The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth

The results of a Sussex study on how children recall events could lead to important changes in the way evidence is gathered for court cases.

The current view is that witness accounts by children are unreliable for legal purposes because young children are more likely to agree to leading questions or suggested information.

However, a team of experimental psychologists at Sussex discovered that measuring a child's level of confidence when giving answers in a memory test provides a more accurate picture of the truth.

Lecturer and researcher Dr Wendy Garnham explained: "The confidence score is a much more sensitive measure. It allows us to tell whether children are agreeing to suggested information because they are just unsure or whether they are agreeing because it's something they really saw."

"These findings will have significant implications for the legal community as they can be used to develop a confidence measure for use in courtroom situations which will enable a much more accurate assessment of children's memories for events."

The research, which was carried out by Dr Garnham, Dr Ted Ruffman and the late Professor Alan Parkin with a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), involved examining the responses of 61 children aged between five and nine after showing them a video cartoon about Mick the Dog and then playing to them an auditory summary of the video that incorporated additional suggested material not seen.

The children had to state whether they remembered seeing particular events in the video, or whether they remembered hearing them mentioned in the summary. They were asked to rate their confidence in their answers on a scale between one and nine (with nine being extremely confident).

Although young children were more likely than older children to agree that they saw events that were merely suggested in the auditory summary, they also showed less confidence in these responses compared with recalling events that they had actually seen.

The findings support the theory that suggestibility is linked with the late maturation of part of the brain known as the frontal lobe, which is thought to be responsible for a range of abilities, including planning, impulse control and inhibition. It has been shown that adults who suffer lesions to this area of the brain (which does not mature until adolescence) are more prone to suggestibility.

State-of-the-art Technology Hub opens on campus

An innovative £4 million research and development project commissioned by the University of Sussex with Sussex Enterprise and the Alliance of West Sussex Electronics Manufacturers (AWSEM) is being launched on campus today (Friday).

The state-of-the-art equipment and facilities at the South East Advanced Technology Hub (SEATH) will be used by small and medium-sized businesses in the region to research new techniques without the risk of applying new technologies and continually having to upgrade products and services. In fast-moving industries, such as electronics, this will allow prototypes to be created, tested and improved to the point of commercial viability, and increase the global competitiveness of the companies involved.

"We have excellent research skills and no shortage of ideas here at Sussex", commented Professor Chris Chatwin, research director of the SEATH. "The aim now is to mix electronics, mechanics and information technology to produce solutions that industry finds useful. Brighton is a natural centre for this type of work – it's central to Sussex, easily accessible and very creative."

Many companies have already shown firm interest in the project, bringing forward innovative ideas and applications for new markets. Continued on page 2.

Annual Barlow Lecture
Chinese Ceramics: Technology and History

Nigel Wood
Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, Oxford
Tuesday 29 February
6.00pm in A1
All welcome
Applications on the up

Figures published by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) show that the popularity of Sussex degrees has increased, despite a drop in university applications across the UK. The number of applications to Sussex has gone up by 7.4% since last year, against a 2.5% decline nationally. While almost all subject areas are showing a big increase in applications, engineering, linguistics and maths have demonstrated particular growth.

Degree programmes that have experienced a dramatic rise in popularity include the BSc in Geography (up by 40%) and the BSc in Natural Science, which places core, specialist science in its historical, political, economic and social contexts.

Assistant Registrar Rob Evans is responsible for tracking undergraduate admissions. He said: ‘It’s pleasing to see a healthy rise in applications this year, particularly against a national decline. What is most reassuring, however, is that the rise is across the University as a whole and not limited to just a few Schools or Subject Groups.’

State-of-the-art Technology Hub opens on campus

Continued from front page

Shirley Withrington, managing director of Hove-based Field Electronics Ltd, said: “As a small company, we need the support of places like the University to help us move into new areas which involve high-risk technology. Such moves are becoming increasingly crucial to survival in this industry, but we cannot make them on our own without threatening the financial stability of the whole company.”

Arnold Cleshaw, director of membership and economic development at Sussex Enterprise, commented: “The beauty of this project is that it gives companies access to R & D facilities they could not afford or fully utilise on their own. We see the development of the Advanced Technology Hub as a cornerstone of our support programme for the county’s manufacturing and engineering companies.”

Peter’s a prize-winner

Peter Millis, a third-year Physics student in CPES, was recently awarded a prize by the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) for being the best undergraduate student in Management Studies at Sussex.

