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NETWORK MEETING: "FURTHER ADVANCES IN PERFECTIONISM RESEARCH"

York St John University, UK, 24th–25th July 2012

Programme

Please find below the preliminary schedule for the forthcoming networking meeting. Presentations have been grouped in a fashion that hopefully reflects the broad topics/focus of the research. This includes a keynote presentation from Professor Gordon Flett entitled "What have we learned from 20 years of research on multidimensional perfectionism? Looking back and moving forward" that will take place on day two. You will also find below the abstracts for the individual presentations.

Notes for presenters

Each presenter has been allocated 20 minutes to use in a manner of their choosing. The majority of the papers submitted are based on empirical findings but some are theoretical/ discussion-based presentations. Presenters are encouraged to allow for time for questions at the end of their presentations (as part of their 20 minutes). However, there will also be an opportunity for general discussion at the end of each session.

Venue

The venue for the network meeting is De Grey Court, York St John University. On day one (24th July) there will be someone to greet attendees in the reception area of De Grey Court. They will direct you to the specific room (DG016). To help with directions, I have provided a map that includes the location of York St John University in relation to the city centre and a campus map.

Refreshments, lunch and dinner

Refreshments and lunch will be provided on both days courtesy of York St John University. However, evening activities (i.e., drinks, evening activity and dinner) are at our own expense.

Accommodation

For those who have yet to arrange accommodation, I have included a list of local hotels. These should suit a range of needs and budgets.

If there is anything I can help you with, or you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

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Day One: *Tuesday 24th July*

Day / Time	Activity
10.00 to 10.30	Refreshments / Welcome
10.30 to 12.00	Research Session 1
10.30	Simon Sherry
10.50	Liesbet Boone
11.10	Kathleen De Cuyper
11.20	Katharine Rimes
11.50	Joachim Stoeber
12.10	Julian Childs
12.30 to 13.30	Lunch
13.30 to 15.00	Research Session 2
13.30	Christine Altstötter-Gleich
13.50	Kristie Speirs Neumeister
14.10	Lavinia Damian
14.30	Dorena Amann
14.50	Natalia Schneider
15.10	Elisabeth Zureck
15.30 to 16.00	Refreshments
16.00 to 17.00	Group activity/Open discussion
17.00 to 18.30	Free time
18.30	Optional drinks at 'The Three Legged Mare' on Micklegate
19.30	Optional Ghost Trail Guided Tour (starts outside the west doors of York Minster)
20.30	Optional dinner

Day Two: *Wednesday 25th July*

Day / Time	Activity
9.30 to 10.00	Refreshments
10.00 to 12.30	Research Session 3
10.00	Sarah Mallinson
10.20	Andrew Hill
10.40	Paul Appleton
11.00	Sanna Nordin-Bates
11.20	Henrik Gustafson
11.40	Howard Hall
12.30 to 13.30	Lunch
13.30 to 15.00	Keynote Presentation
	Gordon Flett: 'What have we learned from 20 years of research on multidimensional perfectionism? Looking back and moving forward.'
15.30 to 16.30	Refreshments / Open discussion
16.30	Close

Keynote Presentation

Title:

What have we learned from 20 years of research on multidimensional perfectionism? Looking back and moving forward

Presenter/s:

Gordon L. Flett[1]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Gordon L. Flett[1]

[1]York University

Abstract:

Programmatic research on multidimensional perfectionism has yielded several new insights and highlighted important issues that need further exploration. The first segment of this presentation will examine key findings and developments that have enhanced our understanding of the perfectionism construct and the consequential outcomes linked with perfectionism. Discussion will focus on the motivational roots of perfectionism and what is known currently about the motives, goals, and needs of perfectionists. The complexities inherent in the perfectionism construct and the heterogeneity among perfectionists will be illustrated by contrasting a variable-centered perspective versus a person-centered perspective. The second segment of this presentation will outline key issues and challenges for future investigation related to the assessment and the conceptualization of perfectionism. Topics discussed include the distinction between the perfectionism construct (i.e., the standards) and the self-evaluative processes and reactions linked with perfectionism. Discussion also focuses on the potential usefulness of a person by situation approach to the study of perfectionism that takes into account the life contexts and life roles of perfectionists. The presentation concludes with an overview of relatively neglected topics that merit further investigation in the next 20 years of perfectionism research.

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Research Session 1

Title:

Why do perfectionists binge eat? Evidence from longitudinal and experience sampling designs

Presenter/s:

Simon Sherry[1], Mackinnon, S. P., Mushquash, A. R., & Sherry, D. L.

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Simon Sherry[1], Mackinnon, S. P., Mushquash, A. R., & Sherry, D. L.

