

ISPN



Issue 6 - Summer 2008

Welcome to the sixth Social Psychology Newsletter (ISPN), the final issue for this academic year. This is the last opportunity for the academic year to share our news before heading –hopefully- to the sunshine! Summer term was marked by a variety of interesting workshops and events organised by the *Health & Community Group*, which sparked stimulating discussions with students and academics from around the world. The success of the *Social Representation Group* was also marked by the announcement of upcoming projects and high-quality publications. New websites were designed and e-projects are also being launched thanks to the outstanding work of Steve & Steve and Ly. Lots of interesting conferences are also coming up, where students and staff will be representing our Institute. Last but not least, May and June were marked by the arrival of little Robert Howarth-Penkett and Gaia Krieger.

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If you would like your news included in the next issue (to be circulated in the Michaelmas Term of 2009-10) then please email the Editorial Team (Stavroula Tsirogianni, Carlos Bruen, Ali Chryssides or Cathy Vaughan)

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

HEALTH, COMMUNITY & DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Chronic Disease and African Communities Research, Practice and Policy



The
British
Academy

UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE



NOGUCHI MEMORIAL
INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL
RESEARCH

ISP hosted the second annual workshop of the **UK-Africa Academic Partnership on Chronic Disease** on June 23rd and 24th at St Clements Building. The UK-Africa Academic Partnership on Chronic Disease (hereafter the Partnership) was established in 2006 with funding awarded by the British Academy to *Dr Ama de-Graft Aikins* (University of Cambridge) and *Dr Daniel Kojo Arhinful* (Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, University of Ghana) (see <http://www.britac.ac.uk/funding/awards/intl/afriacapartnerships.html>).

The Partnership had four goals:

1. To integrate social and biomedical science research on chronic diseases of public health significance in Africa and for African communities in the UK through collaborative research between partners;
2. To contribute to chronic disease policies in the West African sub-region by disseminating evidence-based research and intervention to policy makers;

3. To offer postgraduate teaching, training and support in West Africa and in the UK on Africa-centred chronic disease research, intervention and policy through teaching exchanges and research internships; and
4. To disseminate partnership research and related activities to academic, health practitioner/policy and lay audiences through annual meetings, publications and public education projects.

The partnership is currently made up of 31 partners from institutions in the UK (12), Ghana (12), Nigeria (3), Burkina Faso (1), Benin (1), Kenya (1) and Cameroon (1). Partners' disciplines include anthropology, biological sciences (biochemistry, pharmacology), biomedicine (psychiatry, public health, epidemiology), geography, nutrition, psychology (clinical, cognitive, social) and sociology/demography. Collectively partners have research expertise on asthma, cancers, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, mental and neuro-degenerative disorders and sickle-cell disease.

In its first year the Partnership achieved a number of goals. It facilitated co-publications between partners and an upcoming Special Issue on Chronic Disease in the *Ghana Medical Journal*. It facilitated support for nutrition and demography postgraduate students in Ghana. Its first annual workshop, held in April 2007 Accra at the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, brought together researchers, practitioners, patient groups and policymakers. Workshop proceedings can be found at the partnership website at www.ncdafrica.org.

The second meeting at the LSE brought together social and medical scientists from Africa, UK and Europe to discuss Africa's chronic disease burden. Topics included: the epidemiological burden of chronic physical and mental illnesses; representations and experiences of asthma, cancers, diabetes, hypertension, mental illness and sickle-cell disease; caregiver experiences; and the transition of HIV/AIDS from a terminal to chronic disease. The geographical focus was broad with research based in Africa (Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, Tanzania, South

Africa, Uganda) and on African communities in the UK and Netherlands.

The organisers of the event were *Dr Ama de-Graft Aikins, Professor Cathy Campbell, Morten Skovdal and Dr Daniel Kojo Arhinful*. With Cathy Campbell's and Morten Skovdal's involvement, the HCD presence was strong. *Morten Skovdal* presented a paper based on his PhD research on the psychosocial cost of children providing chronic care for adults affected by HIV/AIDS in Western Kenya. Four HCD MSc students gave poster presentations based on their MSc research: (1) Rochelle Burgess on supporting mental health and the psychosocial needs of communities in South Africa; (2) Nathalie Carter on African Children and Families living with HIV and AIDS in London; (3) Lior Miller on the Psychosocial needs of Ugandan PLWA and carers in a changing HIV/AIDS epidemic; and (4) Dramani Yakubu on the complex dynamics of patient satisfaction and medical compliance in Ghana.

