

Student Fairs

On Friday 10th of November, Emma Rae Rhead, Jane Boissiere and I set up a stand at the Speciality Careers Fair at the Royal Society of Medicine. By all accounts, it was a fun and exciting evening and we, all three of us, thoroughly enjoyed talking to the students. What was lovely was the fact that there were not only individuals in their final year, but there were also students from each year of study. In addition, there were some psychologists interested in various behavioural approaches in clinical practice. And, there were also a few A Level students hoping to pursue a career in either medicine or psychology.

From my perspective, it was an interesting exercise because, although some of the questions were rather simple, they required a depth of knowledge and understanding of hypnosis from both theoretical and clinical perspectives. Indeed, many of them challenged us with questions like, ‘Is hypnosis a proper field in psychology?’, ‘How can doctors incorporate hypnosis in their work?’ and, ‘What evidence is there to show its efficacy?’. Interestingly, many of the students seemed to indicate that they thought hypnosis was a relatively new approach; however, all three of us were able to use our understanding of evidence-based medicine in hypnosis research to persuade many of our listeners as to the benefits of this powerful treatment modality. We also were able to outline, briefly, the history of its use from Mesmer, to John Elliotson, James Braid all the way through to the beginnings of the British Society of Dental Hypnosis (1952) and The Dental and Medical Society for the Study of Hypnosis (1955). Importantly, for both societies, armed with leaflets and business cards, we had the opportunity to advertise not only the Section of Hypnosis and Psychosomatic Medicine but also the postgraduate training in the UK—namely, the courses run by Bournemouth University and Birmingham City University—as well as the BSCAH Foundation Training. We look forward to the David Waxman lecture in December and hope to have secured a few more young minds who will use hypnosis in the future...

David Kraft

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