attending an EFPTA conference and going through the program I noticed the name Joe Cocker who was to lead one of the workshops, and I wondered could it be. It turned out to be Joe Cocker alright (but not that one). At the celebration of EFPTA 10th anniversary Friday night, Joe gave a short speech. Joe had a very engaging way of speaking, and I looked forward to his workshop about the psychology of personal appearance the following day.

Joe Cocker started the workshop with an exercise that I myself am going to use the next time I teach communication, appearance and how we form stereotypical opinions of each other. Joe had us imagine that someone we did not know walked through the door and asked us to mention what we would base our judgment of that person on. We mentioned age, height, weight, sex, sexual orientation, confidence, eye contact, social class, political standpoint etc. Joe then turned our attention to fashion, and how people and especially young women experience pressure because of fashion, and that the media, TV, magazines, the social media all contribute to the pressure that young women experience. Fashion should in this connection not be understood merely as clothes, but also fashion when it comes to weight, how to live our lives etc. There has always been a focus on personal appearance, but today young people seem to feel the pressure of fashion more than ever.

Joe referred to a book by Emma Woolf (granddaughter of Virginia Woolf) called the "Ministry of Thin - How the pursuit of perfection got out of control" in which she discusses the pressure there is on young women not only when it comes to fashion but also when it comes to beauty, age, sex, food, fat, diets, gym, detox, success etc. Emma Wolf being a former anorectic would know this firsthand. Joe also referred to a project made with 14-15 years old who all had a problem with self- esteem, self- image, relationships and sexual health. The girls were taught to critique adverts and be more critical about fashion, and the result of the project was that the girls gained better self-confidence and self-esteem.

All in all, I would say that the topic and some of the things we discussed were not new to me as such, but it is an interesting topic which is important to be aware of and to discuss. Joe also brought our attention to the fact that young men are starting to feel the pressure as well as the young women. As expected Joe was an excellent speaker, and I look forward to reading Emma Woolf's book.

Britta Skovbro-Rasmusse (Denmark)

Twinning classes: Student and teachers collaborating across borders

Workshop leaders: Dorothy Coombs and Renate Schrempf

Not only did I have the honour of attending this wonderful conference, but also I selected to attend the above workshop. The two presenters (known well to attendees past and present) Dorothy and Renate are a formidable team. They presented with consummate ease and enchanted us all.

This conference is about European collaboration and this workshop and indeed the whole conference presented so many wonderful ideas. Not only shared projects, research and peer friendships across borders. All of which are admirable but alas often fail to find fruition.

This conference was a revelation in that two groups of students (Slovakian and German) actually had the pleasure (or is it audacity) to present research to a hall full of international teachers. Wow, they were so relaxed and professional. A true credit to their teachers and the future of psychology.

Collaborating across borders is the way forward not just in psychology, but in all walks of life and I look forward to the next EFPTA conference in 2016 (destination to be confirmed)...

Let's see more students attending, meeting and presenting.

Andy McCarthy (UK)

Climate change in the classroom: Can psychology teaching help us save the planet?

Workshop leader: Morag Williamson (Scotland)

Once upon a time a small group of psychology teachers and some students who still struggle to become some, sat at a beautiful day at the WannseeForum in Berlin and listened with joy to the words and warnings of Morag Williamson about how we psychology teachers could help to save the planet.

Soon it was clear that we as teachers are supposed to reach young people in schools to change attitudes and behavior by using psychology and call attention to this important topic. And Ms Williamson even told us some specific teaching methods to raise the attention of our students. Like outdoor education, storytelling style for younger children, computer or online games, traditional board games or even a botanic garden visit. The aim of eco-psychology should be that the students understand, that everyone is responsible and can help to reduce the climate change by individual behaviour changes. But then a teacher with

inquisitive mind raised his hand and asked „But is it even possible that we few, we little few, we band of psychology teachers can change the beliefs of people and mankind?“ „Well“ said Ms Williamson „If you think you are too small to change a thing you have never been in bed with a mosquito.“

Martin Behrendt (Germany)

High impact teaching strategies

Workshop leader: Jackie Moody (Luxembourg)

This fun workshop really stayed with me. It was so practical and I came away with several new ideas for teaching, some of which I have already tried out. The workshop was all about learning by doing. We were the students and Jackie, our fantastic workshop leader, was the teacher. It was great to get a student perspective on the strategies by trying them out ourselves, seeing what worked well and considering what we could do differently.

