

THE CAMBRIDGE LEGAL CONFERENCE



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BPACRC

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BPACRC

A WORD FROM YOUR CHAIRS



STACY JOHN



DANIEL KINNY

It is with great enthusiasm and delight that we extend our warmest greetings to each one of you as we approach the commencement of the Cambridge Legal Conference 2025.

As Chairs, it is our distinct privilege to welcome you to this momentous occasion. We, Stacy John and Daniel Kinny, take immense pride in presiding over this conference and look forward to witnessing the remarkable contributions and dedication that each practitioner will bring to the committee sessions.

Your active participation and commitment are crucial in ensuring the success of this conference. To aid you in your preparations, we are pleased to present the background guides that have been meticulously crafted to provide you with a comprehensive understanding of the topics to be discussed during the conference.

Throughout the conference, we encourage you to express your perspectives boldly, collaborate with fellow delegates, and explore innovative solutions to the challenges at hand.

Should you have any queries, or concerns, or require assistance at any stage, please do not hesitate to reach out to any of the chairs, or the members of the lead. You can simply drop us a message and we'll reply as soon as possible.

Together, let us strive for an inspiring and fruitful conference that leaves a lasting impact on our world.

Looking forward to meeting you all soon!

Sincerely,

Stacy John and Daniel Kinny

RULES OF PROCEDURE

COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

The BPACRC simulates the real-world intersection of psychology and law in creating evidence-based policies to address crime by targeting its underlying psychological drivers. Participants represent practitioners from various psychological fields, collaborating to provide expert insights into complex legal cases. They are expected to adapt dynamically to new case developments, ensuring that the proposed policies are both legally sound and effective in addressing the root causes of criminal behavior.

NOTABLE AMENDMENTS TO ROP

- The use of personal pronouns in this committee is permitted.
- This committee is double delegated, which means that there will be two people assigned to represent each field of psychology.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

FIELDS OF PSYCHOLOGY

- The Division of Personality & Behavioural Psychology
- The Division of Cognitive Psychology
- The Division of Clinical Psychology
- The Division of Development Psychology
- The Division of Educational Psychology
- The Division of Media Psychology
- The Division of Forensic Psychology
- The Division of Social Psychology
- The Division of Neuropsychology
- The Division of Family Psychology
- The Division of Moral Psychology
- The Division of Counselling Psychology
- The Division of Cultural Psychology



RULES OF PROCEDURE

FLOW OF COMMITTEE

The committee is led by Head Chairs, who play a crucial role in facilitating discussions. At the beginning of each session, the Chair takes roll call to ensure the presence of all practitioners. Following this, a vote is conducted to determine the case that will be discussed first. Once the case is selected, the committee proceeds to engage in debate, adhering to the default debate format called the Speakers List. In this format, practitioners take turns delivering speeches in front of the entire committee, following a predetermined order set by the Chair. The speeches typically last around 1 to 1.5 minutes, although the duration can be adjusted through a majority vote by the practitioners.

During the course of the committee session, there are opportunities to switch between different debate formats. One such format is the Moderated Caucus, which allows the committee to delve into specific sub-issues and foster a back-and-forth debate. During the Moderated Caucus, practitioners raise their placards indicating their intention to speak, and the Chair calls on speakers one by one until the allotted time for the caucus expires.

Alternatively, the committee may choose to engage in an Unmoderated Caucus. In this format, practitioners are free to move around the room and collaborate with other fields that may share similar views on what policies must be implemented. The initial unmoderated caucuses often focus on forming alliances, while subsequent ones are primarily dedicated to drafting policies with a caucus bloc, comprising a group of psychological fields. All practitioners are encouraged to actively participate as sponsors or authors of draft policies. The committee continues to transition between the Speakers List, Moderated Caucus, and Unmoderated Caucus formats until the completion of draft policies. These policies are merged and prepared for presentation. Policies may be presented individually as they are ready or collectively towards the end of the conference. This is followed by a question-and-answer period following the presentations, as well as time for merging or amending policies.

Once the policies have been presented, all divisions represented in the committee participate in a vote to determine whether the policies should be passed. After the voting process, the committee proceeds to repeat the same procedure for the second topic, if applicable, or concludes the session if there are no further topics or time constraints.



RULES OF PROCEDURE

Roll Call

- └ Setting of Agenda
 - └ Moderated Caucus
 - └ Unmoderated Caucus
 - └ Draft Resolution
 - └ Adjourn

Bloc formation

During an unmoderated caucus, practitioners can freely decide whether to join a specific bloc within the time limit set by the chair. The chair determines the overall time limit for the caucus. Each bloc must submit a list of all its signatories and sponsors (with a minimum of 3 sponsors) to the chairs, and this task is usually carried out by one of the practitioners.

