

## Dr Stephane De Brito BSc, MPhil, PhD

Birmingham Fellow

[School of Psychology \(/schools/psychology/index.aspx\)](/schools/psychology/index.aspx)

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### About

Dr De Brito conducts functional and structural MRI research to 1: examine the neural substrates associated with the development and the persistence of severe antisocial behaviour in children and adults; 2. shed light on the relationship between childhood maltreatment and brain structure and functioning; and 3. Identify structural and functional neural markers of resilience.

### Qualifications

BSc. (Hons) Psychology, University of Geneva (1999-2003)

M.Phil. Criminology, Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge (2003-2004)

Ph.D. Forensic Mental Health Science, Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London (2005-2009)

### Biography

Dr De Brito completed undergraduate studies in Psychology in Switzerland (University of Geneva), followed by a move to the United Kingdom to read for a MPhil in Criminology (University of Cambridge) and a PhD in Forensic Mental Health Science (King's College London). Before moving to the University of Birmingham as an Independent Research Fellow in March 2012, Dr De Brito was a post-doctoral research associate in the Department of Psychology at University College London.

### Postgraduate supervision

#### PhD students

Dr De Brito considers PhD student applications on a rolling basis. Students interested in working on topics related to his research and with a competitive academic track record should email him in the first instance. For information regarding the PhD application process see the 'how to apply' section of the [Psychology PhD programme \(/postgraduate/courses/research/psych/psychology.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/research/psych/psychology.aspx).

#### Postdoctoral researchers

Dr De Brito is also looking for good postdoctoral researchers, particularly those interested in applying to the Marie Curie Actions Fellowships, which offer two years of funding for European and Non-European post-docs (deadline: September 2014).

### Research

**ResearchGate:** [http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Stephane\\_De\\_Brito/](http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Stephane_De_Brito/) ([http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Stephane\\_De\\_Brito/](http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Stephane_De_Brito/))

**Google Scholar:** <http://scholar.google.co.uk/citations?user=LtoxIHMAAAAJ&hl=en> (<http://scholar.google.co.uk/citations?user=LtoxIHMAAAAJ&hl=en>)

**ResearcherID:** F-9737-2013

**Scopus Author ID:** 26657895200

Dr De Brito's research uses behavioural, neurocognitive and structural/functional magnetic resonance brain imaging techniques to better understand the characteristics of different subgroups of children and adults displaying severe antisocial behaviour and psychopathic traits.

A second strand of his research interests is to better understand patterns of resilience and vulnerability in children and adults who have experienced early adversity. The goals are to clarify why some individuals who have experienced early adversity show resilience while others do not, whether individuals who have experienced early adversity process emotions differently, and whether structural and functional neural markers of resilience can be identified.

### Publications

#### 2014

Sebastian, C. L., McCrory, E. J., Dadds, M. R., Cecil, C. A. M., Lockwood, P. L., Hyde, Z. H., **De Brito, S. A.**, & Viding, E. (2014). Neural responses to fearful eyes in children with conduct problems and varying levels of callous-unemotional traits. *Psychological Medicine*, 1-11. doi: doi:10.1017/S0033291713000482

#### 2013

**De Brito, S. A.**, Viding, E., Sebastian, C. L., Kelly, P. A., Mechelli, A., Maris, H., & McCrory, E. J. (2013). Reduced orbitofrontal and temporal grey matter in a

**De Brito, S. A.**, Viding, E., Kumari, V., Blackwood, N., Hodgins, S. (2013). Cool and hot executive function impairments in violent offenders with antisocial personality disorder with and without psychopathy. *PLOS ONE*, 8(6):e65566. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0065566

Cullen, A. E., **De Brito, S. A.**, Gregory, S. L., Murray, R. M., Williams, S. C. R., Hodgins, S., & Laurens, K. R. (2013). Temporal lobe volume abnormalities precede the prodrome: A study of children presenting antecedents of schizophrenia. *Schizophrenia Bulletin*. doi: 10.1093/schbul/sbs128

McCrory, E. J., **De Brito, S. A.**, Kelly, P. A., Bird, G., Sebastian, C. L., Mechelli, A., Samuel, S., & Viding, E. (2013). Amygdala activation in maltreated children during pre-attentive emotional processing. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 202(4), 269-276. doi: 10.1192/bjp.bp.112.116624

