SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH TRAINING & COLLABORATION CONTINUES
Between The Netherlands, Sweden and UK

Thank you for your continued support of our international doctoral training programme. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide an update on recent activities and invite your continued contribution to research. The key objective of our programme is to prepare a new generation of high-calibre researchers in Legal Psychology with cross-European expertise in legal, forensic and security domains.

There are currently eighteen PhD students conducting research under the auspices of House of Legal Psychology – six new students joined the programme in September 2017.

Students on the programme take part in a very competitive and highly selective process to secure their place in the programme. The current cohort has an international profile, hailing variously from the U.S., Canada, Republic of Korea, Ghana, Brazil, Serbia and Europe.

Training to date has focused on investigative interviewing with children and adults, intelligence gathering and the detection of deception. Our students have also defended their developing expert opinions in a mock courtroom setting.

The research projects currently underway represent a wide range of topics relevant to European policing, security, investigations, intelligence gathering and crime, in addition to experimental approaches to inform psychological theory. Where relevant, we have consulted with our programme partners and other relevant practitioners to ensure the research is informed by current practice and the applied experience.

We look forward to continuing this vibrant and mutually beneficial research collaboration. If you would like to find out more about research underway on the programme, please see: http://legalpsychology.eu/

PHD GRADUATES: RECENT SUCCESSES

Haneen Deeb successfully defended her research “(In)consistencies as a Cue to Deceit” in Portsmouth on Sept. 8 2017 and at a public defense in Gothenburg on Sept. 11th 2017. She is currently a researcher at the University of Portsmouth.

Renate Geurts successfully defended her research “Separating real threats from bluffs: Positioning threats within the socio-legal studies on true and false intentions” in Portsmouth on Sept. 1st. and at a public defense in Gothenburg on Sept. 15th 2017. She recently started her new post as Board member of the Association of European Threat Assessment Professionals (AETAP).

Tanja van Veldhuizen is now working in a postdoctoral role at the Montaigne Centre for Judicial Administration and Conflict Resolution and Nathalie Brackmann as a quality and research manager in a forensic clinic in Zurich, Switzerland.

Andrew Clark, also a recent graduate of the programme, is a Lecturer in Forensic Psychology at the University of Bedfordshire.

Congratulations to all!
Completed PhD Research

- **Proving claims of asylum seekers: measuring knowledge of people and places** (T. van Veldhuizen)

  This research concerns credibility assessment in the European asylum procedure. The central research question focuses on how best immigration services can assess whether asylum seekers are veracious about their identity, origin, and past experiences when other evidence for their claims is lacking. The main focus is on methods of questioning and the potential and limitations of human memory.

- **Regulating and reporting in eyewitness memory: Failing to retrieve or failing to report?** (A. Clark)

  This research is concerned with the consequences of nonbelieved memories, and their relationship with memory omissions, testing the hypothesis that undermining people’s belief will result in them developing a nonbelieved memory (which will be withheld in subsequent memory tests).

- **Social influences on the Metacognitive Regulation of Eyewitness Memory Reports** (J. Rechdan)

  This research seeks to explain the effects of social influence manipulations on metacognitive monitoring and control processes in eyewitness reports through the Revised Dual Criterion Model (Ackerman & Goldsmith, 2008), examining potential changes in the amount and degree of detail provided by eyewitnesses, as well as their reported level of confidence in their recollections, as influenced by social comparison, conformity, and the introduction of misinformation by social means.

- **Are children really the poorer eyewitnesses? An analysis of counter intuitive developmental trends in eyewitness identifications, memory and suggestibility** (N. Brackmann)

  Many professionals believe that children’s eyewitness accounts are inferior to statements made by adults. This research project challenges these sometimes unfounded assumptions by looking at memory processes that may undergo a counter intuitive developmental trend. Under forensically relevant conditions, children can provide accurate and exhaustive memory reports and sometimes children might be even less prone to memory distortions and erroneous witness reports than adults.