[1]Dalhousie University

Abstract:

Why do perfectionists binge eat? According to the perfectionism model of binge eating (Mackinnon, Sherry, et al., 2011; Mushquash, Sherry, et al., 2012; Sherry & Hall, 2009), perfectionism plays an important role in binge eating both directly by predicting changes in binge eating over time and indirectly by generating conditions where binge eating is likely. More specifically, the perfectionism model of binge eating asserts that perfectionistic individuals are prone to binge eating because they encounter interpersonal problems, feel sad, and engage in harsh dietary restraint. I will present data from three studies testing the perfectionism model of binge eating. The first study involved 566 young women studied using a 7-day experience sampling design. The second study involved 200 young women studied using a 3-week, 3-wave longitudinal design. The third study involved 218 mother-daughter dyads studied using a mixed longitudinal and experience sampling design. Results from all three studies supported the perfectionism model of binge eating, and illuminated the characterological and the interpersonal context within which binge eating is likely to occur. Essential to disrupting the cycle of binge eating is knowing how variables work in concert to generate and to maintain binge eating. The perfectionism model of binge eating moves us closer to achieving this important goal.

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Title:

Can perfectionism, next to a dispositional trait, also be represented as a personality state?

Presenter/s:

Liesbet Boone[1]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Liesbet Boone[1]

[1]University of Ghent

Abstract:

Dimensions of perfectionism, such as - personal standards perfectionism and evaluative concerns perfectionism, are considered to represent surface personality features that might be relatively less stable compared to core personality traits. It has indeed been shown that perfectionism can be triggered by specific negative life-events or daily hassles (e.g., experiences of failure). However, no previous studies have examined how perfectionism manifests on a situational and daily level (i.e. state perfectionism) and how both trait and state perfectionism might relate to negative outcomes. We will present two recent studies in which we aim to add to this body of research and to increase our understanding of how perfectionism might work on a daily level. Study 1 is an experimental study in which perfectionism is experimentally manipulated and in which the effects on eating disorder (ED) symptoms are examined. In this study, we examined whether state perfectionism (i.e. perfectionism levels experienced during the 24 hours following the manipulation) would relate to ED symptoms experienced in the day irrespective of trait perfectionism levels. Study 2 is a diary study in which we looked at the natural intra-individual fluctuations in perfectionism across 7 consecutive days. We also examined whether fluctuations in perfectionism dimensions would covary with fluctuations in ED symptoms within persons, and whether these covariations would depend on trait perfectionism levels. In both studies, we found that state perfectionism levels covary with ED symptoms, even irrespective of trait perfectionism levels. These findings suggests that it might be essential to look at both state and trait perfectionism because different (but not necessarily independent) underlying processes might account for the associations between state and trait perfectionism and ED symptoms.

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Title:

Indirect measurement of perfectionism: An alternative way to further clarify the concept of perfectionism?

Presenter/s:

Kathleen De Cuyper[1,2]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Kathleen De Cuyper[1,2], Guido Pieters[1,2], Laurence Claes[1] & Dirk Hermans[1]

[1] University of Leuven, [2]University of Leuven

Abstract:

In different domains of psychology professionals invoke the concept of perfectionism to explain certain behaviours of their clients. Nevertheless, after several decades of research, the nature of this concept still remains a matter of debate. The aim of our research project is to explore to what extent indirect measures of perfectionism can help to further clarify the concept of perfectionism. Social cognition research shows that information about the self can be processed in an explicit and in an implicit mode. In contrast to the explicit mode, which is typically assessed using self-report questionnaires, the implicit mode is characterized by unconscious, automatic and intuitive processing. Indirect measures are designed to capture aspects of the self-concept processed in this implicit mode. Therefore they assess the association between concepts without relying on self-report. Attitudes and associations are inferred from behavioural responses such as key-presses in specifically developed reaction time procedures, like the Implicit Association Test (IAT; Greenwald et al, 1998) we used in our studies. Two newly constructed indirect measures of aspects of perfectionism will be presented: the Achievement Orientation Single Category IAT and the Failing/Suffering IAT. The results of our first three studies suggest that the Achievement Orientation SC-IAT can predict exam performance in students and that the Failing/Suffering IAT can predict therapy outcome in eating disorder patients, after 2 months of specialized therapy in the same treatment setting. In addition, our research project raises questions about the manifestation of perfectionism in students versus in eating disorder patients, which can also be discussed. The Mediating Role of Body Related Perception, Self-Esteem and Objectified Body Consciousness on the Relationship between Multidimensional Perfectionism and Dispositional Flow State

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Title:

