APS Riverina Branch Newsletter December 2014

This Riverina Branch communication will be sent out to all members who provided their email address to the branch. In order to reduce the number of emails sent out, most communications for the group will be collated and sent out via this method. If you wish to unsubscribe from all Riv branch emails please contact the editor mpfinnegan@bigpond.com.

Season's Greetings to all APS Members and friends!

Chair's Message

Dear Riverina branch members,

2014 is coming fast to a close with only a few more weeks to Christmas. This allows us time for reflection of our achievements for this year. Most of our achievements for the Riverina branch focused on the continuous professional development (CPD). This year we ran two one-day workshops and a number of one to two hour presentations in the evening. From the attendance numbers is evident that were well received by our branch members and the profession.

AGM in November 2014:

Firstly, I would like to thank the outgoing Riverina branch committee for its hard work in planning and organizing the workshops and evening presentations. I would like to thank in particular our outgoing Treasurer Mr. Gerald Wurf, previous Secretary Ellen Farrow, and committee members Natalie Walsch and Robert Emmett.

Secondly, I would like to thank Lisa Taylor for her great work to make the National Psychology Week a success. Lisa organised a psychology book display at the local library, marketed APS National Psychology Week to high school students, and distributed pamphlets and posters to GP practices and Blooms chemist. Lisa also visited the physiotherapy class at the Nan Roberts Division of the Haven Home and engaged both residence and nursing staff in activities and promoted awareness of APS National Psychology Week. Activities involved for residence to exercise with the APS logo squeeze balls.

Thirdly, I would like to thank our APS branch membership for their loyalty to the Riverina branch. The Riverina branch has currently 87 members of which 12 people are student members.

Fourth, I would like to remind associate members that the APS has changed its rules for becoming for full APS members. The eligibility criterion for full membership is available on the APS website.

Fifth, as you are aware the APS has a Division of General Psychological Practice (DGPP). I understand that this division was set up as a forum for DGPP members to discuss relevant issues of the profession, enhance communication and develop initiatives that promote the interests of DGPP members.

The APS DGPP Rep is Nadine Dardanelioti, dgppnsw@psychology.org.au. You can join the DGPP email system (at no cost) by completing the online registration at:

https://confirmsubscription.com/h/r/DA6DC0B4F3D2329B

Finally, I would like to introduce the new APS Riverina branch committee for 2015.

Chair:	Karl Wiener (newly endorsed for another 2 years)
Secretary & web editor:	Martin Finnegan
Treasurer	John Sheppard (endorsed for another 2 years)
Committee members	Julie Hyland (endorsed)
Student representatives	Lisa Taylor (endorsed)
Student representatives	Kimberley Sherwood (endorsed)
Student representatives	Debra Metcalf (endorsed)

I want to thank the AGM attendees for endorsing the nominations of the branch members for the vacant positions. The new committee will continue in communicating with you through e-mails, branch newsletters, and meetings.
On behalf of the APS Riverina branch committee, I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous 2015. See you all in 2015.

Cheers Karl
APS Riverina branch chair

RIVERINA BRANCH AGM Report

Date: Wednesday 19 November 2014 @ Riverine Club.

Members present
Debra Metcalf, Martin Finnegan, Karl Wiener, Lisa Taylor, Gerald Wurf, Stan Bongers, Pam Bongers, Sue Wilson, Daniel Hayes, Alan Draper, Louise Nelson, Joy Mullings, Wendy Dignand, Julie Hyland, and Sophie Mason.
Apologies
John Dalessandro, John Dean, John Sheppard, Josephine Cannon, Ellen Farrow, Michael Redgrave.

Reports from Office Bearers

Chair: Karl Wiener

1)   Achievements:
a)   Workshops

- Aboriginal cultural diversity in society – attended by 11 people (30/4/2014) Aunty Gail Clarke and Lloyd Dolan

- Easy Hypnosis- a common everyday approach after Erickson (18 attendees) 8/5/2014 by Dr Robert McNeilly

- ADHD 5/6/2014- 27 participants   Ass/Prof Tim Hannan

- OCD 19/8/2014 – 22 participants   Ass/Prof Rocco Crino

- Student Info session 13/8/2014 – 27 students (Albury & Wagga) Speaker: Debbie Irons, Kyah Hester, John Sheppard, Gene Hodgins, Karl Wiener, and John Dean

b)   Thank you to the 2014 Riverina Branch Committee for their hard work

- Dr Karl Wiener   (Chair)
- Mr. Martin Finnegan (Secretary)
- Mr. Gerald Wurf (Treasurer)
- Ellen Farrow
- John Sheppard
- Natalie Walsh
- Lisa Taylor
- Robert Emmett

c)   Current APS Riverina Branch Membership

Total members: 87
 Associate & Full Members: 75
Student members: 12

d)   APS matters

1)   National psychology week. Organised by Lisa Taylor;
- Each member of the committee was asked to reserve four books at Wagga library for a display during the week.
- Lisa has also contacted local high schools to publicise the APS National Psychology week.