Our first exercise as a class was lining up events in psychology in order from oldest to newest. While being an excellent team-work exercise it also revealed some gaps in our knowledge, this was harder than it sounds! We did several other exercises but my favourite was a co-operative teaching strategy where we were split into four groups of four. Each group was given a short story to study which was memorized by drawing it on one quarter of a large piece of paper. Three participants from each group went as “ambassadors” to each of the other groups to learn their stories, while one stayed at “home” teaching the story to the visiting ambassadors. On the ambassadors’ return to home, they taught the rest of the group the stories they had learned by drawing them in the other three quarters of the paper. This was an excellent teaching/learning strategy for many reasons. The drawing component forced us to focus on the key points of the story and made them really memorable. It was also a great social skills exercise in listening and conveying information to others. An added bonus was that this was a lot of fun; some of the drawings were hilarious! I can imagine this strategy being useful for studying certain psychological concepts, I recently tried it out using examples of evolutionary psychology and it was a great success.

We had so much fun during the workshop that no one realized that the time was up, I think most people were disappointed that we didn’t get to stay for longer. I would love to attend similar workshops in the future and to be able to learn and share teaching ideas and strategies more often with fellow psychology teachers.

Sólrún Ósk Lárusdóttir (Iceland)

Hamburg psychology students' video project

Workshop leader: Diana Schulze

The second workshop I attended contained one of the most interesting presentations I ever listened to. Young students from Hamburg presented their experiment on the perception of attractiveness by females. They checked if female teenagers gave their telephone numbers when they were asked by a boy firstly with a musical instrument, secondly with a sports bag and thirdly without any equipment. Interestingly, the results showed that girls were more willing to give their numbers when they were asked by a boy carrying a musical instrument. In other words, that was the reason why I bought a guitar and started to attend guitar lessons. Seriously, this sort of an experiment clearly shows what young students are capable of. In the near future, I definitely want to propose my students to conduct the same or similar experiment on attractiveness.

Ahmet Atasoy (Germany)

EFPTA goes global

A report from the 28th International Congress of Applied Psychology
Paris-France, July 2014

The European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations (EFPTA) is affiliated to the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA), and in Autumn 2013 we were asked to take part in an "invited" symposium at the 28th International Congress of Applied Psychology (ICAP) at the Palais des Congrès de Paris. This symposium was part of the "Transversal" (cross-divisional) programme, and the title was



"Teaching Psychology in Europe: Perspectives of the EFPA Board of Educational Affairs". Our presentation was one of four that covered the teaching of psychology from secondary (pre-tertiary) level through to employability of psychology graduates. Findings of an EFPA survey about the teaching of psychology to non-psychologists in Higher Education were reported, as well as some perspectives on the state of undergraduate psychology across Europe. The EFPTA presentation was delivered by Renate Schrempp (Germany) and Dorothy Coombs (UK), who are members of the EFPA's Board of Educational Affairs (BEA).



The main focus of our presentation was on the value to individuals and society as a whole of having the opportunity to learn about psychology at school. We described how increasing psychological literacy can enhance people's lives, and how the transferable skills that students develop through studying psychology could be of significant importance if they progress to higher education, whatever subject they take. You can find the presentation via the "ICAP news" item on the EFPTA web-site www.efpta.org.

Preparing a presentation of this nature posed some interesting challenges because, while much of the vocabulary in the subject matter in psychology is common across many languages, there were subtle differences in some of the terminology relating to psychology education. Even the abstract took much longer to develop than one would imagine and we were very happy when, in November 2013, it was accepted by the ICAP Scientific Program Committee who claim to have enjoyed reading over 5000 abstracts. You can find all the abstracts at www.icap2014.com

A conference on this scale is an awesome experience. The programme booklet ran to 608 pages, there were 18 Divisional programs, a Transversal program and the “Programme Francophone” which ran in parallel to the English speaking event. It took place over three



floors and in dozens of rooms, and there were e-stations in open spaces where brief oral presentations “popped up”. All presentations were loaded on the ICAP system in advance (we took ours the day before just to be on the safe side) and once the slide show started there was a strict time limit at which point it simply switched off! I’d like to bet that some of our students wished this would happen!

At 350 euros for one day (and that didn’t include coffee or tea, let alone lunch) the ICAP event couldn’t match an EFPTA or ATP conference in terms of value for money, but we are confident that we raised awareness of the importance of pre-tertiary psychology amongst branches of the psychology professions which were previously beyond our reach. The opportunity to address an international audience marked a significant milestone in the relatively short history of EFPTA. After only 10 years we have made it on to a very prestigious platform and are proud to have done so.

