

INS Distinguished Career Award Winners Amsterdam

Michael Kopelman

Michael Kopelman is an internationally recognised authority on memory disorders. For over 30 years, his seminar neuropsychological and neuropsychiatric work on the subject has shaped the development of cognitive neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry in Britain and beyond. Mike's first degree was in Psychology before he completed his medical degree at the University of London in 1978 and received his PhD from the Institute of Psychiatry ten years later. In 1998, he became a Professor of Neuropsychiatry at Guy's King's & St Thomas's School of Medicine, now part of the Institute of Psychiatry at King's College London. He has authored around 200 scientific articles and four seminal books on memory, including *The Handbook of Memory Disorders*, a major reference volume in the field. He was elected Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences in 2008 and Fellow of the Society of Biology in 2009. He is the President of the International Neuropsychiatric Association and immediate past-President of the British Academy of Forensic Sciences. Mike has also served as President of the British Neuropsychological Society, 2004-6, and was a founder member of the Memory Disorders Research Society. He has served on the Editorial boards of 12 prominent neuropsychological journals and is a sought-after speaker in international conferences, not only for his tireless research efforts and his persistently high academic standards but also for his unique, understated charisma and his irresistible humour. Mike is also a highly regarded and committed lecturer and mentor to medical and psychology students, seeing and guiding students and trainees on a weekly basis.

In addition to all his academic activities and achievements, Mike is the lead clinician at the Neuropsychiatry and Memory Disorders Clinic run within the British National Health Service. The clinic is a unique multidisciplinary service within British psychiatry, seeing a range of both neurological and psychiatric conditions and receiving nation-wide as well as some international referrals. The success and genuine multidisciplinary nature of the clinic seems to rely on Mike's rare combination of clinical qualifications: he is both a Consultant Neuropsychiatrist, as well as a Chartered Psychologist. Indeed, his approach to clinical work, as well as science seems to be guided by this rare, dual clinical background.

Mike is also a nationally recognized expert in medico-legal work, specializing in memory disorders in the criminal law courts, as well as human rights work on wider psychiatric problems including reports on behalf of detainees under anti-terrorism laws, such as Guantanamo base returnees. Never putting forward himself or his patients in the media, Mike seems to approach this work with the integrity and high academic standards that characterise all his work. Like many successful academics, Mike works far too hard, perhaps the biggest weakness of this memory expert being his inability to remember on a daily basis just how much he has already achieved. Yet, it is precisely this coupling of humility with an assiduous striving for knowledge and justice that makes Mike such an inspirational role model for so many junior academics and clinicians.