

# A little bit of 'Aloha'

Kyle F. Paradis

---

The North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity (NASPSPA) 2012 Conference.

7–9 June 2012, Waikiki, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.

**A**LOHA! The annual conference of the North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity (NASPSPA) took place on 7–9 June 2012 at the Marriott Waikiki Beach Hotel, right on the famous Waikiki beach in beautiful Honolulu, Hawaii. Everyone was well versed with the phrases 'Aloha' which has a variety of meanings mainly a greeting or farewell and a gesture of love, and 'Mahalo' meaning thank you. The conference also coincided with the start of the UEFA European Championships (EURO 2012) which many of the wide variety of international delegates were closely following. The 2012 conference was the largest ever NASPSPA meeting to date with 513 attendees and a programme of 560 abstracts, it was no surprise that this year's abstract book was as about as thick as some textbooks. Surely the tropical location of the conference was an opportunity too good to pass up on for most and so the attendance of the symposia, verbal presentations and poster sessions was quite outstanding.

## Day One: Thursday 7 June

The first day of the conference was jam packed, with no time to eat (literally!) The sessions started at 8.30 a.m. and ran through until 7.30 p.m., with three keynote talks, three concurrent sessions, a poster session and the opening reception after the day was done to conclude proceedings.

The first Sport and Exercise Psychology (SEP) verbal session was on performance

and expertise where Calum Arthur from Bangor University started off the conference. He discussed the mediational relationship of transformational leadership, satisfaction, and performance in sport and that these relationships are contingent on the nature of satisfaction.

Another interesting talk from this session was from Natalie Durand-Bush, from the University of Ottawa, who discussed some of her graduate students' research on performance of medical students and the relationships between self-regulation, psychological well-being, stress, and burnout. Those medical students that were able to self-regulate had greater well-being, and less stress and burnout.

Finally, Melissa Hopwood, from Victoria University, also discussed skill level differences in youth who participate in multiple organised sports which re-opened the sampling vs. specialisation debate. Meanwhile, Claudio Nigg, from the University of Hawaii, was getting things underway in a concurrent session with the first Symposia of the conference on 'Automaticity and Physical Activity'.

The Senior Lecturers immediately followed the opening round of concurrent sessions. Dr Kathleen Martin Ginis, from McMaster University, delivered the SEP Senior Lecture (Martin Ginis, 2012) entitled 'Takin' it to the streets: A community-university partnership approach to physical activity and knowledge translation' where she discussed her lab's remarkable research program on spinal cord injury and knowledge

translation or as she puts it ‘takin’ it to the streets’. Dr Martin Ginis said that she has been involved in this area of research for about 12 years now and her goals were to develop and mobilise evidence-informed strategies to promote physical activity with this special population. The many things her team has achieved in that time is nothing short of remarkable. Dr Martin Ginis has been responsible for developing a set of appropriate physical activity guidelines as well as the ‘Get Fit Toolkit’ for the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) population. Her team has done various road shows in 95 different communities, has developed a user-friendly interactive website which to date has had over 26,000 hits, and they have distributed over 10,000 Get Fit Toolkits. She highlighted the five principles of effective knowledge translation, one of the most important one being to know the audience and key issues and identifying credible messengers. She reminded us that these things do take time to develop and meaningful partnerships are about sharing. You can visit the website at [www.sciactioncanada.ca](http://www.sciactioncanada.ca).

The next SEP symposium was on ‘Understanding physical activity across both a lifespan and in clinical populations: Implica-

tions for theory and intervention’. Presenters included organiser Claudio Nigg, from the University of Hawaii, Mary Jung from the University of British Columbia-Okanagan, and Jenifer Brunet, from McGill University. The Discussant was Dr Ken Resnicow who was just warming up for his SEP Keynote Address which was to follow in the afternoon.

Two more concurrent SEP symposia followed on the day: one entitled ‘An overview of physical self-conscious emotions: Theory, measurement, and prediction of physical activity’ led by Catherine Sabiston, from McGill University, and another called ‘Towards an integrated perspective on officiating research’ led by Clare MacMahon, from Victoria University.