Resolution papers

A draft resolution is a preliminary version of a resolution that proposes solutions and actions to address a specific issue discussed in a committee. Practitioners use draft policies to present their ideas, which undergo further discussion and refinement. It follows the structure of a regular resolution, including sections such as the header, preamble, and operative clauses. However, it is not the final version and is subject to revision, amendment, and debate during the committee session.

Practitioners share their draft policies with others to gather feedback, propose amendments, or suggest alternative clauses. Through discussions and formal procedures, the draft policy evolves into a final policy that reflects the committee's consensus.

The process of drafting and refining resolutions is crucial in CLC as it enables practitioners to work together in developing effective ways to eliminate the root causes of criminal behaviour. This process promotes debate, dialogue, and consensus-building, ultimately contributing to the overall success of the committee.

THE CAMBRIDGE LEGAL CONFERENCE

CASE I : THE URBAN LEGEND



CASE FILE

KEY FACTS AND LEGAL ISSUES

CASE I : THE URBAN LEGEND

LEGAL ISSUES :

Actus Reus: A Latin term referring to a 'guilty act'. It refers to the act committed by a person that constitutes a crime. This is relevant in cases where there are accomplices which may have aided the crime though not directly committing the crime, to understand whether their aid constitutes a criminal offense. (Case of Derek Bentley 1952 [1])

Online Incitement: The act of encouraging or provoking a criminal act through internet mediums such as social media platforms and websites.

KEY FACTS :

Social Influence: A key problem in cases which involve juveniles is the factor of social influence, some crimes could be explained through the dynamics present in the offender's social life or the behaviour of close friends that may have altered the offender's natural behaviour

Psychopathy: A personality disorder characterised by cold, uncaring behaviour attributed to a significant lack of empathy. Psychopathy is often tied to criminality due to the frequent occurrence of anti-social behaviour that is caused by the disorder.

Folklore Influence: Folklore plays an important part in our society as traditional beliefs are passed down through generations. Historically, there have been instances where folklore has incited crimes, such as the belief of the existence of witches during the late 17th century lead to multiple executions and mass hysteria. [2]

CASE BACKGROUND

CASE I: THE URBAN LEGEND

Emily Clarke and Sarah O'Connor, two seventh-grade girls, are facing charges of attempted murder after an attack on their classmate, Jenna Parker. Parker was lured into a wooded area, where she was tackled and assaulted by Sarah, while Emily acted as her accomplice.

Emily and Sarah openly admitted to the crime and willingly submitted themselves into custody, claiming that they had 'done the right thing'.

Interviews from both sets of parents revealed that the girls had become friends over their shared interest in the movie 'IT', where they found a common interest in horror and occult literature.

Text messages between the two revealed that Emily had sent Sarah a link concerning a piece of digital folklore about an entity known as "The Glowing One", a supposedly ubiquitous, malevolent, all-powerful entity who harms those who defy or do not respect it.

Ms. Clarke and Ms O'Connor both had strong belief in the glowing one, and though Emily was the one who introduced it, Sarah had claimed to have seen and spoken to "The Glowing One" in person shortly after her initial introduction to the entity.

Ms. Clarke recounted in her initial interview that they wanted to appease "The Glowing One" so that it would not hurt them and their families, so they had planned a ritualistic sacrifice of a classmate Jenna Parker, where they lured her into a wooded area nearby and carried out the aforementioned attack.

Upon their arrest, both Emily and Sarah displayed no remorse. Sarah even inquired about Jenna's condition and seemed visibly agitated upon learning she had survived.

RELEVANT PROFILES

Mr and Mrs Clarke:

- Parents to Emily Clarke.
- Upper-middle class Caucasian family.
- No prior history of criminality
- No biological disorders.
- Aware of Emily's interest in the occult.
- Did not regulate Emily's internet access.
- Was not aware of Emily's psychopathic traits.

Mr and Mrs O'Connor:

- Parents to Sarah O'Connor
- Lower-middle class Caucasian family.
- No prior history of criminality.
- Mr. Connor is diagnosed with schizophrenia.
- Unaware of Sarah's association with Emily
- Strictly controlled the media that Sarah consumed.
- Aware that Sarah had been acting differently recently.

