

From the President

Dear members

Welcome to our July newsletter. I've just been reading the preliminary agenda for our 2022 conference, and really looking forward to being in San Diego in September, and seeing so many of you.

If you've not registered yet, please remember to do so at the conference website – it will be good to see as many of you as possible in person, though you can also attend virtually to gain access to the talks.

Further info on the keynotes and the agenda are available in this newsletter and on the conference website. A big thank you in advance to the local organising committee who are doing a great job to put together our first IAWBH conference in the USA.

In other important news, it's time to think about putting your hand up to serve on the IAWBH Board. A range of positions are vacant, and we really need members from around the world to stand for election. It is a great opportunity to not only contribute to the IAWBH, but to hone new skills and work with some awesome people in our field.

I'm happy to talk with anyone about what is involved, if you're interested in knowing more, as are our election officers. Further, any current or past board member will be happy to help you understand the nature of the work and time commitments.

I really do hope to see many of you in San Diego – I know it is still a difficult time to travel for many people in the world – but we will do our best to come together face-to-face and virtually to share knowledge and practice this year.

Best regards

Carlo



IAWBH President
Carlo Caponecchia.

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New Board Member Elections

Dear IAWBH Member,

On behalf of the electoral committee, we would like to encourage IAWBH members to stand for any of the available positions for the 2022 IAWBH elections. This year, we will be electing:

- President
- Three Board members (1 practitioners and 2 academics)
- Two Reserve Board members
- One person for the Governance and Audit Committee
- Two people for the Electoral Committee

We kindly invite you to think about whether you would be interested in standing for any of these positions.

With respect to elections of members to the Board, the IAWBH constitution states that at least 5 board members must be employed full time by an academic institute or recognized research establishment.

We hope that some of you will be interested in standing for the available posts as this would be an excellent chance to work for our association and to support and influence the future of bullying research and practice.

Nominations are now open and close on 13 August. Nomination forms are available on the website. You must be a current member to be nominated, and your proposer and seconder must also be paid-up members of IAWBH.

If you have any queries relating to nominations, please contact either Wendy or Shayne on the emails below.

Kind regards

Wendy Bloisi and Shayne Mathieson

w.bloisi@londonmet.ac.uk shayne@top-drawer.co.nz

Get Your Ticket to the Upcoming Conference!

September 19-24, 2022

This year's conference, Reimagining Ways to Research and Address Workplace Bullying and Harassment, is just four months away! You don't want to miss this opportunity to attend the first ever conference in the USA! Join us in San Diego, California, September 20-24, 2022.

Don't forget to [book your room](#) at the conference hotel, the Manchester Grand Hyatt. All oral presenters and workshop facilitators will present in-person, and we'd love you to experience the conference in-person too!

If you can't make it, plan to attend virtually instead. We'll be streaming the presentations live, so you'll be able to participate in the discussion just as if you were there. If the time difference is an issue for you - don't worry - the presentations will be recorded.

In-person attendees will join us for a welcome reception, and dinner at Sally's Fish House (a fine dining seafood restaurant on the water). Full conference registration also includes conference materials, tea, lunches, and of course, in-person networking.



With 100 oral presentations and four workshops, it's a conference you don't want to miss!

[Visit the conference's website](#) for the conference timetable, speaker details, and more information.

Our welcome address will be delivered by [Jenny R. Yang](#), who is a former Commissioner of the United States' Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the government agency who investigates complaints of discrimination and harassment. As Commissioner she initiated the Select Task Force on the Study of Harassment in the Workplace, who produced a study unlike any others the EEOC had completed in the past.

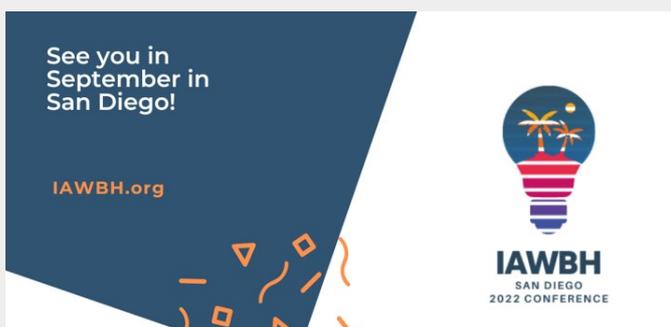
Currently, she's the Director of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), the agency responsible for holding those who do business with the federal government responsible for complying with anti-discrimination laws. She was appointed to this position by President Biden within his first few days of office.