In the latter, David Hancock, from Queen’s University, Canada, discussed the visual attention behaviours of all level of ice hockey referees, while in the former, Andree Castonguay, from McGill University, presented her research on the development of the Body Related Self-Conscious Emotions Questionnaire (BSE-Scale) She discussed the four-factor model of shame, guilt, hubristic pride, and authentic pride and the factor structure yielding a three-factor model with shame and guilt into one factor, which led to



further modification of the items and a confirmatory factor analysis performed. This questionnaire will certainly aid in the measurement and prediction of physical self-conscious emotions.

The SEP Keynote Address (Resnicow, 2012) then followed where Dr Ken Resnicow delivered his talk entitled 'Chaos, reactance and epiphany: The role of non-linear motivation in sport and exercise psychology'. Dr Resnicow was successful in stimulating the debate on the various types of chaos that exist in the motivational research and offered a perspective of non-linear motivational relationships.

The first of three poster sessions of the conference followed the SEP keynote, with 124 posters on display Thursday afternoon. Poster topics included measurement, moral development, motivation, and leadership.

Finally, it was time for the opening Human Kinetics (HK) Lecture. Prior to the start of the talk, NASPSPA Past-President Jody Jensen, called upon a Hawaiian elder to perform a native dance and blessing for our conference proceedings. This was unlike anything I had ever experienced before at an academic conference; it was a great way to welcome us to Hawaii and it truly set the unique tone for our Hawaiian visit. The experience seemed to be enjoyed by all in attendance. The HK Lecture (Shapiro, 2012) was delivered by Dr Lawrence Shapiro from the University of Wisconsin-Madison entitled: 'The body in mind: But whence the mind?' Dr Shapiro is a philosopher and offered us a different and unique perspective on how we view the mind. In a philosophical manner, topics of discussion consisted of 'What makes a thinker a thinker?' and 'What is the mind?' were presented using various philosopher's perspectives and philosophical examples to spark debate on the mind's limitations or delimitations. This was an interesting talk with a different flavour. One likely did not attend NASPSPA expecting to hear about Descartes and Socrates, but this keynote reminded us of how interdisciplinary our research really

is. The take home point for me, aside from the philosophical debates, was that the application of knowledge from various disciplines can be applied in many different ways to what we do. The opening reception ended the night with a packed terrace with an ocean view. Delegates enjoyed catching up with colleagues at the bar to wind down the very busy first day.

## **Day Two: Friday 8 June**

Day Two was not as hectic as the first day of the conference; sessions began at 8.15 a.m. but only went to 3.15 p.m. to allow for the faculty to visit the Polynesian Cultural Centre, and for the students to hit the Waikiki Beach for some paddle boarding. The first SEP symposium on the day was on 'Moral disengagement in sport and beyond: The gym, the pitch and the classroom'. Ian Boardley, from the University of Birmingham, was the organiser and a presenter along with Alan Smith from Purdue University, Mark Bruner from Nipissing University, and Stacey Gaines, from Texas A & M, with Glyn Roberts from the Norwegian University of Sports Sciences, as the Discussant.

Ian Boardley, presented on moral disengagement in body builders and presented on his qualitative findings that displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, moral justification, advantageous comparison and routinising all contributed to the phenomenon. Alan Smith presented some work on the subject and found that moral disengagement mediates the relationship between self-related variables, and antisocial behaviour. Mark Bruner discussed the application of social identity theory and moral disengagement on pro-social and anti-social behaviour in a team sport setting. He reported that, given over 80 per cent of youth in sport participate in a team environment, this was an important avenue to examine. He found that in-group ties (feeling of connections with people in the group) and in-group affect (feelings of affiliations and relationships to those in the group) predicted pro-social behaviour

towards teammates and anti-social behaviour towards opponents. However, in-group affect was negatively related to antisocial behaviour towards opponents. Also a mediational relationship was found with moral disengagement, and in group affect that is to say in group affect appeared to lower moral disengagement and anti-social behaviour. Finally, Stacey Gaines discussed the role of moral disengagement in the classroom as it pertains to cheating, and found that males tend to display more moral disengagement in sport while females tend to display greater moral disengagement in academics.