- **Tactical aspects of the SUE technique: The effect of tactical disclosure of evidence on suspects’ counter interrogation strategies** (S. Tekin)

  This research focuses on suspects’ counter-interrogation strategies as one of the factors that determine the amount of information they disclose in an interview. By using the Strategic Use of Evidence (SUE) technique, we aim to examine to what extent it is possible to alter liars’ strategies (from a less to a more forthcoming strategy) and elicit new information.

- **Eyewitness identification in the case of multiple perpetrator crimes** (N. Tupper)

  Despite the fact that a large number of violent crimes are committed by multiple perpetrators, and that the rising rate of those crimes is a global phenomenon, little is known about eyewitness identification in the context of multiple perpetrator crimes. This research examines the memory and decision processes of eyewitnesses making multiple identifications, as well as perceptions and practices of officials that administer such identifications.

- **Separating genuine threats from bluffs** (R. Geurts)

  This research examines i) whether ‘bluffers’ and genuine ‘threateners’ avail of different cognitive processes when thinking or speaking about their threat and ii) whether these differences can be elicited during interviews with those who make threats.

- **In(Consistencies) as a cue to deceit** (H. Deeb)

  This research examines new strategic and cognitive interviewing techniques that increase the differences in liars’ and truth-tellers’ between-statement consistency as well as statement-evidence consistency. It also investigates consistency when liars use strategies to counteract these interviewing techniques.
Current PhD Research

- **Behavioural indicators of confirmation bias and expectancy effects during suspect interrogations** (N. Adams-Quackenbush)
  This research investigates the phenomena of confirmation bias and expectancy effects in relation to investigative interviews. The focus of this research is to understand how police officers’ beliefs may lead to the creation of confirmation bias in an investigative interview, to study how the presence of confirmation bias and expectancy effects influence suspect and interviewer behaviour, and to determine whether certain types of investigative interviews are more effective in reducing confirmation bias and expectancy effects.

- **Inducing disclosure in HUMINT interviews** (D. Neequaye)
  An emerging body of research suggests that interviewees in human intelligence contexts can be persuaded to disclose information by priming certain concepts and motivations that promote disclosure. This research examines the underlying mechanisms that leads a primed interview to disclose (or withhold) information.

- **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the Courts: In Search for the Evidence Finding a solution to a problem of malingering of PTSD in forensic context** (I. Boskovic)
  This research is based on testing different methods of deception detection and then applying those methods in cases of PTSD. The importance of this project is not only theoretical, but also practical. Malingering is a common problem in case of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). There are many possible benefits if a person has this diagnosis, which makes it appealing to malingers. Additionally, PTSD includes number of subjective symptoms that are easy to fabricate. For those reasons, this research is firstly focused on detecting useful methods that can contribute to detection of malingering subjective symptoms. By applying different methods in work with real PTSD patients, we should be able to establish specific patterns of symptoms or behavior that are distinctive from malingers'. One of the methods is testing if the people really suffering from PTSD have longer reaction time in color naming trauma related words in Modified Stroop task. Besides that, research includes investigating if truth tellers produce more verifiable details in their statements than malingerers.

- **Strategic regulation and reporting in the alibis of innocent and guilty suspects** (S. Portnoy)
  This research examines factors that may affect the informativeness and accuracy of the information reported by innocent suspects when they provide an alibi to convince an interviewer of their innocence. This research is based on findings showing that innocent suspects struggle to report accurately from memory during police interviews, and may be consequently believed to be guilty. Specifically, we investigate how different pre-alibi instructions may enhance innocent suspects’ memory output during alibi provision. Additionally, we examine the effects of interviewers’ presumed guilt on the quality of the information provided in the alibis of innocent suspects.

- **The development of a memory based lie detection tool** (A. Izotovas)
  This research examines how recall of details changes over time in truthful and deceptive statements. In particular, as time passes some details of the experienced events become naturally forgotten. However, some details are remembered better even after many years. This research will focus on the types of recalled details and differences between truthful and fabricated statements after certain period of the event in question.