General perfectionism and perfectionist beliefs about emotions and self-sacrifice in chronic fatigue syndrome

Presenter/s:

Katharine Rimes

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Katharine Rimes

University of Bath

Abstract:

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is characterised by severe and disabling fatigue, often associated with other symptoms such as muscle / joint pain, sleep disturbance or concentration or memory problems. Cognitive behavioural models of CFS propose that perfectionism is a vulnerability factor for this condition in the context of acute illness or stress (e.g. Surawy et al., 1995). Patients with CFS completed measures of current and premorbid levels of general perfectionism, perfectionist standards about putting the needs of other people before one's own ('self-sacrifice) and a new questionnaire assessing perfectionist beliefs about emotions (Beliefs about Emotions Scale; Rimes & Chalder, 2010). The different types of perfectionism showed moderately strong inter-correlations. For all three measures, premorbid perfectionism ratings were significantly greater than current ratings and higher than levels reported by healthy participants. Current levels of perfectionist beliefs about emotions and self-sacrifice were still significantly higher than those in healthy participants. In an uncontrolled study of cognitive behaviour therapy in routine clinical care, perfectionist beliefs about emotions showed a reduction down to normal population levels. In a pilot randomised study of mindfulness based cognitive therapy (MBCT), perfectionist beliefs about emotions decreased to population levels after MBCT but not after being on a waiting list. In conclusion, results were consistent with the hypothesis that several aspects of perfectionism are implicated in vulnerability to CFS. Patients with CFS report becoming less generally perfectionistic after developing the condition but CBT and MBCT may help to further reduce unhelpful perfectionist beliefs about emotions.

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Title:

Exploring sexual perfectionism

Presenter/s:

Joachim Stoeber[1]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Joachim Stoeber[1], Laura Lubej[1], Isabel Almeida[1], Emma Lyons[1]

[1]University of Kent

Abstract:

Perfectionism is a common personality characteristic that can affect all areas of life. This paper presents the first empirical investigation of sexual perfectionism exploring how sexual perfectionism and its facets relate to individuals' thoughts and feelings about different aspects of their sexual life. A sample of 288 students (56 male, 232 female) completed the Multidimensional Sexual Perfectionism Questionnaire (MSPQ; Snell, 1997). Drawing on Hewitt and Flett's (1991) model of perfectionism, the MSPQ differentiates five aspects of sexual perfectionism: (a) self-oriented sexual perfectionism, (b) socially prescribed sexual perfectionism, (c) partner-prescribed sexual perfectionism, (d) partner-oriented sexual perfectionism, and (e) partner's self-oriented sexual perfectionism. In addition to the MSPQ, the students completed measures of sexual perfectionist cognitions, sexual optimism, sexual satisfaction, sexual self-esteem, sexual self-efficacy, sexual pre-occupation, sexual anxiety, sexual depression, and sexual problem self-blame. Results showed differential patterns of relationships for the different aspects of multidimensional sexual perfectionism, suggesting that sexual perfectionism--while mostly maladaptive and dysfunctional--may also have positive aspects with respect to how people think and feel about their sexuality.

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Title:

Socially Prescribed Perfectionism, Stress, and Burnout in the Workplace: Findings from Two Longitudinal Studies

Presenter/s:

Julian Childs

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Julian Childs

University of Kent

Abstract:

Stress and burnout in the workplace have a negative impact on organizations and customers and are estimated to cost the economy billions every year. To help identify employees at high risk, it is important to know what individual differences contribute to stress and burnout. Two longitudinal studies were conducted to examine whether individual differences in socially prescribed perfectionism contribute to employees' role stress and predict increases in burnout symptoms (exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy). Study 1 investigated 69 employees working in healthcare service provision over a 6-month interval, and Study 2 investigated 195 school teachers over a 3-month interval. In both studies, socially prescribed perfectionism predicted longitudinal increases in role stress and inefficacy. Moreover, in Study 2, it also predicted longitudinal increases in exhaustion and cynicism. The findings indicate that individual differences in socially prescribed perfectionism may be a contributing factor to stress and burnout in the workplace.

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Research Session 2

Title:

Perfectionism is not perfectionism – divergent validity of perfectionism facets.