Our keynote speakers include:

Our keynote speakers include:

- Kimberly Young-McLear, Ph.D.— Anti-Bullying and Policy Expert
- Guy Notelaers, Ph.D.—Professor of Work & Organizational Psychology
- Lilia M. Cortina, Ph.D.—University Diversity and Social Transformation Professor



For more information:

For all conference news and updates, visit our website:

tinyurl.com/IAWBH2022Conference

We'll see you there!

Who is....?

In this column, IAWBH members introduce themselves and their work. In this newsletter we have Chloe Gough, who is currently a PhD student at Loughborough University UK.

Tell us something about yourself

I am a doctoral researcher at Loughborough University, based in the East Midlands of the UK. I am currently in the 4th year of my PhD and hoping to submit my thesis soon! Before this, I completed an MSc in Work psychology at the same institution whilst also working part-time in the University's HR department. Alongside my PhD, I do the odd consultancy project and also work part-time as a supervisor at a COVID testing centre. So, it's fair to say I have certainly been kept busy recently! In my spare time, I play football in the Women's National League for Loughborough Lightning and weight-lift a few times a week. Both give me with a healthy break from my work and certainly help to alleviate stress and keep me fit!



Chloe Gough

How did you become interested in workplace bullying?

As a psychology undergraduate (many years ago!), I became fascinated with the field of occupational psychology and in specific, the area of employee health, well-being, performance and productivity at work. This led to a deeper interest into looking at factors that may detriment this, which I was able to explore further during my MSc. During this, I became particularly interested in the phenomena of workplace bullying, the complexities around it (reporting, identifying, addressing and preventing), and how this may ultimately detriment employee health, well-being, performance and productivity. I was offered a PhD studentship researching workplace bullying intervention effectiveness at Loughborough, supervised by Dr Iain Coyne, and practically jumped at the chance! Having the opportunity to work in an area that is so important and constantly in need of further research, was too good to miss.

What can you tell us about the development of the workplace bullying field in your country?

I think in the UK (and rest of the world), there is an extremely talented and passionate collective of workplace bullying researchers who continue to publish and research on a wide variety of topics in this area. Predominantly, it seems a lot of the work done is based in healthcare, but as we know, this is where we tend to see higher prevalence rates, so the data from this work is incredibly useful.

Legally, workplace bullying still falls into this grey area between harassment, victimisation and discrimination. So, whilst it is not technically an illegal form of workplace behaviour, it can easily cause similar levels of harm to individuals and wider work environments. Typically, in British organisational policy, bullying is often merged together with harassment, which can often conflate the two despite them being conceptually and legally different. For targets and bystanders of the behaviour, this can make reporting the behaviour incredibly confusing and difficult. Furthermore, a high burden of proof is required to validate claims, which is often difficult for many to acquire, given the sometimes subtle and gradated nature of the behaviour. So, whilst there is always scope for more research around workplace bullying, I feel this specific area is littered with significant discrepancies that could benefit from further research and perhaps legal reform.

What can you tell us about your work?

For my PhD, I was tasked with exploring the widespread, lack of workplace bullying intervention effectiveness. After months of reading and pondering, it became apparent that as a field we have created some really sophisticated, complex intervention programmes that are still seeing low levels of success in significantly preventing and reducing the behaviour overall. This prompted me to consider that perhaps it may not be the intervention programmes themselves, but rather the environments within which they are being placed and how ready they are for the change, that may be inhibiting success.

With this, I have explored the notion of readiness for change and more specifically, what readiness for a workplace bullying intervention might look like, how it can be achieved and how being 'ready' can improve intervention effectiveness. Put simply, I suggest employee support for, and willingness to engage in, workplace bullying interventions is determined by their perception of the organisations structural ability to successfully implement, uphold and support the change. From my research, I am led to believe employees develop these perceptions by assessing 5 structural facets of an organisation's structure: process & policy, leadership, culture, climate and work stressors and resources. If these 5, structural facets do not synergise with change principles and are not sufficiently prepared to support the change long-term, employees are less likely to perceive the organisation as ready and subsequently, will be less willing to engage in the intervention. Thus, inhibiting the reach and success of the change.

What do you hope to achieve in the field of workplace bullying in the future?

At present, I am working on refining a readiness assessment tool I have created as part of my PhD. The premise behind this, is that the tool can be used by organisations pre-intervention, to gauge employee perceptions of how ready they believe the organisation is to successfully implement and uphold a workplace bullying intervention. The outcome of this assessment will then help organisations to identify key areas within each structural facet that may need further work before an intervention is implemented. So with this, and hopefully a career working within this area, I really hope I can translate my research into pragmatic and accessible content. My ultimate goal is for my work to be easily understood and applied by anyone. I hope through doing this, I can help to improve the effectiveness of workplace bullying interventions and play a small part in helping organisations and individuals prevent and reduce this horrifically damaging form of behaviour.