- **Strategic order of evidence presentation and questioning: Affect on suspect’s counter-interrogation strategies**. (Meghana Srivatsav)
  This research investigates how evidence can be presented in order to affect the suspect’s verbal counter-interrogation strategies. The research also focuses on effective questioning tactics in order to alter perception of interviewer’s knowledge about the suspect’s role in the crime. By using the Strategic Use of Evidence framework, we aim to test various tactical approaches of questioning and evidence presentation to elicit statement-evidence inconsistencies and alter their perceptions of interviewer’s knowledge.

- **Inside the Minds of Liars: Deceivers’ Strategies and Within-statement Verbal Lie Detection** (Brianna Verigin)
  This research examines how truthful and deceptive elements interact within a single statement and whether such interactions are the product of suspects’ interview strategies. We further aim to establish ways to maximize the differences between lies and truths within statements to i) exploit suspects’ strategies and ii) increase within-statement deception detection accuracy.
· Does chronotype (morningness/eveningness) affect eyewitness performance? (Sergii Yaremenko)
Cognitive performance does not stay constant throughout the day. The so-called circadian rhythms are responsible for variations in a number of neurophysiological factors, which results in time-of-day differences in performance on a number of cognitive tasks. Interestingly, individuals differ in the time of day at which they reach their peak, which has led to a classification into morning, intermediate and evening types. The morning types show higher cognitive performance in the morning than in the afternoon or evening; the opposite is true for the evening types. However, little attention has been paid to a possible role of the synchrony effect in eyewitness memory performance. Could time-of-day optimality be a factor that affects eyewitness memory performance? Is it possible that eyewitnesses could provide less accurate details and be more prone to accept misinformation at their non-optimal compared to optimal time of day? These and other issues are the focus of this project.

· Improving the disclosure of information in forensic interviews: Examining environmental influences. (Katherine Hoogesteyn)
This research aims to investigate environmental influences in forensic interviews, and how environmental factors can affect the interviewer, the interviewee, and their interaction. Additionally, we are interested in examining if the environment can be used to the advantage of the interviewer, by employing environmental manipulation techniques aimed to improve the process of building rapport and facilitate disclosure.

· Keeping it to yourself: the cognitive consequences of strategies to delay disclosure of negative memories (Tameka Romeo)
It is not uncommon for CSA victims to use cognitive strategies (e.g., false denial) as a means of coping with their abusive experiences. An emerging line of research has shown that by denying details, memory for discussed information can become impaired – this is known as denial induced forgetting (i.e., DIF; Otgaar, Howe, Memon, & Wang, 2014; Otgaar, Howe, Smeets, & Wang, 2016). Bearing these facts in mind, this line of research will explore the effects that employed cognitive strategies have on the memory of child sexual abuse (CSA) victims. Legal professionals’ perceptions of CSA victim credibility based on their (victims’) use of such strategies will also be examined.

· The role of metamemory on the discrimination of reliable eyewitnesses (Renan Benigno Saraiva)
Discriminating accurate from inaccurate eyewitness is paramount in the Criminal Justice System. Accurate eyewitnesses provide incriminatory evidence that can be used against a perpetrator, but inaccurate eyewitnesses can have severe consequences in court including miscarriages of justice and wrongful convictions. This research investigates the use of metamemory measures to estimate eyewitness performance in free recall and identification tasks.

· Investigative Interviewing with Uncooperative Witnesses (Alejandra De La Fuente Vilar)
Police rely on witness testimony to advance investigations, however witness cooperation is not always granted. This research aims to examine the reliability of uncooperative witnesses’ testimony during criminal investigations from the perspective of the interviewee and the interviewer. On one hand, it will explore the role of witness cooperation on information disclosure and how it affects later memory for a target event. On the other hand, this research will focus on how interviewers conduct investigative interviews when they must overcome witness resistance, and whether their interviewing approach is effective to elicit information from uncooperative witnesses.

· How to interview to elicit admissions from suspects in denial (Minhwan Jang)
This research aims to explore the impact of evidence on a criminal interview, which has long been ignored in the criminal interview context. First, how criminals perceive evidence held against them and how this perception influences their counter interrogation strategies will be explored. For comparison, police investigators’ evidence perception will be investigated. In addition, criminals’ detectability of whether police really holds incriminating evidence against them and of investigator’s bluff are the other things to look at. Finding the type of cues (verbal or non-verbal) they rely on is another important aspect of this SUE research.

