

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Psychology-Law Knowledge Fusion for Real-World Challenges

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Abstract

This Special Issue comprises the proceedings from the Roundtable Unconference that took place at Hult International Business School, London, on 3 December 2025. The event brought together researchers and practitioners with expertise in psychology and law who shared their insights into the importance of psychology-law fusion in addressing pressing societal challenges.

Keywords: psychology and law; judges; lawyers; psychologists; interdisciplinary evaluation; psychology and justice; knowledge fusion

Law affects society at its core across all life contexts: it regulates rights and freedoms, societal structures, the conducting of business and more. In practice, psychology and law are only very partially connected (e.g. see (Amsterdam and Bruner 2011; Pernu and Elzein 2020; Howe and Knott 2015)). The relationship between the two is often reduced to forensics and rare technical cases. However, many researchers and practitioners express that law cannot function reliably without incorporating knowledge from psychology. This later view can be likened to the adoption of *monism* in psychology – the view that brain and mind are intricately connected (mind is what the brain does).

Indeed, law and psychology are intricately connected, because law examines and regulates peoples' behaviour, as well as values, beliefs and intentions – which are all

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the realm of psychology. There are already many successful examples of psychology-law collaborations. For example, psychological insights into memory, attention and cognitive biases have contributed to developments in the justice process, including amendments to witness questioning and line-up identification (e.g. see (Howe and Knott 2015)). Many more existing insights will need to be implemented, including understanding how sleep affects cognition and emotion; the effects of gene-environment interplay on behaviour and the relevance of genomic findings to conceptualisations of *will*, *praise* and *blame* (see for example (Kovas and Selita 2021)).

Another underappreciated and underexplored area is the effects of law on psychology. For example, adoption of particular laws can initiate cascading negative effects on individuals and ultimately societies, creating vicious cycles that perpetuate inequality, frustration and lack of societal cohesion. In contrast, laws designed using interdisciplinary approaches can prevent such cascades of negative influences, and instead promote trust and cohesion, considering the field of justice ‘operates with such complex phenomena as *will*, *intention*, *capacity*, *decision-making*, *consciousness*, *guilt*, *remorse*, *praise* and *blame*, *aetiology*, *reason*, *morality*, *social cohesion* and many more ...’ (Selita and Kovas 2026).

This roundtable unconference explored the *insights from a group of experts*, including judges, lawyers and psychologists at the peak of their professions and possessing multidisciplinary knowledge and expertise. The focus of the discussions was the power of *interdisciplinary approaches* in addressing real-world challenges in decision-making, law-making, enforcement, risk management, business regulation and more. The unconference also helped formulate novel practice-oriented research questions at the intersection of psychology and law.

There was full agreement that psychology research can aid legal practice *across the justice process*; and that the psychology-law knowledge fusion is crucial. For example, a courtroom is not purely a legal environment, but is a microcosm of a myriad of interacting psychological processes: hope, worry, tension, fear, suffering, disappointment, frustration, conflict, expectation, emotional exhaustion, trust, empathy, credibility, mental health, wellbeing, information processing, pressure, expertise, responsibility, conformity, communication, unconscious influences, biases, ethics and morality, decision making, and much more. At the core of all regulation is the human mind: laws are a product of human mind, enforcing of laws (decision making) is a product of the human mind, and the behaviour being judged is a product of the human mind. Knowledge about the human mind can make a major difference towards more balanced societies: balance in decisions, balance in wealth, and ultimately better societal cohesion.

The experts also discussed how even the short psychology-based guidance during judicial training has made a difference to their practice as a judge. Examples were expert training for judges on consistency/inconsistency in witness accounts; unreliability of lie-detection; importance of empathy; understanding the role of quality of sleep of judges, witnesses, of those accused and of people serving prison sentences (see (Gregory et al. 2026)). The experts agreed that psychology-law knowledge fusion can help with all the challenges of the courtroom; and that knowledge-fusion is particularly crucial for decision making across contexts.

The experts agreed that bringing knowledge of psychology to law needs to be systematic, for example incorporating courses about human mind and behaviour early in law degrees and in professional law training. Similarly, psychologists must collaborate with legal experts as they delve into exploring law-psychology interplay, including how laws interact with culture (values, morals, social set-ups) and how culture affects individuals. Moreover, as many disciplinary boundaries are artificial, interdisciplinary degrees equip students with deeper understanding of the complexity of the world, such as interconnections among different phenomena. It is therefore fitting that Hult International Business School, where the event took place, has launched a new interdisciplinary degree in Psychology, Economics and Politics (PPE), including Psychology and Law and other interdisciplinary modules.

Roundtable experts

Expert contributors included:

Prof Dr Alice Gregory, Professor of Psychology, Sleep expert. University of Royal Holloway.

Anthony Metzer KC, Judge: High Court, Crown Court, Deputy High Court, First-tier Tribunal, Upper Tribunal of the IAT, and War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Tribunal. King's Counsel, Goldsmiths Chambers.

Armela Hasantari, Judge: Court of First Instance of General Jurisdiction of Tirana.

Edison Frangu, Founder and Executive Director of Open Gov Hub Albania. Anticorruption expert.

Dr Ellie Brown, Barrister, 7BR. Solicitor. Criminologist. Prison reform expert.

Emiliano Doko, Advocate. Senior Legal Advisor of Qendra Open Gov Hub Albania.

Enkel Peza, Judge, Court of First Instance of General Jurisdiction of Tirana. Member of the Electoral College of Albania by the High Judicial Council. Lecturer at Judge's School.

Prof Dr Fatos Selita, Professor of Psychology, Hult International Business School. Barrister of England and Wales. Attorney of the State of New York State, USA. Expert at TechnoTruth.

Gerd Hoxha, Deputy President and Judge of the Court of First Instance of General Jurisdiction, Tirana. President of the Albanian Judges' Association.

Iliba Bezati, President and Judge at the Court of Appeals with General Jurisdiction. Member, Electoral Judicial College. Lecturer at Judges' School.

Lertida Balili, Chancellor, Court of Appeals with General Jurisdiction of Albania.

Marçela Shehu, Judge, Court of First Instance of General Jurisdiction of Tirana.

Megi Anxhela Muhaj, Judge, First Instance Court of General Jurisdiction in Dibër.

Oltjona Goxha, Judge, Court of First Instance of General Jurisdiction of Tirana

Prof Dr Yulia Kovas, Professor of Genetics and Psychology, Hult International Business School. Director of InLab. Visiting Professor, Kings College London.

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