One of several mature students on the course, he received a cheque and a citation in a ceremony at the London headquarters of CIMA, which jointly sponsored the prize with the South East Area NHS National Financial Management Training Scheme.

Pictured above (from left to right) are Dr Brian Smith, who founded the science with management studies programme at Sussex; David Melvill, President of CIMA; Peter Millis, the prize winner; and Jan Nicol-Smith, from the NHS Training Scheme.

Brian said: "Peter is an excellent all-rounder who will find it difficult to choose between science and management when he graduates."
Scientists develop diagnostic tool for brain tumours

Discovering that you may have a brain tumour is possibly the worst news anyone could be told. What usually follows is a biopsy to establish whether the tumour is malignant or not.

The problem here is that such invasive surgery is highly unpleasant for the patient and may not give the right answer.

Now a team of scientists has successfully bid for a European Union grant of Euro 2.2 million (£1.35m) to fund a project that will develop methods to identify different types of tumour without the need for surgery.

Dr Rosemary Tate, a visiting fellow in COGS, is the scientific manager for the project, which also involves scientists at St George’s Hospital Medical School in London as well as teams in Spain, the Netherlands, France and Germany.

The work focuses on developing a method using magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS), which measures the chemical content of the tumour and provides information on the type of tumour and degree of malignancy. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans, which are currently in use, cannot alone provide these answers.

A prototype software package was developed by Sussex MSc graduate Joshua Underwood, who is also now involved in the work to develop a more extensive version. Also taking part in the project are Dr Des Watson and Dr Rosemary Luckin.

Rosemary Tate expects MRS to be used on a wide scale within the next five years: ‘This test will add an extra dimension to identifying and treating brain tumours and could be an add-on to existing MRI units in hospitals. This will reduce the need for invasive brain biopsy and provide a valuable aid for planning treatment and therapy.’

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Research funding opportunities

This is a selection of research opportunities. More details of these and other opportunities are available from the Research Grants & Contracts Office. Contact Debbie, ext. 3812 or email D.Frey-Evrett@sussex.ac.uk. For an extensive listing of funding opportunities see REFUND on the Research Website: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/research or USIS home page, under Research.

The DTI have announced a £1.4 million Recycling Programme. The primary objective is to secure and maintain increases in demand for secondary raw materials by reducing or removing some of the technical and market obstacles which inhibit the use of recycle by manufacturing industry. Deadline for outline proposals: 13 March 2000

The AHRB’s Research Leave Scheme enables teaching staff to be relieved of their normal duties in order to bring a research project to completion. The scheme operates in partnership with the applicant’s host institution, which will provide matched funding for three or four months preceding the AHRB leave. Deadline: 31 March 2000

The British Ecological Society invites applications under the Small Project Grants scheme. Grants up to £2,000 are given to promote all aspects of ecological research and ecological survey. Support will not normally be given to projects forming part of an expedition proposal nor those undertaken as part of the work for a higher degree. Deadline: 1 April 2000

The Joint Research Equipment Initiative (JREI) is an annual competition that aims to contribute to the physical research infrastructure and to enable high-quality research to be undertaken, particularly in areas of basic and strategic priority for science and technology. The essential requirements are that bids must be for research equipment that have external sponsorship, and must request a minimum of £12,500 from the JREI. Two competitions allow applicants to request up to and over £150,000. Deadline: 31 May 2000

The EPSRC is inviting applications for International Collaborations. Proposals in any area of engineering or cognitive discipline are welcome for group study visits, bilateral workshops, conferences and/or secondments. Deadline: 30 June 2000

The British Academy is inviting applications for Research Readerships and Senior Research Fellowships. These schemes are aimed at established scholars who are in mid-career and are designed to allow the successful candidates to undertake/complete an approved programme of sustained research, while relieved of their normal teaching and administrative commitments. Deadline: 31 July 2000.

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Something for everyone

Canadian Studies postgraduate award

Postgraduates are invited to apply for the Canadian Studies postgraduate award of £500 to assist with travel to Canada for fieldwork relating to their degree. Priority will be given to DPhil candidates. Further details are available from Tania Golds (t.j.golds@sussex.ac.uk), Arts B245. Closing date for applications is 26 April.

Gardner Arts Centre freebies

The Gardner Arts Centre has eight pairs of tickets to give away for the Oxford Stage Company’s Making Noise Quietly. There are four pairs of tickets available for both Thursday 7 March and Wednesday 8 March to the first eight readers who turn up at the box office waving a copy of the Bulletin. The performance starts at 8.00pm.

