



## NEWSLETTER MARCH 2011

### 31st Annual SRIP Conference, University of Nottingham, 14-15 September 2011

*“Reproduction & Parenting Challenges in the 21st Century.”*

**Keynote speaker:** Professor Cris Glazebrook, Professor of Health Psychology, University of Nottingham  
**SRIP lecturer:** Professor John Cox, Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, Keele University

Since 1980 SRIP has organized an annual international scientific conference to exchange research findings, develop research interest and networks and engage with clinical partners. We are very pleased to announce that this year's conference will be held at the University of Nottingham ([www.nottingham.ac.uk](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk)). In line with the aims of SRIP, this conference will provide a unique forum for the integration of issues in reproduction by researchers and individuals working in psychology, healthcare, midwifery, nursing, obstetrics & gynaecology, paediatrics, psychiatry, social work, sociology, anthropology and epidemiology.

#### CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

**Submissions for symposia, papers and posters on the psychological, behavioural, medical and social aspects of all areas of reproduction, birth and infancy are currently being invited.**

The conference theme for 2011 is, “Reproduction and Parenting Challenges in the 21st Century.” We would therefore particularly welcome papers dealing with health inequalities & poverty, ethnicity, child protection, mental health, domestic abuse, disability, nutrition and obesity. However, submissions on other SRIP

#### CONFERENCE BURSARIES Cont.

related topics are also very welcome. A 250 word abstract and 500 word summary should be submitted by email to the academic programme organiser ([anita.hughes@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:anita.hughes@nottingham.ac.uk)) by the **3rd May 2011**. Please visit [www.srip.ac.uk](http://www.srip.ac.uk) for further information about the aims of SRIP and the requirements for 2011 SRIP conference submissions.

#### CONFERENCE BURSARIES:

SRIP supports a number of bursaries for students and NHS staff. Bursaries are intended to support conference fees, travel and accommodation up to a maximum of £300. Applications will be considered on an individual basis by the committee, with applicants being informed of the committee's decision by the end of July. To apply for a bursary, write to the SRIP Secretary ([anita.hughes@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:anita.hughes@nottingham.ac.uk)) specifying the bursary type (see overleaf) and the nature and amount of support required. The closing date for receipt of applications is **June 30<sup>th</sup> 2011**.



- **Student Bursaries:**  
**Application Deadline 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

Each year SRIP provides a total of 3 bursaries for students to attend the annual conference. Anyone undertaking an undergraduate degree, masters by research, PhD or a professional doctorate is eligible to apply, although preference will be given to those students presenting a paper or poster or those with limited funds to support their own conference attendance. Applications should be made in writing to the SRIP secretary (anita.hughes@nottingham.ac.uk) and should include a brief CV of no more than 3 pages, a letter of support from a research supervisor or tutor and a statement outlining the

potential benefits to the student of attending the conference.

- **NHS Staff Bursaries:**  
**Application Deadline 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

The SRIP staff bursary is available to NHS staff who can demonstrate direct engagement with the implementation of evidence-based practice or appropriate research relating to the Society's interests and aims. Applications should be made to the SRIP Secretary (anita.hughes@nottingham.ac.uk) and should include a brief CV of no more than 3 pages, a letter of support from a principal investigator or clinical manager and a statement outlining the potential benefits to the individual of attending the conference.

## Report on the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual SRIP Conference, LEUVEN, BELGIUM; 8-10TH SEPTEMBER 2010

Last year, the 30<sup>th</sup> annual SRIP conference was held for the second time outside of the UK in Belgium, at the University Hospital Gasthuisberg, part of the Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven. Around seventy delegates from the UK, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Malta, the Netherlands, and Poland attended.

The conference theme was "30 Years of Reproductive and Infant Psychology" and the programme reflected the wide range of topics that are of interest to SRIP members including antenatal testing, infertility, maternity care and infant development. The theme of maternal mental health was again well represented with **Professor Pauline Slade** leading a symposium on how the relationship patterns of women are associated with birth related post-traumatic stress and maternal depressive symptoms. Abstracts of the conference papers and posters presented have been published online and are accessible through the website of the Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology (ejournal online contents, Volume 28 (2010), Issue 3).



City Hall, Leuven

### 2010 KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

The invited conference keynote lecture "Severe disorders of the mother-infant relationship" was delivered by emeritus **Professor Dr Ian Brockington**. Professor Brockington worked for many years as a Consultant Psychiatrist, specialising in maternal mental health and research into puerperal psychosis and impaired mother-infant relationships. He published a key text on the topic, "Motherhood and Mental

Health” in 1996. Prof Brockington’s lecture reflected on the history of disorders of the mother-infant relationship and presented his research in this area. His lecture emphasised the importance of early recognition of cases of severely impaired mother-infant ‘bonding’.