- Additionally Lisa visited GPs with pamphlets and posters. As well Blooms Chemist was displaying an in-store display.
- Presentation at Physiotherapy class at the Nan Roberts Division of the Haven Home- Residence did some exercises with APS logo squeeze balls, and both residence and nursing staff engaged in activities and gained an awareness of APS National Psychology week

2)   APS Associate members under certain conditions can now become full APS members; Strand one of the Non-standard route to the grade of Member (MAPS) was recently approved by the APS Board of Directors as part of the continuing process to align aspects of APS membership criteria with those required by the Psychology Board of Australia.

- Eligibility under this pathway requires applicants to:
- Hold current general registration as a psychologist in Australia; and
- Have held general registration as a psychologist in Australia for a cumulative period of at least five years; and
- Have worked as a psychologist during this period of registration for a minimum full-time equivalent of five years.

3)   Division of General Psychological Practice (DGPP)
- Nadine advised that they will present at the next APS conference and that David Stokes is responsible for the website- no dates were provided for it to become active. To-date the website has not been activated.

4)   Psych News letter
- Nil publications since November 2013
- Objectives:
- Online
- What are the wanted featured- regular publications from state specific issues and branch information e.g. CPD issues and what did work well etc
- Local editor autonomy
- No word restrictions
- Online template will be developed to be consistent with APS templates (Lyn Casey)

5)   Better Access;
- This system is now under government review- outcome should be available in Nov 2014 – Mental Health Review Paper.

6)   Medicare Local
- To be renamed and streamlined to Primary Health Services by June 2015-> unclear who will administer the ATAPS and other programs
- Better Access Fee structure not CPI indexed (next due July 2015)

7)   AHPRA

• Discussion for AHPRA review cycle from 3-5 years
• CPD Audit- selected psychologists will receive letter to submit their documentations
• Consultation re changes to 4+2 pathway to open late 2014
• Consultation of 5+1 pathway complete (see AHPAR website)

8) Workcover
• Resumption in providing Provider numbers to eligible clinicians
• Providers will have to complete an ONLINE training through Personal Injury Education Foundation (in next 3-6 month)

9) Work Order Scheme
• See previous bulk email for details
• Here people with impairments or being unable to pay their fines can reduce their fines by either doing community work of seek psychological treatment for specific issues (NSW specific fine recovery)

10) Subpoena
• APS has developed an REPLY template to deal with solicitors who issue subpoenas as a 'fishing exercise' to gain information from psychologists in personal injuries and family law matters.

11) NDIS Newcastle
• Many psychologists will lose their government jobs when ADHC is restructured by July 2018. New system is customer driven facilitated by agencies and psychologists will get on average 5 sessions @ 164/hr (all allied disciplines including behavioural therapists) There is a concern of the training of non-regulated providers.

12) Event Calendar
• Looked after by Sabina Haywood
• Branch & Interest group events free
• Personal events attract a fee
• Takes 5 days for approval
• CPD allocations for colleges will take longer
• cpd@psychology.org.au
• Changes in look of events calendar differentiating between member groups vs. non-member groups

Secretary: Martin Finnegan

There have been a total of four newsletters this year (this being the fourth). Newsletters are no longer attached to the bulk email but instead members are sent a link where they can download a PDF document. This overcomes problems

such as file size limits, and attachments being culled by over-zealous internet security software.

Are four newsletters per year enough? Too much? Let us know! Also, we welcome your contributions to the newsletter. Sharing your experience of working in the psychology field can be of interest to your profession colleagues. We don't need a small novel, just a few hundred words talking about your area of interest. So if you feel so inspired, have a go and send us something for the New Year.