Presenter/s:

Christine Altstötter-Gleich[1]

Author/s and affiliations:

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[1]University Koblenz-Landau

Abstract:

Regarding current empirical studies on perfectionism mainly three multidimensional perfectionism scales are employed: The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale of Frost and colleagues (MPS-F; Frost et al., 1990; with the subscales Personal Standards, Organisation, Concern over Mistakes, Doubts about Actions, Parental Expectations, and Parental Criticism), the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale of Hewitt and Flett (MPS-H; Hewitt & Flett, 1991; with the subscales Self-oriented Perfectionism, Other-oriented Perfectionism, and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism) and the Almost Perfect Scale Revised (APS-R; Slaney et al., 2001; with the subscales High Standards, Order, and Discrepancies). Even though empirical evidence clearly confirms that two distinct dimensions of perfectionism - perfectionistic striving and perfectionistic concerns - underlie the diverse subscales (see in summary Stoeber & Otto, 2006), the conceptions differ notably in the number of facets they refer to and with respect to their content. By means of correlational analyses (N=424) divergent and convergent validity of the different facets operationalizing perfectionistic strivings and concerns are highlighted. Criteria variables are different facets of self-esteem (MSWS; Schütz & Sellin, 2006), coping (PCI; Schwarzer, Greenglass & Tauber, 2000), and work related behavior and experience patterns (AVEM; Scharschmidt & Fischer, 2003). Whereas facets of perfectionistic striving show high convergent validity, significant differences in the correlational patterns of the facets of perfectionistic concerns point to the divergent validity of the diverse operationalizations of the three multidimensional scales. Implications for the application of the scales for specific research questions and the comparability of the results relying on different scales to assess perfectionism are discussed.

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Title:

Perfectionism and Achievement Motivation: Implications for the debate on positive perfectionism

Presenter/s:

Kristie Speirs Neumeister[1]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Kristie Speirs Neumeister[1]

[1]Ball State University

Abstract:

Although perfectionism was initially conceptualized as pathological (Burns, 1980), researchers have argued that some types of perfectionism (i.e., adaptive, healthy, or positive) might actually enhance achievement. Slade and Owens (1998) proposed that underlying differences in motivation might help explain why perfectionism may appear to be beneficial. According to their dual process model, individuals with positive perfectionism focus on a need to achieve (i.e., approach motivations) and individuals with negative perfectionism are primarily motivated by the need to avoid failure (i.e., avoidance motivations). Research on perfectionism and achievement motivation in the athletic domain supports this notion: adaptive perfectionism (referred to as perfectionistic striving) has been associated with approach goal orientations whereas maladaptive perfectionism has been associated with avoidance goal orientations (Stoeber, 2011). However, research on perfectionism and achievement motivation in the academic domain is less clear and may be due to failure to control for the shared variance across dimensions of perfectionism and/or the exclusion of mastery-avoidance in the analysis of achievement motivation (see Fletcher & Speirs Neumeister, in press, for a review) Eum & Rice, 2011; Speirs Neumeister & Finch, 2006; Van Yperen, 2006; Verner-Filion & Gaudreau, 2010). The current study addressed these concerns by examining the unique relationship between self-oriented (as a proxy for adaptive perfectionism) and socially prescribed perfectionism (as a proxy for maladaptive perfectionism) to each of the four achievement goals: mastery approach and avoidance and performance approach and avoidance (Elliot, 1999) within a high ability population. After controlling for socially prescribed perfectionism, self-oriented perfectionism was positively correlated with all four achievement goals. Socially prescribed perfectionism was positively correlated with performance approach and performance avoidance goals after controlling for self-oriented perfectionism. Results are discussed in light of research findings from other studies that have examined perfectionism and achievement motivation in the academic domain as well as the unique sample of high ability students.

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Title:

Patterns of perfectionism and achievement goals in adolescents' affect: A longitudinal panel study.

Presenter/s:

Lavinia Damian

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Lavinia Damian[1], Joachim Stoeber[2], Oana Negru[1], & Adriana Baban[1]

[1]"Babes-Bolyai" University, [2]University of Kent

Abstract:

The present research aimed to explore the role perfectionism plays in adolescents' affect, taking into account gender, age, academic efficacy, academic achievement, and personal achievement goals as conceptualized in the 2 × 2 achievement framework (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). The design of the study followed a longitudinal panel model with data collected at two time points: April - May of 2011 and February - March of 2012. The longitudinal sample consisted of 382 adolescent school students (61% girls) aged between 15 and 20 years (M_{T1} = 16.75, *SD* = .91, M_{T2} = 17.52, *SD* = .92). To measure the key variables, the study used the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson et al., 1988), the Child and Adolescent Perfectionism Scale (Flett et al., 1997), and the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (Midgley et al., 2000) in combination with items assessing mastery avoidance goals (Bong, 2009). As expected, hierarchical regression analyses of time 1 data (*N* = 581) revealed distinct patterns in predicting positive and negative affect. The same multiple regression models were tested for positive and negative affect at time 2 from time 1 predictors, while controlling for affect at time 1. Results showed that only low performance avoidance goals predicted positive affect at time 2 ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .05$). Conversely, negative affect at time 2 was explained by socially prescribed perfectionism ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$), low performance approach goals ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .05$), performance avoidance goals ($\beta = .12$, $p < .05$), and female gender ($\beta = .14$, $p < .01$). The present results confirm the fact that perfectionism predicts negative affect, but, more importantly, they show that high levels of socially prescribed perfectionism can predict adolescents' future affect state, after a 10 months period.

