

International Society for Research on Aggression (ISRA)

Preconference symposium

Part of the Macquarie University Faculty of Human Sciences (FoHS) Perspectives Series
An activity of ISRA, MQ FoHS and the MQ Children and Families Research Centre

Perspectives on aggression

July 19, 2016 at X5B Theatre 1, Macquarie University, Sydney

Speaker Biographies

Professor Jack van Honk

Utrecht University, Netherlands
University of Cape Town, South Africa

Jack van Honk is Professor of Social Neuroscience at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, and Professor in Clinical Neuroscience at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. His research focus is on the psychoneuroendocrine mechanisms underlying human social and emotional behavior, especially social fear and aggression. In his research in the Netherlands and South Africa, Jack van Honk specializes in causal research methodologies: Not only placebo-controlled administration of the hormones testosterone, cortisol and oxytocin, and opioid agonists and antagonists, but also transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) and transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS). In South Africa, he is furthermore project leader on the research into Urbach-Wiethe disease, a rare genetic syndrome (knock-out-of-function mutation of the *ECM1* gene), which causes bilateral calcification of the basolateral amygdala, a regulating brain hub in fear and aggression. Jack van Honk has published 135 peer reviewed articles, mostly in high-impact international journals such as *PNAS*, *Nature*, *Neuroimage*, *Human Brain Mapping*, *Psychological Science*, *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, *Archives of General Psychiatry* and *Biological Psychiatry*. These have been cited more than 8400 times and he maintains an H-index of 55. Finally, Jack van Honk is the Editor for invited reviews of *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, Academic Editor of *Plos One*, and Associate Editor of *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience*, *Frontiers in Emotion Science* and *BMC Psychiatry*.

Professor Joanna Bourke

Birkbeck College, London

Joanna Bourke is Professor of History at Birkbeck College, University of London, and Fellow of the British Academy. She is the prize-winning author of twelve books, including histories on modern warfare, military medicine, psychology and psychiatry, the emotions, and rape, as well as over 85 articles in academic journals. Among others, she is the author of *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain, and the Great War* (1996), *An Intimate History of Killing* (1999), *Fear: A Cultural History* (2005) and *Rape: A History* (2007). Her book, *What it Means to be Human* was published by Virago in 2011. In 2014, she was the author of *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers* (OUP) and *Wounding the World: How Military Violence and War-Play are Invading our Lives* (Virago). Her books have been translated into Chinese, Russian, Spanish, Catalan, Italian, Portuguese, Czech, Turkish, and Greek.

Professor Eddie Harmon-Jones

University of NSW

Eddie Harmon-Jones is Professor of Psychology at The University of New South Wales. His research focuses on emotions and motivations, their implications for social and cognitive processes, and their underlying physiological substrates. In 2012, he received the Career Trajectory Award from the Society of Experimental Social Psychology. He has authored over 175 articles and book chapters, and has edited six scholarly books. Citations to his publications place him in the top 1% of cited scientists in Psychiatry/Psychology according to the Institute for Scientific Information's *Essential Science Indicators*. He has served as an associate editor of the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* and the *International Journal of Psychophysiology*. He is currently an associate editor of the journals *Psychological Science* and *Emotion*.

Ass. Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews

University of Technology, Sydney

Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, of the D'harawal nation, is a researcher and lecturer whose outputs are increasingly encapsulating and promoting Aboriginal Australian standpoints and perspectives across a diversity of disciplines (most notably education and psychology). He has managed and led numerous research grants investigating a diversity of topics including, mental health, mentoring, identity, Traditional Knowledges, education, racism, and bullying. His projects have led to the development of a strong foundation in developing robust and diverse research designs, with an increasing dedication to Indigenous Research Methodologies. From this framework, he is continually developing his experience in applying quantitative and qualitative methods within his scholarly work. His research has also attracted a number of national and international awards (including the AARE Betty-Watts Indigenous Researcher award), and he has produced the Healing the Wounds of the Heart documentary focusing on developing resiliency against racism (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0RosRz_HtQ) for Aboriginal youth.

Ass. Professor Kay Bussey

Macquarie University

Kay Bussey is an Associate Professor in Child and Adolescent Psychology at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. She is on the editorial board of the British Journal of Developmental Psychology and serves as an editorial consultant for several psychology journals and scientific organizations. She has been the recipient of numerous awards including a Fulbright Fellowship, an Early Career Award from the Australian Psychological Society and an Award for Excellence in Higher Degree Research from Macquarie University. Her interests and publications span several areas of social development including moral development, gender development, bullying and aggression, and children's participation in the legal system. She has authored over 100 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters and has co-authored two books. The Australian Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council have funded her research.

Dr. Sally Fitzpatrick

Macquarie University

Sally Fitzpatrick is a postdoctoral fellow at Macquarie University in Sydney. Sally's current research is primarily focussed on implementing evidence-based interventions to reduce bullying and the negative outcomes associated with bullying behaviours, and she currently manages a large research trial examining the efficacy of two bullying interventions, and their combination, to reduce peer victimisation in NSW and WA schools. Sally also works as a Clinical Psychologist conducting individual therapy at the Centre for Emotional Health Clinic, Macquarie University. Sally's research interests include: Children's development, bullying and victimisation, peer friendships, anxiety disorders in children and adolescents, psychopathology and clinical psychology.

