

# WORKSHOP ON MENTAL HEALTH, COGNITION, AND ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING

07 FEBRUARY 2020 | UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



Hosted by the Mind and Behaviour Research Group at the Centre for the Study of African Economies, University of Oxford.  
Organisers: Stefan Dercon (University of Oxford), Kate Orkin (University of Oxford), and Alan Stein (University of Oxford).

## PROGRAMME

Friday 07 February 2020

Mary Sunley Lecture Theatre, St Catherine's College, Oxford, UK

### THURSDAY 06 FEBRUARY 2020

7:00pm	Welcome Drinks and Conference Dinner History of Science Museum (Broad Street, Oxford, OX1 3AZ)
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### FRIDAY 07 FEBRUARY 2020

8:00am Registration and Coffee

8:30-8:45am	Welcome <b>Kate Orkin (University of Oxford) and Alan Stein (University of Oxford)</b>
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9:30am Coffee Break

#### Session 1 – Mental Health Interventions and Economic and Social Outcomes (1)

8:45-9:15am	The Comparative Impact of Cash Transfers and Psychotherapy on Psychological and Economic Well-being* (25 min talk, 5 min discussant) <b>Johannes Haushofer (Princeton University)</b> Discussant: Michelle Craske (University of California, Los Angeles)
9:15-9:45am	Reducing Violence in the Most Violent Contexts: Behavioural and Neurophysiological Evidence from El Salvador* (25 min talk, 5 min discussant) <b>Lelys Dinarte (World Bank)</b> Discussant: Emma Kilford (University College London)
9:45-10:00am	<i>Questions on both talks</i>

10:00am Coffee Break

#### Session 2 – Mechanisms Through Which Depression May Affect Economic Decisions

10:15-10:50am	Cognitive Bias and Depression <b>Michael Browning (University of Oxford)</b> (30 min talk, 5 min questions)
10:50-11:30am	Panel: What are the Potential Cognitive, Affective or Behavioural Mechanisms in Depression That May Most Affect Economic Decisions? (40 min: 10 min talks, 10min discussion) <b>Jon de Quidt (IIES, Stockholm University)</b> (beliefs), <b>Emma Kilford (University College London)</b> (cognition, particularly risk-taking), <b>Heather O'Mahen (University of Exeter)</b> (affect and 'activation') Moderator: Sarah-Jayne Blakemore (Cambridge)

11:30am Break

<b>Session 3 – Child Development and Adolescent Decision-Making</b>	
11:40am-12:00pm	Maternal Depression and Child Development: Evidence from a Psychotherapy RCT and Stress Biomarkers <b>Victoria Baranov (Melbourne University)</b>
12:00-12:30pm	The Role of Genetics, Early Environment and Neurobehavioral Development in Predicting Adult Temperament and Common Mental Disorders <b>Nelson Freimer (University of California, Los Angeles)</b>
12:30-12:40pm	<i>Questions on both talks</i>
<b>12:45pm Lunch in Dining Hall</b>	
1:40-2:15pm	Adolescent Cognitions and Decision-Making <b>Sarah-Jayne Blakemore (University of Cambridge)</b>
2:15-2:30pm	<i>Discussant across all three papers: Pietro Biroli (University of Zurich)</i>
<b>Session 4 – Mental Health Interventions and Economic and Social Outcomes (2)</b>	
2:30-2:50pm	Research Designs Investment in Agriculture and Enterprise in Ghana and Colombia <b>Gharad Bryan (London School of Economics)</b>
<b>2:50pm Tea Break</b>	
3:00-3:20pm	Long-run Effects of Psychotherapy on Economic Outcomes: Preliminary Evidence from Goa <b>Frank Schilbach (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)</b>
3:20-3:40pm	Group-Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Training Improves Mental Health of SME Entrepreneurs: Experimental Evidence from Conflict-Affected Areas of Pakistan <b>Julian Jamison (University of Exeter)</b>
3:40-4:00pm	<i>Discussant across all three papers: Jon de Quidt (IIES, Stockholm University), questions</i>
<b>4:00pm Break</b>	
<b>Session 5 – Developing Mental Health Interventions for Scale</b>	
4:10-4:40pm	Key Directions in Global Mental Health Research Strategy <b>Miranda Wolpert (Head of Mental Health Priority Area, Wellcome Trust &amp; University College London)</b>
4:40-5:10pm	Panel: What Characterises Mental Health Interventions That Have (Or Have Not) Translated Well Across Cultures or Age Groups? Targets of Intervention, Mode of Treatment (30 min: 10 min talks, 10 min discussion) <b>Panel: Heather O'Mahen (University of Exeter) and Crick Lund (Kings College London/UCT)</b>
5:10-5:45pm	A Comprehensive Digital Platform for Mental Health Treatment and for Measurement of Neurocognitive Mechanisms <b>Michelle Craske (University of California, Los Angeles)</b>
5:45-6:00pm	<b>Closing</b> <b>Stefan Dercon (University of Oxford)</b>
<b>6:00pm Drinks</b>	

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## GOALS OF THE DAY

There is evidence of some relationships between an individual's economic position and their mental health, likely in both directions. There is also some evidence that immediate poverty may affect cognitive function in adults, and that growing up in poverty or adversity is a risk factor for impaired development of some cognitive functions, potentially with economic effects. However, studies have rarely explored relationships between all three of mental health, cognition and poverty.

The workshop aims to bring together ideas and spark collaborations for a research agenda at the intersection of development economics, psychiatry and cognitive neuroscience. The (very) broad question is whether interventions from psychiatry or neuroscience might be effective as part of poverty reduction interventions. This includes understanding:

- What mechanisms interventions might target that might affect economic decision-making (which might require elements from both cognitive neuroscience and psychiatry);
- Which economic behaviours might be most effective to target;
- Who should be targeted; and
- Which interventions have potential for scale.

## QUESTIONS

We aim to map out both existing evidence and point to gaps in evidence.

### Questions for psychiatrists and cognitive neuroscientists include:

- What do we know or need to know about relationships between cognition and economic status (either currently, or as experienced in childhood)? For example, does poverty affect risk-taking, the formation of false beliefs, the ability to take another's perspective, or valuing what happens in the future? Do financial worries cause stress or anxiety or affect planning?
- There are high proportions of people with common mental disorders in developing countries. What do we know about the cognitive, affective and behavioural effects of common mental disorders that may influence whether and how CMD would affect economic behaviours? For example, how do common mental disorders affect interpersonal relationships and daily functioning? Do they affect 'activation', the ability to plan, or the ability to solve problems? Do they affect beliefs about the future or discounting of future benefits?
- Are the answers similar for children, adolescents and adults? How does this influence intervention design?

### Questions for economists include:

- What domains of economic behaviour in low and middle-income countries where living with a common mental disorder might have a substantive effect on economic choices and outcomes?