The Howard Lecture

David Alton (Professor Lord Alton of Liverpool) will be giving a lecture on Religious and political freedom in the new millennium. It will be at 6.00pm on Tuesday 29 February in the Meeting House.

Looking for part-time or temporary work?

Visit the Student Employment Office jobsday on Wednesday 1 March in Mandela Hall, Falmer House, 10.00am-3.30pm. Students will be able to talk directly with a range of employers about part-time and vacation work in administration, clerical, retail, catering and light-industrial work. The Employment Service, Career Development Unit and USSU Student Advice Centre will also be there.

Dress to impress and bring copies of your CV if possible.

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George Butterworth

We regret to announce that George Butterworth, Professor of Psychology, died unexpectedly on 12 February, aged 53.

After completing his DPhil at Oxford, George held posts at Southampton and Stirling, before coming to Sussex in 1991. His many contributions to the discipline include founding both the British Infant Research Group and the journal Developmental Science.

George’s research interests were broad, encompassing topics as varied as the origins of self-awareness in human development and evolution, and children’s understanding of geographical features of the earth. But his most distinguished work was on the origins of thought and perception in infants, a field in which he was a world authority.
Lectures, Seminars, Colloquia

Monday 28 February
4.00pm SCOAP Seminar:
Tilman Pfau (Konstanz), Atom optics: Basics and applications. PEV 1A2.

4.30pm Neuroscience Seminar:
Daniel Oseorio, Colour categorisation. BLR.

5.00pm Women's Studies Research-in-Progress Seminar:

Tuesday 29 February
12.30pm Centre for Life History Research Seminar:
Brychan Carey (Queen Mary & Westfield), This extraordinary negro: Johnsonian biography, slave narrative and Joseph Jekyl’s Life of Ignatius Sancho. LMR.

12.30pm Inorganic Discussion Group:
Barbara Gebrus, News from the silylene. Scott Clanddening, Novel reactions of a 1,3,5-triphosphenobenzene. CH 3R143.

2.15pm SEI Research-in-Progress Seminar:
Charlie Jeffery (Birmingham), Germany and Europe. A71.

4.00pm American Studies Research Seminar:
Peter Way, Venus and Mars: Gender and the regular army in the French and Indian war. A71.

4.00pm International Relations and Politics Society Lecture:
Heike Farbí, Corporate responsibility: A survival discourse. C133.

4.00pm COGS Seminar:
Daniel D. Hutto (Hertfordshire), Title TBA. COGS Building, SC1.

4.15pm Social Anthropology Seminar:
Deborah James (LSE), The government will come next week: Conflicting discourses on land, leadership and representation in the new South Africa. C233.

4.15pm Biochemistry and Genetics & Development Seminar:
Robin Allshire (MRC Human Genetics Unit, Edinburgh), Dissecting fission yeast centromere structure and function. BLT.

5.00pm Media Studies Graduate Seminar:
Nick Coulby (Goldsmiths), Back to the future? Rediscovering the method in audience studies. EDB 125.

5.15pm German Research Colloquium:
Evelyn Friedlander (London), Geniza finds in Southern Germany. A155.

6.30pm A Students’ Guide to World Development Talk:
Rob Bowden and Phil Mulligan, Experiences in development work. EDB 125.

Wednesday 1 March
2.00pm Music Research Seminar:
Malcolm Miller, Stylistic evolution in the music of Berthold Goldschmidt. Palmer House 120.

2.00pm COGS Guest Lecture:
Ilse Marshall (Amazon.com), Working in e-commerce. 5CI PEV II.

4.00pm Centre for South African Studies Seminar:
Christabel Gurney (London), Solidarity or sell-out: The British Labour movement and apartheid in the 1960s and 1970s. C337.

4.30pm History of Art Research Seminar:
Alison Hardie, Chinese gardens: Descriptions, representations, uses. A103.

5.00pm English Graduate Colloquium:
Elena Guaitieri, Woolf on sketches, pictures and glass boxes. D640.

5.00pm Migration Research Seminar:

Thursday 2 March
1.10pm Lunchtime Recital:
Craig McKenzie and Heather Boyling, Recital Room, Palmer House.

4.00pm Experimental Psychology Colloquium:
Liz Robinson (Keele), Title TBA. BLR.

4.00pm Geography Research Seminar:
Rob Bowden (Brighton), Title TBA. D610.

4.00pm Accelerating Adaptation Lecture:
Bryn Bridges, Hypermutation and adaptation of bacteria under selection conditions. BLT.