The workshop proceedings will be available in due course at the HCD and Partnership websites. For further information on Partnership activities and the LSE workshop please contact Ama de-Graft Aikins at ada21@cam.ac.uk.



END OF YEAR EVENTS

The new Health, Community and Development website <http://www.psych.lse.ac.uk/socialpsychology/research/hcd/index.php> was formally launched at the "Third Annual HCD Mini-Conference:

Promoting Health-Enabling Social Environments" held on 25th June in the St Clements Building.

Ly Voo, who designed and constructed the website was unable to attend, but *Steve Bennett*, the ISP Workshop Manager, accepted a present and card from HCD staff and students on Ly's behalf.



Steve Bennett, Institute Superintendent Technician, accepts a gift on behalf of Ly Voo, who constructed the new Health, Community and Development website.

The mini-conference was attended by a selection of post-graduate students and ISP staff, and lively and productive discussion centred around eight student papers, focusing on research on health-related issues and projects based in Ghana, South Africa, India, Uganda, the UK (one in London and one in Newcastle), and one project focusing on a global health alliance.

WELLCOME TRUST GRANT FOR RESEARCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Cathy Campbell is part of a five-person team (Gregson, Garnett, Campbell, Nyamukapa and Mugurungi) which has just been awarded a grant of **£2,700,000** by the **Wellcome Trust** to study the scale-up and impact of HIV/AIDS management services in southern Africa. The project - which is led by demographer Dr Simon Gregson - is based at Imperial College, London. Two members of this research team will be part of the ISP community next year: Mercy Nhamo (PhD) and Zvai Mupambireyi (MSc HCD).



Delegates at the "Third Annual HCD Mini-Conference: Promoting Health-Enabling Social Environments", hosted by the Health, Community and Development Research Group at the LSE on June 25th.

SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS GROUP

9TH LSE-CAMBRIDGE INTERUNIVERSITY GRADUATE CONFERENCE

The **9th LSE-Cambridge Interuniversity Graduate Conference** on 'Constructions, Discourse and Representations' was held successfully on the 17th May 2008 at the University of Cambridge. *Wolfgang Wagner* delivered the keynote presentation on the theme of the conference. The conference saw the participation of a number of graduate students from the Institute, and the organisation of 2 symposia, one on Health and Development, and one on Social Representations. The conference was founded by George Gaskell and Gerard Duveen and is organised annually by graduate students from the ISP and from the Department of Psychology at the University of Cambridge. The 10th conference is due to be hosted by the LSE next year. The working title for the 10th conference is 'Culture, Cognition and Construction'.

ART AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON

The Social Representations Group are embarking on a new project, which aims to theorise and

study art as a social phenomenon. The study will focus on street art, such as **Banksy**, and will look at this phenomenon from a number of different angles. The group intends to look at people's interrelation with street art, as well as taggers' activities, and analysis of street art and the media, amongst others. If you would like to join the group or participate in this project, please email *Gordon* (g.sammut@lse.ac.uk) for details.



PhD Students discussing about Banksy's graffiti pictures in London.

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

JULY 27-29, 2008 – THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND POSSIBILITIES FOR POLITICAL ACTION CONFERENCE - 'CAN THE MARGINALISED SPEAK?'

Eri Park has been invited to be the opening keynote speaker at a conference at the Freie Universität Berlin, hosted by the New German Psychological Society (Neue Gesellschaft für Psychologie). This year's congress is concerned

with the embeddedness of the Social Sciences in people's actual life circumstances. Within that framework it seems to be incredibly important to question the scientific discourse and its claim to be objective and neutral as well as its claim of being able to create ever more new knowledge. The conference is entitled 'Can the marginalised speak?' and is taking place from July, 27-29 www.ngfp2008.org

AUGUST 26-29, 2008 - DIALOGICAL SELF CONFERENCE

Sandra Jovchelovitch, Caroline Howarth, Ivana Markova, Alicia Renedo, & Paul Daanen are due to give papers at the [5th International Conference on the Dialogical Self](#), to be held in Cambridge between the 26-29 August. The conference will focus on the self and dialogue, and the ways in which meaning is constructed and reconstructed, with the aim of organising interchange and the discussion of problems related to the dialogical self across the boundaries of specific (sub)disciplines in the social sciences.