· Unique vs. repeated events in memory (Bruna Ferreira da Silva Calado)
This research examines unique vs. repeated events in true memories and false memories. A plethora of studies concerning the implantation of false memories can be found in the literature; nevertheless, all of them have been replicated with the implantation of a single event. In real life, for most of the false childhood memories for sexual abuse cases, the so called victims usually attest that the “abuse” took place more than once. As much as reality has shown to be possible to implant false memories of repeated events, it is unknown whether people are more (or less) likely to believe a repeated false event when compared with a single false event.
• **Is there a negative effect of stress on eyewitness memory?** (Carey Marr)

  This research examines the effect of stress on eyewitness memory, which has been a subject of debate between the fields of eyewitness and neurobiological research. By applying neurobiological methodology to eyewitness settings, we hope to investigate the role stress plays in both encoding and retrieval recognition and recall, as well as examining nuances in the timing of the stressor (e.g., pre- or post- cortisol peak). We plan to apply stress to varied eyewitness settings, such as a face recognition paradigm and virtual reality crime scenes.

• **Forensic examiner bias and risk assessment** (Jennifer Kamorowski)

  This research examines internal and external influences on forensic mental health evaluators who conduct risk assessments. Risk assessments have significant influence on decision-making in the criminal justice system and are seldom subject to review or validation. However, research about the impact of cognitive biases and heuristics on forensic evaluations is sparse. In particular, few researchers have examined the role of cognitive bias among forensic evaluators at the level of their observations or information-seeking strategies. Furthermore, few studies have examined how potentially biased cognition in observations may affect scoring of actuarial risk assessment instruments and evaluations of risk. A series of experimental studies and surveys will examine forensic mental health evaluators' understanding of cognitive bias, their use of debiasing strategies, and the influence of potentially biasing information on subsequent formulations of offender risk.

• **Cultural influences on perception, retention and eye-witness testimony** (Nkansah Anakwah)

  This research examines cultural variations in perception and retention among eyewitnesses. The testimony given by eyewitnesses depends to a great extent on their perception of a crime event. This study will thus examine comparatively, differences between eyewitnesses from sub-Saharan Africa and Europe to investigate cultural differences in eyewitness testimony. The study will further our understanding of how people from different cultures retain information and form perception of crime events they witness.

• **Falsification in Legal Decision-making** (Enide Maegherman)

  This research examines whether legal decision-making which makes use of falsification as well as verification results in better decisions. Previous research has established the negative influence of confirmation bias on decisions in several areas. Through a number of studies, this research aims to determine whether this also the case for decisions made by the court, and whether falsification can reduce the influence of confirmation bias. This research will look at whether judges’ decisions show evidence of the falsification process, or whether there is a tendency to focus on evidence that supports the belief expressed by the prosecution.

**Publications authored/co-authored by our Doctoral Students**


· Tupper, N., Sauer, J., Sauerland, M., Fu, I., & Hope, L. Face value: Testing the utility of contextual face cues for face recognition. (Manuscript submitted)

Conference Presentations by our Doctoral Students


· Brackmann, N. (2015, July). "Developmental trends in misidentifying a bystander from a lineup” Presentation at EAPL 2015 in Nuremberg, Germany


· Deeb, H., Vrij, A., Hope, L., Mann, S., Granhag, P. A., & Lancaster, G. L. J. (2014, December). Suspects’ consistency in statements concerning two events when different question formats are used. Oral session presented at the Postgraduate Research Presentations Day, University of Portsmouth, Department of Psychology, Portsmouth, United Kingdom.


· Where the truth lies: Within-statement deception detection (pitch presentation). European Association of Psychology and Law (EAPL), Annual Conference in Mechelen, Belgium, from 28th to 31st of May, 2017.


http://streamio.com/api/v1/videos/54f09f8e5b903528360000bf/public_show?link=true&player_id=4e9b6854b35ea80b50000001

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