Workplace bullying: can we ever wipe it out? (Part one)

Martin recently published his book *The Bastard in Le Bureau: Universal lessons from three modern French plays, following a PhD and prior to this a 40-year career in HR. In the first of a two part article, he will discuss the scope and nature of workplace bullying in contemporary organisations*



Martin Goodman

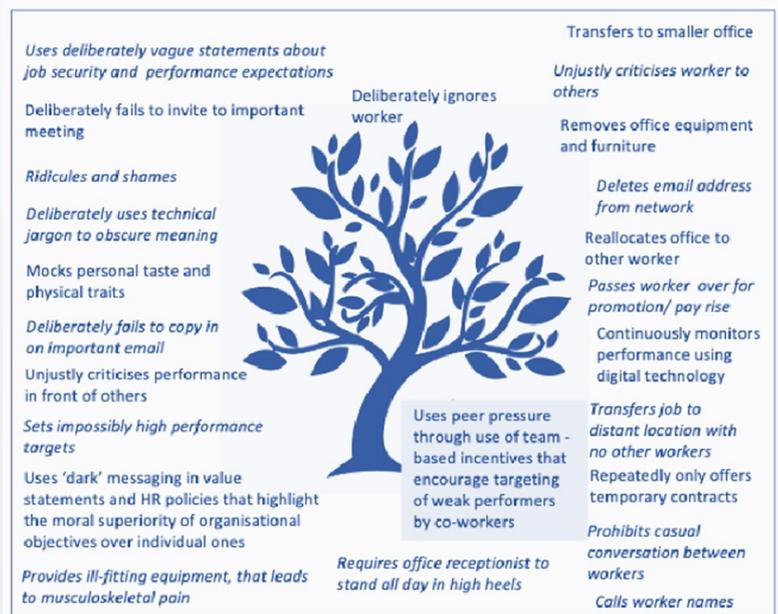
What is it about workplace bullying that makes it so repugnant while it arguably remains widespread and accepted as 'normal' in many organisations? In the UK over the last 12 months, the press has reported cases involving the Sellafield nuclear power plant, branches of the government, and healthcare organisations.

From my experience in HR, I know that bullying is notoriously difficult to define, identify and deal with, especially when the CEO or another senior executive is the main source of aggression. I also know that it is fairly easy for an HR manager or director to adopt a bullying style, partly as a form of self-protection against a narcissistic CEO. Over the last three years, I've been researching for a PhD on how French contemporary storytelling (in novels, plays and films) depicts workplace bullying and whether these representations can be said to characterise 'lived experience'. My observations from the research are that:

- Workplace bullying has no national boundaries.
- It is best defined by 'pattern' i.e. a series of actions by an aggressor that through repetition define intent. So, for instance, we might ask the question: 'Was a government minister, a bully in her dealings with senior civil servants?'. The answer is: 'Only if the evidence shows repeated acts of shouting, mocking etc. with the clear aim of denigrating individuals'.
- It is often, but not always, top-down i.e. it can come from co-workers and indeed subordinates, not just managers.
- It becomes institutionalised when acknowledged as 'normal' by management and employees.
- The line between bullying and 'banter' can be blurred and depends on what is perceived as acceptable to the recipient as well as in the organisation's culture.
- There is a 'dark' side to much of the internal organisational communications between management and employees because value statements, competencies and so forth are all underpinned by the organisation's singular view of the world. If this is not actively subscribed to an employee, such statements may be said to contain covert admonitions that 'underperforming', or 'non-conforming' individuals will be side-lined or dismissed.
- Storytelling presents another version of 'reality' based on individual lived experience. Its power is in its ability to generate empathy and engage audiences in the journey taken by individuals as they experience what for the most part is psychological, rather than physical, aggression. This is often subtle and always persistent. It does not appear to be a coincidence that several of the French writers I have researched have experienced workplace bullying, either as targets or bystanders.

The French context is important because France criminalised workplace bullying in 2002. This places it in an exceptional position both within Europe and beyond. A recent landmark case at *France Télécom* led to imprisonment and fines for members of this company's senior management team (following an estimated 30 workplace suicides provoked by a culture of systemic bullying). During the Supreme Court trial in 2019 senior management were accused of being 'blind' to a culture that deliberately provoked and maintained the psychological suffering of employees (Beynel, 2020). This was despite, or indeed, because of considerable investment in HR talent.

In the UK, on the other hand, bullying is not against the law but only specific forms of 'harassment' are i.e. unwanted conduct related to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Very, very, broadly a similar situation applies in the USA. As a consequence of this situation, the real scale of workplace bullying in these countries remains unclear.