SEPTEMBER 18-19, 2008 – 'AFRICAN CHILDREN IN FOCUS' INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

Morten Skovdal will be presenting a paper entitled "Young carers as active agents: Coping Strategies of Children Caring for Ailing or Ageing Guardians in Western Kenya" at the ['African Children in Focus: A Paradigm Shift in Methodology and Theory?' Interdisciplinary Conference](#), organised by the Netherlands African Studies Association, to be held in Leiden on the 18th & 19th September.

SEPTEMBER 19-22, 2008 - SOCIAL CAPITAL & SOCIAL INCLUSION CONFERENCE

Gordon Sammut will be presenting a paper entitled "[Social Representations as Social Capital: the development and breakdown of social cohesion](#)" at the [2008 Malta Conference on Social Inclusion: Perspectives on Social Capital and Social Inclusion](#), organised by The Social Capital Foundation, to be held in Malta between the 19-22 September

MAY 15-19, 2009 - 'EAST', 'WEST', 'SOUTH', 'NORTH': CHALLENGES AND TRANSFORMATIONS IN THEORETICAL PSYCHOLOGY CONFERENCE

Eri Park became a member of the executive committee and the program committee of the next conference of the *International Society for Theoretical Psychology*, with the title: 'East', 'West', 'South', 'North': Challenges and transformations in theoretical psychology. Mark your calendars! The dates for the 2009 ISTP Biennial Conference in Nanjing, China are 15-19 May 2009.

E-ACADEMIA

ISP FACEBOOK LAUNCH FOR 2008/09

The launch of the ISP Facebook for prospective students 2008/09 has gotten off to a brilliant start. We currently have 89 friends and the list is quickly growing. We have students arriving from Colombia, Bermuda, India, America, Singapore, Beirut, UAE, Australia, Germany, Greece, Mexico, Germany, Italy, Norway, Canada, Kenya and even London! They can find welcome letters, FAQs, discussion topics (thanks to Lucia & Derek), as well as introductory postings about each other.

We look forward to finding out what they thought of using Facebook as an introduction to the ISP as well as a way of checking out their new classmates.

Special thanks must go to *Terri-Ann* for getting this project off the ground.

ACADEMIC EXCHANGES

Jap Dhesi, 2nd year PhD student at the ISP, visited the Psychology Department at Princeton University in the capacity of a Visiting Student Research Collaborator for 2 months. During her time there she conducted research in collaboration with Professor Deborah Prentice, Head and Chair of the Department of Psychology.

PUBLICATIONS

Skovdal, M., Mwasiagi, W., Webale, A. & Tomkins, A. (2008). "Community-based capital cash transfer to support orphans in Western Kenya: A consumer perspective." Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies 3(1): 1 - 15.

Vaughan, C. 2008. "Social determinants of health: case studies from Asia and the Pacific" in Keleher H. and MacDougall C. (eds.) Understanding Health (2nd ed.), Oxford University Press

The Social Representations Group are publishing a paper in *Culture and Psychology* entitled 'We Don't Share! The Social Representation Approach, Enactivism and the Fundamental Incompatibilities Between the Two', in response to Verheggen & Baerveldt's (2007) paper on social representations and enactivism. The paper argues that underlying all theories are philosophical presuppositions that lend themselves to different epistemological approaches, which need to be unfurled when comparing theories and offering alternative explanations. Contrary to Verheggen & Baerveldt's promulgation that 'enactivism' may be an adequate alternative for social representations, the paper outlines how this may be a misguided position. The paper is presently in press.

Eri Park became an editor together with Thomas Teo, Paul Stenner and Alexandra Rutherford for the Toronto conference proceedings of the International Society for Theoretical Psychology, which will be published by Captus Press.