Ms Clarke:

- Emily Clarke.
- 12 years of age.
- Interested in occult literature.
- Internet savvy.
- Introduced "The Glowing One" to Ms. O'Connor.
- Suggested the sacrifice of Ms. Parker to Ms. O'Connor.

Ms O'Connor:

- Sarah O'Connor.
- 13 years of age.
- Claimed to have seen and spoken to the "Glowing One".
- Disappointment upon finding out the survival of Ms. Parker.
- In an apparent state of delusion, often found talking to seemingly no one.
- Extremely strict upbringing.
- Claims she did the "right thing".

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[2] "Salem Witch Trials - Destination Salem." Salem.org, 2018, www.salem.org/salem-witch-trials/.

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CASE II - ECHOES WITHIN



CASE FILE

KEY FACTS AND LEGAL ISSUES

CASE II - ECHOES WITHIN

LEGAL ISSUES

Diminished Responsibility - A defense used in court of law wherein the defendant claims they should receive a reduced penalty due to them having impaired mental functions. (See the case of Richard Rojas [1])

KEY FACTS

Nature Vs Nurture - A key debate in psychology that argues over which is the more suitable explanation for human behaviour, upbringing and socialisation or genetics and biological conditions such as hormones and disorders. It is possible there may be conflicts from a younger age which are still unresolved [2] which causes people to be unable to form social relationships, or there could be biological factors such as personality disorders which cause cognitive dysfunction.

Social Learning Theory - A theory developed by Albert Bandura which suggests that our behaviour is a compilation of observed behaviours from those close to us. This is important in cases where there might be problematic behaviours during a child's upbringing that may be modelled later in life.[3]

CASE BACKGROUND

CASE II - ECHOES WITHIN

Sarah Coleman, a 34-year-old woman, has been arrested for the violent assault of her neighbor, Mr. Robert Harris. Using a blunt object, Sarah inflicted a severe head injury on Mr. Harris, who survived the attack.

Mr. Harris, a retired journalist, is known in the community for his outspoken and occasionally abrasive personality. Tensions had recently risen between Sarah and Mr. Harris after she filed a noise complaint against him, citing his habit of playing loud music late at night.

On the day of the attack, neighbors reported hearing an intense argument between Sarah and Mr. Harris in the hallway of their apartment building. Witnesses claimed Sarah's voice sounded deeper and more aggressive than usual, and her posture and movements appeared unnaturally rigid and commanding unlike the introverted and soft-spoken woman they knew. Moments later, the attack occurred. Sarah allegedly struck Mr. Harris multiple times with a heavy vase before fleeing the scene.

Sarah herself has no recollection of the incident. She claims she woke up at home hours later, covered in blood and confused about what had happened.

Sarah grew up in an unstable and abusive household. Her stepfather subjected her to severe physical and emotional abuse, while her mother was frequently absent and neglectful. Left to fend for herself from a young age, Sarah developed coping mechanisms to survive her traumatic environment. As a teenager, Sarah received mental health treatment and was diagnosed with PTSD and major depressive disorder.

Despite this, her adult life has been marked by reclusiveness, avoiding social interaction and preferring solitude in her small apartment.

RELEVANT PROFILES

Ms. Coleman

- Sarah Coleman
- 34 years of age
- Sarah grew up in an unstable and abusive household
- As a teenager, she was diagnosed with PTSD and major depressive disorder after receiving mental health treatment.
- Sarah's lack of memory surrounding the violent attack suggests a dissociative episode, a phenomenon often linked to trauma and PTSD.

Mr. Harris

- Mr. Robert Harris
- 54 years of age
- Mr. Harris is known for his outspoken and sometimes abrasive personality in the community.
- He is described as outspoken, which may suggest he is prone to blunt or confrontational behavior.
- As a retired journalist, Mr. Harris might have a sense of identity linked to his career, and retirement could affect his self-esteem and social engagement.
- Scored a high 'P' score when administered the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire.

Mr and Mrs. Coleman

- Sarah's Mother and Father
- Sarah's mother's absence would have contributed to attachment insecurity, which is linked to difficulties in forming healthy relationships and emotional regulation.
- The absence of a stable father figure could contribute to feelings of abandonment and insecurity, further exacerbating attachment and trust issues.
- Sarah's relationship with her father, especially if it was marked by neglect or abuse, might have contributed to her problematic interactions with male authority figures later in life.

Neighbors

- Neighbors who witnessed the argument and later the attack may have biases based on their pre-existing perceptions of Sarah or Mr. Harris.
- Neighbors who witnessed the violent incident may experience secondary trauma, and their recall of the event could be affected by emotional stress or shock.