Treasurer: Gerald Wurf

This will be my last report as Treasurer. Following the recent Branch AGM, John Shepard will now hold this position. At the end of October, 2014 the Riverina Branch had a total balance of $4,793. Since the end of the financial year, the Branch's financial position has improved dramatically. We reached a May low of $679:99! Our two recent PD events were conducted at a small profit and this has resulted in the stronger financial position. Total workshop income from the ADHD: Theory to intervention workshop was $4254:55. Workshop income from the Exposure and Behavioural experiments workshop was $3527:27. Major costs associated with these workshops are almost finalised and the Branch remains in a healthy financial position as the new Treasurer commences and events are planned for the first half of 2015. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of our Riverina members. Thank you for your support of the Branch in 2014 and I look forward to catching up with you all at our 2015 events
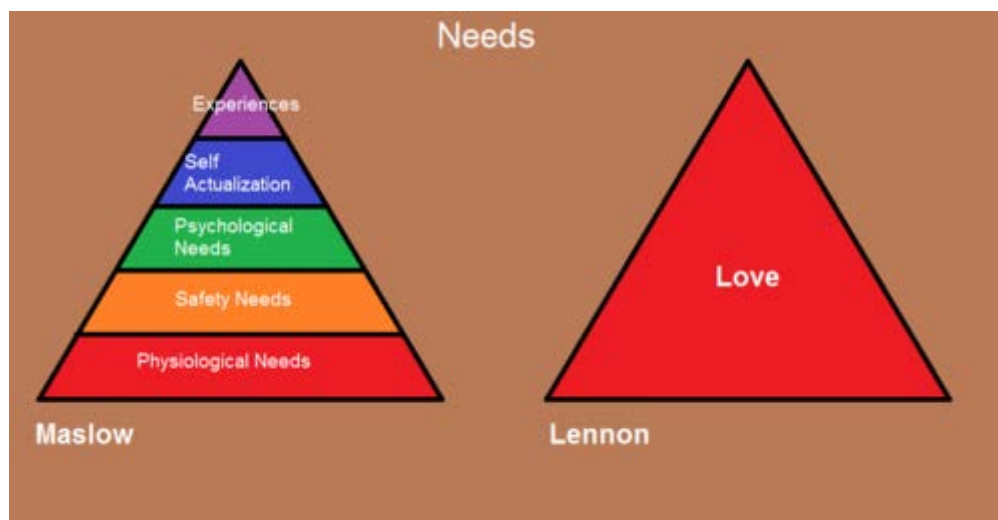
The Debunking Handbook
By John Cook and Stephan Lewandowsky

Now freely available for download at:
http://www.skepticalscience.com/Debunking-Handbook-now-freely-available-download.html

Excerpt (to pique your interest!)

Debunking myths is problematic. Unless great care is taken, any effort to debunk misinformation can inadvertently reinforce the very myths one seeks to correct. To avoid these "backfire effects", an effective debunking requires three major elements.

First, the refutation must focus on core facts rather than the myth to avoid the misinformation becoming more familiar. Second, any mention of a myth should be preceded by explicit warnings to notify the reader that the upcoming information is false. Finally, the refutation should include an alternative explanation that accounts for important qualities in the original misinformation.

Debunking the first myth about debunking

It's self-evident that democratic societies should base their decisions on accurate information. On many issues, however, misinformation can become entrenched in parts of the community, particularly when vested interests are involved. Reducing the influence of misinformation is a difficult and complex challenge.

A common misconception about myths is the notion that removing its influence is as simple as packing more information into people's heads. This approach assumes that public misperceptions are due to a lack of knowledge and that the solution is more information - in science communication, it's known as the "information deficit model". But that model is wrong: people don't process information as simply as a hard drive downloading data. Refuting misinformation involves dealing with complex cognitive processes. To successfully impart knowledge, communicators need to understand how people process information, how they modify their existing knowledge and how worldviews affect their ability to think rationally. It's not just what people think that matters, but how they think.

Once people receive misinformation, it's quite difficult to remove its influence. This was demonstrated in a 1994 experiment where people were exposed to misinformation about a fictitious warehouse fire, then given a correction clarifying the parts of the story that were incorrect. Despite remembering and accepting the correction, people still showed a lingering effect, referring to the misinformation when answering questions about the story.

Is it possible to completely eliminate the influence of misinformation? The evidence indicates that no matter how vigorously and repeatedly we correct the misinformation, for example by repeating the correction over and over again, the influence remains detectable. The old saying got it right - mud sticks.

There is also an added complication. Not only is misinformation difficult to remove, debunking a myth can actually strengthen it in people's minds. Several different "backfire effects" have been observed, arising from making myths more familiar, from providing too many arguments, or from providing evidence that threatens one's worldview.

The last thing you want to do when debunking misinformation is blunder in and make matters worse. So this handbook has a specific focus - providing practical tips to effectively debunk misinformation and avoid the various backfire effects. To achieve this, an understanding of the relevant cognitive processes is necessary. We explain some of the interesting psychological research in this area and finish with an example of an effective rebuttal of a common myth.