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Title:

How Perfectionism Influences the Perception of Charismatic Leadership

Presenter/s:

Dorena Amann[1]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Dorena Amann[1], Friderike Gerstenberg [1]

[1]Technische Universität München,

Abstract:

High personal standards produce positive and negative consequences. The consequences are usually depended on the interaction with dysfunctional facets of perfectionism. The effects of such interaction were studied in relation to charisma perception. First, perfectionism was assessed. Subsequently, participants were randomly assigned to two experimental conditions.
In both conditions, participants were shown a short video of a leader figure in action. In the first condition, the leader conveyed his message by using the inspirational motivation leadership style. In the second condition, the leader conveyed his message by using the intellectual stimulation leadership style. Immediately afterwards, participants had to indicate to what extent they perceived the leader figure as charismatic. Results show that charisma perception was moderated by perfectionism. For example functional perfectionists perceived the intellectual stimulation leader as more charismatic then dysfunctional perfectionists. The results are discussed with regard to the possible underlying mechanisms of charisma perception.

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Title:

Perfectionism and the attribution of success and failure

Presenter/s:

Natalia Schneider[1]

Author/s and Affiliation:

Natalia Schneider[1], Friederike Gerstenberg[2], Christine Altstotter-Gleich[1], Elisabeth Zureck[2], Manfred Schmitt[1]

[1]University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany, [2]Technische Universität München, Germany

Abstract:

Current research has shown that different types of perfectionism are related to different attributions of success and failure (Stöber & Becker, 2008). In two studies we further investigated the hypotheses that perfectionistic standards in their pure form are associated with a beneficial attributional style (internal and global attribution of success an external and specific attribution of failure) and pure evaluative concerns walk along with attributions which are unfavorable (external and specific attribution of success and internal and global attribution of failure). Previous studies mainly used correlative designs or illusory feedback situations oriented on the average achievement to investigate the attributional reaction. In Study 1 we implemented an experimental design with easy vs. difficult versions of the Remote Associate Test (Mednick, 1962) to produce a task-immanent feedback situation. In Study 2 the feedback was oriented on the expectancies the participants had for their task performance. After each feedback situation we assessed the attributional and the emotional reaction (primarily self-conscious-emotions) to investigate the further consequences of different kinds of attributions. These investigations should help to get a broader view of the connections of types of perfectionism with situational as well as habitual attributional and emotional reactions to success and failure. The results of both studies will be discussed in the light of previous theoretical assumptions and empirical findings.

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Title:

How Perfectionism Influences Psychological and Physiological Responses in stressful situations

Presenter/s:

Elisabeth Zureck[1]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Elisabeth Zureck[1], Friederike Gerstenberg[1], Christine Altstötter-Gleich[2], Natalia Schneider[2], Manfred Schmitt[2]

[1]Technische Universität München, [2]University of Koblenz-Landau

Abstract:

In a series of studies we investigated how perfectionism is related to different stress responses. In a first study we examined whether, compared to functional perfectionists, dysfunctional perfectionists are related to more vulnerability after a stress induction (Trierer Social Stress Test, Kirschbaum, Pirke, & Hellhammer, 1993). In relation to psychological responses (e.g., mood, arousal, anxiety) significant moderator effects of perfectionism were found. With regard to physiological responses (cortisol) a main effect of experimental condition was obtained (higher levels of cortisol in the stress condition). In a second study we examined the influence of implicit (Heckhausen, 1966) and explicit achievement motivation (Schönbrodt & Gerstenberg, 2011) as a potential mediator of the moderating effects of perfectionism. The empirical findings on psychological and physiological responses (cortisol, heart rate variability) are discussed with regard to the potentially underlying mechanisms of personality and stress.