Lockwood, P. L., Sebastian, C. L., McCrory, E. J., Hyde, Z. H., Gu, X., **De Brito, S. A.**, & Viding, E. (2013). Association of callous traits with reduced neural response to others' pain in children with conduct problems. *Current Biology*, 23(10), 901-905. doi: 10.1016/j.cub.2013.04.018

Kelly, P. A., Viding, E., Wallace, G. L., Schaer, M., **De Brito, S. A.**, Robustelli, B., & McCrory, E. J. (2013). Cortical thickness, surface area and gyrification abnormalities in children exposed to maltreatment: Neural markers of vulnerability? *Biological Psychiatry*, 74(11), 845-52. doi: 10.1016/j.biopsych.2013.06.020.

## 2012

McCrory, E., **De Brito, S. A.**, & Viding, E. The link between child abuse and psychopathology: A review of neurobiological and genetic research. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 105(4), 151-156. doi: 10.1258/jrsm.2011.110222

Sebastian, C. L., McCrory, E. J. P., Cecil, C. A. M., Lockwood, P. L., **De Brito, S. A.**, Fontaine, N. M. G., & Viding, E. (2012). Neural responses to affective and cognitive theory of mind in children with conduct problems and varying levels of callous-unemotional traits. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 69(8), 814-822. doi: 10.1001/archgenpsychiatry.2011.2070

Sebastian, C. L., Fontaine, N. M. G., Bird, G., Blakemore, S., **De Brito, S. A.**, McCrory, E. J. P., & Viding, E. (2012). Neural processing associated with cognitive and affective theory of mind in adolescents and adults. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 7(1), 53-63. doi: 10.1093/scan/nsr023

Viding, E., Sebastian, C. L., Dadds, M. R., Lockwood, P. L., Cecil, C. A. M., **De Brito, S. A.**, & McCrory, E. J. (2012). Amygdala response to preattentive masked fear in children with conduct problems: The role of callous-unemotional traits. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 169(10), 1109-1116. doi: 10.1176/appi.ajp.2012.12020191

## 2011

McCrory, E. J.\* **De Brito, S. A.\***, Sebastian, C. L., Mechelli, A., Bird, G., Kelly, P. A., et al. (2011). Heightened neural reactivity to threat in child victims of family violence. *Current Biology*, 21(23), R947-R948. doi:10.1016/j.cub.2011.10.015

### \*Equal contribution

**De Brito, S. A.**, McCrory, E., Mechelli, A., Wilke, M., Jones, A., Hodgins, S., & Viding, E. (2011). Small, but not perfectly formed: Decreased white matter concentration in boys with psychopathic tendencies. *Molecular Psychiatry*, 16, 476-477. doi:10.1038/mp.2010.74

McCrory, E., **De Brito, S. A.**, & Viding, E. (2011). The impact of childhood maltreatment: A review of neurobiological and genetic factors. *Frontiers in Child and Neurodevelopmental Psychiatry*. doi: 10.3389/fpsy.2011.00048

Günther, T., Konrad, K., **De Brito, S. A.**, Herpertz-Dahlmann, B., & Vloet, T. D. (2011). Attentional functions in children and adolescents with ADHD, depressive disorders, and the comorbid condition. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 52(3), 324-331. doi: 10.1111/j.1469-7610.2010.02320.x

Cooke, D., Michie, C., **De Brito, S. A.**, Hodgins, S., & Sparkes, L. (2011). Measuring life-long patterns of instrumental aggression: A methodological note. *Psychology Crime & Law*, 17(4), 319-329. doi: 10.1080/10683160903203953

### Book Chapters

McCrory, E., De Brito, S. A., & Viding, E. (2011). The neuroscience and genetics of childhood maltreatment. In D. Skuse, H. Bruce, L. Dowdney, & D. Mrazek (Eds) *Child Psychology and Psychiatry: Frameworks for Practice*: Wiley. doi: 10.1002/9781119993971.ch20

## 2010

McCrory, E., **De Brito, S. A.**, & Viding, E. (2010). The neurobiology and genetics of maltreatment and adversity. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 51(10), 1079-1095. DOI: 10.1111/j.1469-7610.2010.02271.x