Eri Park has undertaken editor's role of 'Theory in Action', the journal of the Transformative Studies Institute: www.transformativestudies.org

MOSCOVICI IN ENGLISH

Serge Moscovici's publication of the English translation of his classic work, 'Psychoanalysis: Its image and its public', was marked by a workshop and reception at Corpus Christi College at the University of Cambridge on the 24th of May 2008. The workshop was attended by a number of leading academics in the field, including Serge

Moscovici, Denise Jodelet, Ivana Markova, and Gerard Duveen, amongst others. A number of graduate students from the LSE attended the event. Sandra Jovchelovitch, Martin Bauer and George Gaskell participated by giving papers at the workshop. The papers presented at the workshop are due to be published in a special issue of the *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* to mark the event.



Students and staff smiling together with Serge Moscovici at Cambridge.

NEW MEMBERS...

Summer term was marked by the arrival of two little yet very significant indirect members.

Little **Robert Howarth-Penkett** arrived on 8th May and weighed 9 pounds. Caroline shares with us her first experiences of living with her little man:

"I am really, really loving getting to know my little man. I am putting all my community psychology to good use and have ensured I have a fantastic support circle – mostly friends (and colleagues!) who are also parents and also the new mums I have recently met – everyone has been invaluable in sharing the tips, joys and challenges of being a new parent. My partner, Clive, has ensured that we all continue to enjoy life to the full – organising meals in the garden and trips to the beach!

Like all parents I am sure, we are convinced we have the cutest, strongest and cleverest baby – and continually amazed with his daily achievements! He has talipes (what used to be

called club feet) and has had his little legs in plaster since he was 10 days old, but he manages so well and is such a happy baby. I hope to introduce him to friends at the LSE one day."



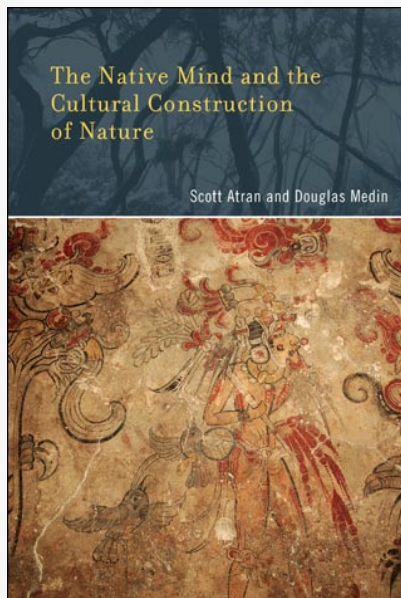
Our second new member arrived from Italy, where **Gaia Krieger** was born on 24th June 2008. She and her parents Sharon and Eran are enjoying their first weeks together under the Italian sun.



Our warmest wishes to both families! We hope you enjoy every single moment with your little ones!!

SUGGESTED READINGS

Katarina Keresztesova suggests the following book:



The Native Mind and the Cultural Construction of Nature (Life and Mind: Philosophical Issues in Biology and Psychology) (Hardcover) [Scott Atran](#) (Author), [Douglas Medin](#) (Author)

Surveys show that our growing concern over protecting the environment is accompanied by a diminishing sense of human contact with nature. Many people have little commonsense knowledge about nature--are unable, for example, to identify local plants and trees or describe how these plants and animals interact. Researchers report dwindling knowledge of nature even in smaller, nonindustrialized societies. In *The Native Mind and the Cultural Construction of Nature*, Scott Atran and Douglas Medin trace the cognitive consequences of this loss of knowledge. Drawing on nearly two decades of cross-cultural and developmental research, they examine the relationship between how people think about the natural world and how they act on it and how these two phenomena are affected by cultural differences.

These studies, which involve a series of targeted comparisons among cultural groups living in the same environment and engaged in the same

activities, reveal critical universal aspects of mind as well as equally critical cultural differences. Atran and Medin find that, despite a base of universal processes, the cultural differences in understandings of nature are associated with significant differences in environmental decision making as well as intergroup conflict and stereotyping stemming from these differences. The book includes two intensive case studies, one focusing on agro-forestry among Maya Indians and Spanish speakers in Mexico and Guatemala and the other on resource conflict between Native-American and European-American fishermen in Wisconsin. *The Native Mind and the Cultural Construction of Nature* offers new perspectives on general theories of human categorization, reasoning, decision making, and cognitive development.