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Research Session 3

Title:

The Relationship between Multidimensional Perfectionism and Junior Athletes' Experiences at a Sports Event

Presenter/s:

Sarah Mallinson[1]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Sarah Mallinson[1] and Andrew Hill[1]

[1]York St John University

Abstract:

While research suggests that perfectionism energises high levels of motivation for athletes, its wider influence on the quality of the motivation exhibited by athletes (e.g., emotional experiences, peer relations, and moral functioning) is less clear. This study aimed to address this issue by examining the multivariate and univariate relationship between multidimensional perfectionism (striving for perfection and negative reactions to imperfection) and junior athletes' experiences at a sports event. Following institutional ethical approval, 160 junior athletes (M age = 11.53, *s* = 1.66 years) completed the Multidimensional Inventory of Perfectionism in Sport (Stoeber et al., 2007) and the Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (Diener et al., 2010) during a regional sports event. Canonical correlation analysis revealed a multivariate relationship between perfectionism and experience. Specifically, when perfectionism includes lower levels of negative reactions to imperfection and moderate levels of striving for perfection it is associated with more positive experiences. Regression analyses indicated that, at a univariate level, striving for perfection and negative reactions to imperfection predicted positive experiences in opposing directions, while negative reactions to imperfection positively predicted a negative experience. Extending research in this area, the findings suggest that striving for perfection contributes to more positive experiences in sport when accompanied by lower levels of negative reactions to imperfection or when considered independently. In contrast, higher levels of negative reactions to imperfection may undermine the potential for junior athletes to have positive experiences at sports events. Practitioners should consider the wider influence of perfectionism amongst junior athletes, including the potential for it to contribute to positive and negative experiences in sport.

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Title:

The influence of self-oriented perfectionism on responses to *interpersonal* failure on a competitive cycling task

Presenter/s:

Andrew P. Hill

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Andrew P. Hill

York St John University

Abstract:

It is currently unclear whether self-oriented perfectionism is a desirable and adaptive characteristic for athletes to possess or a vulnerability factor that predisposes athletes to psychological and motivational difficulties (see Flett & Hewitt, 2005). In order to address this issue research has recently begun to examine the influence of this dimension of perfectionism on the manner in which athletes respond to competitive failure (e.g., Hill, Hall, Duda, & Appleton, 2011). This research has found initial evidence that the failure to meet *personal* performance targets may be especially distressing for those with higher levels of self-oriented perfectionism. The aim of this study was to extend this research by examining the interaction between self-oriented perfectionism and *interpersonal* failure on a series of competitive cycling bouts. A quasi-experimental design compared the cognitive (desire for escape, satisfaction and perfectionistic cognitions), affective (guilt, pride, shame and anger) and behavioural response (performance) of student-athletes who reported higher and lower levels of self-oriented perfectionism. Forty-eight student-athletes (*M* age = 20.91 years, *SD* = 4.03 years) competed in three cycling bouts in which they were led to believe that they were outperformed by other competitors. The results indicated that those with higher levels of self-oriented perfectionism exhibited a negative pattern of cognition and affect following failure. This primarily manifested in a more pronounced increase in guilt and anger, along with a decrease in pride. No differences between the two groups were found in terms of performance. The findings provide support for the possibility that self-oriented perfectionism predisposes athletes to psychological difficulties under conditions of achievement stress.

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Title:

How can athletes striving for perfection be protected from the perils of perfectionism?

Presenter/s:

Paul Appleton[1]

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Paul Appleton[1]

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Abstract:

Since the publication of Stoeber and Otto's (2006) conceptual model of perfectionism, sport psychology research has generally supported the dual nature of certain perfectionism dimensions in athletes (see Stoeber, 2011). Specifically, *perfectionistic striving* (PS) (or high personal standards) is associated with a host of positive motivational and performance-based outcomes (especially when controlling for negative reactions), whereas *negative reactions* (NR) typically undermines athletic potential and development. Before concluding that PS should be promoted in sport, however, we should remain cognisant of Flett and Hewitt's (2006) observation that the two perfectionism dimensions are (generally) positively and significantly correlated. The implications of this suggestion is that people who strive towards perfection may eventually engage in critical evaluative tendencies, and thus experience a strong fear of failure and an overriding sense of worthlessness which will undoubtedly render them vulnerable to poor psychological health (Soenens, Luyckx, et al, 2008; Soenens, Vansteenkiste, et al., 2008). Given the potential benefits of PS in sport, it is important that researchers begin to identify those variables/ conditions that moderate the relationship between PS and NR, so that we can enable athletes to strive for high standards without becoming victims of the perils of perfectionism. In this talk, I will propose that Achievement Goal Theory offers one framework by which we can identify when (and why) perfectionistic striving will be associated with higher negative reactions (or higher levels of positive reactions to mistakes). I will then consider research methodologies for testing the forwarded hypotheses.

