

Press release

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Basic information

Name: Arndis Simonsen Email: arndis.simonsen@clin.au.dk Phone: 29425875

Department of: Clinical Medicine

Main supervisor: Ole Mors

Title of dissertation: Social Influence: Imitation and Conformity in Schizophrenia

Date for defence: 17-11-2017 at (time of day): 14:00 Place: Auditoriet, Aarhus Universitetshospital, Risskov, Skovagervej 2, indgang 30, 8240 Risskov

Press release (Danish)

Social påvirkning ved skizofreni

Et nyt ph.d.-projekt fra Forskningsenheden for Psykoser, Aarhus Universitet, bidrager med ny viden om, hvordan mennesker med skizofreni lader sig påvirke af andre og hvilke mulige konsekvenser, dette har både for symptom billedet og deres funktionsniveau. Projektet er gennemført af Arndis Simonsen, der forsvarer det d. 17/11.

Vi bliver konstant påvirket af andre mennesker. Det kan fx dreje sig om, at vi spørger en ven til råds om, hvad vedkommende ville gøre i en given situation, eller at vi følger ændringer i moden. Det er uklart, om tendensen til at blive påvirket af andre er anderledes ved skizofreni og i givet fald, om dette har betydning for sygdomsbilledet eller funktionsniveauet. Formålet med dette projekt var at undersøge, hvordan personer med skizofreni lader sig påvirke af andre, både på et bevidst og ubevidst plan, sammenlignet med raske personer. Dette blev undersøgt ved hjælp af en række kognitive tests, der bl.a. undersøgte, i hvor høj grad deltagerne imiterede andres bevægelser, eller ændrede deres holdninger for at tilpasse sig andre. Undersøgelsen tyder på, at patienter med skizofreni er mindst lige så påvirkelige som raske personer, når der er tale om ubevidste processer. Patienter har derimod vanskeligheder ved bevidst at bruge information fra andre, når de skal træffe beslutninger, og dette har muligvis en betydning for symptom billedet og det sociale funktionstab, der ofte ses i denne patientgruppe.

Forsvaret af ph.d.-projektet er offentligt og finder sted fredag den 17/11 kl. 14:00 i Auditoriet på Aarhus Universitetshospital, Risskov, Skovagervej 2, indgang 30, 8240 Risskov. Titlen på projektet er "Social Influence: Imitation and Conformity in Schizophrenia". For yderligere oplysninger kontakt ph.d.-studerende Arndis Simonsen, e-mail: arndis.simonsen@clin.au.dk, tlf. 2942 5875.

Bedømmelsesudvalg:

Christine Parsons (formand), lektor, Interacting Minds Centret, Institut for Klinisk Medicin, Aarhus Universitet

Jennifer Cook, Birmingham Fellow, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham

Leonhard Schilbach, Privatdozent og leder, Department of Psychiatry, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität og Max Planck Institute of Psychiatry

Projektet blev finansieret af Lundbeckfonden, Forskningsenheden for Psykoser, AUHR og Interacting Minds Centret, Aarhus Universitet.

Press release (English)

Social Influence in Schizophrenia

A new PhD project from the Psychosis Research Unit, Aarhus University, contributes to new knowledge about how people with schizophrenia are influenced by others and which potential consequences this has both on the characteristic symptomatology and their level of functioning. The project was carried out by Arndis Simonsen, who is defending her dissertation on 17/11.

We are constantly influenced by other people. Examples of this could be that we ask a friend for advice about what he/she would do in a given situation or that we follow changes in fashion. It is unclear whether the tendency to be influenced by others is altered in schizophrenia and whether a potential alteration would impact the symptomatology or the level of functioning. The aim of this project was to investigate how individuals with schizophrenia are influenced by others, both on a conscious and sub-conscious level, compared to healthy individuals. A range of cognitive tests were used to assess the susceptibility to influence, for instance by measuring the participants' tendency to imitate others' movements or their tendency to change their opinions according to other people's opinions. The study suggests that patients with schizophrenia are at least as susceptible to social influence as healthy individuals when it comes to sub-conscious processes. However, patients display difficulties when they consciously have to use information from others during decision making and this may contribute to the characteristic symptomatology and the social impairments, often accompanying the disorder.

The defence is public and takes place on Friday 17/11 at 2 pm in the Auditorium at Aarhus University Hospital, Risskov, Skovagervej 2, entrance 30, 8240 Risskov. The title of the project is "Social Influence: Imitation and Conformity in Schizophrenia". For more information, please contact PhD student Arndis Simonsen, email: arndis.simonsen@clin.au.dk, Phone +45 2942 5875.

Assessment committee:

Christine Parsons (chairman), Associate Professor, Interacting Minds Centre, Department of Clinical Medicine, Aarhus University

Jennifer Cook, Birmingham Fellow, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham

Leonhard Schilbach, Lecturer (Privatdozent) and Leader, Department of Psychiatry, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität and Max Planck Institute of Psychiatry

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