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# one on one



We dip into the Society member database and pick out...

**Judith Eberhardt, Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Teesside University**

## One book

I've read Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* several times, having been introduced to it in my teens. Huxley's dystopian vision of a society in which conformity is achieved through genetic engineering, conditioning, consumerism and a mood-altering drug was fascinating and terrifying to me when I first read it. Every time I pick it up, I find something new in it.

## One thing psychologists could do better

We are very good at identifying what drives individual health behaviour and what it takes to change that behaviour. We need to take a more active role in relation to intervening in the circumstances that promote maladaptive health behaviours. These often relate to social injustice. Focusing solely on the individual to effect positive change is not a viable long-term strategy. We need to be cognisant of this in the work we do, and campaign for social change on a larger scale. We can't do this alone – it requires interdisciplinary work.

## One moment that changed my career

A few years ago, I felt stuck in a rut in terms of my career, unsure of where I was heading. I met someone who helped me gain the confidence to pursue my research interests and who has since been a great source of motivation, support and inspiration for me. This serendipitous meeting has not only been career-changing but life-changing.

## One film

I saw Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* as a teen and it made a big impression on me. The film provides a wonderful allegory for the internal human conflict between the rational and the irrational, with the instinctual side of

human nature being embodied by the world of the apes and the rational, scientific side by HAL. I constantly reflect upon this conflict as part of my research around preventative health behaviours. We tend to assume that these behaviours are a product of conscious and rational decision-making processes, but this assumption neglects the (often unconscious) biological and social influences on our behaviour.

## One song

'Glass Eyes' has all the ingredients of a great Radiohead song – plaintive, haunting lyrics accompanied by ethereally beautiful music. It's about being in love, it's about pain, and it's about being in the moment. It feels as though I've grown up and matured in tandem with Radiohead's music.

## One nugget of advice for aspiring psychologists

If you are thinking of pursuing a career in academia, try to gain some teaching experience as early as possible – it will help you decide if this career path is for you. I didn't originally set out to become an academic. Upon completing an MSc, I wasn't sure what to do next. I was offered some part-time lecturing work, and I found that I really enjoyed it. I had never seen myself as a lecturer – now I couldn't imagine doing anything else. Some of the most interesting discussions I've had have been with my students in the classroom. My job is interesting and fulfilling; seeing my students succeed and forge successful careers in psychology is very rewarding.

## One challenge

With three children, combining a career in academia with motherhood is a constant balancing act. Additionally, as a woman of mixed race, it has at times felt as though I've needed to work twice as hard to prove myself. I don't want my daughters, who will all grow up to be women of colour, to feel limited in terms of what they can achieve. I hope to set a positive example for them.

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