5.00pm History Work-in-Progress Seminar:

5.00pm Queering Development Seminar:
Michele Calandrino, Sexual orientation discrimination in the UK labour market. IDS Room 120.

5.00pm Centre for Statistics and Stochastic Modelling Seminar:
Karen Ayres (Reading), Measuring genetic correlations within and between loci (with implications for forensic identification). FEV2A2.

5.00pm Science Lecture:
Michael Maier (Imperial), Watching the brain think. CLT.

Friday 3 March
2.15pm SPRU Seminar Series:
Koenraad Debackere (Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium), Title TBA. C133.

4.00pm SCOAP and Chemical Physics Joint Seminar:
Helen Fielding (KCL), Rydberg electron dynamics in NO. CH13-3R241.

4.00pm Astronomy Centre Seminar:
Geoff Wright, Observations of radio pulsars. ARUN 401.

4.30pm Philosophy Society Seminar:
Bernie Flynn (NYU), Title TBA. A155.

Monday 6 March
1.40pm Neuroscience Seminar:
David McAlpine (UCL), Hearing auditory objects. BLR.

5.00pm Women’s Studies Research-in-Progress Seminar:
Cathy Gelbin, Jewish women’s issues and multicultural politics in contemporary Germany. A71.

Tuesday 7 March
12.30pm Inorganic Discussion Group:
M. Schröder (Nottingham), Synthesis and structures of new templated frameworks, catenates and aggregates. CH 3R143.

4.00pm American Studies Research Seminar:
Gail Danvers, Confronting the other: Anglo-Iroquois ‘race’ relations on the New York colonial frontier. A71.

4.15pm Social Anthropology Seminar:

4.15pm Biochemistry and Genetics & Development Seminar:
Helen Saibl (Birkbeck), Protein folding by chaperonins and misfolding in amyloid. BLT.

5.00pm Literary and Intellectual History Seminar:
Suzanne Aspden (Cambridge), The monumentalisation of Handel in the 18th century. D610.

5.00pm International Relations and Politics Society Lecture:
Kees Van Der-Fijl, Getting acquainted with the Transnational Far Right. A1.

5.15pm German Research Colloquium:

Wednesday 8 March
12.30pm ES Seminar:
Dan Pickford (AstraZeneca), Endocrine disrupting research with fish and amphibia. CH 3R241.

2.00pm Queerly Seminar:
Margareta Jolly, Coming out of the coming out story: Recent queer life writing and its theorising. A71.

2.00pm Music Research Seminar:
Nicholas McKay, Prototypically in Stravinsky’s neoclassical voices. Palmer House 120.

4.30pm History of Art Research Seminar:
Adam Hardy (De Montfort), Indian temple architecture: Using your eyes as a research tool. A103.

5.00pm Migration Research Seminar:
Stephen Dobson (Lillehammer College, Norway), The role of the emotions in Norwegian policies of refugee reception and resettlement. D630.

Thursday 9 March
1.10pm Lunchtime Recital:
Emma Booth. Recital Room, Palmer House.

4.00pm Experimental Psychology Colloquium:
Clive K. Catchpole (Royal Holloway), Singing in the brain: Bird song and sexual selection. BLR.

4.00pm Geography Research Seminar:
Nigel Thrift (Bristol), The pursuit of wow. D610.

4.00pm Accelerating Adaptation Lecture:
William Rice (California), Evolution in the fast lane: The intersexual red queen. BLT.

5.00pm History Work-in-Progress Seminar:

5.00pm Science Lecture:
Phil Parsons, Oxidation: Light and flame. CLT.

6.00pm Jack Dominion, Sexual ethics in a world of unstable relationships. Meeting House.

Friday 10 March
2.15pm SPRU Seminar Series:
Keith Hayward (British Society of Aerospace Companies), Recent developments in the globalisation of the defence and aerospace industries. C133.

4.00pm Physical Chemistry Seminar:
K. Reid (Nottingham), Photoelectron angular distributions as a probe of molecular alignment. CH13-3R241.

For small ads visit the Bulletin on the web at www.sussex.ac.uk/information_offic/bulletin

Bulletin

The next issue of the Bulletin will be out on Friday 10 March with a copy deadline of 1.00pm on 3 March. We welcome any suggestions for news, events, letters and small ads from staff and students of the University. Please contact the Information Office in Sussex House on ext. 8888 or email Bulletin@sussex.ac.uk.