Dorothy Coombs, President of EFPTA

Mampaey, E., Coombs, D., Schrempf, R. & Stuchlikova, I. (2014, July) Psychological literacy: teaching psychology at the secondary school (pre-tertiary) level. In S. Dutke (Chair) Teaching Psychology in Europe – Perspectives of the EFPA Board of Educational Affairs. Symposium conducted at the International Congress of Applied Psychology, Paris. Retrieved from:

<https://b-com.mci-group.com/Abstract/Statistics/AbstractStatisticsViewPage.aspx?AbstractID=183173>

EFPTA has a contact to APA (USA)



EFPTA Secretary Udo Kittler has received and exchanged several emails with representatives of the American Psychological Association (APA) which should be reported to our member associations and individual members. Maria Vita and Emily Leary Chesnes are our contact persons and we are pleased to publish their interesting statement:

The APA Teachers of Psychology in Secondary Schools (TOPSS)

by

Emily Leary Chesnes, American Psychological Association, Washington, DC
Michael McLane, Sterling Heights High School, Sterling Heights, MI

The American Psychological Association (APA) is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and the world's largest association of psychologists. With nearly 130,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students as its members, APA's mission is to advance the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives.

APA has been committed to the teaching of high school psychology for several decades. Since the 1970s, high school teachers have been able to join APA as Teacher Affiliates. In 1992, the APA Council of Representatives created the APA Teachers of Psychology in Secondary Schools (TOPSS) to serve as an APA membership group for high school psychology teachers. A nine-member TOPSS Committee provides leadership for the larger group and is part of APA's governance structure.

Today the TOPSS Committee is a vibrant team of educators committed to ensuring that high school psychology teachers have the resources they need to teach psychological science to high school students. The high school classroom is often the first, and possibly the only, time students have the opportunity to learn about psychology. The full mission of TOPSS can be found through its website (<http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/topss/index.aspx>). In general, TOPSS promotes excellence in the teaching of psychological science at the high school level through the *National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula*; meets the curricular, professional development and networking needs of high school psychology teachers; provides opportunities for high school psychology teachers and their students to be recognized and rewarded for their excellence; increases the professional identity and leadership opportunities for high school psychology teachers; and enhances the visibility of psychological science as a means of promoting health, education and human welfare.

There are currently about 2,000 TOPSS members. Our membership includes teachers from the United States, Canada, and approximately 20 countries! We invite all high school psychology teachers to join us. Membership is \$50/year, and teachers can apply for membership through the TOPSS website above.

TOPSS is a very active group; ongoing TOPSS opportunities and resources include:

- *National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula*: Available online at <http://www.apa.org/education/k12/national-standards.aspx>, this document outlines what students should know and be able to do after completing the high school psychology course
- TOPSS Unit Lesson Plans for high school teachers, each with content, activities, and resources for different units of introductory psychology (there are currently 20 unit lesson plans)
- APA/Clark University Workshop for High School Teachers: Sponsored by APA, the American Psychological Foundation and Clark University, this three day workshop is held each summer at the Clark campus in Worcester, MA
- TOPSS-sponsored sessions at the annual APA Convention
- New TOPSS webinars on topics of interest to high school teachers
- TOPSS Competition for High School Psychology Students: This annual essay competition awards up to four \$250 scholarships to winning students
- Academic Achievement in Psychology Certificates: These certificates are provided each spring so that teachers can recognize outstanding student achievement
- APA TOPSS Charles T. Blair-Broeker Excellence in Teaching Awards: These annual awards recognize outstanding psychology teachers
- Other resources, including mass mailings, psychology posters for the high school classroom, and support of high school student research

All TOPSS members receive the monthly *APA Monitor on Psychology* magazine, which provides the latest news and research findings in psychology, as well as the *American Psychologist* journal. Members can also subscribe to receive the *Psychology Teacher Network* (PTN) newsletter, a quarterly publication for psychology teachers. PTN can be accessed online at <http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/ptn/index.aspx>.

We encourage you to visit the TOPSS website to learn more about our programs and initiatives. Again, all high school teachers are welcome to join us. Psychology teachers in Europe might also be particularly interested in APA's *National Standards*, as mentioned above. A new policy document also outlines the recommended training for high school teachers; see the *Guidelines for Preparing High School Psychology Teachers: Course-Based and Standards-Based Approaches* available through the TOPSS website.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact 2014 TOPSS Chair Michael McLane of Sterling Heights High School (Sterling Heights, MI), at mclane@wcskids.net or Emily Leary Chesnes of the APA Education Directorate at eleary@apa.org or 1-202-572-3013.