Psychology

School of Social Sciences

August 2017

Welcome to the latest Psychology newsletter

In this month's newsletter, you'll find the regular updates on our activities, from learning and teaching achievements, new grants and publications, to the conferences and outreach events we've been part of.

To keep up to date with the latest news from the team as it happens, follow us on Twitter @HWPsych, or find us on Facebook.

Links: Social Sciences | Psychology | Twitter | Facebook

The newsletter displays best on tablets (PDF attached also).

The robots are coming!

An inter-disciplinary team, involving students and academics from across the University, appeared on the CBBC channel this month on the long-running magazine programme, Blue Peter.

The show was co-hosted by Pepper, one of the University's artificially intelligent social robots and featured an interview with psychologist Dr Thusha Rajendran from the School of Social Sciences as he guides children's presenter Barney through current robotics research. Read more...

If you missed the show, you can catch up on BBC iPlayer here.

Follow our updates on Twitter @HWPsych

Forthcoming events

What Keeps You Sharp?
15 & 19 August,
New Town Theatre
(Edinburgh Fringe).
View trailer | Tickets

Our **Psychology Research Seminars** will restart in the new semester; details will follow in future newsletters.

Latest publications

Our latest publications are listed here, but you can find a full list via the Heriot-Watt Research Portal.

Scocchia, L., Paroli, M., Stucchi, N. A., & Sedda, A. (2017). Spatial Alignment and Response Hand in Geometric and Motion Illusions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8, 1169. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01169

Grajfoner, D., Harte, E., Potter, L. M., & McGuigan, N. (2017). The effect of dog-assisted intervention on student well-being, mood, and anxiety. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* (Special Issue Animal Assisted Interventions and Activities for Health and Wellbeing), 14, 483. doi:10.3390/ijerph14050483

Garraffa, M. (2017). Book review: Contemporary and emergent theories of agrammatism. A neurolinguistics approach, by J. Durks. *Aphasiology*. doi: 10.1080/02687038.2017.1355438

New funding

Calia, C. Conference funding to attend Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC), London. Alzheimer's Society. £1500, July 2017.

Chondrogianni, V., Garraffa, M. & Bak, T. Supporting children with language disorders in primary Gaelic medium schools. Bòrd na Gàidhlig. £85,580.40, September 2017-August 2018.

Bell, C. (Communities Along the Carron Association). Cycling Without Age. European Social Fund/Scottish Government Social Innovation Fund, £36,460, July-October 2017. Named research partner: Gow, A.

Ferre, E., Sedda, A. & Cocchini, G. Workshop "The multi-faceted body: Updates into body representation and embodiment" (June 2018, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh) funded by the Experimental Psychology Society. http://www.eps.ac.uk/index.php/eps-funded-workshops

In the news

Heriot-Watt University Dubai Campus Graduation Ceremony

City of Edinburgh will lead UK in robotics revolution through City Deal

Volunteers needed for new ageing research (Alan Gow)

Brain health in later life (Alan Gow)

Minister visits Heriot-Watt University widening access summer school (Maria Garraffa)

Heriot-Watt Researchers explore Dangerous Ideas (Alan Gow)

Hypnosis during pregnancy (Zuhrah Beevi)

Future proofing our graduates amidst the human revolution

Cycling project helping older people to get on their bikes (Alan Gow)

Conferences and outreach activities

Don't forget to catch up on Thusha's Blue Peter appearance on BBC iPlayer.

Mario Parra coordinated the Alzheimer's Society/Alzheimer's Association South American Consortium Meeting held during the Alzheimer's Association International Conference in London last month. The meeting brought together more than 30 Dementia Research Leaders from South and North America to discuss strategies for harmonization of dementia strategies across the developing and developed world.

Our Psychology Research Seminars will restart in the new semester; details will follow in future newsletters.

The team regularly present at national and international conferences and at a range of public engagement events. A selection of the most recent include:

Calia, C., Backhouse, E. V., Pattan, V., Clafferty, R., Starr, J. M., Della Sala, S., & Parra, M. A. (2017). Do Semantic Clustering Deficits Underpin Long-Term Memory Binding Impairments in Prodromal AD? Alzheimer's Association International Conference, London, UK, 16th-20th July.

Calia, C., Parra, M. A., Hoefeijzers, S., & Lim, M. (2017). Virtual Reality Assessment and Intervention System for the frail and cognitively impaired older adult (VRAIS). Alzheimer Scotland Annual Conference, Edinburgh, UK, 2nd June.

Grajfoner, D., McGuigan, N. & Potter, L. (2017). Animal assisted interventions with young people. Child-Animal Interaction Research Conference, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK, 28th July.

Grajfoner, D. & Rojon, C. (2017). Exploring academic leadership: Definition and development. European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology (EAWOP) 2017 Congress, University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland, 17th-20th May.

Parra, M. A., Yassuda, M. S, Nitrini, R., Brucki, S. M. B., Cappa, S. F., Pomati, S., Lopera, F., Stamate, A., Guinea, S. F., Frank, A., Olazarán, J., Pattan, V., Clafferty, R., Starr, J. M., & Della Sala, S. (2017). A Transcultural Cognitive Marker of Alzheimer's Disease. Alzheimer's Association International Conference, London, UK, 16th-20th July.

Parra, M. A, Gazes, Y., Stern, Y. (2017). From Cognition to Molecules: Tracking Brain Amyloid-ß with Memory Markers for Alzheimer's Disease. Alzheimer's Association International Conference, London, UK, 16th-20th July.

Rajendran, G. (2017). Social Robotics: a developmental psychopathological approach. Digital Education Research Group, School of Education, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK, 29th June.

Yassuda, M. S., Amore, M., Della Sala, S., & Parra, M. A. (2017). The Short-Term Memory Binding Test Differentiates Alzheimer Disease from Behavioural Variant Frontotemporal Dementia Patients with Amnestic Deficits. Alzheimer's Association International Conference, London, UK, 16th-20th July.

Learning and teaching

Nicola Sobieraj, who held a Vacation Scholarship, has been appointed as a Research Assistant to work on the project: Health and informatics framework for the assessment and intervention of elderly people at risk of dementia with Mario Parra and colleagues. Read more...

Professional development

Gerardo Fernandez (Universidad Nacional Del Sur, Buenos Aires, Argentina) will spend 6 months in Psychology from August 2017. He will develop a standardised procedure for the evaluation of cognitive abilities from the recording and modelling of eye movements. The main objective is to achieve an early diagnosis for disease. The work will deepen the analysis and understanding of eye movement behaviors, working memory performance, attentional processes and binding tasks.

Research in the Department of Psychology, School of Social Sciences, at Heriot-Watt University is grouped by three main themes: Cognition, Brain and Behaviour; Lifespan Health and Wellbeing; and Work, Society and Environment. Find out more about our research at www.psych.hw.ac.uk or follow updates on Twitter @HWPsych.