Glyn Roberts, the Discussant, then reviewed the four presentations and drew from his many years of experience to provide some of his insights on the topic. He recalled Joan Duda's 1981 thesis in where she found males wanted to succeed more in sport and females wanted to succeed more in academics which could explain Stacey's findings. He drew upon real life examples like Ben Johnson in 1988 or Zinedine Zidane at the 2006 World Cup and said that the distortion of consequences, the attribution of blame, the dehumanisation of the victim along with displacement and diffusion of responsibility all contribute to the phenomenon across all settings.

The second of three poster sessions took place immediately following the morning sessions. A total of 123 posters were on display on such topics as intervention and assessment, stress emotion and performance, group processes, motivation, physical activity/health behaviour, and psychological skills and imagery.

NASPSA President Dianne Ste. Marie, from the University of Ottawa, then hosted the business meeting where everyone enjoyed a boxed lunch and learned of the upcoming NASPSA initiatives. Catherine Sabiston, from McGill University, and Quincy Almeida, from Wilfrid Laurier University, were awarded the NASPSA Early Career Distinguished Scholar awards, while Lindsay Kipp, from the University of Minnesota, under the supervision of Dr Maureen

Weiss, was awarded the Outstanding Student Paper Award. Penny McCullagh discussed where NASPSA will be off to in the future starting next year in New Orleans, then possibly off to Chicago in 2014. The whole room was buzzing when the idea of going to Italy for the 2015 conference to celebrate the 50th anniversary of ISSP but we will have to wait and see on that.

The afternoon concluded with a symposium on 'Special measurement issues in sport and exercise psychology' organised by David Markland from Bangor University. Then it was off to either the Polynesian Cultural Centre, or the Waikiki Beach to take in the beautiful Hawaiian afternoon and evening.

### **Day Three: Saturday 9 June**

The third and final day of the conference kicked off with a fascinating session on 'Cheating in sport science: A case study and panel discussion' organised by Glynn Roberts, from the Norwegian University of Sport Sciences, moderated by Alan Smith, from Purdue University, with presenters, Nicolas Lemyre, from the Norwegian University of Sport Sciences, and Richard Magill, from New York University, as the Discussant. The case was one of a hired research assistant falsifying a data set on a nationally funded project. As the expert panel discussed, unfortunately cases like this likely happen and go undetected. Fortunately for this case, it was detected and reported, but those who reported it were still greeted with distaste and blame for the incident, when they did not do anything wrong. In this case the one who produced a fraudulent data set was a former student of the Principal Investigator on the project which further added insult to injury on the betrayal of trust that took place. The panel went on to further discuss motives of why one might succumb to cheating or falsifying data. The 'funding or flop' and 'publish or perish' mentality in academia certainly contributes to the temptation to cheat said the panel. They reiterated that it certainly doesn't excuse it, but if your

livelihood is on the line, people will resort to any means necessary. The panel went on to say that we should not lose trust of colleagues and continue to collaborate with top scholars and trust that their hired research assistants, post docs, and graduate students are holding themselves to the highest standard of ethics. Glyn Roberts advocated that there still needs to be a level of mutual professional trust or else all is lost. While this intriguing symposium was taking place, concurrent verbal sessions on 'Interventions' moderated by Claudio Nigg, from the University of Hawaii, was also underway, which speaks to the full programme NASPSPA had to offer this year.

Another round of SEP verbal sessions on 'Motivational processes' followed this, moderated by Sarah Ullrich-French. This session was one I had the pleasure and privilege of presenting in alongside some great colleagues. Jeff Graham, from McMaster University, presented on the effects of energy conservation and motivation on self-regulation strength depletion. Results revealed that participants conserved resources for upcoming tasks so not to deplete them all at once, while those who had autonomy also improved performance.

Mark Beauchamp, from the University of British Columbia, presented on his lab's fascinating work in transformational teaching and adolescent physical activity behaviour. He found that enjoyment of activity fully mediated the transformational teaching-leisure time physical activity and transformational teaching-within class physical activity relationships.

Brad Young, from the University of Ottawa, examined the relationship with passion in masters-level athletes and various negative outcomes. He found that harmonious passion was inversely related to negative outcomes, while obsessive passion was positively related to negative outcomes (e.g. self-pressure, risky behaviours). Conflict in life also mediated these relationships. That is to say Master's-level athletes high in obsessive passion would engage in risky behaviours to

legitimise and justify it to make it worth the conflict with other areas of life (e.g. relationships) they experience.

