Faculty profile - Wendy Ellis

Wendy Ellis’ research interests involve social development in childhood and adolescence including children’s peer group relationships, friendships, bullying and adolescent dating violence and risk behavior.

She is currently implementing a federally-funded (SSHRC) project investigating the scope and processes through which peer groups influence children’s social, psychological and behavioural adjustment. Through this study, Ellis and her team will attempt to document the specific processes through which characteristics of groups (e.g., aggression, status, shyness) predict changes in children’s behavior (e.g., deviancy, bullying) and well-being (e.g., depression, self-esteem).

Ellis recently completed a large, provincially-funded (Ontario Mental Health Foundation) project on adolescent dating relationships and is planning the next phase of this project with a young adult population. “In future work, I hope to examine dating relationships more closely and study how electronic forms of communication and social media impact the overall quality and use of aggression in dating relationships.”

According to Ellis, “the Psychology Department at King’s offers a wide variety of courses and programs to King’s students. All of our faculty maintain very active programs of scholarship that contribute to knowledge and provide a context for mentoring students in research.”
Psychology
The Department of Psychology at King’s offers students several degree options, as well as a variety of courses in psychology for students majoring in other disciplines.

Our Honors Specialization program prepares students for graduate (post-BA) work in psychology and our Major and Specialization modules give students a strong background for careers or further education in a variety of areas, such as health, education, law, and others. We offer courses dealing with psychological dimensions of a wide range of issues, including addictions, child development, counseling, consciousness, creativity, diversity, education, law, thinking and perceiving, mental health, personality, psychological disorders, religion, sexuality, social issues, and work and organizations. Several of these courses are unique to King’s.

Year one classes
The Introduction to Psychology course covers a wide range of topics covering the personal, social, and biological underpinnings of experience. In this class we address questions such as:

- How does the brain work?
- How do people learn, remember, and solve problems?
- What motivates people and what makes people happy?
- How are physical and emotional health linked?
- Why do people seem capable of incredibly loving and powerfully hurtful behaviour?
- How do people’s personalities develop?
- What are psychological disorders and how can they be treated?
- Are all of these kinds of issues influenced by culture?

These kinds of questions are addressed by examining classical and contemporary psychological theory and research.

Anyone interested in the human experience is welcome to take Introduction to Psychology. Students who are considering completing a degree in Psychology are advised to also take Math 1228A/B (028a/b) Finite and Stats 1024A/B in their first year.

Career options
A degree in psychology prepares students to pursue graduate education or work in many fields. Graduates of our program have developed careers in fields such as health, education, research, community development, counseling, and business.

Other graduates of our program have gone on to pursue professional, Masters and PhD degrees in various areas including:

- Clinical, counseling, social, developmental, forensic, and humanistic psychology
- Education (teacher’s college)
- Health sciences, including occupational therapy and communication sciences
- Law, industrial relations and journalism

What students have to say
“The small class sizes and community atmosphere allowed me to get to know both my classmates and faculty which has been invaluable in making the most out of my time at Kings.”

-Mike MacKinley ’13

“Exploring the subject of psychology has been one of the most interesting and positively challenging experiences I have ever had. The intimate learning atmosphere at King’s College also provided me a home feeling while I was away from home. Choose King’s, choose a different learning path!”

-Yang Zhang ’12