Rijsdijk, F.V., Viding, E., **De Brito, S. A.**, Forgiarini, M., Mechelli, A., Jones, A.P., McCrory, E. (2010). Heritable variations in gray matter concentration as a potential endophenotype for psychopathic traits. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 67, 406-413. DOI: 10.1001/archgenpsychiatry.2010.20

Hodgins, S., **De Brito, S. A.**, Chhabra, P., & Côté, G. (2010). Anxiety disorders among offenders with antisocial personality disorders: Different mechanisms underlying violent behaviour. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 55(12), 815-827. <http://publications.cpa-apc.org/media.php?mid=1076>

Günther, T., Konrad, K., **De Brito, S. A.**, Herpertz-Dahlmann, B., & Vloet, T. D. (2010) Attentional functions in children and adolescents with ADHD, depressive disorders and the comorbid condition. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. 52(3), 324-331. DOI: 10.1111/j.1469-7610.2010.02320.x

## 2009

**De Brito, S. A.**, Mechelli, A., Wilke, M., Laurens, K. R., Jones, A. P., Barker, G. J., Hodgins, S. & Viding, E. (2009). Size matters: Increased grey matter in boys with conduct problems and callous-unemotional traits. *Brain*, 132(4), 843-852. DOI: 10.1093/brain/awp011

— This paper was featured in the scientific commentary in *Brain*: Blair, R. J. R. (2009). Too much of a good thing: Increased grey matter in boys with conduct problems and callous-unemotional traits. *Brain*, 132(4), 831-832. DOI: 10.1093/brain/awp051

**De Brito, S. A.**, & Viding, E. (2009). Psychopathic, but not thick: Temporal and prefrontal gray matter thinning in psychopaths. Invited commentary. *Cell Science Reviews*, 6(1), 31-34. No link available

**De Brito, S. A.**, Hodgins, S., McCrory, E. J. P., Mechelli, A., Wilke, M., Jones, A. P., & Viding, E. (2009). Structural neuroimaging and the antisocial brain: Main findings and methodological challenges. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 36(11), 1173-1186. DOI: 10.1177/0093854809342883

Hodgins, S., **De Brito, S. A.**, Simonoff, E., Vloet, T., & Viding, E. (2009). Getting the phenotypes right: An essential ingredient for understanding aetiological mechanisms underlying persistent violence and developing effective treatments. *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience*, 3(44), 1-10. DOI: 10.3389/neuro.08.044.2009

Mechelli, A., Tognin, S., McGuire, P. K., Prata, D., Sartori, G., Fusar-Poli, P., **De Brito S. A.**, Hariri A. R., & Viding E. (2009). Genetic vulnerability to affective

**De Brito, S. A.**, & Hodgins, S. (2009). Die Antisoziale Persönlichkeitsstörung des DSM-IV-TR - befunde, untergruppen und unterschiede zur Psychopathy. *Forensische Psychiatrie, Psychologie, Kriminologie*, 3(2), 116-128. DOI: 10.1007/s11757-009-0124-x German translation of the book chapter: **De Brito, S. A.** & Hodgins, S. (2009). Antisocial Personality. In M. McMurran & R. Howard (Eds.).

#### Book Chapters

**De Brito, S. A.** & Hodgins, S. (2009). Antisocial Personality. In M. McMurran & R. Howard (Eds.), *Personality, Personality Disorder, and Risk of Violence*: Wiley. ISBN: 978-0-470-05948-7

**De Brito, S. A.** & Hodgins, S. (2009). Executive functions of persistent violent offenders: A critical review of the literature. In S. Hodgins, E. Viding & A. Plodowski (Eds.), *Persistent violent offenders: Neurobiology and rehabilitation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199543533

Hodgins, S. & **De Brito, S. A.** (2009). Damaged development and the propensity to criminal behaviour. In B. Kamaldeep (Ed.) *Psychiatry and Crime*. Royal Society of Medicine Press. ISBN: 978-1-85315-883-4

## Expertise

Violence and severe antisocial behaviour in children (e.g., conduct disorder, callous-unemotional traits/psychopathic tendencies) and adults (e.g., antisocial personality disorder and psychopathy) using cognitive neuroscience methods (e.g., brain imaging and neurocognitive assessments).

Impact of childhood maltreatment on brain structure and functioning: individual and environmental factors contributing to resilience.

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