Titles and Abstracts

Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews

Title: *Aboriginality, Essentialism, and Epistemological Violence*

Abstract: It is the purpose of this presentation to explore representations of 'Aboriginality' across mainstream theory, empirical research, and opinion. More specifically, such research will be contrasted against standpoints adhering to, and emanating from, Indigenous Research Methodologies, critical theory, and long standing Indigenous ethical guidelines. Whilst the emphasis of this presentation will be surrounding representations of imposed 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander'/'Indigenous Australian' labels when compared to more complex layers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identities, careful consideration will be given the potential impact of such representations on the current and future generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. From this, the dangers of essentialism, stereotyping, and Eurocentric thinking will be outlined with regards to its significant risk of contributing to a form of epistemological violence that explicitly and implicitly contributes to the silences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, lower levels of social and emotional wellbeing, and the oppression and subjugations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being, and doing.

Joanna Bourke

Title: *A Global History of Sexual Violence*

Abstract: Violence is an essentially contested concept. Despite the fact that cooperation and communion with other sentient beings is at the heart of what it means to be human, in every period of history and in every culture, the fleshly vulnerability of other sentient beings can provoke aggression. Frequently, it includes a sexual component. This paper explores how "sexual violence" has been defined and conceptualised from the nineteenth century to today in a global context.

Kay Bussey

Title: *Bullying and Aggression Across the Life Span: A Social Cognitive Theory Perspective.*

Abstract: The past decade has witnessed a proliferation of research on bullying and aggression with less attention to advancing theory. This presentation builds on Bandura's classic work on aggression (1973) incorporating contemporary research on both bullying and aggression. It specifically focuses on recently conceptualized sociocognitive processes associated with these antisocial behaviours including outcome expectations, self-regulatory mechanisms (e.g. self-reactive influence, moral disengagement), and self-efficacy. The development and maintenance of these processes related to bullying and aggression through the complex mix of observational learning, enactive learning, and direct instruction is explicated. An important aspect of this approach is the broad array of social influences that impact bullying and aggressive conceptions and behaviour in different social contexts (e.g. home, school, the workplace) and for the different types of bullying and aggression (e.g. physical, verbal, relational, and cyber). The interplay between targets, bystanders, and perpetrators of bullying and aggression further adds to the dynamic conceptualization of aggressive and bullying conduct. Finally, the implications of this approach for reducing aggression and bullying at the individual, school, family and broader societal levels are considered.

Sally Fitzpatrick

Title: *Explorations into Social Bullying*

Abstract: Social bullying is recognised as a distinct form of interpersonal aggression in which at least one person aims to purposefully and repeatedly harm the social relationships of a less powerful person. The consequences include internalizing and externalizing distress, as well as a negative impact on relationships and belonging in the peer group. This presentation explores current conceptualizations of social victimization, the progression of social victimization from preschool through to adolescence, and key predictors associated with the development and maintenance of social victimization. Specific focus will be given to the adaptive and maladaptive impact of social victimization on relationships in the peer group. Examination of how these factors are important for the development of research based intervention programs to address the negative impact of social bullying will be elucidated.

Eddie Harmon Jones

Title: *Anger: Toward a psychophysiological understanding*

Abstract: In this talk, I will review research on anger that my lab has conducted since the late 1990s. I will discuss how anger differs from other negative emotions because it is associated with approach (the urge to go toward something) rather than avoidance. The talk will cover research on: (1) asymmetrical frontal cortical activity and its relationship with anger and other emotional variables; (2) relationships between anger and approach versus avoidance motivation; (3) and how anger may occasionally relate to some positive affective responses. This body of research has shed light on “angry” personalities as well as situations that influence anger and aggression.

Jack van Honk

Title: *On the prosocial qualities of testosterone and the antisocial properties of oxytocin*

Abstract: In how they would influence social behavior, the steroid hormone testosterone has a bad reputation, whereas the peptide hormone oxytocin has a good reputation. Testosterone is by the general public associated with violence and aggression, and in the scientific literature and media victimized as the chemical source of corruption and immorality. Indeed, in certain social conditions testosterone may motivate for rebellious, aggressive and violent behavior. However, in other conditions, testosterone may encourage behaviors that are socially protective, prosocial and altruistic. Likewise, oxytocin, popularly known as the 'love-drug', is not categorically a prosocial hormone. Oxytocin even seems to promote ethnocentrism: its “love” is biased towards the in-group, and may even come at the expense of out-group hate. Furthermore, oxytocin evidently has positive effects on cognitive aspects of empathy, such as mind reading and emotion recognition. However, recent evidence suggests that this hormone may reduce empathy for pain, and reduced empathy for pain is a core psychopathic trait. At the preconference, I will present human behavioral and neuroimaging research with testosterone and oxytocin administration, which may change opinion on who’s bad.