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Title:

Perfectionism and Perceptions of Motivational Climate have a Reciprocal Relationship: Findings from the UK Centres for Advanced Training in Dance

Presenter/s:

Sanna Nordin-Bates[1]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Nordin-Bates[1], Andrew Hill[2], Jennifer Cumming[3], Imogen Walker[4], Emma Redding[4]

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Abstract:

Recent research suggests that perfectionistic tendencies may be common among dancers and a source of negative experiences (Nordin-Bates et al., 2011). Recognising the importance of the motivational climate, a number of researchers have argued that a task-involving (or mastery-oriented) climate may have the potential to reduce perfectionism and its effects (e.g., Hill et al., 2010). In support of this possibility, aspects of the motivational climate have been found to predict dimensions of perfectionism in dancers (e.g., Carr & Wyon, 2003). The current study extends such research by examining the relationships between perfectionism and perceptions of the motivational climate longitudinally. In doing so, two directional causal hypotheses were tested (i.e., perfectionism causes change in perceptions of the achievement climate versus perceptions of the climate cause change in perfectionism). Two hundred and seventy-one young dancers (M = 14.21 years old, SD = 1.96, 73.8% female) were recruited from UK centres for advanced training in dance and completed standardised questionnaires twice approximately six months apart. Cross-lagged analysis indicated that over time perfectionism and perceptions of the climate had a reciprocal relationship. Specifically, perceptions of a task-involving climate predicted lower self-evaluative perfectionism whereas self-evaluative perfectionism predicted greater perceptions of ego-involving climate over time. The findings provide some support for suggestions that a task-involving climate can be used to reduce aspects of perfectionism. However, researchers should also be mindful of the potential for perfectionism to colour perceptions of the climate.

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Title:

Perfectionism in elite sports – Experiences from sport psychology consulting and links to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Presenter/s:

Henrik Gustafsson[1]

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Henrik Gustafsson[1], Andrew Hill[2], David Tod[3], Göran Kenttä[4]

[1]Karlstad University, [2] York St John University, [3]Aberysthwyth University, [4]The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences

Abstract:

Although the role of perfectionism in elite sport is currently being debated, it is evident outside of sport that in its most extreme forms it may contribute to clinically relevant outcomes (Flett & Hewitt, 2002). There is also some indication that perfectionism may hold similar consequences for athletes, with initial research finding that perfectionism may contribute to crippling performance anxiety, burnout, and eating disorders (Gustafsson, Kenttä, Hassmén, Lundqvist, & Durand-Bush, 2007; Haase, 2011; Hall et al., 1998). The presentation will draw upon firsthand experiences of working with perfectionistic athletes in a consulting capacity and offer cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) as a useful framework to guide the provision of support for these athletes. Research in a clinical setting suggests that CBT may be useful when attempting to manage and treat perfectionism (e.g., Riley, Lee, Cooper, Fairburn, & Shafran, 2007). CBT draws especial attention to the irrational beliefs and distorted attitudes that must be addressed in order for perfectionism to be treated successfully. As part of this process, Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) can be used to help the therapist and athlete identify and analyze situations which trigger anxiety. Methods such as cognitive restructuring and behavioral experiments can be used to expand and change an athlete's view of themselves and their performances. In addition, third wave techniques in CBT, including meditation (Burns, Lee, & Brown, 2011), can be used to handle the anxiety associated with perfectionism during this process. It is concluded that although striving for perfection is regarded by some as a key attribute of superior performance, it is evident that the self-appraisal that accompany this striving among most athletes can hamper performances and lead to ill-health and withdrawal from sport (Gustafsson, Hassmén, Kenttä, & Johansson, 2008).

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Title:

Personal Musings on Perfectionism in Sport

Presenter/s:

Howard Hall

Author/s and Affiliation/s:

Howard Hall

York St John University

Abstract:

Perfectionism has become an increasingly popular concept for investigation in sport (Hall, Hill & Appleton 2012; Stoeber, 2012). As in other domains there is considerable debate around the specific nature and influence of perfectionism (Slade & Owens, 1998; Flett & Hewitt, 2006), but in sport, the debate is enriched by the fact that the behaviours which contribute to sustained exceptional performance appear to correspond with a number of the characteristic qualities of perfectionism. This has led many in sport to conclude that perfectionism can reflect an adaptive form of motivation. It has also led others to believe that for some athletes, perfectionism may be an instrumental feature underpinning elite sporting success. While I have doubts about the veracity of the former statement, I believe the latter statement to be true. However, I also consider that when one looks beyond the indirect influence of perfectionism on performance, perfectionism is a personality characteristic which rarely underpins adaptive patterns of cognition, affect and behaviour in athletes, and more often than not, has debilitating effects on their psychological well-being. In this brief presentation I aim to challenge some of the generally held beliefs that perfectionism in sport can be adaptive. In focusing on how we currently define and measure perfectionism. I will attempt to demonstrate that lack of clarity around definition and measurement currently hinders progress, and that attempting to unpack the disparate findings from sport may be a productive avenue for enquiry that challenges beliefs about dual nature of the construct (Stoeber, 2011).

