

## PRACTITIONER PARTNER UPDATE FROM THE HOUSE OF LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY 2015

### ERASMUS MUNDUS JOINT DOCTORATE (EMJD) PROGRAMME

## 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 eight PhD students conducting research under the auspices of House of Legal Psychology, with six new students scheduled to join in September 2015.

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., Lebanon, Turkey, Germany, The Netherlands and England.

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 HOUSE' OFFERS AN  
EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL  
EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF  
LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY AND  
VALUES THE CONTRIBUTION  
OF PRACTITIONER PARTNERS

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/>

### HOUSE OF LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS WIN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AWARDS

Two students from 'The House' programme won student awards at the **European Association for Psychology & Law (EAPL)** conference in St. Petersburg, Russia in June 2014.

**Nathalie Brackmann** took First Prize for her presentation titled: "The impact of testing on the development of false memories".

**Serra Tekin** took Second Prize for her presentation titled: "Strategic interviewing to elicit new information: Making liars more forthcoming".

*Congratulations!*

Our students are keen to disseminate the findings of their research as widely as possible. It is also important their work reaches relevant practitioner audiences. *Read more about their research work overleaf.*

## On-going 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 possibilities 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). This research will further our understanding of eyewitness memory.

- **Social cognition and metamemory** (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 the extent to which inducing cognitive load on interviewees elicits cues to deception. Under such load, liars cannot rehearse their responses, and their consistency across multiple interviews diminishes. This research also investigates whether liars attempt to use countermeasures against these cognitive interviewing techniques.

## Articles authored/co-authored by our Doctoral Students

- Brackmann, N., Otgaar, H., Sauerland, M., & Merckelbach, H. (2015). Children are poor witnesses. Or are they? *In-Mind Magazine*, 24, 1-6.
- Brackmann, N., Otgaar, H., Sauerland, M., & Jelicic, M. (in press). When children are the least vulnerable to false memories: A true case or a case of autosuggestion? *Journal of Forensic Sciences*.
- Clark, A., Nash, R. A., Fincham, G., & Mazzoni, G. (2012). Creating non-believed memories for recent autobiographical events. *PLoS ONE* 7(3). doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0032998.
- Mazzoni, G., Clark, A., & Nash, R. A. (2014). Disowned recollections: Denying true experiences undermines belief in occurrence but not judgments of remembering. *Acta Psychologica*, 145, 139-146.
- Otgaar, H., Howe, M. L., Clark, A., Wang, J., & Merckelbach, H. (in press). What if you went to the police and accused your uncle of abuse? Misunderstandings concerning the benefits of memory distortion: A commentary on Fernández (2015). *Consciousness and Cognition*. doi:10.1016/j.concog.2015.01.015
- Scoboria, A., Memon, A., Gawrylowicz, J. & Clark, A. (in press). Nonbelieved memories across the adult lifespan. *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*.

## Presentations by our Doctoral Students

- Brackmann, N., Otgaar, H., Sauerland, M., Merckelbach, H. (2014, June). *The impact of testing on the development of false memories*. Presentation at the 24th annual conference of the European Association of Psychology and Law (EAPL), St. Petersburg, Russia.
- Brackmann, N., Otgaar, H., Sauerland, M., & Howe, M. L. (2015, June). *The impact of testing on the formation of false memories in different ages*. Presentation accepted for the 11th biennial meeting of the Society for Applied Research in Memory and Cognition (SARMAC), Victoria, BC, Canada.
- Brackmann, N. (2014, November). *Legal professionals' credibility assessments based on age and specificity of a statement*. Presentation at 10th annual meeting of the Nordic Network - Psychology & Law (NNPL), Oslo, Norway.
- Clark, A., Nash R. A., Fincham, G., & Mazzoni, G. (2012, April). *Creating non-believed memories for recent autobiographical events*. Presentation at the Experimental Psychology Society, Hull, UK.
- Clark, A., Hope, L., Otgaar, H., Ost, J., & Sauer, J. (2015, June). *The consequences of not believing: Do non-believed memories result in memory omissions?* Presentation accepted for the Society for Applied Research Memory and Cognition (SARMAC), Victoria, BC, Canada.
- Rechdan, J., Hope, L., Sauerland, M., Ost, J., & Sauer, J. (2015, June). *The effects of social comparative feedback on grain size and confidence in eyewitness reports*. Presentation accepted for the Society for Applied Research Memory and Cognition (SARMAC), Victoria, BC, Canada.
- Geurts, R. (2014, November). *Separating threats from bluffs: a research outline*. Presentation at the 10th annual meeting of the Nordic Network - Psychology & Law (NNPL), Oslo, Norway.
- Tekin, S., Granhag, P. A., & Mac Giolla, E. (2014, June). *Strategic interviewing to elicit new information: Making liars more forthcoming*. Presentation at the annual conference of the European Association of Psychology and Law, Saint Petersburg, Russia
- Tekin, S., Granhag, P. A. & Mac Giolla, E. (2015, March). *Strategic interviewing to elicit admissions: Making guilty suspects more forthcoming*. Presentation accepted for the annual conference of American Psychology and Law Society, San Diego, USA
- Van Veldhuizen, T.S. (2014, October). *When evidence is lacking: Interviewing practice of Swedish asylum officials*. Presentation at the annual conference of the Nordic Network for Psychology and Law, Oslo, Norway.
- Van Veldhuizen, T.S., Horselenberg, R., & Van Koppen, P. (2014, June). *When evidence is lacking: Interviewing and decision practice in the asylum procedure*. Presentation at the annual conference of the European Association for Psychology and Law, Saint Petersburg, Russia.
- Van Veldhuizen, T.S., Van Koppen, P.J., Granhag, P.A., Horselenberg, R., & Landström S. (2015, May). *Credibility assessment of claims about origins: the validity of measuring knowledge of places*. Presentation accepted for the annual conference of Canadian Association for Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, Toronto, Canada.

## Contact

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