Following this session, there were two SEP symposia to choose from; one on the 'The youth sport parenting experience: Role socialisation, contextual considerations and educational recommendations' with Kevin Spink, from the University of Saskatchewan, as the Discussant, and one on an applied model for the use of observation interventions organised by Penny McCullagh, from California State University, East Bay, and Barbi Law, from Nipissing University, with Nicola Hodges, from the University of British Columbia, as the Discussant.

The final session block also had a symposium or verbal presentations to choose from. The symposium was on 'Imagery ability, perspectives and preference: Insights for developing effective interventions' organised by Nicola Callow, from Bangor University, where Craig Hall, from Western University, was the Discussant, and presented on 'Changing imagery ability: Practice vs. awareness', and Jennifer Cumming, from the University of Birmingham, presented on 'Does PETTLEP imagery improve imagery ability in learning visual-motor skills in youth athletes?'

The final set of verbal presentations was also taking place on 'Social processes and well-being'. In this session, Kathleen Wilson, from California State University, Fullerton, presented on 'Parental social control in preschoolers, the relationship with social support and parent activity' and found that social support and parent activity were positive predictors in parental social control. Alyson Crozier, from the University of Saskatchewan, presented on the behaviour of others on individual effort in sport and found that descriptive norms and the perception of how hard others were working on the same team predicted individual effort, and Svenja Wolf, from the German Sport University in Cologne, presented on the relationship between team cohesion and athlete precompetitive appraisals and found that

task cohesion predicted athlete primary appraisals, whereas task and social cohesion predicted athlete secondary appraisals. Lindsay Kipp, from the University of Minnesota, then presented on 'Social influence and psychological and physical well-being among female adolescent gymnasts'. She found that coach autonomy support, a mastery motivational climate, and friendship quality were strong positive predictors of well-being, self-esteem, and positive affect and the session concluded with Leah Ferguson, from the University of Saskatchewan, presenting on the 'Beyond self-esteem and narcissism: The contribution of young women's self-compassion to eudaimonic well-being'. She found that self-compassion is less based on outcomes than self-esteem and thus improves eudaimonic well-being. Thus, suggesting that more research attention should be placed on self-compassion.

The third and final poster session concluded the conference with 118 posters on display. This was a nice way of winding down the conference as people browsed through the last batch of posters which included topics on imagery and mental practice, special populations and aging, youth physical activity, weight appearance and body image, stress burnout and well-being, and social relationships and interpersonal processes. At the conclusion of the poster session, delegates dashed back to their rooms to get ready and make their way over to the terrace for the closing banquet. We were again entertained by Hawaiian cultural music and dancing during the banquet, before moving indoors for the remainder of the evening.

## Final thoughts

The 2012 annual meeting of NASPSPA was a truly outstanding conference. This year NASPSPA set records for abstract submissions and registered attendance. Everyone truly enjoyed the unique Hawaiian atmosphere that many of the attendees were experiencing for the first time. Along with the quantity of presentations, the quality of research presented was exceptional. NASPSPA as a society should be commended for attracting and displaying the work from many of the top researchers in our field. For more information on any of the conference proceedings please refer to the Volume 34 Supplement of the *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*. The 2012 NASPSPA conference in Hawaii will surely be the highlight of the summer for many of those who attended. As always it was a great venue to catch up with old colleagues, meet new colleagues and taking in the latest research going on in our field. While we say 'Aloha' and 'Mahalo' to Hawaii and the 2012 NASPSPA conference we will be saying 'Bonjour' and 'Bienvenue' to the French Quarter of New Orleans when NASPSPA re-convenes 13–15 June 2013.

## Correspondence

**Kyle F. Paradis**

School of Kinesiology,  
Thames Hall/3M Centre,  
University of Western Ontario,  
1151 Richmond Street, London,  
Ontario, Canada, N6A3K7.  
Email: kparadis@uwo.ca

## References

- Martin Ginis, K.A. (2012). Takin' it to the streets: A community university partnership approach to physical activity and knowledge translation. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 34 (Supplement), S3.
- Resnicow, K. (2012). Chaos, reactance and epiphany: The role of non-linear motivation in physical activity. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 34 (Supplement), S1.
- Shapiro, L. (2012). The body in mind, but whence the mind? *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 34 (Supplement), S1.