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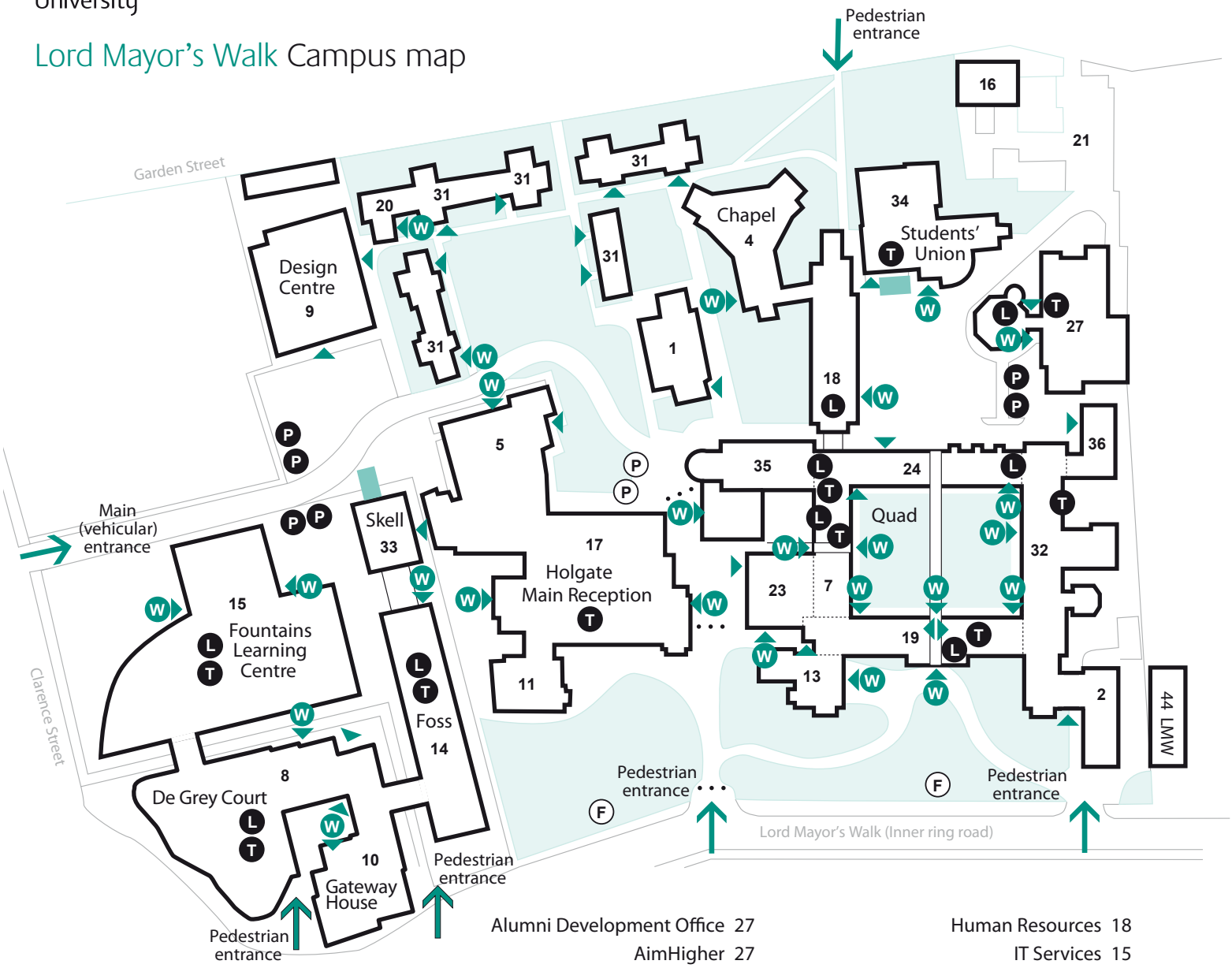
York St John University

Lord Mayor's Walk Campus map



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Website: www.york.parkinn.co.uk
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Telephone Number: 01904 559000
Fax: 0845 468 0687
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Website: www.hotel53.com
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Telephone Number: 01904 644744
Fax: 01904 612453
E-mail: reservations@grangehotel.co.uk
Website: www.grangehotel.co.uk
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Address: 62 Heworth Green, York, YO31 7TQ
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E-mail: info@yorkhouseyork.co.uk
Website: www.yorkhouseyork.co.uk
Distance from YSJ: 0.8 miles / 15 mins

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