### 2010 SRIP LECTURER:

The 2010 SRIP lecturer award was presented to **Professor Axel Schölmerich**, Professor of Developmental Psychology at Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany. Axel Schölmerich has been a long time supporter of the Society and the award was made in recognition of his extensive work in the psychology of infancy, particularly in the field of mother-child interaction. Much of Prof Schölmerich’s research emphasises the need to take a cross-cultural perspective on development and part of his address on *“The significance of infancy”* included his recent study on transitions into school for Turkish migrant children in Germany.

### BEST POSTER WINNER:

The prize for the best poster was awarded to **Erin Yong Ping** and colleagues from McGill University & the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, Canada, and the University of Illinois, USA. The poster, entitled *“Endogenous oxytocin levels and symptoms of psychological distress across pregnancy”* presented research into pregnancy related biological risk factors for perinatal depression and anxiety. Our thanks go to Taylor and Francis, the publishers of the Society’s journal, for sponsoring the poster prize and accompanying wine reception.

### CONFERENCE DINNER & SOCIAL EVENTS:

The main social event of the conference was a guided tour of Leuven’s Grand Béguinage, a restored historical quarter of the city containing narrow streets of around 100 houses mostly dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Started in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century as a lay Catholic community for unmarried women, the community in Leuven is one of the largest béguinages still in existence in the Low Countries.



*Delegates at the 2010 SRIP conference wine reception*

The guided tour was followed by an excellent conference dinner at the Faculty Club situated in the grounds of the Grand Béguinage. Christopher Macy, founder member of SRIP attended the conference and gave a short talk about the origins of the Society and his reflections on how it has developed.



*Leuven’s Grand Béguinage*

### SRIP THANKS

The 30th conference was organised for the Society by the Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven and our sincere thanks go to Dr Johan van Bussel and Prof. Dr Koen Demyttenaere for organising a successful and enjoyable event.

## STUDENT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Each year the Society awards prizes for undergraduate and post graduate research. The subject of the research may be any aspect of reproduction, birth or infancy. As well as a cash prize, winners are offered the opportunity to present at the SRIP conference with their full conference fee covered by the Society. They also receive £200 towards conference travel and accommodation. Further details regarding student prize application requirements can be found at <http://www.srip.ac.uk/funding/> or by contacting the SRIP secretary ([anita.hughes@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:anita.hughes@nottingham.ac.uk)).

- **Annual Student Prize: Application Deadline 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

This prize is awarded for the best research dissertation submitted as part of an undergraduate degree, masters by research, or equivalent level professional training (e.g. MBBS). The SRIP Prize winner will receive £150. It is expected that the dissertation would be no longer than 15000 words.

- **Annual Graduate Student Prize: Application Deadline 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

This prize is awarded for the best research thesis submitted as a full or partial requirement for a postgraduate degree, including M.Phil, D.Clin.Psy., PhD, or other similar awards. The Postgraduate Student Prize winner will receive £250. Dissertations and theses should be entered in the year they are submitted for the degree or training course or in the following year.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2010 STUDENT PRIZE WINNERS:

In 2010 the SRIP Student Prize was awarded to **Aleena Wojcieszek** for her dissertation "'Missed-conceptions': An intervention to increase knowledge of fertility and the effectiveness of IVF". Aleena's research was conducted for her BSc in Psychological Science at the University of Queensland, Australia. Her study evaluated the effect of an information intervention on young people's knowledge of and attitudes towards fertility and reproductive issues. Her findings demonstrated that young Australians significantly underestimate the age at which fertility begins to decline and over-estimate the ease and success rates of IVF treatment. Aleena was nominated by her supervisor Professor Christina Lee.

The 2010 SRIP GRADUATE Prize was awarded to **Rachel Wu** "Learning From Cues During Infancy". Rachel carried out her doctoral research as a student at the Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development, Birkbeck, University of London. Her research combined the areas of attention to social cues and perceptual learning. Using some wonderful lab footage of infants responding to cues in a variety of experimental conditions, her presentation at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual conference demonstrated exactly how babies preferentially respond to people as learning cues. Rachel was nominated by her supervisor Dr Natasha Kirkham.

Our congratulations are sent to them both.

## ARE YOU A MEMBER OF SRIP?

If you would like to join SRIP, or if you are existing member whose contact details have changed, please email the SRIP membership administrator Gillian Weir ([gillian.weir@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:gillian.weir@ncl.ac.uk)). Please note that we can no longer accept payments by American Express Cards.



## DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR A RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT GRANT?

SRIP continues to invite applications for grants to support single occasion research development workshops in any area of interest to the Society (see the "About us" section on our website [www.srip.ac.uk](http://www.srip.ac.uk)). The Society will provide up to £1000 to help cover travel and accommodation for participants and other small incidental costs. Applications can be made at any time. At least one of the organisers must be a member of SRIP. If you have an idea for a research development workshop then further details about the grant criteria and how to apply can be found under 'Developmental Grant Guidelines' on the funding page of the SRIP website (<http://www.srip.ac.uk/funding/>).

### SRIP 2010 Workshop Snapshots:

- ***Beyond ESMEE (The European Survey of Maternity Expectations & Experiences); 21-22 January 2010; University of Ghent, Belgium.***

Early in 2010 SRIP part-funded a workshop organized by Wendy Christiaens, Department of Sociology, University of Ghent and Josephine Green, University of York, UK. Its purpose was to further develop a major funding application first submitted to the European Collaborative Research Partnership in March 2009. The objective of the workshop was to i) further current understanding of psychosocial processes initiated by the transition to parenthood and ii) to contribute to the evidence base for European health and social policies concerning pregnancy, childbearing and

parenting in the first postnatal year. Having considered the focus and theoretical underpinnings of the original ESMEE project, a refined funding application was submitted.

- ***Understanding Regional Variation in Antenatal Screening Uptake; 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010; University of Leeds***

This workshop, organised by Janet Hirst, aimed to explore perspectives of clinical midwives regarding regional variation in prenatal screening uptake for Down's syndrome. Sixteen midwives from a purposive sample of ten local NHS Trusts attended the event with the intention of identifying early-stage research questions related to in screening uptake and practice. New working relationships were forged and existing networks were strengthened. It is anticipated that these emerging relationships will facilitate future research collaborations across the Yorkshire and Humber regions.

- ***Revisiting Choice; 19<sup>th</sup> November 2010; University of Leeds***

This full-day workshop organised by Shenaz Ahmed, brought together a multidisciplinary audience consisting of academics, practitioners and policy implementers engaged in projects or services related to antenatal screening. The workshop sought to disseminate research findings relating to informed choice in antenatal screening procedures, discuss future research ideas and facilitate networking among policy-makers and practitioners. The NHS Director of Programmes, UK National Screening Committee has since invited the submission of a tender for further work on this research topic.

## SRIP COMMITTEE NEWS

SRIP extends a warm welcome to three new committee members this year: **Jane Iles** from the University of London, **James Newham** from the Maternal and Fetal Health Research Centre, St Mary's Hospital, Manchester and **Professor Elenora Bielawska-Batorowicz**, Professor of Psychology at the University of Lodz, Poland.

Also, we bid a fond farewell to **Professor Helen Pattison** and express our sincere thanks on behalf of the committee for all her hard work over previous years. Helen has been a long standing member of SRIP, a successful SRIP conference organiser and was, until a couple of years ago, the Society's Treasurer. We wish her well.

## BEYOND SRIP: RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

### *HEFA Consultation: Donor Conception*

Our members may be interested to know that the HFEA has recently launched a public consultation on a number of its policies on sperm and egg donation.



**HFEA** is the independent regulator for IVF treatment and embryo research. Their role is to protect patients and the public interest, to drive improvement in the treatment and research sectors and to provide information to the public and policymakers about treatment and research. HFEA are currently inviting people to share their views on the issues surrounding donor conception via a series of questionnaires on the consultation pages on their website. They are also holding a series of workshops with patients, donors, parents of donor-conceived people, and those who are donor-conceived. Consultation runs until April and decisions will be made at the

Authority meeting in July. If you would like to learn more about their activities or if you wish to participate in this consultation please visit [www.hfea.gov.uk/donationreview](http://www.hfea.gov.uk/donationreview).

### *NHS FASP Consultation: Fetal Anomaly Screening*

The NHS FASP (Fetal Anomaly Ultrasound Screening Programme) has recently reviewed the current guidance pertaining to consent for screening as present in both the Antenatal Screening - Working standards for Down's Syndrome Screening (2007; standards 7-9) and the Consent Standards for Screening Fetal Anomalies during Pregnancy(2007).



The consent expert group has developed an updated document which will replace the contents of both of these documents. NHS FASP will be carrying out an online consultation of this document for 1 month. The document can be found at <http://fetalanomaly.screening.nhs.uk/consentstandardsconsultation>

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