

Dear subscribers,

In this year's final newsletter you find current information from the IPU Berlin, information on upcoming **events** and the monthly **column** by IPU President **Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz**.

Additionally, Prof. Olbertz looks back on the year 2023 at the IPU Berlin. Find the **Review of the Year on our website**.

**We would like to wish you a relaxing end to the year and we look forward to welcoming you back to Berlin-Moabit in the New Year.**

### Information event for prospective students

26 January 2024 • 5 pm



## Events

17 January 2024 | 4 pm | Lecture hall 1

### Research Forum

All IPU professors and research associates as well as interested students are invited. A registration is not required.

26 January 2024 | 5 pm

### Information evening for prospective students.

Registration [on our website](#).

26/27 January 2024

### Operationalised Psychodynamic Diagnostic (OPD-CA)

Online workshop hosted by Prof. Annette Streeck-Fischer and Jenny Kaiser

Register [on our website](#).

## Fare evasion for the celebration

The **December column** by IPU President **Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz**

This column explores my first field experiment within social psychology.

At the age of 17, I found myself head over heels in love. My beloved had five siblings, each bearing names of notable distinction, three of whom were still children. They were looking for a new Santa Claus for Christmas Eve, as the voices of their grandfather, uncle, or neighbor would likely be recognized.

The choice fell upon me. Thus, in the confines of my home, I put on my mother's crimson hooded bathrobe, hung a white cotton beard on my head, secured a potato sack over my shoulders, and stood in front of the mirror facing a veritable Santa Claus.

So why not set off like this? My destination was at the farthest reaches of the city and I encountered cheerful greetings at every turn on my way to the bus stop.

At that time, the bus could only be accessed through its front door, necessitating a direct passage by the driver who also checked the tickets. He used a metal box with two flaps for this purpose. A paper ticket, usually part of a six-trip ticket, had to be placed on the left-hand flap, while the right-hand flap was filled with the exact fare, a whole 20 pfennigs.

*Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz has been president of the IPU Berlin since July 2021. Once a month, he provides commentary here on contemporary, timeless, psychoanalytic and political issues.*



While awaiting the bus, I thought of the experimental design. What would happen, I wondered, if I were to simply stroll past the bus driver on Christmas Eve in my festive attire? What if I were to give him a friendly nod, but not put down a ticket or any change? Would the driver have the courage, possibly amidst a full bus, to address me, impose a fine, or perhaps refuse my boarding? Moreover, could I endure the designation of a "fare dodger," as we termed it in those days? Presently, this transgression is labeled "fare evasion" (*Beförderungerschleichung*)—initially, I thought it sounded like a term from civil service law. With a degree of apprehension, I ascended the bus; the driver hesitated briefly but ultimately allowed me to pass without comment. The ploy had succeeded.

On my return journey, I wanted to do it again (to validate the experiment). This time, I encountered a grim driver who grabbed me by the sleeve, insisting that I pay the fare. Before I could rummage money out of my coat pocket, several passengers intervened. "It's Santa Claus; you have to let him through tonight!" exclaimed one woman indignantly, supported by another passenger. "And even if it were the good Lord," the driver objected, until a broad-shouldered passenger emerged from the rear of the bus, inquiring if he should handle the situation "his way." The festive atmosphere had dissipated, and my heart raced. Fortunately, this driver relented as well.

Since then, I have refrained from conducting similar field experiments, even without donning costumes.

**Jonas Rudolph** started his position as a research associate with Prof. Gavin Sullivan in December.

Welcome to the IPU Berlin.