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- [3] Cherry, Kendra. "What Is Social Learning Theory?" Verywell Mind, Dotdash Meredith, 8 Oct. 2023,
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CASE III - EXAM HEIST



CASE FILE

KEY FACTS AND LEGAL ISSUES

CASE III : EXAM HEIST

LEGAL ISSUES

Mens Rea - refers to a 'guilty mind'. In a legal context, the intent of any crime committed may raise questions about the culpability of criminals, in some cases there is a morally grey area when it comes to dealing with criminal intent and the real outcome of actions. For example, the case of R V Cunningham. [1]

KEY FACTS

External Validation - Seeking approval, recognition, or validation from others. This often acts as a major factor that may explain erratic and impulsive behaviour. A well-known case of this would be Andrew Garfield, a famous actor who talks about how the need for external validation can drive someone into impulsiveness. [2]

Erikson's Psychosocial Stages - A psycho dynamic approach to explaining behaviour at different stages in a person's life. The stages can be used as a link between a person's age and the behaviour they exhibit that may offer an insight to the typical cognitive challenges faced by the certain age group. [3]

Learned Helplessness - When an individual believes that their circumstances are out of their control due to repeated failure or an inability to meet expectations, often leading to destructive behaviour in order to regain any sense of control of one's life.

CASE BACKGROUND

CASE III : EXAM HEIST

Chris Parker, a 17-year-old senior in high school, is well-regarded by both his peers and teachers for his approachable nature and leadership qualities, despite his average academic performance and struggles with exams. However, a concerning incident arises when several midterm examination papers go missing from the staff room and are subsequently discovered in Chris's locker one week later.

When confronted, Chris denies any involvement in the theft but becomes defensive during the discussion. Surveillance footage places him near the staff room at the time of the incident, but it does not definitively show him entering. Following the discovery, the school administration convenes a meeting with Chris's parents and the principal to address the situation. As a consequence, Chris receives a two-day suspension.

The incident polarizes the school community, with some believing Chris is responsible, while others suggest he may have been framed.

Chris comes from a family with high academic expectations. Both of his older siblings have graduated from Ivy League universities, and his parents often compare Chris's achievements unfavorably to theirs. This dynamic has left Chris feeling neglected and overshadowed within his family, contributing to frequent arguments about his grades.

In addition to the pressure to secure a college scholarship, Chris's family holds traditional values that prioritize academic excellence and view underperformance as a reflection on the family's reputation. This cultural perspective has exacerbated Chris's feelings of inadequacy and heightened his anxiety.

Despite these challenges, Chris is known among his peers as a natural leader, admired for his charisma and ability to inspire others. However, he has also been described as impulsive and prone to risky behavior, particularly when seeking attention or validation.

RELEVANT PROFILES

Mr. Parker:

- Chris Parker
- 17 years of age
- Family with high academic status
- Charismatic, well-liked by peers and teachers, but struggles with impulsivity and a need for validation.
- Prone to risky behavior for attention.
- Displays defensive reactions under stress.

Mr. and Mrs. Parker:

- Chris's parents
- Mr. Parker: Practical, values hard work and academic achievement, often compares Chris to his siblings.
- Mr. Parker is diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder
- Mrs. Parker: Supportive but shares similar high expectations for academic success.

Ms. Jones:

- Jessica Jones
- Mr. Parker's childhood therapist
- Mr. Parker is diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder and Ms. Jones has been counselling him
- Claimed to have termed Mr. Parker "Unstable"
- Ms. Jones provided a document in which Mr. Parker scored a high level in the Borderline Personality Test

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GENERAL ADVICE

- If your field of psychology is not currently relevant to the case, don't worry! use this as your opportunity to make points of information against other divisions that you believe may be responsible.
- It is advised to consider different forms of debate such as challenges, or a round-table conference that give you the opportunity to speak and stand out.
- Understand and research on each division in the committee and research on any major theories associated with them, the key to effective debate comes with understanding how to differentiate between divisions and attribute different aspects of behaviour to each.
- Cooperation is key, whether it be within your own division, or between you and other divisions, having allied divisions that may fall under the same blanket term in psychology (ex. the divisions of Developmental and Educational psychology falling under the 'nurture' argument) may be the pushing force needed to draft and publish a policy.
- Most important of all, understand the objective of this committee. The goal is to deliver a policy that is evidence-backed. Avoid deviating from the issue at hand, or trying to dispute the charges presented against a defendant, rather, focus on creating a psychological evaluation of the defendant that will be used as a base for the policy.