The many faces of psychological bullying

On the other hand, if we look more closely at the situation in France, we might reasonably conclude that while a statutory prohibition against workplace bullying has had a dissuasive effect on individuals with aggressive tendencies, it hasn't actually stopped bullying entirely. This conclusion is supported by continuing French legal cases on workplace bullying which suggest that, in the absence of an actual statutory definition of what constitutes workplace bullying, organisations have demonstrated remarkable creativity. Ultimately, French courts decide, on the basis of a particular case, whether specific behaviour constitutes bullying. In fact, my research describes more than 20 types of behaviour that can be construed as bullying. These are set out in the illustration above.

By the way, there is nothing to suggest that workplace bullying is more extensive in France than elsewhere in Europe. However, evidence indicates that bullying is subject to self-labelling by employees i.e. it is used as a shorthand by employees to cover a multitude of (especially) management behaviours which, on investigation, may or may not be considered bullying.

I submit that, from an HR perspective, a voluntarist approach rather than one based on statutory regulation and punishment has a much greater chance of fundamentally halting aggressive attitudes and behaviours. This seems particularly appropriate where this approach is framed as a culture change programme that focusses on the costs of bullying for both the organisation and its employees. Such an approach therefore uses the modern management predilection for measurement and applies it to workplace bullying.

In the second part of this article, which will appear in the next newsletter, I will discuss consideration of costs to the employers and strategies to address workplace bullying.

Literature Update

Members corner



Charl Emmerson

The list of literature on workplace bullying and related issues continues to be reviewed. Between Aug 21–Feb 22 Charl Emmerson identified 192* new publications . They range from:

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Aarestad, S. H., Harris, A., Einarsen, S. V., Gjengedal, R. G. H., Osnes, K., Hannisdal, M., & Hjemdal, O. (2021). Exposure to bullying behaviours, resilience, and return to work self-efficacy in patients on or at risk of sick leave. *Industrial Health*, 59(3), 180-192. <https://doi.org/10.2486/indhealth.2020-0064>

To

Z

Zhou, Y., Mistry, T. G., Kim, W. G., & Cobanoglu, C. (2021). Workplace mistreatment in the hospitality and tourism industry: A systematic literature review and future research suggestions. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 49, 309-320. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2021.09.024>

To access the whole new literature list, log-in to the IAWBH website or through this [link](#).

*Please Note—due to a change in licenses at Northumbria University the search was restricted to WoS, Scopus and Emerald databases. In the past Business Source Complete was also used in our previous reviews. If we can regain access to the database we will do a retrospective search covering this time period.

Upcoming events

- 13th International Conference on Emotions and Work life. Postponed Until 2022. Lancaster, UK
<http://www.emotionsnet.org/conferences/emonet-xiii/emonet-xiii-call-for-papers/>
- Australia and New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) 35th Annual Conference, 6-7 December 2022, <http://anzamconference.org/>
- Academy of Management, 82nd Annual Meeting. 5-9 August 2022. Seattle, Washington, USA.
<https://aom.org/events/annual-meeting/annual-meeting-theme>
- British Academy of Management (BAM) Conference 31st August–2nd September, Manchester, UK <https://www.bam.ac.uk/events-landing/conference.html>
- 21st European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology (EAWOP) Congress - 24-27 May 2023, Katarice, Poland. <https://eawop2023.org/>
- European Congress of Psychology (Rescheduled 2021 conference) 5-8 July 2022, Ljubljana, Slovenia. <https://www.ecp2022.eu>
- International Association of Workplace Bullying and Harassment Conference, Sept 19-24, 2022, San Diego. https://whova.com/web/hybri18_202109





Next newsletter and guidelines

We are delighted that a lot of our members contribute to the IAWBH newsletter. To ensure the quality of contributions, the Board of IAWBH has prepared some guidelines.

If you intend to write a contribution for the newsletter please first check the guidelines at our website: <http://www.iawbh.org/Newsletterguidelines>.

The next IAWBH newsletter will appear in Oct 2022—deadline for contributions 31st September 2022

Please inform us about:

- your published work,
- Local and national bullying in the media
- international conferences on workplace bullying,
- special issues on workplace bullying and harassment,
- research breakthroughs,
- new research projects or challenging hypothesis,
- international cooperation and funding, and
- any news that may be relevant to a significant number of our members.



Neill Thompson

If you would like to contribute or discuss ideas, please get in contact: neill.thompson@northumbria.ac.uk

Disclaimer:

The viewpoints in contributions other than those communicated by Board members in their capacity as office bearers do not reflect the position of the IAWBH or its Board but of the author. Authors must necessarily ensure accurate referencing and citations and the IAWBH and its Board are not responsible for plagiarism within contributions.